



Character Education in the Will to Meaning of Two Novels: *Surga Yang Tak Dirindukan* and *Air Mata Tuhan* (Feminist Logotherapy Study)

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Abstract. This article aims to analyze the character education in two popular novels, Asma Nadia's *Surga yang tak dirindukan* (The Heaven None Missed) and Aguk Irawan's *Air Mata Tuhan* (Tears of God). These two novels were chosen because they describe the struggles of the main characters in finding the meaning of life and facing challenges that involve character growth. This study uses the feminist logotherapy approach as a theoretical framework to understand the character education in these novels. The analysis results show that the two novels describe strong character education. The main characters experience significant changes and growth along with their journey of searching for the meaning of life. They face moral conflicts, emotional difficulties, and social pressures that test the meaningfulness of their lives. The character education found in these novels includes values such as honesty, integrity, courage, patience, and compassion. The main characters learn to take responsibility for their actions, to face suffering with dignity, and to form meaningful relationships with those around them. This study also discusses the relevance of character education in the two novels to real life. The values promoted in these novels can serve as inspirational examples and trigger reflections in shaping individual characters in everyday life.

Keywords: Logotherapy, Character Education, Feminism.

1 Introduction

Novels often explore human experiences, life challenges, and character journeys. In this context, the logotherapy approach can help understand the hidden meaning of the character's journey and see how the character overcomes their suffering, finds their life's purpose, and develops themselves. The urgency of this study is to provide a deeper insight into how logotherapy can be applied in the context of the novel. This approach can give more depth to the story, characters, and moral messages expressed in the novel. Logotherapy in the novel can inspire readers to live a meaningful life and to understand that the search for the will to meaning in life is a universal and valuable journey.

Logotherapy is a method of psychotherapy developed by Viktor Frankl, an Austrian psychologist and psychiatrist. Logotherapy focuses on finding a deeper meaning and

purpose of life. According to Frankl [1], the primary source of human suffering is their lack of meaning and purpose. Logotherapy is based on the assumption that each individual can find the meaning of their life, even under challenging circumstances. Logotherapy aims to identify the essential values to each individual and encourage them to take responsibility for their own lives. Logotherapy uses a variety of therapeutic techniques, such as reflection, discussion, the discovery of life values, and the development of meaningful goals. The main purpose of logotherapy is to find life's meaning and achieve life satisfaction. Frankl [1] argues that the only way to suppress the psychological disturbances of existential frustration is to seek personal goals and find meaning to be equipped with a stronger moral and hopeful attitude. Logotherapy can also help individuals overcome feelings of emptiness, depression, anxiety, loss of direction in life, and other psychological problems associated with a lack of meaning and purpose. Logotherapy aims to strengthen individuals to face life challenges and to develop a meaningful and purposeful life [2].

1.1 The Will to Meaning

The will to meaning means that one has a strong will to find the meaning of life and is determined to live a meaningful life. According to Frankl [3], a strong determination to find the meaning of life is the primary motivation of humans because the principle of will to meaning is contrary to the hedonic principle. Frankl [1] views that the ability to contemplate and realize the end of life makes one's life more valuable because the will to meaning is considered an important factor in achieving fulfillment and happiness. When individuals find deep meaning and purpose, they can overcome feelings of emptiness, depression, and anxiety resulting from a lack of meaning in life. The search for the meaning of life is not easy because it does not always go according to plan.

Meaningfulness of Life. Meaningfulness of life refers to an individual's understanding and experience of the meanings, purposes, and values that give meaning and direction to their lives. Frankl [1] explains that a meaningful life is achieved by giving satisfaction and happiness. The meaningfulness of life in logotherapy involves an understanding that each individual can find and actualize the meaning in their own life. It consists of an awareness of values that are important to certain individuals and a deep search for purpose and direction in life. In logotherapy, the meaningfulness of life is also tied to the individual's responsibility to live their life according to the values and goals they have chosen. Individuals have the freedom to react to situations and make choices that align with their values and goals so they can achieve a meaningful life.

Meaninglessness of Life. Meaninglessness is a condition in which individuals feel lost or unable to find a deep meaning and purpose in their lives. The meaninglessness of life is often associated with deep feelings of emptiness, confusion, and dissatisfaction. Koeswara [4] is beginning to recognize the meaninglessness syndrome as an important problem in modern society and a significant source of psychological distress. The meaninglessness of life is one of the main causes of various psychological issues, such

as depression, anxiety, hopelessness, and the tendency to seek escape through unhealthy behavior. Frankl concludes that there are two stages of meaninglessness, which are existential frustration and noogenic neurosis.

Existential Frustration. According to Frankl [1], existence is the struggle for the meaning of life. Existential frustration is seen as a natural response to a condition lacking meaning and purpose in life. Viktor Frankl argues that existential frustration can arise when individuals feel trapped in a monotonous routine, lose their life direction, or encounter insurmountable difficulties. Existential frustration is often associated with emptiness, confusion, hopelessness, or depression. People who experience existential frustration may feel like they have no clear meaning or purpose and are hindered from achieving satisfaction and happiness. Frankl [3] states that existential frustration is not a disease but an inner anguish that causes neuroticism.

Noogenic Neurosis. In logotherapy, neogenic neurosis responds to a lack of meaningful fulfillment in life. Viktor Frankl believes that humans have deep psychological needs for meaning and purpose, and when these needs are not fulfilled, noogenic neurosis is likely to arise. The correct treatment for neogenic neurosis is logotherapy because logotherapy goes into a specific human dimension.

1.2 Feminist Logotherapy

Feminist logotherapy refers to a logotherapy approach that is applied with a specific understanding and emphasis on women's issues and gender perspectives in the search for meaning of life. It combines logotherapy principles, which emphasize the fulfillment of meaningfulness, with a feminist perspective that observes and analyzes inequality of gender, gender roles, and women's experiences in social, cultural, and political contexts. In feminist logotherapy, attention is given to understanding how women experience and explore the meaning of their lives in social conditions that affect gender roles and equality. This involves recognizing gender inequalities and encouraging women to develop their identity, autonomy, and fulfillment of life purposes.

1.3 Character Education in Novels

Many studies have explored the issue of character education, focusing on the use of religious, cultural, and national values as elements of character-building [5]–[8]. These studies have suggested various media for character education, including not only schools [9], [10] but also families [11]–[15]. Several studies have also explored the influence of various academic disciplines on character education [16]–[18]. From those studies, certain disciplines have been found minimally effective, focusing more on cognitive achievements than their character development [18], [19]. However, only a few studies have explored the ability of literature to shape character.

Character education in novels refers to the development of values and attitudes expressed and instilled through stories and characters in a story or novel. It is concerned with interpreting and transmitting moral, ethical and value messages that are necessary to shape an individual's character and behavior. Character education in fiction aims to

influence the reader in a way that inspires, teaches, and encourages reflection on the attitudes, values, and actions of the characters in the story. Through exposure to conflict, character development, and decision-making in the story, readers are invited to reflect on and consider the values displayed and build their understanding of the importance of those values in real life. In novels, character education can be realized through the main characters and supporting characters who face challenging situations, moral conflicts, and complex decision-making. These traits can represent values such as honesty, courage, perseverance, empathy, cooperation, and responsibility, among many other values.

2 Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach involving text analysis and meaning interpretation. The data sources in this study are two novels, *Surga yang tak dirindukan* (The Heaven None Missed) and *Air mata Tuhan* (Tears of God). *Surga yang tak dirindukan* is a novel written by Asma Nadia published in 2015 by Asma Nadia Publishing House in Depok, with 346 pages. The other novel, *Air Mata Tuhan* by Aguk Irawan, published in 2015 by Imania in Depok, consists of 300 pages. These novels were chosen because they explore themes relevant to character education and have elements of feminist logotherapy that can be analyzed. This study's data collection techniques are library research and note-taking techniques. The data needed is the full text of the two novels. In this study, the researcher must read and fully understand the story, characters, and conflicts related to character education and gender issues.

The analysis in this study involves identifying the elements of feminist logotherapy found in the story, the characterization of the main characters, the conflicts they face, and the changes that happen to them as the story progresses. After analyzing the texts, the researcher needed to interpret the meanings revealed in the two novels. This involves understanding how the novel characters try to find meaningful life, face gender challenges, and develop strong character education. Furthermore, the researcher needs to integrate feminist logotherapy concepts into the interpretation of meaning. This aims to see how the character education in the two novels relates to feminist logotherapy concepts such as gender understanding, equality, social justice, and self-liberation. In addition, researchers can conduct a comparative analysis between the two novels to find similarities and differences in the character education and gender issues that arise. This helps to identify consistent or unique patterns and findings from both novels. Based on the analysis and interpretation, the researcher can conclude the results on character education in both novels with a focus on the feminist logotherapy approach.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Character Education in the Will to Meaning of the Characters in *Surga yang Tak Dirindukan* and *Air Mata Tuhan* Novels.

Character education in the will to meaning also involves self-reflection and introspection, in which individuals explore the purpose of life and the values that are important to them. They also identify actions and decisions consistent with the will to meaning. Character education in these two novels shows the importance of reinforcing values such as honesty, integrity, bravery, patience, compassion, and justice. These characters serve as inspiring examples for the reader, encouraging reflection in shaping personality and inviting readers to face life with a more meaningful attitude.

Meaningfulness of Life. The following quote illustrates the meaningfulness of Arini's life:

“Arini stopped running. No longer avoiding injury. On the other hand, like a sponge, Arini's body slowly sucked the arrows that contain pain are getting deeper and deeper until they merged with her body (STD.3.56). “

Through this excerpt contained in the novel *Surga yang tak dirindukan*, the meaningfulness of Arini's life has undergone changes and challenges when she discovers that her husband, Pras, is having an affair with another woman, May Rose. The meaningfulness of Arini's life, which was previously tied to her relationship and happiness with Pras, is suddenly shaken by his betrayal. Arini feels deeply sad, angry, and disappointed as she cannot understand why Pras is having an affair. She spends days to cry and feel the lingering sorrow. After that, Arini decided to find out more about the Pras' affair by visiting the house of May Rose.

The meaningfulness of Arini's life is different from Fisha's. Fisha feels the meaning of life when her long-lost husband returns and takes care of her. This can be found in the following quote:

“This situation made Fisha gasped. Eliminating words she was going to say earlier, and suddenly change with spilling of her feelings as a wife who really loves and cares for her husband, and also misses him with all her heart and sincerity: "Husband, will it be over soon? Where have you been? Why do you change? I miss you? I miss your affection? I miss my clingy husband? I'm lonely, honey? And one more thing that you must know, I have never cheated on you!" (AMT.2.59)

Through the excerpt in the novel, the character Fisha feels the meaningfulness of her life when her long-lost husband returns and takes care of her. Fisha expressed her feelings as a wife who loves and cares for her husband and misses him with all her heart. In shock, Fisha said her longing to her husband, who had changed and left. She missed her husband's affection, caress, and tenderness, which she had been waiting for so long.

In the excerpt, Fisha also points out that she is faithful to her husband and has never committed affair.

Meaninglessness of Life.

Existential Frustration. Arini is experiencing existential frustration over Pras' affair. Arini feels confused, hurt, and ashamed because of Pras' actions. The excerpt describes Arini's condition when she feels tired and sheds many tears. She shows dissatisfaction and emotional emptiness. The existential frustration that Arini feels reflects feelings of loss and meaninglessness of life due to an affair in her marriage. Arini feels devastated and confused by Pras' actions, which have damaged their trust and severed their relationship. Arini's feelings of hurt, shame, and exhaustion are symptoms of existential frustration in a disturbed marriage relationship. This condition reflects how much meaninglessness can affect a person's emotional and psychological state. Arini feels lost and may doubt the meaning of her life due to the affair. This is contained in the following quotation:

“The eight digit number given was not their home phone number. But the woman who picked up the phone there introduced herself without hesitation, making arini feel like she was no longer treading, swaying and almost falling (std. 1.08).”

The quote says that the phone call had a strong emotional impact on arini. The phone call may be related to unexpected problems and events in her life. Arini is unsteady and almost falling reaction reflects the feelings of confusion and instability that may arise from information received over the phone. Arini's response became unsteady and nearly fell, reflecting the confusion and instability that may arise due to specific information received via telephone. In the context of Asma Nadia's novel *Surga Yang Tak Dirindukan*, this quote could be the opening to describe Arini's life, which is disturbed and shaken by unexpected events. Events like these can lead to feelings of uncertainty, uncertainty, discomfort, and the meaninglessness of life that might become the story's focal point. The meaninglessness of life appears not only with Arini in *Surga Yang Tak Dirindukan* novel but also with Fisha in *Air Mata Tuhan* novel, which can be found in the following excerpt:

“The wedding day has arrived. Fisha woke up early, took a shower, prayed sunnah prayers, read the qur'an, prayed at dawn, then put on the clothes she first wore when she was married to her husband. Fisha was about to get out, but she felt she was not strong. She chose to sit by the window, opened the window, and felt the warm morning sunlight (amt.2.58).”

The excerpt describes the moment of fisha's wedding day. Fisha felt that the preparations she made this morning were something important and symbolic. She gets up very early, performs spiritual activities such as bathing, sunnah prayers, and reading the qur'an. After that, she completed the dawn prayer. Fisha wore the clothes she wore

for the first time when she married her husband, which symbolized the beginning of their marriage. However, in the middle of the preparations, Fisha felt a sense of weakness and inability to continue her way out. She chose to sit by the window, opened the window, and felt the warm morning sunlight. This moment may reflect a moment of reflection and tranquility for Fisha before entering her marriage. This shows the importance of marriage for Fisha, where she made spiritual preparations and took moments alone to feel god's presence through the morning sun. It can also reflect Fisha's hope, happiness, and serenity in facing her marriage.

4 Conclusion

Based on the research results, in the novels of *Surga yang tak dirindukan* and *Air mata Tuhan*, a strong character education can be analyzed through a feminist logotherapy approach. Feminist logotherapy combines the concepts of logotherapy with feminist thinking and point of view, emphasizing the understanding of the meaning of life from the perspective of gender and social equality. In both novels, the main characters, women and men, face challenges in finding the meaning of life. They must deal with conflicts related to gender identity and existing social norms. They struggle to break free from gender stereotypes and pursue meaningful life purposes.

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