

Gender Inequality Reflected in Short Story *Sweat* by Zora Neale Hurston

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out the evidence of gender inequality experienced by Delia Jones in Zora Neale Hurston's *Sweat*. The writer used a qualitative method in conducting this research. In collecting data, the writer uses two sources: the first is primary source, namely the literary work *Sweat* by Zora Neale Hurston, while secondary sources are references such as journals, books, and internet sources related and relevant to the research. In data analysis, the writer uses a feminist approach to analyze gender inequality. The result shows that Delia's life as the main female character experiences several types of gender inequality that she must face in her life, such as marginalization, subordination, and violence. She can finally feel happy because she can be free from the threats that bind her. Her patience and wisdom brought her to safety. The writer hopes that through this research, readers can learn not to think that gender inequality is common because, basically, women have the same rights as men and should use wisdom to fight for life when our strength is limited.

INTRODUCTION

Gender is a characteristic that aims to identify differences between women and men based on socio-cultural conditions, attitudes, norms, emotions, mentality, and other non-biological factors (Marzuki, 2007: 68). Gender can also explain something as an analytical concept (Nasruddin Umar, 1999: 34). Based on explanations above, the researcher concluded that gender is a characteristic that is used as a concept to identify differences between women and men in socio-cultural conditions, values, behavior, mentality, and emotions. Gender has a social and pragmatic nature because gender roles are created based on people's behavior, attitude, appearance, personality, work, sexuality and so on. (Mosse, 2007: 3). Gender roles are the same as realizing a culture in society, namely as a complex and patterned activity of humans in the social environment, so that from this culture, gender inequality arises.

Gender inequality is a characteristic, action, or treatment that is partial or only fair to certain genders, and this can result in social inequality between individuals. This is a manifestation of the process of gender inequality that can occur, resulting in a loss of freedom. (Nurna, 2015: 2). According to Mustafa (2018: 1) gender inequality is a situation where behavior or unfair acts against a particular gender. Gender inequality is more common occurs in the female gender. Gender inequality is an attitude of discrimination that prioritizes or privileges one dominant gender over another that is not dominant based on sex or gender. (Maryam & Astuty, 2022: 45). From several definitions of gender inequality, it can be concluded that gender inequality is a condition that occurs in people's lives that causes unfair behavior in one gender and harms other genders, and the most experienced gender inequality is female gender.

Gender inequality can occur in various places, according to Fatmariza (2010: 2) gender inequality occurs in family, school, the mass media, work and society in various form. Gender inequality in the family can occur due the systemic factors and social structures that place men at an advantage while

women are at a disadvantage. According to Fakih (1999: 12) gender differences have given rise to various acts of gender injustice experienced by women. This situation also occurs in the short story *Sweat* which is set in African-America more specifically in a small town at the beginning of the 20th century where patriarchal norms are highly upheld, which gives great opportunities to men as figures who have complete power over woman.

Zora Neale Hurston is the author of the short story *Sweat*; this short story published in 1926 *Sweat* is a South American literary short story. This story shows the disrespectful, unethical, and unequal attitude or behavior towards women, especially in a marriage. It is a picture of a woman who has to endure terrifying suffering to find a little comfort in her life. Delia Jones, the main character, endures years of marriage by facing various psychological, inner, and physical abuses from her husband, amidst family and society who do nothing to help her deal with her problems. *Sweat* is a story that shows the gender inequality experienced by the main character Delia, who fights for herself and her marriage. She is a laundress; besides, she has a hot-tempered, abusive, and unemployed husband. This situation caused Delia had sexual harassment, threat, trauma, and even almost killed by her husband. This story is a story about a woman who struggles, works hard and is patient for her life and her marriage especially in dealing with her husband's attitude.

This work is interesting to analyze because it provides benefits to society, especially for women so that they can train and learn to be independent and not depend on others. Because it is undeniable that in social life there are many problems that we encounter about the differences between men and women. The differences exist in society require women to be strong and independent. The researcher chose the topic of gender inequality because the writer found some evidence that was shown in several parts of the story *Sweat*. Gender inequality occurs between Delia and her husband, Delia is treated unfairly and gets physical and mental violence. The researcher gets new insights and lessons about the position of women in people's lives.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative methodology, beginning with data collection and using existing theories to clarify and interpret the findings. The qualitative data analysis was guided by the framework of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which involves three stages: data reduction, data display, and data verification and conclusion. During the data reduction stage, the researcher selected, simplified, and transformed data from documents to identify patterns and draw initial conclusions. The data display stage involved organizing and presenting data in a structured narrative format to facilitate further analysis. Finally, the data verification and conclusion stage compiled and synthesized information, leading to the identification of new insights or clarifications about previously ambiguous aspects of the subject.

Data for this study were sourced from both primary and secondary materials. The primary data included Zora Neale Hurston's short story *Sweat* focusing on scenes, dialogues, and actions that highlight gender inequality and the oppressive behavior of Sykes Jones toward Delia Jones, the main character. Secondary data were drawn from relevant journals, theses, and articles that supported the research's theoretical framework and contextual analysis. Together, these sources provided a comprehensive basis for examining the central themes and underlying issues of gender and power dynamics in the short story.

The data analysis utilized a feminist approach, specifically drawing on Betty Friedan's feminist theory. Friedan posits that women can achieve parity with men through hard work while maintaining their roles as wives and mothers without being subjected to oppression or violence. Her perspective underscores the importance of women's liberation within familial, social, and economic contexts, advocating for equal rights and justice (Friedan, 2010: 274). Applying this lens, the research critiques forms of oppression, racism, and injustice depicted in *Sweat* particularly in the relationship between Sykes and Delia. The feminist theory served as a foundation for analyzing the portrayal of Delia's struggle against societal and domestic constraints, illuminating broader issues of justice and equality.

FINDINGS

The Evidences of Gender Inequality

Gender inequality in the form of marginalization

Delia as the main character who feels gender inequality in her life, where it happens in her family and is specifically done by her husband against her. As a wife, she is treated badly by her husband. Delia is treated differently in getting her rights as a woman and also as a wife. At that time, men were considered more dominant and had power over women, so they had the right to do anything to women. Because of this, Delia felt unappreciated and unworthy of the things she did in her life. Besides being a hard worker, Delia is also a religious woman, she goes to church every Sunday night and takes the sacraments, which Delia revealed to her husband, Sykes.

"He snorted scornfully. Yeah, you just come from the church house on Sunday night, but heah you is gone to work on them clothes. You ain't nothing but a hypocrite. One of them amen-corner Christians—sing, whoop, and shout, them come home and wash white folks clothes on the Sabbath," (Hurston 1926: 2).

The sentence above shows Sykes treatment in cornering Delia through his words. Sykes said that Delia is a hypocrite, which shows that Sykes wants Delia to feel guilty and ashamed of her work. Sykes' attitude is a restraint on woman, and Delia cannot feel comfortable because of Sykes' words that cornered her in her work. Sykes' attitude places Delia as a low-class woman who does not deserve to go to church because of her job. Sykes' attitude towards her statement is a form of effort that makes Delia feel cornered. The attitude shown by Sykes makes Delia feel powerless over herself and her work.

Gender Inequality in the form of Subordination

Delia lived a life of suffering. Sykes' attitude made Delia see the fact that she was an unlucky woman in her family. Power makes men assume that women do not have the freedom to express their thoughts and is often used to undermine women's position in a family. Delia was treated inappropriately several times, positioning herself as a low-class and powerless woman. Sykes threw her an object resembling a snake, which was the animal Delia was most afraid of. Delia tried to warn Sykes that she was afraid of snakes, but Sykes, who had a hard heart, did not care about Delia.

"Sykes, what you throw that whip on me like that? You know it would scare me—looks just like a snake, and you knows how scared Ah is of snakes."

"Course Ah knowed it! That's how come Ah done it." He slapped his leg with his hand and almost rolled on the ground in his mirth," (Hurston 1926: 1).

Sykes' nosy attitude shows that he wants Delia to be afraid, and he wants Delia to understand that she has no power in their household. Delia is his wife, whom he is supposed to protect, but in this case, Delia is placed as a woman who is not understood by her husband. Sykes shows how low Delia is. He already knew that Delia was afraid of snakes, but he did it on the basis of knowing that Delia was afraid of snakes. Poor Delia can only be patient with her husband's attitude. Delia understood her position at that time, when she was treated unfairly because men dominated every action in the family.

Delia's patience with her husband is very big, it can be seen how Delia tries to survive with various bad treatments by her husband Sykes.

"You sho is one aggravatin' nigger woman!" he declare and stepped into the room. She resumed her work and did not him at once. "Ah done told you time and again to keep them white folks' clothes out this house."

"He picked up the whip and glared down at her. Delia went on with her work. She went out into the yard and returned with a galvanized tub and set it on the washbench. She saw that Sykes had kicked all of the clothes together again, and now stood in her way truculently, his whole manner hoping, praying, for an argument. But she walked calmly around him and commenced to re-sort the things," (Hurston 1926: 1).

Sykes shows a demeaning attitude towards Delia because she is a Negro woman who is synonymous with black skin, which at that time was considered a weak person and did not have the right to oppose

the mistreatment of men. She also adds that Delia is an annoying woman, which is a form of bad accusations against the attitude that Delia has. When Sykes picks up the whip and stares at Delia, it is also a threatening gesture towards Delia, letting her know that Sykes is a powerful person who can do anything to Delia. Then, Sykes also demeaned Delia's job as a laundress for white people. Sykes told Delia to immediately remove the clothes from their house and kicked the clothes that would be washed by Delia, showing that men have more power over women. Sykes' attitude of hoping for a fight between the two of them shows how Sykes wants to be recognized as a man who has higher authority to determine things. Delia's silence towards Sykes' condescending treatment is an understanding that Delia is aware of herself as a weak woman. Delia also acted indifferent to everything that happened, but Delia only realized that she was only a weak woman and had no power to fight all the bad things that happened to her.

Delia is a diligent and hardworking woman, but it is her husband's attitude that makes her often feel burdened at work, because he often makes a mess of her work and never appreciates the work she does. Her husband's mistreatment brought Delia to a life of suffering.

"He stepped roughly upon the whitest pile of things, kicking them helter-skelter as he crossed the room. His wife gave a little scream of dismay, and quickly gathered them together again," (Hurston 1926: 2).

Sykes' attitude shows how powerful he is in his family; he sees himself as a man who can do anything to his wife, including destroy her work by kicking the clothes that Delia is about to wash. Delia, who is helpless, can only gather the clothes back. Delia screams a little because of her disappointment. Delia does that because she understands her position as a woman who has no chance to be appreciated. She is weak and has no power to work on her life.

Gender Inequality in the form of Violence

Delia's story shows how a woman (wife) is subjected to domestic violence, clearly perpetrated by her husband, Sykes. Delia is an independent woman who does her work only by relying on her strength, but this does not make her free in living her life; instead, she is just a woman who is considered powerless and inappropriate in taking action in the family.

"Just then something long, round, limp and black fell upon her shoulders and slithered to the floor beside her. A great terror took hold of her. It softened her knees and dried her mouth so that it was a full minute before she could cry out or move. Then she saw that it was the big bull whip her husband liked to carry when he drove," (Hurston 1926: 1).

The sentence above shows the cruel attitude of Sykes, who deliberately threw his whip on Delia's shoulder, who was working at the time. Delia was shocked and felt herself threatened because of Sykes' actions. The violence that Sykes did to Delia included verbal violence, which made Delia feel disturbed and even in danger. Delia's fear shows that she is in a depressed and inferior condition as a woman, while Sykes feels proud of his actions by laughing at the suffering Delia feels.

A marriage is a sad story in Delia's life. Her marriage lacked the genuine love that most marriages had due to the way her husband treated her. Delia often reflected on the journey of her household story. At night, when going to bed, she thought about how unfortunate her fate was when she became the wife of Sykes.

"She lay awake, gazing upon the debris that cluttered their matrimonial trail. Not an image left standing along the way. Anything like flowers had long ago been drowned in the salty stream that had been pressed from her heart. Her tears, her Sweat, her blood. She had brought love to the union and he had brought a longing after the flesh. Two months after the wedding, he had given her the first brutal beating," (Hurston 1926: 2).

This section narrates Delia and Sykes' journey as husband and wife. Delia reflected on all the suffering in her household that she felt, there was no more intimacy. Her sacrifice to maintain her marriage brought her to misery. The quote above also explains that she experienced physical violence when Sykes brutally beat her when their marriage was only two months old. This shows how cruel and violent Sykes was towards his wife. It was too early in the marriage to experience physical violence that victimized a woman. Delia was tortured, both physically and mentally. Sykes took advantage of Delia's weakness as a woman to vent his anger.

Delia is a strong woman. The reason she is strong is to survive in her violent household and be able to be strong for her own life. Delia often encourages herself, because that's the only way she gets new strength and energy to continue her life. She does this because she remembers that her husband, who is the most important person in her life, will not be able to do it. Her husband can only hurt and threaten her life, so she becomes the strength of her life.

"Somehow, before sleep came, she found herself saying aloud: 'Oh well, whatever goes over the Devil's back, is got to come under his belly. Sometime or rather, Sykes, like everybody else, is gointer reap his sowing.' After that she was able to build a spiritual earthworks againts her husband. His shells could no longer reach her. Amen. She went to sleep and slept until he announced his presence in bed by kicking her feet and rudely snatching the covers away," (Hurstons 1926: 3).

After gaining spiritual strength in herself, Delia felt that she became stronger. Delia believed that Sykes would find the results of his evil deeds for her. But after that happened to Delia, Sykes came to show that he really did not appreciate Delia as his wife. The author shows that Sykes kicked Delia's leg; it was physical violence, which caused harm to Delia. Her body, especially her leg, which was her foundation for work, was kicked as a form of Sykes not wanting Delia to be there. Moreover, he kicks Delia's leg violently, showing that Sykes wants Delia to feel the suffering that Sykes wants to show as a man. Delia, who is aware of her husband's intentions, can only remain silent and avoid him by leaving.

Sykes hurt Delia continuously. Poor Delia could only continue to strengthen herself and continue to live her life. At that time, Delia had finished her work and went home tired because of the long journey she had taken to deliver and pick up clothes. Delia wanted to rest by not wanting any quarrels in her house, but unexpected things happened in her house caused by the arrival of Bertha, who was her husband's mistress.

"Delia's work-worn knees crawled over the earth in Gethsemane and up the rocks of Calvary many, many times during these months. She avoided the villagers and meeting places in her efforts to be blind and deaf. But Bertha nullified this to a degree, by coming to Delia's house to call Sykes out to her at the gate."
"Delia and Sykes fought all the time now with no peaceful interludes," (Hurstons 1926: 5).

Bertha's reckless attitude became a big problem in Delia and Sykes' household. The violence committed by Sykes and Bertha was verbal violence that caused Delia's heart to be deeply hurt by the incident; she felt disappointed with her husband, and it resulted in a great quarrel in her household. Their family became victims of Sykes' arrogant and selfish attitude when he had an affair with Bertha.

Delia's disappointment did not stop her from respecting Sykes as her husband. One day when Delia returned home, she found Sykes standing at the kitchen door, Delia entered by bowing under his arm as a sign of her respect for Sykes. But Delia was surprised by Sykes' treatment of her.

"Look in the box there Delia, Ah done bring you something!"
"She nearly fell upon the box in her stumbling, and when she saw what it held, she all bu fainted outright."
"Syke! Syke, my God! You take that rattlesnake away from here! You gottun. Oh, Jesus, have mussy!," (Hurstons 1926: 6).

Sykes' excessive nosiness frightened Delia. Sykes surprises Delia by giving her a snake that he puts in a box; snakes are the animal that Delia fears the most. The violence committed by Sykes is verbal violence that is related to Delia's mental state, Delia feels threatened because of this. . Sykes deliberately gave the snake to Delia to frighten her. Delia even almost fainted when she saw the snake. Sykes' treatment was very cruel.

A great terror always loomed over Delia, as the snake that was the animal, she feared the most was kept in her house. The evil Sykes let the snake into their house, not caring about Delia's fears. Poor Delia could only be vigilant and careful to do everything because there was always a danger threatening her, namely the snake. When the time came for Delia to take the clothes from her room to wash, she entered the room and would not take the basket out of the bedroom. Delia, who was full of excitement because she had just finished participating in the love party, entered the room happily.

"Ah wanna cross Jurden in uh calm time," she was singing again. The mood of the "love feast" had returned. She threw back the lid of the basket almost gaily. Then, moved by both horror and terror, she sprang back

toward the door. There lay the snake in the basket! He moved sluggishly at first, but even as she turned round and round, jumped up and down in an insanity of fear, he began to stir vigorously. She saw him pouring his awful beauty from the basket upon the bed, then she seized the lamp and ran as fast as she could to the kitchen. The wind from the open door blew out the light and the darkness added to her terror. She sped to the darkness of the yard, slamming the door after her before she thought to set down the lamp. She did not feel safe even on the ground, so she climbed up in the hay barn," ((Hurstons 1926: 8).

The above explains that Delia was surprised to find that the basket containing the dirty clothes she was going to sort contained a scary snake. It turned out that Sykes deliberately planned to kill Delia by putting the snake into the clothes basket so that when Delia took the clothes, she could be pegged by the venomous snake. Delia, who was panicked and full of fear, could only grab the lamp used to light her way and run as hard as she could. Verbal violence is very visible from the explanation above, where Sykes deliberately puts Delia in danger and could even kill Delia. Delia hid in the hay barn to save herself from the danger that threatens her.

The Way Main Female Character Named Delia Address Gender Inequality

By Reprimanding

Delia's way of addressing gender inequality can be seen from some of the dialogues that occur between Delia and Sykes. Delia, who is gentle and kind, reprimands Sykes several times with polite words and a low tone of voice. Delia does this with the intention that Sykes can understand her as his wife. Sykes often belittles Delia, beats her, and even undermines her work. Delia tries to reprimand Sykes nicely about Sykes' actions that hurt her. Sykes' attitude of wanting Delia to live a life of pressure and suffering never ceases; however, it does not make Delia silent about Sykes' treatment. Delia tries to always restrain herself by being gentle as a woman in addressing the problems caused by her husband that make her feel difficult in the work she does.

"Sykes, you quit grinding dirty into these clothes! How can Ah get through by Saturday if Ah don't start on Sunday," (Hurstons 1926: 2).

The quote shows Delia's attitude towards Sykes when Sykes stepped on the clothes that Delia was going to wash. Delia tried to reprimand Sykes not to step on the clothes because she would have to work longer if she didn't finish them immediately. Delia knew that what Sykes was doing to her was wrong, and she tried to reprimand her in a good tone, hoping that Sykes would understand and stop obstructing her work. Delia tries to. Sykes always makes it difficult for Delia to do her work. By reprimanding Sykes, Delia was trying to address gender inequality.

By giving advice

Sykes' cruel attitude often makes Delia feel threatened. Poor Delia always gets things beyond her expectations. Sykes often scares Delia and puts her in danger. Sykes often thinks of Delia as a doll that he can play with as he pleases. It is undeniable that what Sykes thinks is a joke, but it really makes Delia's heart hurt. Delia, who was patient, often dealt with these things, and she advised Sykes about his action.

"No, now Syke, don't keep that thing 'round' here to scare me to death. You knows I'm even feared a earth worms. Thass the biggest snake Ah even did see. Kill it Syke, please," (Hurstons 1926: 6).

That quote shows how Delia gently begged Sykes not to let the big snake into their house. Delia's plea occurs when Sykes gives Delia a gift in a box containing a large, venomous snake. This shows how Delia tried to be calm in her fear and tried to be kind when she was very angry with Sykes' behavior. Delia tried to restrain herself from getting overly emotional. Delia advises Sykes to get the snake out of their house and not scare her anymore. Delia's advice aims to address gender inequality. Sykes, who didn't care about Delia's fear, kept the snake in their house. Delia, a strong woman, did not stop asking Sykes to remove the snake from their house. Delia always tries different ways to express her opinion to Sykes, including showing him how to understand her fear of the snake that Sykes has left in their house.

"Syke, Ah wants to you take that snake away from here. You don't starved me and Ah put up witcher, you done beat me and Ah took that, but you done kill all my insides bringing that varmint heah," ((Hurstons 1926: 6).

The quote above shows how Delia repeats her efforts by advising Sykes to remove the snake from their home. For the second time, Delia begs Sykes with tenderness. The quote above occurs when Sykes and Delia are sitting at the dinner table, and talking about Sykes' actions that made Delia almost faint because of his actions in giving Delia a gift of poisonous snakes in a box. Delia patiently advises Sykes to understand that she is very afraid of snakes, and it makes her feel threatened because she is in a dangerous position. Delia's repeated efforts to advise Sykes are a form of overcoming her gender inequality.

By Rebelling

In Delia's suffering, she fights for the gender inequality she feels. This makes her a brave and strong person in every situation. In some dialogs Delia becomes a person who is able to express her opinion. She becomes fearless and fights Sykes with a rebellion against Sykes' treatment. She does this so that Sykes realizes the mistake he made. Delia's behavior also amazes Sykes because of his violent resistance to Delia. Everyone has their own limit of patience just like Delia. Her suffering makes Delia a wife who is able to stand up for herself in the face of her husband's treatment.

"Delia's habitual meekness seemed to slip from her shoulders like a blown scarf. She was on her feet; her poor little body, her bare knuckly hands bravely defying the strapping hulk before her."

"Look at here, Sykes, you done gone too far. Ah been married to you for fifteen years, and Ah been taking in washing for fifteen years. Sweat, Sweat Sweat! Work and Sweat, cry and Sweat, pray and Sweat!"

"What's that got to do with me?" he asked brutally."

"What's it got to do with you, Sykes? Mah tub of suds is filled you belly with vittles more times than you hands is filled it. My Sweat is done paid for this house and Ah reckon Ah can keep on Sweating in it."

"She seized the iron skillet from the stove and struck a defensive pose, which act suprised him greatly, coming from her. It cowed him and he did not strike her as he usually did."

"Now you won't," she panted, "that ole snaggle-toothed black woman you running with aint coming here to pile up on mah Sweat and blood. You aint paid for nothing on this place, and Ah'm gointer stay right here till Ah'm toted out foot foremost," (Hurstons 1926: 2).

The description above shows how brave Delia is towards Sykes. Delia is able to show another side of her husband; she behaves uncharacteristically towards Sykes. The incident occurred when Sykes interrupted Delia in completing her work; he stepped on and made a mess of the clothes that Delia was about to wash. This angered Delia, and she brought up the dark past of their family. Delia bravely confronts Sykes and explains to him that for 15 years of their marriage, there was only suffering. Delia always tried to give in so that their marriage would remain okay, but Sykes never thought about that and only continued to torment Delia. Even in a defiant manner, Delia picked up an iron skillet and pointed it at Sykes, showing how much hatred Delia harbored in her heart. Delia's actions scared Sykes, and he didn't retaliate like he normally would. This expression of Delia's emotions shows that she is putting up a fight against Sykes' attitude.

The form of resistance by rebelling against Sykes is also shown in Delia when facing Sykes' intolerant attitude. Delia patiently became unable to control her emotions because she felt Sykes did not understand Delia.

"Delia pushed back her plate and got up from the table. "Ah hates you, Sykes," she said calmly. "Ah hates you to the same degree that Ah useter love you. Ah done took and took till my belly is full up to my neck. That's the reason Ah got mah letter from the church and moved mah membership to Woodbridge—so Ah don't have to take no sacrament with you. Ah don't want to see you 'round' me at all. Lay 'round' with that woman all you want to, but go away from me and my house. Ah hates you like a suck-egg dog," ((Hurstons 1926: 7).

The attitude shown by Delia in the quote above shows that she does not accept Sykes' attitude and does not want to understand her. The incident occurred when Delia asked Sykes to remove the poisonous snake that she brought into their house by begging him several times, but Sykes did not care about Delia's fear. Sykes' selfish attitude aroused Delia's anger. So in a bold and defiant manner, she pushed the table and said that she hated him, her bravado showing Delia's frustration with Sykes' attitude. Delia even changed church memberships to avoid Sykes; she made it clear that she didn't

want to see Syeks around her. She did this when she couldn't contain her anger towards Syeks. Delia even willingly allows Syeks to have an affair as long as Syeks stays away from her and her house. Delia shows how disappointed she is with her husband's actions. Delia even hates Syeks like an egg-sucking dog, which means that Syeks is a man who likes to have affairs and a man who has a habit that she can't get rid of. Syeks always does what he thinks is right and never listens to Delia's advice. Delia feels bored because of Syeks' actions. Rebelling when Syeks doesn't understand her opinion is Delia's form of resistance.

By Saving Herself From Danger

Syeks' cruelty continued until he planned to kill Delia, but the wise and patient Delia was able to overcome this. Delia found the venomous snake in the basket of clothes that she was going to wash. As a result of this, Delia ran and hid in a safe place, the hay barn.

"There for an hour or more she lay sprawled upon the hay a gibbering wreck."

"Finally, she grew quiet, and after that, coherent thought. With this, stalked through her a cold, bloody rage. Hours of this. A period of introspection, a space of retrospection, then a mixture of both. Out of this an awful calm."

"Well, Ah done the best Ah could. If things aint right, God knows taint mah fauld," (Hurston 1926: 8).

The quote above shows how Delia faced death that almost harm her. It happened when Delia found a poisonous snake that Syeks deliberately put in their bedroom basket. With full of fear, Delia ran in the darkness of the night using a lamp and hid in the hay barn. She felt safe there and spent several hours in that place raving about Syeks' actions. Delia's thoughtful behavior brought her to safety in the hay barn. In her panicked and threatened state, Delia made the right decision as she sought out a safe place where she could avoid danger. In the cold hay barn, she is silent and tries to think clearly so that she gets calm. She also reminds herself that God knows all the things that happen to her and who is at fault for them. Delia, who is religious, wise, and brave, is able to get through the thing that endangered her life, so that she can survive and find peace within herself.

DISCUSSIONS

This research is in line with several previous studies. The first previous study, *An Analysis of Gender Inequality on Black Women Characters in Hidden Figures Film* (Maryam, Astuty, Pradana, 2022), shows that the most important factor that causes gender inequality is patriarchy. This statement has similarities to what the author found. In analyzing, the author found that the main female character, Delia, experiencing gender inequality from her husband was due to the patriarchal system that occurred at that time. The second previous study was *Gender Inequality in Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre* (Wurangian, Mamentu, and Andries, 2023). It was found that the female main character, Jane Eyre, experienced gender inequality from the surrounding people and men in the novel. She faced and fought for this by trying to let go of her selfishness and be more patient. This statement has similarities to what the author found. In analyzing, the author also found the same attitude carried out by Delia as the main female character who experienced gender inequality by her husband, Syeks. Delia was not selfish by often trying to hold back her anger and was always patient with the bad treatment given by her husband.

Based on previous research entitled *Gender Inequality in The Chrysanthemums* by John Steinbeck researched by Indah Damayanti, it shows that two sources of frustration for Elisa Allen as a female protagonist character are sex and gender. This statement is similar to what the author found. In analyzing the data, the author found that the source of the problem that occurred was the result of gender inequality. So, it can be stated that the treatment of gender inequality is caused by the patriarchal system that occurs, which makes one gender more dominant than the other gender, and the gender that is most victimized is a woman. This results in a woman having to be patient and not selfish when dealing with something that threatens her.

In this research, the researcher focuses on the evidences of gender inequality and how the female character address gender inequality. In this short story, Hurston raises problems that occurred in the African-American section, especially Florida, experienced by the lower classes, especially women at that time, where racial and gender differences became the basis of views for the

assessment and treatment of others. This short story not only presents gender inequality but also presents various life lessons such as independence that produces good things, hard work, loyalty and unwavering faith from Delia to God, kindness from Delia against the evil attitude of Syeks, and pride that results in a fall. There are many moral values contained in this short story that can be an inspiration for readers.

This short story is very interesting to use as research material because it contains many elements that provide lessons in life. The author hopes that this research can be a good reference for other researchers who want to conduct more in-depth research on literary works, and that the moral values that exist in these literary works can be a lesson so as to provide good knowledge for other readers.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the short story *Sweat* by Zora Neale Hurston, the author concludes what has been discussed in the previous chapter. The conclusion here is to answer the purpose of this research. All the things discussed in this study are in the form of language and behavior that offend one gender. The object of this research is an adult woman named Delia, who is a victim of gender inequality. The analysis shows that there are three forms of gender inequality found in this literary work: marginalization, subordination, and violence. The author finds one evidence of marginalization, where Sheikhs made Delia feel cornered because of his offensive words. There are three evidences of subordination that the author finds, where the male character who plays the role of the object demeans and underestimates Delia personally and, in her work, as well. Violence is the most common form of gender inequality found by the author. There are six forms of violence committed by Sykes against Delia, including physical violence such as beatings. And verbal violence in the form of insulting words and inappropriate actions. In facing the gender inequality, she experienced, the female protagonist also made several efforts to fight back. There are four efforts that Delia made: giving reprimands, giving advice, by rebelling, and by saving herself from an accident planned by her husband. There is one form of effort that shows Delia addressing gender inequality by reprimanding, and there are two efforts made by Delia to address gender inequality by giving advice. Then there are two efforts that show Delia's struggle in conveying her thoughts in fighting for justice in herself. There is also one attempt to save herself from an accident planned by her husband. Delia is a strong and patient woman in facing every problem in her life; it is proven when she is able to survive with various efforts she makes. Her patience led her to the luck that saved her from the accident planned by her husband.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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