

## **The Image of Women and The Correlation of Principle 4b in The Novel *Racun Puan* By Nyoman Ayu Suciartini**

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### **Abstract**

The image of a woman is a mental, spiritual and everyday behavioral picture of a woman. The purpose of this study is to obtain results related to self-image, social image of women and their correlation with the 4B principle (*Brain, Beauty, Behavior, Brave*) in the novel *Racun Puan* by Ni Nyoman Ayu Suciartini. This study uses a descriptive qualitative research approach. Data collection techniques in this study use library techniques, listening and note-taking techniques. The validity of the data in this study uses researcher triangulation, while the data analysis technique uses content analysis based on Elaine Showalter's feminist literary criticism theory. The results of this study demonstrate women's self-image from both physical and psychological perspectives. Meanwhile, women's social image is examined through their relationships with family and society. The image of women in the novel *Racun Puan* correlates with the 4B principle because it represents an image that can serve as a role model for today's women.

**Keywords:** Image of Women, Novel *Racun Puan*, Principle 4B

### **INTRODUCTION**

Women are portrayed as second-class and weak. This is driven by gender inequality. Gender inequality is currently declining. Data released by the Indonesian Gender Inequality Index (GIG) showed ([Badan Pusat Statistik, 2025](#)) that Indonesia's Gender Inequality Index (GIG) in 2024 was recorded at 0.421, a decrease of 0.026 points compared to the previous year.

In essence, women's nature is to give birth, breastfeed, and menstruate, and the rest can be done together regardless of gender. This will affect the image projected by women. According to [Purwahida \(2018\)](#) the image of women, it refers to the depiction of women's thought patterns and behavior in everyday life that reflect their unique identity and personality. Meanwhile, according to [Sugihastuti \(2000\)](#) the image of women, it is dominated by women's thoughts, so it is closely related to self-image, including physical and psychological aspects. Furthermore, the social image of women is seen from their relationships within the family and society. One interesting novel that presents the image of a woman is also written by a female author, entitled *Racun Puan*, published in (2023).

Based on the description of the problems contained in the novel *Racun Puan*, the researcher will conduct research using a feminist literary criticism approach. Several studies that are relevant to the research that will be conducted by the researcher in supporting the novelty entitled *The Image of Women in the Short Story Sambal di Ranjang*

by Tenni Purwati: *A Feminist Study* researched by [Wilujeng et. al \(2021\)](#) Click or tap here to enter text.. *The Image of Women in the Novel Lilin* by Saniyyah Putri Salsabilah Said: *Feminist Literary Criticism as the Development of Teaching Materials in Vocational High Schools* researched by [Ginting & Julianti \(2022\)](#). *The Image of Women in the Novel Jagade Kanisthan* by Tulus Setiyadi researched by [Ramadhan \(2022\)](#). *The Image of Women in the Drama Satu Babak Awal and Mira* by Utuy Tatang Sontani researched by [Roihanah & Ramadhan \(2022\)](#).

This research is important to conduct because there has been no research on the image of women correlated with the 4B principle (*brain, beauty, behavior, brave*) using the novel *Racun Puan* by Ni Nyoman Ayu Suciartini as the object. Quoting from (Ardilla, 2013) the 4B principle aim to shape young women into inspiring figures, role models, and drivers of women's progress. It is hoped that this research will change how women are viewed and combat stereotypes that harm them. Based on this background, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled " *The Image of Women and the Correlation of the 4B Principles in the Novel Racun Puan by Ni Nyoman Ayu Suciartini.* "

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The portrayal of women as second-class citizens is deeply rooted in gender inequality, which remains a significant issue globally, despite some progress. In India, for instance, women constitute half the population yet are often marginalized and deprived of basic rights, reflecting a societal perception of inferiority ([Sharma, 2015](#)). Similarly, in Nigeria, cultural stereotypes and patriarchal structures have historically relegated women to subordinate roles, although increasing education and economic opportunities are gradually changing this narrative. Despite these advancements, women continue to face underrepresentation in power and prestige, indicating that gender inequality persists. However, the decline in gender inequality is evident through rising female literacy rates and empowerment initiatives, suggesting a potential shift towards greater equality. Overall, while gender inequality is declining, its effects remain pervasive, necessitating continued efforts to dismantle systemic barriers and promote women's rights.

The image of women is intricately linked to their self-image, encompassing both physical and psychological dimensions, as well as their social relationships. Research indicates that body image significantly influences self-esteem among women, with negative body perceptions correlating with lower self-esteem levels ([Morgenroth & Ryan, 2018](#)). Additionally, women over 50 experience complex feelings about aging, highlighting the psychological and physical challenges they face, which further impacts their self-image and societal roles. Sociocultural factors also play a crucial role, as societal standards of beauty can lead to body dissatisfaction and psychological disorders, particularly among specific groups such as women of color and athletes. Furthermore, the concept of genital self-image is emerging as a vital aspect of women's overall body image, affecting their sexual health and self-perception. Collectively, these studies underscore the multifaceted nature of women's self-image, shaped by personal, societal, and cultural influences.

## METHODS

The research method used is descriptive qualitative research. In qualitative research, the researcher acts as a data collection tool (*human instrument*), so the quality of the data obtained in qualitative research is highly dependent on the quality of the researcher ([Sutopo, 2006](#)). Data collection in qualitative research must be conducted critically and thoroughly. This is in line with ([Sugiyono, 2013](#)) the statement that data collection is the initial stage and the most crucial part of any research. In this study, the

researcher used library research techniques, observation, and note-taking techniques to obtain the necessary data.

The analysis technique used in this study is content analysis based on the theory of feminist literary criticism put forward by Elaine Showalter. The qualitative analysis process used uses the stages of [Milles & Huberman \(2009\)](#) in their book, namely: (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, and (3) drawing conclusions and verification.

## RESULTS

Women's image is divided into self-image and social image. Self-image encompasses both physical and psychological aspects. Social image, on the other hand, is seen in terms of her relationships with family and society. Furthermore, the 4Bs (*brain, beauty, behavior, and bravery*) encompass a woman's intelligence, beauty, behavior, and courage. The following data on women's image and its correlation with the 4Bs is obtained from the novel "*Racun Puan*" by Ni Nyoman Ayu Suciartini.

**Table 1. Data on the Image of Women and the Correlation of the 4B Principles in the Novel *Racun Puan* The work of Ni Nyoman Ayu Suciartini**

No.	Category	Sub Category	Data Code	Amount of Data
1.	Women's Self-Image Physical Aspects	Adult Women Full of Sacrifice	CPF.PDP	2
	Women's Self-Image Psychological Aspects	No Noise in Life	CPP.TBH	1
2.	Social Image of Women in the Family	Loyal Couple	CSK.PYS	1
	Social Image of Women in Society	Easy to Adapt	CSM.MMA	1
3.	<i>Brain</i> Principles (Intelligence)	Intelligent Women Have the Right to Choose	PBK.CBM	1
	Principles of <i>Beauty</i>	Managing Emotions Well	PBP.MEB	1
	<i>Behavior</i> Principles	Wise Decision Making	PBK.BMK	2
	The <i>Brave</i> Principle	Dare to Fight Against Societal Stereotypes	PBK.BMS	3

## DISCUSSION

Based on the research results listed in the table, the following is a discussion regarding the image of women and the correlation of the 4B principles in the novel *Racun Puan* by Ni Nyoman Ayu Suciartini.

### Women's Self-Image Physical Aspects

The physical self-image of women is depicted as mature, self-sacrificing women. This finding is supported by the following data found by researchers in the novel.

Aku merasakan kegetiran yang sama saat kelahiran Sam, anak kebanggaan kami (Suciartini, 2023:113).

*I felt the same bitterness at the birth of Sam, our proud child* (Suciartini, 2023:113).

The CPF.PDP.1 data reveals that the character's physical image is depicted as that of a woman entering adulthood. Aruna goes through the birthing phase of a baby girl, having obviously undergone the pregnancy process beforehand. This process can only be experienced by women, thus physically differentiating women from men.

In line with research ([Wandira et al., 2021](#)), women giving birth physically experience the process of their water breaking, the opening of their uterus, and the baby being born. Men, on the other hand, do not have a uterus. In the novel *Racun Puan*, Aruna

depicts the journey she goes through as she enters adulthood, as evidenced by her experience of childbirth.

### **Women's Self-Image Psychological Aspects**

The psychological self-image of women is depicted as quiet in life. This finding is supported by the following data found by researchers in the novel.

Aku kira ibuku yang gemilang soal akademik tak pernah bermasalah dengan kebodohan, tak bermasalah dengan nasib (Suciartini, 2023:71).

*I think my mother, who excelled in academics, never had a problem with stupidity, no problem with fate (Suciartini, 2023:71).*

CPP.TBH.1 data shows that women who excel academically don't necessarily have smooth sailing. Women also experience draining psychological struggles, particularly when it comes to determining their future. However, the woman depicted in the novel "*Racun Puan*" excels in self-management and appears calm in her life.

This is in line with research [Kurnia & Zahro \(2021\)](#) that shows that everyone experiences anxiety in life. However, a calm or stable mental state can help manage it. This is the experience of Aruna, who overcame various challenges during her teenage years, which has made her calm in facing life's challenges.

### **Social Image of Women in the Family**

The social image of women in the family is portrayed as loyal partners. This finding is supported by the following data found by researchers in the novel:

Aku terlambat menyesali bahwa sesungguhnya hanya kaulah yang akan menemaniku sampai aku tua, sampai aku keriput, sampai aku tak bisa lagi membuka mata ini (Suciartini, 2023:4).

*I regret too late that you are truly the only one who will accompany me until I am old, until I am wrinkled, until I can no longer open my eyes (Suciartini, 2023:4).*

CSK.PYS.1 data shows that women who are married have a strong commitment to being faithful to their partners under all circumstances. Loyalty in a marital relationship must be maintained.

According to [Rahmadewi \(2023\)](#) As a couple, we must understand each other's psychological characteristics, accept each other, respect each other's personalities, and commit to maintaining our marriage until death do us part. The loyalty of a couple in the novel *Racun Puan* is demonstrated by the female character, Aruna, who is always there for her husband, Kawa, no matter what.

### **Social Image of Women in Society**

The social image of women in society is portrayed as adaptable. This finding is supported by the following data found by researchers in the novel.

Ibuku dan ibu Kelana berbicara di telepon. Ibu berangsur-angsur lebih tenang. Mungkin dia merasa menemukan teman yang bisa diajak berbagi hal gawat (Suciartini, 2023:134).

*My mother and Kelana's mother spoke on the phone. Mother gradually calmed down. Perhaps she felt she had found a friend with whom she could share her distress (Suciartini, 2023:134).*

CSM.MMA.1 data shows that a woman, the mother in the novel "*Racun Puan*," forms a relationship with another human, Ibu Kelana. This relationship develops because Aruna, at the time, is experiencing a shocking event with her child.

### **Brain Principles (Intelligence)**

The principle of *brain* (intelligence) is depicted as an intelligent woman having the right to choose. This finding is supported by the following data found by researchers in the novel.

Mereka bilang Ibu tidak seharusnya berpendidikan tinggi jika ujungnya akan berkutut di dapur dan mengurus anak (Suciartini, 2023:62).

*They say mothers shouldn't be highly educated if they'll end up stuck in the kitchen and taking care of the children* (Suciartini, 2023:62).

PBK.CBM.1 data shows that a woman who plays a mother in the novel "*Racun Puan*" has the freedom to make choices. One of these is choosing to pursue higher education. Women who pursue higher education are not born solely to be career women. Being a housewife, juggling domestic work and caring for children, is also a choice.

In line with research conducted by [Juraidah et al. \(2023\)](#) which states that a woman with intellectual intelligence can demonstrate her existence to the public and demonstrate her empowerment. Women who have life's resources can determine their future and be respected by others. Aruna, using her intelligence, persisted in pursuing higher education, even though not everyone supported her. Aruna's persistence aims to open society's eyes to the fact that intelligent women have the right to pursue higher education.

### **Principles of Beauty**

The principle of *beauty* is depicted as a woman who manages her emotions well. This finding is supported by the following data found by researchers in the novel.

Bahkan, saat aku dilempar batu oleh anak lain, Ibu malah memintaku menyelesaikan persoalanku sendiri. Entah dengan meminta maaf atau memberi anak itu pelajaran ketika aku yakin tak bersalah (Suciartini, 2023:95).

*In fact, when another child threw a stone at me, my mother asked me to resolve the problem myself, either by apologizing or teaching the child a lesson when I was convinced I was innocent* (Suciartini, 2023:95).

PBP.MEB.1 data shows that mothers with good behavior consistently provide guidance to minimize further harm. When their child is hit, mothers don't immediately order the child to hit again. Instead, they give the child time to reflect on what they did wrong to cause such harm. Mothers also teach their children to respond appropriately and avoid physical harm.

This is in line with research that [Maulina & Budiyo \(2021\)](#) suggests that children will behave according to their roles to meet their emotional needs. This behavior tends to be imitated by children who observe it. Aruna instructed Samudra to control his emotional outbursts appropriately. One way to express emotions is to refrain from engaging in similar behaviors that trigger anger.

### **Behavior Principles**

*behavioral* principle is depicted as a woman making wise decisions. This finding is supported by the following data found by researchers in the novel.

Ibu juga rutin memintaku belajar bahasa Bali kepada Nenek. Katanya, sejauh apa pun aku akan bersekolah, menikah, lalu hidup di belahan dunia mana, aku akan tetap *kemBali* (Suciartini, 2023:86).

*My mother also regularly asked me to learn Balinese from my grandmother. She said that no matter how far I went to school, got married, or lived in any part of the world, I would always come back* (Suciartini, 2023:86).



PBK.BMK.1 data shows that mothers always remember their homeland. Even after giving birth to a new generation, mothers continue to teach their children to remember and learn the characteristics of their region.

In line with research conducted by [Islahuddin et al. \(2021\)](#) which states that women also have the right to make decisions, both regarding themselves and their own flesh and blood, just as men and women do not depend on anyone. The wisdom of female characters towards their own flesh and blood is displayed in Aruna's novel Samudra.

### **The *Brave* Principle**

The principle of *bravery* is depicted as a woman who dares to defy societal stereotypes. This finding is supported by the following data found by researchers in the novel.

Yang kutuliskan dalam buku harian ini adalah perasaan-perasaan berkecamuk saat aku menghadapi masa muda, masa bebas, dan masa aku tidak setuju dengan apa pun yang mengerdilkan perempuan (Suciartini, 2023:120).

*What I wrote in this diary are the feelings that raged as I faced my youth, my freedom, and my disagreement with anything that belittled women* (Suciartini, 2023:120).

PBK.BMS.1 data shows that women are willing to sacrifice themselves to achieve freedom for their people. In the novel "*Racun Puan*," Aruna is depicted as a woman who bravely rebelled to achieve equality for her fellow women.

In line with research conducted by [Hakim & Wulandari \(2022\)](#) which states that the majority of women have not received equal recognition as men. Women's voices are often silenced to serve men's personal interests. Women should rise up and fight for their rights and positions. Aruna has demonstrated her resistance to defend her rights and positions. This resistance is intended to ensure that women are not vulnerable.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the analysis of various netizen comments on the podcast video under study, it can be concluded that the expressive speech acts observed reflect a diversity of speakers' psychological attitudes in responding to the presented content. The identified forms of expressive speech acts include praising, criticizing, insulting, expressing sadness, showing support, and blaming. Among these, praise was the most dominant, particularly in relation to Arra's politeness, manners, and intelligence. In contrast, acts such as criticizing, blaming, and insulting represent negative responses, often characterized by sarcasm or confrontational tones. Meanwhile, expressions of sadness and support demonstrate the empathetic and affirmative stance of netizens toward the stories or figures featured. These findings indicate that social media functions as a multimodal space of expression, reflecting the dynamics of emotions, social values, and public perception in an open and interactive environment.

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