

## SARAH GAVRON'S *SUFFRAGETTE*: SHAPING GENDER EQUALITY IN WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE ISSUE

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### Abstract

This study aims to reveal the women struggle in fighting for human rights, especially for women done by women characters in a movie entitled *Suffragette*, directed by Sarah Gavron. As women who live the life whereas the government of the country is dominated by men, it is hard for women to participate in the government. Based on that, some research problems of this study are related to: (a) how society treat women especially related to women's working condition; (b) how is the oppression of women depicted in the movie; and (c) how is the First Wave of Feminism affects to the women movement. To analyze the movie, this study will use the conception of women's right by Mary Wollstonecraft and a perspective of First Wave of Feminism. The result of this study showed that the female characters want to shape women and men equality in the case of women's right to vote as civil right. They wanted an equality between the men and the women, being appreciated, and had security from the country by become participant of government.

**Keywords:** *Suffragette*, Gender Equality, Right to Vote, First Wave of Feminism, Mary Wollstonecraft.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of the women's rights movement, liberal feminist takes the issues of the right to get the same education as men. They are fighting for civil and economic rights opportunities for women. Besides, radical feminist focusing on the root causes of the oppressed women, such as sex and gender. They are opposing sexual discrimination in the political, social, economic, and personal fields. Women struggle to realize equal rights, both at the political, economic, and other social levels.

The women's rights movement

growing rapidly, as (Engel, 2019) point out that Emmeline Pankhurst as the founder of *The Women's Social and Political Union* fought for equal rights with her members. This organization used the colors purple, white, and green (GWV) is chosen for acronym *Give Women Votes*. This movement called *Suffragette*, the word that was coined by journalist Charles E. Hands in an article he wrote for the *London Daily Mail* in 1906. He used the diminutive slight ending "-ette" to mock and disparage the actions of militant suffragists. However, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in United Kingdom, such as the WSPU and even

today the terms are still used.

In the movie “Suffragette” directed by Sarah Gavron, setting on 1912 in London, portrays a young working mother who galvanized into radical political activism supporting the right for women to vote by make a movement by organization of women and do everything for the sake of shaping women and men equality in the women’s right to vote. According to (Wollstonecraft, 1792) known as English writer and advocate of educational and social equality for women. The women fight for their freedom of choose and do what they want, whether it’s in education, employment, or politics. Because their existence must be recognized and respected as human beings who can think and have feelings. There are many scenes in the movie that shown the women struggle to get their right in their country.

## 2. DISCUSSION

This section will discuss how the struggle of shaping gender equality in women’s right to vote issue, especially about how society treat women and how the First Wave of Feminism affects to the women movement.

### 2.1 Workplace Harrasment

The women could work outside the house, they not just being as wife and mother to their family but they participated in do a job as the men. But, wage for those women looks like not balance of what that they have done in the workplace. Besides, they get the discrimination from the men who as the leader or boss in the company. So, they fight to get the justice of human right as citizens that with allowing the women become the participant in the government which is begin from give women to vote. It will make women fill safe and calm in doing their job because they are get security from the government and also do not feel humbled by men out there, especially in the workplace.



Picture 1 (00:02:49)



Picture 2 (00:02:57)



Picture 3 (00:19:29)

The picture above portrays women struggle of human right. It can be seen in the first picture; the camera shot the female's feet that is bandage because the wound when she works very hard in the workplace. Besides, they get the discrimination by the man who as their leader or boss. The women like this are very strong and independent; they not look weak in front of the men, the problems that still could they handle by themselves will they do. But, if they just silent without doing anything, they will just be more oppressed which is can be seen in the next picture, the male's facial expression looks very underestimated to the female in front of his and she looks like stand up with a little down shoulder, not standing upright. Because the women as working class do not have a high position in the workplace, they have limited action in doing what they want. It is created the perception that the men look at them just as a human who never could changes the rules of this world and the

men will always being a leader in running the country.

In the third picture, the female character sits on the chair surrounding by the male characters to voice her aspirations deputize all women. The place seems in the government building, all the men wear a neat uniform and all the eyes are on the female character. In front of her, there are some high state official. They are who in the room seem ready to hear what the woman wants to say. The struggle of women's right as a citizen, begin from the verbal and non- verbal violence even to the wage salary that does not balance with the hard work they do, and working hours that longer than the men. All the issues in the workplace, she explains in front of the government to know that those issues to be sought the way for the welfare of the women in the country begin from give women to vote.

## 2.2 Oppression of women

The issue of oppression of women is based on power domination where there is a tendency for men to control women and also men's activities are approved by patriarchal society which is make women do not have enough strength to resist the oppression itself.



**Picture 1 (00:27:59)**



**Picture 2 (00:29:56)**



The pictures above portray women's oppression when they struggle to assert their rights to vote. In the first picture, it can be seen how the female characters are full of confidence to fight for their right as citizens by bring the demo's attributes with wearing neat clothes, ready for their movement to get what they want. In addition, around the building many guards watched the demonstration so that there is no riot, because the women very full of spirit. The second picture, the camera movement

shown that the situation began to chaotic and the guards carried out their duties. But, it is seen that they are holding the female character's hand seems like to force her where she ends put up a fight to them.

However, women as human beings who do not have great physical strength like men eventually fall and hurt. In the third picture, the female character gets violence from male characters that basically have physical strength. She has a lot of blood, running on her face and seems unconscious. It is clear that the male characters still be major in the human live because all the activities in the country or environment of society is driven by male domination that have power of authority. Their efforts and struggles ultimately only get oppression from men.

### **2.3 Anarchist movement**

The women really work hard in their movement to get the right of voting as citizens so that they will be treated and appreciated with better. The women who agree with this movement will planning their action with more anarchist by conduct silently so that not get caught by government and the people who oppose their movement, especially men.



The pictures above reveal the anarchist movement by the women who join the organization with the vision of the women's right to vote, known as suffragette. In the first picture, the camera shot from female character's point of view that shown the woman put the artificial raft bomb with the lit axis to the place of a public mailbox. It seems the environment little quite, nobody around her and with carefully she begin her action. Next, the female characters do their mission, not just doing terror in the public area but also in the government area. It can be seen in the second picture, there are three female characters run in the elite housing avoiding the blazing fire lit up is very large, burn one of the houses. In the night, those women even still do

their action when the people of government who living there asleep and they continue their mission by give the terror to the government for hear their voice.

In the last picture, there are many people watching the riding show, the television journalists carrying a camera, and all people enjoy the show with the happy facial expression. Meanwhile, the camera shot to the female character movement who walk out the audience border. It showed the woman holding a small rag which is the attribute demo of suffragette. She closed to the riding horse area, seems not afraid to get the accident by horse riders. The women do this anarchist movement not without reason, it is because they think they cannot do anything with nice action, must be more extreme for the sake of women's right so that all society aware and care to the issues of women's right in their country.

### 3. CONCLUSION

The issues that women have made them to do actions to get the justice and that all start from give women to vote. They want like the men, being appreciated and have security from the country by become participant of government and that all start from give

women to vote. The struggle of women's right as a citizen, begin from the verbal and non-verbal violence even to the wage salary that does not balance with the hard work they do, and working hours that longer than the men. So, by allowing them to vote will make women feel safe and calm in doing their job because they get security from the government and also do not feel humbled by men out there, especially in the workplace. The women do some anarchist movement not without reason, it is because they think they cannot do anything with nice action, must be more extreme for the sake of women's right so that all society aware and care to the issues of women's right in their country. The women really work hard in their movement to get the right of voting as citizens so that they will be treated and appreciated with better in society.

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