

## Conference Paper

# Liberal Feminism in Ika Natassa's Novel *Critical Eleven*

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**ORCID:**Purwarno Purwarno: <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8925-8566>**Abstract**

This study aimed to reveal the liberal feminism in Ika Natassa's novel, *Critical Eleven*. This study applied liberal feminism as proposed by Lewis (2018) who claims that liberal feminism focuses on the issues of woman's equality in the workplace, education and political rights. This study used qualitative methods since it involved the characteristics of qualitative procedures of analysis (Creswell, 2009). The main data were collected from the novel, and the supporting data were taken from books, journals and websites dealing with the subject matter of this research. Therefore, this study is categorized as a library research study as is noted by Herbert (1990: 18) who claims that a library research study is research to collect ideas and theories and to report empirical data within scholarship in the library. The research results show that of the three issues focused on in liberal feminism as proposed by Lewis (2018), those of woman's equality in the workplace and education are vividly reflected in the novel by the character named Anya who had a prestigious education (she is a Georgetown University graduate) and also has a good career as a management consultant. Equality in political rights is not found in the novel.

**Keywords:** Feminism, Liberal Feminism, Women, Equality in Education, Equality in the Workplace

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Published: 11 March 2021

Publishing services provided by  
Knowledge E

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Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the AICLL Conference Committee.

## 1. Introduction

Over the past decade, feminists have used the terms '*feminist*', '*female*' and '*feminine*' in multitude of different ways. The words '*feminist*' or '*feminism*' are the political labels indicating the support for the new women's movement which emerged in the late 1960s. '*Feminist criticism*', then, is a specific kind of political discourse: a critical and theoretical practice committed to the struggle against patriarchy and sexism, not simply a concern for gender discrimination. If feminist criticism is characterized by its political commitment to the struggle against all form of patriarchy and sexism, it follows that the very fact of being *female* does not necessarily guarantee a feminist approach (Moi, 1986).

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The mainstream of patriarchy reinforces the idea that the concerns of women privileged class groups are the only one worthy of receiving attention. Feminist reform aims to gain social equality for women within the existing structure. Privileged women want equality with men of their class. Feminist efforts to grant women social equality with men of their class neatly coincide with white supremacist-capitalist-patriarchal fears that white power would diminish if non-white people gain equal access to economic power and privileged (Hooks, 2000: 40). Supporting what in effect becoming white power-reformist-feminism enables the mainstream white supremacist patriarchy to bolster its power while simultaneously undermining the radical politics of feminism.

In patriarchy, a social system positioning a man as a superior and a woman as inferior creates the pattern of sex role behavior which embedded deeply in the mind of both man and woman (Anderson, 1997: 13). It means that the system of the culture and their dependent to men, positioning woman is easily to be exploited. Patriarchal society uses rigid gender roles, to ensure that women remain passive. Therefore, a way for women to break the power of men over women is not feasible to first realize that women are not destined separately to be passive, as well as men are not destined to become active.

There are a variety of reasons behind women who are traditionally placed in the domestic sphere to participate in the public sphere in order to work or have a career. In addition to increasing financial income, this is also used as a means to actualize themselves. For women who are not married, going into the public domain to work or have a career is a profitable choice because they can actualize themselves while earning their own income. In other words, women can direct more attention to themselves. However, this is different for women who are already married because inevitably they have to assume a dual role, namely as a wife, mother and worker so that their attention will be divided. In the pattern of society as explained earlier, the task of a woman who works will be heavier than men because after work or maybe even during work, they must pay attention to their family (husband and child) and other domestic matters.

Feminism is a diverse, competing and often opposing collection of social theories, political movements and moral philosophies largely motivated by or concerning the experience of women especially in terms of their social, political and economic inequalities (Adawo et al., 2011). It is women's movement and liberation that is at stake. It is women that are harmed, oppressed and subordinated; women's consciousness changed to see oppression for what it was, and to see, too, that it was not inescapable or natural and that it could be challenged (Thompson, 2001). Feminist theories attempt to describe women's oppression, explain its causes and consequences, and prescribe strategies for women's liberation (Tong, 2009). These theories, by paying close attention

to structures of power and social context and by examining the real experiences of women living within these structures, suggest a method of theorizing that moves beyond the forms of individualism and abstraction that are prominent within liberalism (Schwartzman, 2006). On the basis of the root causes of women's oppression and subordination, different feminist groups have emerged in different times. Although their assumptions and interests vary, the main goal is to eschew women's oppression so as to achieve gender equality. Of the varieties of feminism, liberal feminism is the most dominant and the groundwork for other feminist groups.

Giddens (2001) defines liberal theory as a "feminist theory that believes gender inequality is created by lowering access for women and girls to civil rights and allocation of social resources such as education and employment". This situation is mainly centered on the socially constructed ideology of patriarchy that perpetuates inequality between the two sexes. Liberal feminism is derived from the liberal political philosophy in the enlightenment period, and centers on the core ideas of autonomy, universal rights, equal citizenship, and democracy (Tong, 2009). It is characterized by an individualistic emphasis on equality (Khattak, 2011). It is depicted as focusing on individual rights and on the concepts of equality, justice and equal opportunities, where legal and social policy changes are seen as tools for engineering women's equality with men (Maynard, 1995). Some aspects of feminist politics are shifting from autonomous forms of organization to increased engagement with the state. Women are just beginning to enter an era of liberal democracy (Walby, 2002).

In its central assumption, liberal feminism maintains that differences between women and men are not based on biology, which basically represents reproduction differences. Hence, women should have the same rights as men, including the same educational as well as employment opportunities. Unfortunately, liberal feminism cannot overcome the prevailing belief that women and men are intrinsically different; but to a degree, it succeeds in showing that, although women are different from men, they are not inferior (Nienaber and Moraka, 2016).

In today's modern age, more and more demands and opportunities for women to have a career and collide with the quality of education and employment with men in various fields. In fact, jobs that were previously identical to men's identities such as the police, army, pilots, company leaders and so on can now also be cultivated by women. This phenomenon was apparently not spared from the touch of the authors to be reflected in literary works. Ika Natassa is one of the authors, who raises women's career discourse in her latest novel entitled *Critical Eleven*, which was published in 2015.

In this novel, Ika presents how the construction of career women who are supported by these various aspects still cause problems. As a wife and mother, a career woman is required to have good management to regulate and harmonize work and family interests. If other novels such as *Layar Terkembang*, *Geni Jora*, and other novels depict how the female characters struggle to gain equal access to men to enter public spaces, what has been presented in this novel is different. Ika actually fights against the image of women in traditional societies by creating the first female figure who has already gotten what the women characters wish to have as presented in aforementioned novels. Anya, the first character in the novel, is described as having obtained a high education, a brilliant career in the public sector, and the financial power to support her family, friends, and even husband as she is engaging in her profession as a consultant manager. However, with this ease of access to the public world, which is almost unimpeded, it creates problems. Anya who is accustomed to supporting her career actually experiences a great shock in her life due to her husband's words that she understands as accusations that her work has become the very cause of the death of their child.

*Critical Eleven* by Ika Natassa is used as an object of study focusing on a domestic and marriage life of Anya, a woman who has high education, good career, and sundry public activities. This topic was chosen because of the nature of its possessions and the conflicts experienced by Anya, the first character who is considered to represent the lives of career women, especially the upper middle class in the modern era. In addition, Ika Natassa as a female writer who is also a career woman (banker) is considered a right representative in describing the contraction of career women in this novel. Besides, *Critical Eleven* raises the story of women's work in the domestic realm, whose female community is identified with its social function in the domestic sphere as a housewife. This means that women are responsible for matters relating to household affairs, but family leaders remain husbands. Whereas in the public domain men are more dominant that they feel more powerful because they are the ones who are looking for money. The researchers chose the novel that was used as the object in this study as a proof of resistance that not only were men able to be in the public sphere but women could also occupy various fields of life according to their expertises.

## 2. Literature Review

## 2.1. Feminism

The term “feminism” in general is always referred to the discussion about women who want to free themselves from men domination in family and society. They refuse to be treated as the second society and regarded as inferior. They do not want to live under the shadow of men’s power.

At the beginning, feminism was only a social movement then it transformed into social theory with various theoretical forms. These terms oppose women against: woman and children violence, rape and pillage on woman’s body and emotion, also teaches woman to defense herself from improper condition, how to maximize her talents and side by side work with man to take a better life. It is true that feminism wants to raise the essences of woman that for centuries regarded as oppressed, weak, sensitive, gloomy, passive, instable, irritable, piety, materialist, and confine person.

Feminism is not a new concept. Women have defended their rights, as they perceived them, on various battlefields throughout history. Even so, in the modern sense, feminism can be said to have begun around 1830’s with the women’s movement for suffrage. Woman, as a collective unit, stood together asserting their rights as members of society to take equal part in the government that supposedly represented them. They finally won that right in 1920. This movement is now known as the First Wave of Feminism. Some forty years later woman began mobilizing again. This Second Wave of Feminism rose out of the demand of equal pay for equal work. They demanded the right to a non-discriminatory work place, in which sexual harassment would be legally punishable. They also fought for the right to abort unwanted fetuses. These issues, in particular, galvanized the women taking part in the Civil Rights movement. They won the fight (at least to some degree). This fact has helped to give rise to a Third Wave of Feminists with diverse ideas of what Feminism means, where the women’s movement should be heading, and how to get there.

Feminism can take many different forms, include many different ideas, and have many different goals. However, the one basic characteristic of feminism, which has been important throughout its history, has been the importance of achieving equal rights, equal respect and equal opportunity for women in all aspects of society– political, economic and social. Usually, feminism involves some sort of critique of what is assumed to be or have been a dominant patriarchy in which women have been denied the equality and respect they deserve.

Any attempt to provide a baseline definition of all feminisms may start with the assertion that feminisms concern themselves with women’s inferior position in society

and with discrimination encountered by women because of their sex. Furthermore, one could argue that all feminists call for changes in the social, economic, political or cultural order, to reduce and eventually overcome this discrimination against women. Clark (1990: 112) states that in general, feminism is a movement that stands against oppression and injustice; and specifically those oppression and injustice are usually exercised on women. Rebalancing the standing of the sexes in social life is termed feminism. This notion derives from a highlighted point that men and women have been treated unequally in society. And a desire to change such situation gives a way to feminism to emerge. Equality does not merely mean equality under a certain norm or law but also mean philosophical and social equality as every individual has its own standing and every individual that has raised by women must know how to treat women respectfully.

Feminism has a strong personal element, it is primarily a political and movement and such its main weapon is rhetoric. Feminism is also the fairly modernization that men and women should have the same responsibilities and privileges in society, except where reproductive differences apply. It fights for the right women to experiences and tranquility in the home, and a place in society. This idea is in line with Castro (1990: 46)'s idea in which he claims that true feminism embraces all women. It is not the product of one political ideology. It embraces conservative and libertarian women as well as liberals and socialists. It is not the exclusive property of white middle to upper class women in the United States, who dictate to the rest of the world what it means to be a woman.

Trowler (1999) claims three different types of feminism, i.e. Liberal, Radical, and Marxist Feminisms. Liberal feminists believe that media is changing in relation to women for the better. With two legislations the equal pay act which was drawn up in 1975, and the sex discrimination Act which came about in 1976. They felt optimistic about the future. Radical feminists argue patriarchy is still pervasive throughout society, meaning that men dominate society. They state that media reinforces women in domestic roles. Marxist feminists state that the women's inferior position in society is serving the interests of capitalism. That media reflects the situation because it is controlled by men (patriarchy). They also argue that pornography and women's bodies are used to make profits for the owners of the media. (Trowler, 1999: 311)

The premises of modern day feminism are traceable to its roots in early feminism (Cott, 1987). Three main tenets of this philosophy continue today:

1. Women should be the equal of men. No gender is superior.

2. Women's roles and status are a product of the social structure, and thus changeable.
3. Women are self-identified as a social group; thus, they are positioned to act "as a group" to change their status.

Feminism brings about the world in which people of all ages and both sexes embrace full responsibility for their action. It teaches that women are not slaves to men. Their bodies are their most precious material possession they will only have one body. They deserve to have that body respected by men. This means that rape is unacceptable. Assault is unacceptable. Women have a right to a fortress of peace in which or raise our children and they have right to be free of the mind control which is used a woman to convince them that do not deserve peace in their homes.

## 2.2. Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminists are part of a long tradition that begins with classical liberal thought. This tradition regards human beings as rational, autonomous, and self-interested individuals. This tradition strongly values liberty. It argues for a state that will protect liberty and not undermine it. From the beginning of the classical liberalism, a very heavy emphasis is placed on rights.

The goal for liberal feminists in the late 1800s and early 1900s was to gain women's suffrage under the idea that they would then gain individual liberty. They were concerned with gaining freedom through equality, putting an end to men's cruelty to women, and gaining the freedom to opportunities to become full persons. They believed that no government or custom should prohibit the exercise of personal freedom. Early liberal feminists had to counter the assumption that only white men deserved to be full citizens. Feminists such as Mary Wollstonecraft, Judith Sargent Murray, and Frances Wright advocated for women's full political inclusion (Marilley, 1996). In 1920, after nearly 50 years of intense activism, women were finally granted the right to vote and the right to hold public office in the United States.

In the 1960s, during the civil rights movement, liberal feminists drew parallels between systemic race discrimination and sex discrimination (Tong, 1989). Groups such as the National Organization for Women, the National Women's Political Caucus, and the Women's Equity Action League were all created at that time to further women's rights. In the U.S., these groups have worked for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment or "Constitutional Equity Amendment", in the hopes it will ensure that men and women

are treated as equals under the democratic laws that also influence important spheres of women's lives, including reproduction, work and equal pay issues. Other issues important to liberal feminists include but are not limited to reproductive rights and abortion access, sexual harassment, voting, education, fair compensation for work, affordable childcare, affordable health care, and bringing to light the frequency of sexual and domestic violence against women (Hooks, 1984).

Wendell (1987) states that liberal feminisms value individualistic approaches to justice and societal structures instead of blaming inequalities on others. Wendell also states, "liberal feminism's clearest political commitments, including equality of opportunity, are important to women's liberation and not necessarily incompatible with the goals of socialist and radical feminism." Musgrave (2003) says that the basis of liberalism gave liberal feminism a familiar enough platform that it came the closest out of other waves to convincing the general public and the government that their feminist philosophies "could and should be incorporated into existing law." He further states, "Liberal feminists argued for women's rightful inclusion in the liberal category of the autonomous individual as the basic social unit, and that women likewise be accorded the individual rights connected to the category." Further, Hooks (2012) states that liberal feminisms focus too much on equality with men in their own class. She mentions that the "cultural basis of group oppression" is the biggest challenge, in that liberal feminists tend to ignore it.

Ella (2017) states that liberal feminism is an individualistic form of feminist theory. It has also been said that liberal feminism is liberalism as applied to gender issue. Supporting Ella's statement, Tong (1992) states that liberal feminism is an individualistic form of feminist theory, which focuses on women's ability to maintain their equality through their own actions and choices. Its emphasis is on making the legal and political rights of women equal to men. Liberal feminists argue that society holds the false belief that women are, by nature, less intellectually and physically capable than men; thus it tends to discriminate against women in the academy, the forum, and the marketplace. Liberal feminists believe that "female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that blocks women's entrance to and success in the so-called public world". They strive for sexual equality via political and legal reform. Further, he claims that liberal feminists believe that "female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that blocks women's entrance to and success in the so-called public world". They strive for sexual equality via political and legal reform. In line with Tong's concept of liberal feminism, Abbey (2013) states that liberal feminism conceives of freedom as personal autonomy and political autonomy.



Theoretically, liberal feminism claims that gender differences are not based in biology, and therefore that women and men are not all that different—their common humanity supersedes their procreative differentiation. If women and men are not different, then they should not be treated differently under the law. Women should have the same rights as men and the same educational and work opportunities. The goal of liberal feminism in the United States was embodied in the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which was never ratified. Politically, liberal feminists formed somewhat bureaucratic organizations, which invited men members. Their activist focus has been concerned with visible sources of gender discrimination, such as gendered job markets and inequitable wage scales, and with getting women into positions of authority in the professions, government, and cultural institutions. Liberal feminist politics took important weapons of the civil rights movement—anti-discrimination legislation and affirmative action—and used them to fight gender inequality, especially in the job market.

Affirmative action calls for aggressively seeking out qualified people to redress the gender and ethnic imbalance in work-places. That means encouraging men to train for such jobs as nursing, teaching, and secretary, and women for fields like engineering, construction, and police work. With a diverse pool of qualified applicants, employers can be legally mandated to hire enough different workers to achieve a reasonable balance in their workforce, and to pay them the same and also give an equal chance to advance in their careers.

Lewis (2018) describes liberal feminism as theory and work that focuses more on issues like equality in the workplace, in education, and in political rights. Where liberal feminism looks at issues in the private sphere, it tends to be regarding equality: how does that private life impede or enhance public equality. Thus, liberal feminists also tend to support marriage as an equal partnership, and more male involvement in child care. She further states that liberal feminism's primary goal is gender equality in the public sphere, equal access to education, equal pay, ending job sex segregation, better working conditions, won primarily through legal changes. Private sphere issues are of concern mainly as they influence or impede equality in the public sphere. Gaining access to and being paid and promoted equally in traditionally male-dominated occupations is an important goal.

It is clear that liberal feminism is an individualistic form of feminist theory, which emphasizes on making the legal and political rights of women equal to men focusing on the workplace, education and political rights. It is as stated by Lewis (2018) who claims that liberal feminism focuses on the issues of **equality in the workplace, in education, and in political rights.**

### 2.2.1. Equality in the Workplace

A workplace is a location where someone works for his or her employer, a place of employment. Such a place can range from a home office to a large office building or factory. For industrialized societies, the workplace is one of the most important social spaces other than the home, constituting “a central concept for several entities: the worker and his/her family, the employing organization, the customers of the organization, and the society as a whole”.

The workplace is the location at which an employee provides work for an employer. That seems like a simple enough explanation, but it can become a bit more complex, especially in today’s knowledge economy. The workplace is located in a variety of settings including offices, manufacturing facilities or factories, stores, farms, out-of-doors, and in any other location where work is performed. With the proliferation of electronic communication, employers are no longer expected to always provide a workplace with a physical location at which employees work. Home offices, telecommuting work arrangements, and worldwide employment relationships mean that almost any location, including the employee’s home, may serve as and can accurately be called, a workplace (Heathfield, 2018).

According to Dlamini (2017), women have come a long way in defying the odds and challenging issues of gender inequality that existed in the workplace and business market. Public figures such as Michelle Obama, Oprah Winfrey and Suze Orman to name a few, have upheld the positive influence in leadership positions. As role models, these women have played a significant role in influencing their own spaces. These female leaders have paved the way for other women to assume leadership roles. Some of these women have created their own stories by standing for what they believe in and making major breakthroughs in different fields. Women in positions of power have challenged the status quo and that has given more opportunities to women who have been previously disregarded. The growth of women in the workplace over the years has strengthened and the world is seeing women taking on more prominent roles in the workplace. Women have proven their ability to drive successful projects that are a success and inspire growth in companies. She further claims that there are six characteristics that have given rise to the presence of more women in the workplace, i.e. women possess professionalism and leadership qualities, women bring in strong work ethic and motivate the team, women determine team growth and business advancement, women have good organisation skills, women possess attention to detail, and women can advance company growth.

According to Tricia (2015), the last 60+ years have seen the numbers of women in the workplace increase hugely since they entered the economic system to supplement the male earning capacity lost to two world wars. Complex social movements have contributed to this change— the feminist movement, equal opportunities legislation, the expansion of the service sector and the knowledge economy, the ever increasing cost of living and increased access to education. This rise in numbers has resulted in women entering a much broader range of occupations, from mainly supportive, nurturing roles such as teaching and nursing to every walk of occupational and professional life. Therefore, women are now found in occupations, industries and roles previously regarded as the sole prerogative of men.

It is stated that liberal feminism is an individualistic form of feminist theory, which focuses on women's ability to maintain their equality through their own actions and choices. It means that women have freedom and equality in their own choice to work as they want. Women have no less intellectuality than men that they can work as well as men do in the workplace. Nowadays, women have occupied various workplaces previously considered as the domains of men.

### 2.2.2. Equality in Education

Education is the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits. Educational methods include storytelling, discussion, teaching, training, and directed research. Education frequently takes place under the guidance of educators, but learners may also educate themselves (Dewey, 1944). Education can take place in formal or informal settings and any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels, or acts may be considered educational. The methodology of teaching is called pedagogy.

The nineteenth century saw major advances in educational opportunities for women and girls, from the common school movement in the early part of the century to multiple opportunities in higher education at the century's close. In the 1800s, women began to play central roles in education—as teachers and as learners, in formal and informal education settings, on the frontier and in the cities. Education is the foundation for civic participation, and schools are formative in shaping how children and young people view themselves and others. Accordingly, it is essential that school environments foster gender equality and provide safe spaces in which all students can learn. Nowadays, women and girls have the right to education free that they have made great strides toward achieving equality.

Education is globally acknowledged as the most powerful means of empowering girls and women and protecting them from the violation of their human rights. Investing in girls' and women's education can transform, and even save, lives—the lives of girls and women, and the lives of their families and communities. It is one of the most effective ways to achieve positive, sustainable change in the world, for everyone. Education sets in motion a virtuous spiral: girls and women gain greater knowledge, skills, self-confidence and capabilities, improving their own life prospects—and, in turn, an educated woman provides better nutrition, health care, and education for her family. Education enables a woman to take greater control of her life and gain inclusion in decision-making processes, which unleashes her potential to contribute socially and economically to her family's and community's wellbeing (Women's WorldWide Web, 2010).

The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960, CADE) prohibits all forms of discrimination in education, including on the basis of sex. CADE defines discrimination in Article 1, which is more specific than CEDAW's definition, as it applies solely to education, for example, it refers to discrimination in both access to and quality of education and to gender-segregated schools. Article 2 (a) of CADE permits the establishment or maintenance of gender-segregated educational systems or institutions, provided they offer equivalent access to education, teaching staff with the same standard of qualifications, infrastructure and equipment of the same quality, and the opportunity to study the same or equivalent subjects. Article 2 (c) permits the establishment or maintenance of private education institutions as long as the 'object of the institutions is not to secure the exclusion of any group'. Other important international human rights treaties guaranteeing the right to education of women and girls on the basis of non-discrimination and equality. A number of other international human rights treaties also guarantee girls' and women's right to education combining general provisions on non-discrimination with specific provisions on the right to education. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966, ICESCR) guarantees the right to education of everyone on the basis of equality and non-discrimination (Articles 13 and 14) and expressly prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (Articles 2 (2) and 3). In its general comment on the right to education, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights applies obligations under Articles 2 (2) and 3 to the right to education, clarifying, inter alia, that temporary measures to bring about de facto equality between the sexes in relation to education are legitimate as long as such affirmative action does not lead to the 'maintenance of unequal or separate standards for different groups, and provided they are not continued after the

objectives for which they were taken have been achieved. The Committee also provides that states ‘must closely monitor education—including all relevant policies, institutions, programmes, spending patterns and other practices—so as to identify and take measures to redress any de facto discrimination. Educational data should be disaggregated by the prohibited grounds of discrimination (Right to Education, 2018).

Liberal feminists support laws against sex discrimination in education, employment, and public accommodations. According to liberal feminists, the refusal to hire or promote a woman or do business with her because she is a woman is a morally objectionable limit on her options. So are workplaces that are hostile to women. Liberal feminists argue that laws prohibiting sexual harassment, and requiring affirmative action and comparable worth policies are often called for to remedy past and ongoing sex discrimination (Williams, 2000: 253). In line with Williams’ claim, McClain states that liberal feminists hold that girls must receive a formal education free of sexist stereotyping, including instruction in the legal equality of women, including autonomy-promoting sex education (McClain, 2006). Their claims are also supported by Okin (1989) who argues that the state, educational institutions, and workplaces should not assign roles according to sex. But Okin argues that this applies to the family as well. Gender blindness must play the same role in the family that it plays in these institutions. In Okin’s words, there must be “congruence” between the principles that govern these institutions and those that govern family life.

### 2.2.3. Equality in Political Rights

Merriam Webster defines political rights as the rights that involve participation in the establishment or administration of a government and are usually held to entitle the adult citizen to exercise of the franchise, the holding of public office, and other political activities.

Political rights are a class of rights that protect individuals’ freedom from infringement by governments, social organizations, and private individuals. They ensure one’s ability to participate in the civil and political life of the society and state without discrimination or repression.

Political rights include natural justice (procedural fairness) in law, such as the rights of the accused, including the right to a fair trial; due process; the right to seek redress or a legal remedy; and rights of participation in civil society and politics such as freedom of association, the right to assemble, the right to petition, the right of self-defense, and the right to vote. Political rights are the rights exercised in the formation and

administration of a government. They are given to citizen by the constitution. These rights give the citizen power to participate directly or indirectly in the administration.

US Legal (2016) states that political rights are the right to political participation. Political participation can take many forms; the most notable form is the right to vote. The right also covers the right to join a political party; the right to stand as a candidate in an election; the right to participate in a demonstration; and freedom of association.

The Convention on the Political Rights of Women was approved by the United Nations General Assembly during the 409th plenary meeting, on 20 December 1952, and adopted on 31 March 1953. The Convention's purpose is to codify a basic international standard for women's political rights (Cherif, 2015).

### 3. Research Method

Research designs are plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detail methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2009). This research follows qualitative method of research since it involves the characteristics of qualitative procedure of analysis (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The writers use the qualitative approach to explore the behaviors, perspectives, experiences and feelings of the first female character under the analysis, and emphasize the understanding of the aforementioned elements. The writers make interpretations of the meaning of the data. Data collection and analysis follow the procedures under the researcher's role as the key instrument.

The data in this research were collected from many sources, especially books, journals, and websites which are related to the subject matter of this research, i.e. liberal feminism. Therefore, it is categorized as a library research as it is noted by Herbert (1990: 18) who claims that "a library research is a research to collect ideas, theories, and reported empirical data within the scholarship in the library." Besides, the data are also taken from websites of the internet to support the study. However, Ika Natassa's *Critical Eleven* is used as the primary source of the data. The significant data dealing with the theory of liberal feminism were taken from various books, journal and websites, especially the one written by Lewis (2018).

## 4. Result and Discussion

A common theme that can be seen often in life, history and literature as well is the theme of feminism. Feminism has transformed the academic study of literature, fundamentally altering the canon of what is taught and setting new agendas for literary analysis. This study offers a comprehensive as well as lively analysis to liberal feminism focusing on the protagonist named Tanya Baskoro (Anya) who upholds the status of women for emancipation or equal rights between women and men without discrimination, especially in terms of the equality in workplace and education reflected in Ika Natassa's novel entitled *Critical Eleven*.

In the aviation world, the term critical eleven is known as the eleven most critical minutes on the plane. The critical eleven moment is three minutes after takeoff, and eight minutes before landing. Statistically, 80% of aircraft accidents occur within the eleven-minute range. The term critical eleven is applied by the writer of the novel, Ika Natassa on human relations through her novel *Critical Eleven*. During the first meeting, the initial three minutes are a time to give the impression of good or bad, while the last eight minutes are the moment of determination.

### 4.1. Equality in Workplace

Today more and more women are starting to open up and dare to get out of the domestic shell to pursue a career. Even not a few of them choose to prioritize careers rather than establishing a family. Marriage is considered as one of the obstacles to establish a career. They are concerned more with careers than getting married and having a family. Anya in this novel is reflected as a business woman. She is a management consultant, who spends much time in airports and who admits that she is one of those weird people, who loves airports. There is just something liberating yet soothing about it. She is always busy with her pile of work that she regards airport as her temporary place to break from her mundane life.

I'm one of those weird people who loves airports. There's just something liberating yet soothing about it. Even when I was there to fly for the business affairs, the airport was like a temporary resting place. A temporary break from my mundane life. Of course, when I land, I will be busy with any pile of work waiting, but in the meantime I can "park" here first. (Natassa, 2015: 5)

Anya is accustomed to airports as well as planes. It clearly shows that she has a good position as well as career in her work. It also obviously shows that she has equal right as man.

Anya is also an active woman as she does not stand of sitting still. It has been for years that she always concerns herself with something to carry out. She cannot be quiet as it will take her mind to wonder about her own life in terms of the meanings as well the purposes of life.

I admire people who have the ability to sit still. Because I can't. It has been four years, I can't. I must always concern myself with something, because every time I keep quiet, my mind would start to wonder to places I don't want it to wonder to. Questioning the meaning of life, what the purpose of life is actually, what I want to do, whether I have done what I should have done as a human being at this age. It was like being chased by Ligwina Hananto, who, every time taught financial planning, always asked, "What is your goal?"

.....

Perhaps that's why I like airports. Airport is the least aimless place in the world. Everything about the airport is destination. Everything at the airport must have a purpose and indeed have a purpose. Even that goal is clearly stated on a piece of paper, boarding pass. Every time I hold a boarding pass, I feel my life finally has a purpose, even though the goal is only three letters. CGK, SIN, ORD, TTE, HKG, LGA, EWR, NRT. (Natassa, 2015: 5-6)

Anya has been familiar with various airports and visiting a number of places. It means that she is indeed a distinguished woman who always carries out her business in various places. As a consultant management, there will be many things that she must regulate and monitor, and there are many clients and their problems that can keep Anya's mind busy.

Anya is also described as an experienced management consultant, who has a good performance. She has been in her position for almost eight years, and her reputation in the position is extremely good.

If there is one thing I learned from almost eight years of my career as a management consultant, it's this: KPI determines employee behavior. The KPI is a Key Performance Indicators, a kind of report card used by companies to define and measure the extent to which the company achieves its objectives, then is reduced to the KPI of each employee according to department and position. (Natassa, 2015: 47)



A management consultant is professional who provides advisory services in the field of management, analyzes, improves, and recommends construction management to improve the quality of employee work and advance an agency or company. In addition to demanding mastery of management knowledge and sensitivity in reading markets, this work also requires expertise in communication.

Ika Natassa's choice to make a management consultant as a job for Anya clearly identifies that she actually gives support to women to have a career in the field of work. However, Ika apparently still has not really let go of the image of a traditional woman who is gentle and has a physical quality not as strong as man. Anya's job as a consultant management is more focused on cognitive and communication skills which are still fairly common for women to master. Prati (2015) revealed that of the 10 sectors of work that women and men are engaged in, there are two occupational fields that make women's wages higher than men, namely the field of communication and transportation services. In this novel, Anya works as a consultant management focusing on cognitive and communication skills which most probably have given her higher wages than men in general.

As a career woman working as a management consultant for eight years, Anya got married beyond the traditional view of the ideal marriage age. Anya got married to Ale (her husband) when she has been already considered a successful career woman. Even though, no direct information dealing her age when she got married to Ale, it can be traced that Anya's age when she got married to Ale was around 29 years. It is assumed so since Anya is predicted to finish her education from Georgetown university at her 21 years old, then she got married after her experience in her career as a management consultant for eight years. Anya's age when she got married to Ale has broken the traditional view that the ideal age for women to get married is under 25 years.

Besides, the sociological construction of equality in workplace for women represented by Ika Natassa in *Critical Eleven* through the character of Anya can also be seen in terms of her family backgrounds; such as family and social environment, and lifestyle. Anya was born and raised by the parents who both have high educational backgrounds. Anya's father is a diplomat and his mother is a graduate from one of the colleges in London. The background of the two parents is made known by the author in the following quote:

Ibrahim Baskoro, Papa, first met Mama at the Indonesian Embassy in London, 33 years ago. Papa, the junior diplomat, who had just been on duty for a year, was still an onion, while Mama had arrived in London at that time for postgraduate study, scholarship. (Natassa, 2015: 207)

Looking at the background of Anya's parents, both in terms of work and high education, it can be seen that they have broader knowledge and more advanced and open thinking towards the world. More advanced and open thinking will lead people to prioritize education as one of the main bases for getting good and successful work in the future. Therefore, it is natural that even then their children are constructed by the author, Ika Natassa, to have higher education and promising work. That is, here Ika Natassa tries to strengthen the notion that education can lead someone to a bright future and this will be achieved, one of which is with the support of parents. In short, it can be summed up that the environment as well as parents plays an important role to construct the career.

Sociological construction as described above is closely related to the relation of Anya's character to other figures to see the construction of equality in workplace for women in this novel. Based on the story of the novel, the relation that best gives an illustration of the construction of equality in workplace for women is the one between Anya and Ale. The relation between the two illustrates the existence of coordinative relation or the existence of equality.

I listened to the words Ale half-consciously, still unusually sleepy, began to regret why I offered to accompany him to the airport to catch this first flight. And how could it be this morning. Ale remembered the contents of my presentation as detailed as that. I am a management consultant, and sometimes I reshare my presentation in front of him if he is in Jakarta. He said that instead of overtime at the office, I'd rather be overtime at home accompanied by him. Sometimes he actively gives input about my style of speaking, but more often he even says this: "The presentation makes me not concentrate, I want to kiss you all the time." Then he laughed as I pretended to throw my cue cards into his chest. (Natassa, 2015: 37)

Ale as a husband does not feel heavy hearted to provide an opportunity for his wife to pursue her career. He even provides supports by giving input. In addition, in another quote Ale is also described as a husband who has an understanding of his wife's profession. Although Anya's profession as a management consultant often drives her to go home late and travel abroad, Ale always shows his supports by not giving restrictions. Perhaps, Ale does remember that Anya has never protested him about his work which has made his life 50: 50, which is 5 weeks at work (oil processing at sea) and 5 weeks at home (holiday).

If the husband is often portrayed as having the power to regulate the role of the wife, then in this novel the author distorts that view through the character by the name of Ale. Women are given the same opportunities as men to walk the public world. In fact, this opportunity is supported by men who give freedom to women to choose a career or not. Women as wives are also not required to only be in the domestic sphere and do domestic matters. When Anya excuses of not having skill to cook well for Ale, Ale surprisingly confirms that he has married Anya not to make a restaurant but a household. Ale claims, "I marry you as I want to make a household, not make a restaurant, Nya. (215)".

Ale does not demand that Anya ought to be good at cooking like her mother. Cooking in this case is categorized as an activity carried out in the domestic sphere. Here the author creates the concept that a wife does not have to do domestic activities or in other words domestic duties are not the main identity of a wife. In addition, Ale and Anya have good cooperation in home affairs, and she shows it when she insisted to help her husband to turn their house into their home, "*You've given me a home already, Le, let me help you to turn it into OUR home (194)*". She also insisted to help fill the house with her money and started to buy dining tables, sofas, and all kinds of knick-knacks.

Ale does not feel rivaled by Anya who also has her own income. He is happy when Anya offered to help buy things to fill their homes. The house or residence and its contents are not only the responsibility of the husband. With whatever money the house and its contents are purchased, the most important thing is how to make it a shared and maintained joint property. If this perspective is used, what appears is the coordinative relationship between Anya and Ale. However, there is also a suspicion of the existence of subordinate relations which makes the position of Anya (female) only as the other (ie) when the main needs of the house are fulfilled by Ale (male), then Anya's income is only used to fill the gap (home furniture) which is not in the main thing (home). Due to this suspicion, the author is still possible to be influenced by the traditional view of women who even though they have the same abilities as men in certain fields, they are still considered as subordinates. In addition to the above, one thing that is considered as one part of the construction of a middle to upper class career woman is her lifestyle. The lifestyle lived by Anya's character in terms of the economy can be said to be glamorous and full of luxury. Anya's luxurious lifestyle both before marriage and after marriage can be clearly seen; among the things are, from the places she often visits which are usually visited by high-ranking people like Amuz, Mangia, Blue Doors, Häagen- Dazs, Mothercare Pacific Place, Ace, Authentique, and Le Bernardin; branded objects she has

such as iPhone (cellphone), Prado and Herrier (car), and Louboutin (shoes); her journey to abroad (Sidney) just to watch the concert of her favorite band (Coldplay); and the star hotels in which she often stays. Besides, Anya also adheres to an instant lifestyle by choosing an easily made breakfast menu or buying fast food and drinks. This is probably due to many works that have taken up a lot of her time.

Lifestyle is highlighted because it is considered to have implications for the career undertaken. Based on the reading of the novel, Anya's luxurious lifestyle is based on two reasons. First, Anya since childhood is in a community of middle to upper class circles so she is accustomed to a luxurious lifestyle, and choosing a career to fulfill her lifestyle. Secondly, the environment in which Anya works is an exclusive circle of environment that demands her to have an exclusive lifestyle to be accepted. In other words, the lifestyle of a career woman who chooses a luxurious or simple life may be due to a family background or work environment, or it is precisely the culture that demands her to live this lifestyle. In short, there is a choice between a career to meet the demands of a lifestyle or lifestyle to support a career, and this is one of which that a woman who has quality in workplace with man has to live in.

## 4.2. Equality in Education

Reading the construction of career women means reading women from the point of view of their role both in the public and domestic spheres. Ika Natassa's *Critical Eleven* presents the construction of a career woman by the name of Anya who has free access to actualize herself in the public sphere despite having a family. However, even though she has freedom and even support, she still carries out her domestic duties. In other words, she, as a married woman, has a dual role, namely the role in the domestic and public spaces at once. This is reflected by Ika Natassa who has taken the 2014 story setting, and tried to present how the construction of career women in today's modern society. Through the character Anya, she entrusts a number of ideas regarding the constructs of career women who have access to education to higher education. Anya as a woman, "learned how to make the most delicious omelet in the world before she left for college in Georgetown, 218)".

Anya has equality in education with man since she undertakes her study at Georgetown, one of the leading universities in Washington DC, United States. This obviously shows that Anya as a woman already has access to obtain education outside the domestic space. Even the university where Anya is studying is one of the leading universities that has global achievements. In other words, the author of the novel reveals

that women also have the same opportunity as men to get higher education in a good place, and it is evidently reflected by the author in the character of Anya. Anya's equality in education with man has brought Anya to a successful career woman. She becomes an experienced management consultant that makes her possible to fly to various places all over the world to carry out her official affairs. In short, Anya's equality in Education with man plays a very important role to her success in life as a career woman.

Equality in education as well as workplace is clearly represented by Anya in the novel. In line with the view that women have equality in education in the novel, the author, Ika Natassa also reflects the other female characters who are Anya's friends, Tara and Agnes, as educated and career women. Agnes is a Georgetown graduate like Anya, while Tara works in the field of interior design.

One's decision to have a career is also supported by a social environment. Tara and Agnes become the social environment of Anya who has a background not much different from their's. They are also the closest friends who always become a place for Anya to share. These things make them have the opportunity to influence Anya's choice for her career.

## 5. Conclusion

In Ika Natassa's *Critical Eleven*, of the three focuses of liberal feminism; in workplace, education and political rights, two of which namely equality in workplace and education are clearly reflected by the first character of the novel by the name of Tanya Baskoro (Anya). The topic inspires us that we must uphold justice for gender equality between women and men because life cannot run smoothly without the role of women. The topic also reflects the resilience of a woman by the name of Anya who has not only a good education, a graduate from one of leading universities in the world, Georgetown University, but also a fantastic job as a management consultant.

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