

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In chapter 4, the writer will analyze the collected data. The analysis is based on the problem formulations, those are “what are Mulan’s efforts to get the same rights as men?” and “what forms of discrimination do women in “Mulan” experience?”

#### **4.1. Mulan's Efforts to Get The Same Rights As Men**

Women are always portrayed as weak, vulnerable, and insignificant while men are seen as intelligent, strong, and powerful. Nussbaum et al. (1995) states “women were considered weak and unintelligent. In “Mulan”, women have lower status than men. Women are discriminated. Women are not permitted to join military, choose spouses, raise voice, choose what kind of job she is going to do, go out, and so on. And, in the movie, Mulan is the one who fights for the rights. Thus, in this sub-chapter the writer will discuss in detail what Mulan does to get the rights, such as tries to speak up, infiltrates to battle camp, and joins the war.

##### **4.1.1. Mulan Tries to Speak Up Her Mind**

There is Huns invasion in China that requires citizens to be trained as soldiers. Thus, Mulan wants to substitute her injured father. Mulan tries to speak up to Chi Fu, the royal advisor so Mulan is permitted to substitute her father, Fa Zhou. Instead of getting permission, Mulan is considered impolite.



Figure 3: Mulan interrupts Chi Fu

Interrupting is impolite in Chinese culture, especially when it is done to royal blood people. Ulijn and St. Amant (2000) state “the Chinese will consider such interruptions as impolite and not expected from the “polite” Chinese...” The same rule applies for both women and men.

Instead of interrupting, Thornes (2015) gives an example from former royal adviser on how Mulan should have communicated “Dong Zhuo’s advisor Li Ru gestures for permissions to speak: Dong Zhuo predictably gives that permission.” Chinese citizens were expected to ask permission before talking.

At night, after pouring tea for everyone in her family, Mulan slams her tea cup. Then, Mulan talked about the same thing again. Instead of getting permission, Mulan is asked to mind her own business.



Figure 4: Mulan Slams Her Teacup

Mulan's attitude, slamming the cup of tea is considered as unlady-like. There are consequences for acting unlady-like. Laktor (2006) states "if we refuse to talk 'like a lady: we are ridiculed and criticized for being unfeminine." Fortunately, Mulan is not criticized or ridiculed, she just gets unpleasant response. Since Mulan called unlady-like, the writer will discuss how woman should be. Women are stereotyped. Payne (2013) states "girls or women are expected to be caring, quiet, and less assertive." In writer's opinion, being quiet gives disadvantage towards woman, because when they have concern, they tell the government. Besides that, being all quiet puts women in awkward situation, because people would think they are rude. Being less assertive is not good as well, because they cannot refuse when being asked to do something wrong or things that give advantage only for the men.

Mulan's action is an effort. Although, she fails, Mulan's action can be considered as a representation of her feminist self, because she is brave to express her wish. Adichie discusses about "talking back" in her book that:

Talking back is a strategy which has to be learnt by women so that they can be heard and claimed as people who are able to express their differentiation in environment where the majority of the society are using patriarchy system. (2014, p. 7)

In writer's opinion, in order their opinions to be heard by people, women need communication skills. They should learn communication skills from elderly or observe the way the officials talk. They should not deliver their wishes in public, because many people can hear it, it embarrasses the concerned person, and it is impolite. Besides that, they should deliver their wishes to

royal adviser when he is on working hours, has spare time, or at the hour of appointment so they do not disturb the royal advisor who is hectic.

#### 4.1.2. Mulan Infiltrating Battle Camp

After asked to mind her own business, Mulan is disappointed. So, Mulan goes out. When Mulan is outside, she sees her mother, Fa Li is sulking because Fa Zhou will leave tomorrow. Mulan, who does not think much, is automatically running her preparation to substitute Fa Zhou by praying to her ancestors, exchanging the mandate with hairpin, cutting her hair short, etc. Then, after her preparation is done, Mulan heads to battle camp.



Figure 5: Mulan Cuts Her Hair

When Mulan is close to battle camp, she is afraid of being caught, so she practices acting like a man. Fortunately, Mushu, dragon who claims to be sent by the ancestors comes to help Mulan. When Mulan is asked by the captain, Li Shang, about her name, she feels confused. With Mushu's help, Mulan comes up with the name Ping.



Figure 6: Mulan Introduces Herself As Ping

Mulan infiltrates to battle camp, because women are not permitted to be soldiers. One of the reasons is women still needed help when fighting. Li (1994) states “women leaders of peasant uprisings fight shoulder to shoulder with their male family members.”

Besides that, women had lack of experience. The number of female soldiers was small. From 24 women preparing for war, only about 20% were in combat. Li discusses that:

The Central Work Regiment, which engaged in propaganda work, contained twenty-four women. Fewer than twenty of the women who served in the Second and Sixth Red Army Corps as confidential secretaries, nurses, cooks, and commanders have thus far been identified.

One of these women, Zhen Li, was the only woman general to emerge during this period (All-China Women's Federation 1986). (1994, p. 3)

Other than that, women were vulnerable to seduction. Mahtab (2016) states “although women were seen as uninterested in sex, they were vulnerable to seduction.” Moreover, female warriors experienced loss in the past because

of joining military. Satpathy (2003) states “seeing from what had already happened in the past, often, women were harmed in sexual negotiations.”

Although Mulan has known anyone commits fraud to the government will get punishment, Mulan is willing to take risk to substitute her father and save all China. Chamber et al. discuss one of punishments in Han Dynasty, as follows:

Imprisonment was an unheard form of punishment during Han, common punishments were the death penalty by beheading, periods of forced hard labor for convicts, exile, or monetary fines. (1997, p. 141)

#### **4.1.3. Mulan Joining The War**

After royal advisor got mandate letter to start the war, Mulan joins the war. Mulan violates gender stereotype. Mahtab (2016)states “a gendered stereotype consists of beliefs about the psychological traits and characteristics of, as well as the activities appropriate to men or women.”The reason Mulan violating gender stereotype is Mann (1997)states “women were not allowed to go for war.”

Since stereotype is about characteristic and activity, the writer is going to discuss about them. Brannon (2016) states “women were expected to be weak, dependent, and timid.” Nussbaum et al. (1995)states “women should be humble.” Nussbaum et al. (1995) states “women were considered weak and unintelligent. Their role was to serve the deeds of men.”Besides that, here were woman roles appointed in Han. Chung (2005) states “women’s familial roles as virtuous wives and wise mothers of sons became widely idealized.”

Then, the writer is going to discuss how men should be. Mahtab (2016) states “men were active, independent, coarse, and strong.” Brannon

(2016)states “men were supposed to be wise and forceful.”Nussbaum et al. (2016) states “men should be respectable.” Besides that, Breyer (1998) discusses about man jobs in Han “men ran the government, supervised craft making, and worked as soldiers, farmers.”

Woman and man have different gender stereotypes. Therefore, trying to achieve man stereotypes is a challenge. Lewis et al (2014) states “woman who do operate in male structures are chided for failing to do so.” So, there is a pressure to do well. Besides that, men in Han had bad views towards women. Ma (2012)states “a woman warrior during the East Han Dynasty, she led a rebel army together with her sister against the Emperor.”Moreover, being a soldier is also hard for men. Worell (2002) states “notably, the military seems to elicit gender stereotypes than other social settings.”

By Mulan joining the war and finally won it, Mulan has proved that women are able to do men’s work too. By Mulan doing that, the concept of male as the head of the family might not be abolished, but it could abolish male control and hierarchial based on sex. Besides that, men might not take women lightly after that. Thus, the writer found similarity between Mulan and Kate Millett in aim that they both aimed to abolish male control and hierarchial based on sex. Millett (2016) states “but perhaps equality –meaning the absence of hierarchy, specifically the absence of sexualized hierarchy...”

According to the writer, although, Mulan and Millett have similarity in

abolishing male control and hierarchial based on sex, the movement that they did is different. Millett did her movement by writing some books like “Sexual Politics”, “Flying”, “The Basement”, “The Politics of Cruelty”, etc while

Mulan did a rebellion infiltrating battle camp and joining war without her parents and emperor's permission.

## **4.2. Discrimination in Mulan**

Women are discriminated. Women are not permitted to join military, choose spouses, raise voice, and so on. Thus, in this sub-chapter the writer will discuss in detail empowerment discrimination, freedom of speech discrimination, decision making discrimination and method to abolish them.

### **4.2.1. Women Empowerment Discrimination**

Mulan is not permitted to join military, even though she has already communicated it. Mulan's act is impolite indeed. But, even though Mulan speak it up politely, women are not permitted to join military. Mann (1997) states "in Han Dynasty, women are discriminated. Women are not permitted to work as soldiers." Besides that, Mann states about what women did instead of working on the field they wanted:

During dynasty era, women were considered as tool to gain wealth by arranging marriage. Young women did not have freedom because of family restrictions and traditional custom roles. Women's mobility was restricted. Women were not allowed to go for war. They got depressed. (1997, p. 70)

Besides that, women in Han were not permitted to get into politics. Hinsch (2010) states "some men opposed female participation in government." West discusses what happened when women got into politics:

Women in Han Dynasty were expected to be mild and have meek personality. While strong and rebellious women lost their values of femininity in front of men. Mostly, men would marry the ones who are feminine. And, in case, the wives of these men became politicians after marriage, then it means they would have to divorce them. (1995, p. 91)

In fact, if men permit women to get into politics, there will be many advantages. They can attract young adults to care about politics. West (1995) states even though, writer Zuo Jia was criticized "...the works were able to attract young adults, mainly women in cultural events, in Han Dynasty." Other than Zuo Jia, there was writer Qiu Jin. Yan discusses about Qiu Jin good acts:

Back in Han Dynasty era, China had good politics, but no humanity. Women struggled to get a job. In job interview, if the interviewee was a man, he would take precedence over women. Political writer, poet, and also female warrior, Qiu Jin wanted to do the right thing to do for the other citizens. In fact, Qiu Jin already knew the rule that if there is a citizen, who published political literary works against the Emperor, her life would be threatened. Qiu Jin made literary works in the form of poems entitled "Don't Tell Me Women/Not the Stuff of Heroes", "On Precious Sward", and so on. (2006, p. 58)

Besides that, women can spread culture. Donchin et al. (1999) states "...women as the producers of Chinese culture, figure prominently in the body politic." Women's bodies is wealth and art, because with that nice bodies

women can promote culture and attract more people than men. King (2010) states “women and their bodies are a part of social wealth.”



Figure 7: Foot Binding in Chinese Culture

The example of the distribution of Chinese culture is foot-binding as culture and also fashion. Packer (2002) states “foot-binding was the traditional Chinese custom of forcibly stunting the normal growth of a woman’s feet.” Keng (2005) states “in early 10<sup>th</sup> century, the emperor introduced foot-binding after inventing a petite shoe for his concubine...”

Foot-binding was famous before being distributed abroad. Cohen (2005) states “...this custom would appear to have been firmly established throughout much of urban and rural China during the Han dynasty.” Then, it started to be distributed to Mongol too. Pitts-Taylor states:

Foot-binding still existed until the end of 11th century. It was started to be distributed in the period of social change era. It was distributed through poetry and song, from North to South China, from rich to poor. Foot-binding was formerly the way of Chinese women dress-up. Foot-binding determined woman’s beauty, because Chinese considered woman with small feet is beautiful. Thereafter, it was

distributed to Mongolia too. Mongol rulers encouraged to do so. (2008, p. 203)

Women empowerment discrimination should be abolished, because it has been already attracted students of fiction as one of the issue of the country. Mann (1997) states “...debates about women roles in Han times have already attracted scholarly analysis, especially among students of fiction.”

According to the writer, the government has to abolish gender stereotype starting from young age. China can look at United States as an example on how to abolish gender stereotypes. Crooks et al. (2010) states “Fortunately, schools in the United States is now acting to reduce classroom perpetuation of stereotypical gender roles.” The aim is so that children mindset is not shaped from childhood about what they have to do. Other than that, Correia et al. (2000) states one of possible actions include “...eliminating gender stereotypes in textbooks and other pedagogical materials. The aim is to reduce the possibility children mistakenly learn gender stereotypes.

#### **4.2.2. Decision Making Discrimination**

In “Mulan”, women are not permitted to make their own decisions, specifically choosing a spouse. People are underestimate women’s ability therefore, women always asked to do what they are asked to do. Women do not have her freedom to make a decision. Mann states women in Han Dynasty were restricted:

During dynasty era, women were considered as tool to gain wealth by arranging marriage. Young women did not have freedom because of family restrictions and traditional custom roles. Women’s mobility was

restricted. Women were not allowed to go for war. They got depressed.  
(1997, p. 12)



Figure 8: Mulan Practices to Be A Good Bride

Women in Han Dynasty were mated with specific purposes. Chen states that the purposes, as follows:

Nowadays, researcher reports that in Han Dynasty, parents restricted their daughters to choose their own spouses. Then, parents and match-maker were the ones who decided their marital lives. Besides that, they also decided the future of the daughters. This match-making process was made so that women could tolerance the death possibility of their husbands due to war, and so on, since in the match-making process the ones who decided whether the girl is fine or not is the match-maker herself and the guy. (2012, p. 7)

In a marriage, women's opinion should also be considered. She should not only follow the decision made by the match-maker and the man, because Mann (1997) states "...she would suffer for the rest of her life." Schram gives a solution on women decision making discrimination, as follows:

China should have continued their progress on abolishing marriage restriction, if they wanted to be a role model for other countries. Women should have permitted for taking care of their own business, meeting people outside, mainly men, and expressing their opinions, because without those rights women were not able to talk and find their own spouses. (1997, p. 48)

Besides that, parents should support and respect their daughters' decision about whom they would be married, because marrying their daughters to wrong people could put them at risk. Mann states:

No matter how much bride-giving parents contrived to “match doors”, however the High Qing marriage market put daughters at special risk. Unbalanced sex ratios, resulting from the preference for sons in the family system, created an insatiable demand for brides, which one demographer has termed a persistent “marriage crunch”. (1997, p. 8)

#### **4.2.3. Freedom of Speech Discrimination**

Women in Han Dynasty cannot freely talk. When Mulan delivers her wishes to the royal advisor, her words did not affect him at all. This situation shows that no matter women tries, they always getting ignored in the end for speaking out their mind. Even until now, women are still not able to freely talk, women are still being oppressed. Huang states the issue regarded women's freedom of speech in Han Dynasty:

In dynasty era, women could raise voice. The issue was when they did; their words regarded nothing to men. Women's social status was

lower than men. Women were claimed as the cause of corruption and threat to men's gender integrity. (2006, p. 2)

Women were not supposed to bargain with the rulers about what they wanted to do. Long time ago, women are always asked to do the house chores meanwhile men is the one who pay the bills. In the movie, Mulan errand is to feed the dog named Little Brother and the chickens and pour tea for her father.

In her book entitled "On Democracy", Li states the rulers expected women to speak, as follows:

After Han Dynasty rulers released the policy that women were not permitted to look for their own spouses. There were other discrimination against women emerged. One of the examples was four virtues, which are women should have moral, polite sayings, good manner, and being diligent on working, despite of they did not even get their rights and some of them were enslaved. (2002, p. 339)

According to writer's opinion, restriction on freedom of speech should have been abolished, because by permitting citizens to give suggestions, critiques, or opinion, the problems of the country can be solved a lot better and faster, because of knowing the root of the problems.

Besides that, Gibson states the reason discrimination should be abolished, as follows:

Restriction on freedom of speech in women empowerment, choosing spouse should, and so on and discrimination on status and sex should be abolished for the sake of equality in opportunity in

empowerment. The rulers should protect the life and personal rights.  
(2002, p. 55)

People should be able to express their opinions regardless of how it would make one feel, as they have the freedom to ignore. Freedom of speech should have no limits. Freedom of speech is essential.

