

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

Sinta's characteristics will be defined based on the physical and non-physical categories.

4.1 Physical Characteristics

Physical characteristics are beautiful, fertile, and chaste. These characteristics are in accordance with Mukherjee's theory of the image of women in Hinduism (1983).

4.1.1 Being Beautiful

Being beautiful is the first physical characteristic that a woman must have, especially as a character in a story. Lizawati (2015) discovered that physically, women are typically represented as a beautiful form like a goddess. A beautiful woman appears to be the pinnacle of all. Sinta's character first appears in the book when Begawan Yogiswara orders her son, Ramawijaya, to go to Mantili and compete to win Princess Sinta. In the line when Begawan Yogiswara told his son, he used the adjective "beautiful" to describe Sinta's appearance. It reveals that Sinta is well-known for her undoubtedly stunning appearance, "King Janaka is holding a competition: whoever can pull the bowstring of the bow of love will win his beautiful daughter, Princess Sinta" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 96).

The word "beautiful" emerges for the second time to describe Sinta's beauty when sitting next to King Janaka at the competition location, "At his side sat Princess Sinta, radiantly beautiful" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 97). In this case, Sinta's beauty seems to be the most important attraction of Sinta as a woman.

The beautiful Sinta is described in greater detail at the time she and Rama are travelling to Ayodya as they face a roaring wind in the forest. Suddenly, a massive behemoth appeared from beyond the trees' crack, barring their path. To fulfil his oaths, the giant wishes to murder Rama. When Rama gets out of the chaise, the verse depicts Sinta's beauty standing next to him, "At his side was Sinta, her alluring beauty mesmerized and enchanted even wayward clouds" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 104). Sinta's presence does not appear to be necessary in this situation, because it is who Rama will defeat the giant. However, the author continues to underline Sinta's flawless beauty, which can even withstand a storm.

Furthermore, Sinta's beauty is not often described explicitly. Her beauty can be shown through symbols. For instance, the tale describes how Rama and Sinta encounter the enormous Wirada in the bush. Wirada seizes Sinta in order to anger Rama, "She looked like a white pearl in Wirada's hand" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 123). Sinta, like a white pearl, represents something petite and beautiful. Her beauty cannot be diminished by living in a wood. She is still beautiful even though she is in the forest, a place that is usually associated with darkness and mystery, "Meanwhile, Sinta's beauty blossomed as she became accustomed to life in the great forest" (Sindhunata, 2015, p.126).

Sinta's physical beauty can also be recognised in the author's direct statement of some of her body's most beautiful features. Sinta is quite slender in appearance, "Clothed simply in white, Sinta was as slender as a shaft of divine light that shone from the eyes of Surya, the god of the sun" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 128). Further, she features dainty fingers, "Surrounded by the peacefulness of nature,

Sinta stroked Rama's forehead and combed his hair with her slender fingers" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 129). Sinta's eyes are characterised as sparkling and even radiating divine light in another line, "Sinta's eyes were indeed mesmerizing, but even more enticing was their divine radiance" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 129). She also has perfectly arched eyebrows and long, thick, and curling lashes, all of which draw attention to her beautiful eyes, "Her eyebrows were like two delicate rainbows; her eyelashes turned up to the sky" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 418). Furthermore, similar to the pomegranates, her lips are described as being red in this sentence, "The fawn was charmed not by the beauty in her lips that were as red as fresh pomegranates, but by the sweet words that flowed from them" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 129). The last line suggests that Sinta's breasts are as round and firm as a pair of ivory coconuts, "Covered with a beautiful cloth, her breasts were like a pair of ivory coconuts; the cleavage between them shimmered like a rainbow" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 418).

According to the lines regarding Sinta's beauty, her attractiveness has brought satisfaction to her husband, Rama, since the first time the adjective "beautiful" appears. Rama even compliments Sinta's beauty. Despite living in suffering, Sinta's physical beauty is capable of bringing Rama delight, "Rama continually marvelled and praised his wife's beauty" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 127).

The following statement is extremely intriguing since, in the Ramayana story, Sinta will suffer hardship while being kidnapped by the king of Alengka for a long period. However, the word "beautiful" is employed to emphasize Sinta's misfortune. Even though she will be unhappy in a short period of time, she is still

lovely, “There was no one in this world who could paint her beauty, which would shortly be embraced by misery” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 128).

The radiance of her beauty irritates those around her, “Her anger flared when she saw Sinta’s beauty” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 131). It occurs when Sarpakenaka attempts to entice Rama because she desires him. However, Rama claims that only Sinta has the ability to possess his heart. Sarpakenaka then looks at Sinta and sees a magnificent beauty in her. Sinta's flawless physical attractiveness is equally attractive to another woman. Sarpakenaka, in comparison to Sinta, is nothing more than a slave attempting to earn the heart of God. She is also telling Rahwana, her brother, about the beauty of Sinta in order to gain her brother's interest, “These two warriors are escorting the most beautiful woman I have ever seen” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 139). Rahwana thinks of Sinta as being the incarnation of the Goddess Widowati based on Sarpakenaka's depiction of Sinta. Rahwana therefore believes Sinta has an equal amount of power to him, which is why he wants to possess her. The manner in which Sarpakenaka describes Sinta's beauty to his brother serves to highlight how that beauty eventually becomes Sinta's charm.

Sinta's beauty does not end in this book, even after she has overcome her difficulties in Alengka. She is still considered as a lovely woman who saves her beauty for her one and only husband, “Sinta was like a flower with the body of a cloud, ready to offer her beauty to Rama who was at the gate of Argasoka Garden” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 418).

In Hinduism, a woman should be renowned for her beauty, just like Sinta is, as this is emphasized numerous times in the text. Gandhi gave three examples of

excellent women in Hindu culture (Mukherjee, 1983). Sita, who is characterized as charming, is one of them. One of the keys to being a good lady is to be beautiful. The reason why a woman's appearance is vital is because she is responsible for making her husband's life happy. Beauty is one important aspect that a woman must possess.

4.1.2 Being Fertile

Women in Hinduism have two meanings. The bestower is the first one. The bestower is a good woman who can get pregnant (Wadley, 1977). The narrative does not directly discuss Sinta's fertility since the novel focuses on Sinta's functions as Rama's wife. Sinta's sensual body, on the other hand, is described in the narrative through Rahwana's imagination. Rahwana's passion is out of control. He visualises Sinta's body,

He imagined her breasts were like two full moons that had descended to settle on to the chest of an Ashoka flower. To his eyes blurred by passion, Sinta's slender waist was like the tendril of the wild yam vine that begged to cast aside the cloth that was covering it (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 342).

Being fertile is linked to having a body that can have children. Sensuality conveys the sense that a woman's body is fruitful.

4.1.3 Being Chaste

Chastity refers to a woman's virginity. One of the many reasons a woman needs a man to protect her chastity. According to Bambawale (2004), a man is the only one capable of rescuing a woman from the clutches of male lust. In other words, a woman should only keep her body for her husband. If the wife is being

touched by other men, it suggests that the first husband has failed. It follows that if the wife is pure, the husband will feel superior. Thus, purity is essential for a Hindu woman.

In this novel, Sinta is a nice Hindu lady because she demonstrates that she stays chaste till the end, despite Rama's constant doubts about her purity. Rama has his initial doubts about Sinta's purity when he sends Anoman to find out where Sinta is imprisoned. He provides Anoman a ring that will be used to determine Sinta's virginity. If the ring's stone lights in Sinta's finger, it implies she is still pure. Sinta, on the other hand, is saddened by Rama's skepticism. Trijata, Wibisana's daughter, proudly claims Sinta's virginity. Trijata claims that, "I am witness to Sinta's purity" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 254). Despite her sacrifices, Sinta remains patient and prepared to put the ring on her finger. The ring shines. It demonstrates Sinta's chastity.

Rama's pride requires him to ensure that Sinta remains chaste. A woman is viewed as a liability by men. It indicates that if the woman is no longer virgin and is not with the man, the male will lose his pride. Thus, a woman requires a guy to defend and protect her chastity. The explanation for this is that a woman can only be saved from a man's passion by another man. However, instead of protecting the woman because of love, they protect her as a way to keep his own pride. In other words, Sinta appears to be simply a pawn in Rama and Rahwana's game.

Sinta, on the other hand, is a devoted wife. She tries her hardest to keep her chastity since she knows she has to be loyal to her husband, who is waiting for her out there. When Rahwana cannot wait any longer to touch Sinta, she fights hard to

protect her body. She says, “Rahwana, do not touch me!” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 341). She demonstrates self-control and refuses to submit to Rahwana's desire. At the end of the story, Sinta's purity triumphed over Rahwana's depravity. Her perseverance in the face of adversity in order to keep her body and heart pure has resulted in her defeat of Rahwana, “Her purity had transcended his power that defeated Rahwana’s wickedness” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 420).

Nonetheless, following Rahwana's destruction and Rama's victory, Rama begins to doubt Sinta's virginity. He challenges Sinta to verify her purity by entering the flames. This implies that Rama's victorious moment is not just when he defeats Rahwana, but also when Sinta's virginity, her lovely wife, is still solely his. Likewise, Sinta is a representation of a good wife. She may have chosen not to enter the flame in order to defend her honor. However, she is aware of her position as a wife and that she must obey her husband's commands. She uses the fire that did not burn her as proof of her chastity, “As the minutes passed the fire flared higher and higher, enveloping her purity” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 425). Sinta demonstrated and established her virtuosity and saintliness by her suffering in the fire.

4.2 Non-Physical Characteristics

Non-physical characteristics are honest, faithful, forgiving, comforting, patient, submissive, sacrificial, and spiritual. These characteristics are in accordance with Mukherjee's theory of the image of women in Hinduism (1983).

4.2.1 Being Honest

Truthfulness is a hallmark of a truly wonderful female character trait. A woman with a nice heart is a rare find. In the narrative, Sinta's chastity is a reflection

of her integrity. On the other hand, Rama doubts her honesty. Therefore, venturing into the fire is the only option for determining whether or not Sinta is being truthful. If she is burned by the fire, it signifies she is not honest, “May my honesty and sincerity be my witnesses; may this fire purify me” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 425). Since she was not singed by the fire, she must still be uncontaminated and, most importantly, trustworthy.

Sinta as the representation of Asian women shows her integrity or *mitayani* in Javanese. *Mitayani* represents honesty. As a woman, you must always be sincere and chaste. There does not appear to be any space for a woman to consider herself (Nirmalawati & Wahyuningsih, 2017). Thus, Sinta is living proof that honesty is the key to a good lady.

4.2.2 Being Faithful

There are six factors that contribute to a woman's death in Hinduism (Wadley, 1977). Separation is a contributing factor since it shows the woman's emotional and physical isolation from her husband. Sinta is subjected to this requirement, but she is unfazed because she has remained loyal despite it. She says to her husband, “Rama, my beloved husband, do not look upon me as one who is disloyal to her husband’s hardships” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 111). Sinta can bear the suffering because she accepts it as part of her own journey in keeping her loyalty with her husband just as shown in this line, “Her tears were not tears of fear of life suffering, but rather, they were tears of a wife’s loyalty to her husband and his life of hardship” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 112).

A wife is expected to be by her husband's side throughout every stage of life. The true test for a wife is when her husband is enduring a difficult journey. Sinta chooses to remain by Rama's side during his agony, "Despite all of my weaknesses, I will willingly accompany you in your ordeal. Your ordeal is my happiness, Rama" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 111).

Being faithful entails always attempting to be dedicated to someone in the face of adversity. In her statement, Sinta reminds Rama that she may have flaws as a woman. Those weaknesses, however, are the ones that could best compliment Rama's ordeal. She even implies that she is content to be with Rama during his ordeal.

Another quote from the book that demonstrates Sinta's undying love for her husband emphasizes the significance of a loyal and devoted partner, "Rama spent the day in the arms of his loyal wife (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 127)." She herself asserted that her devotion to her husband would last forever, "The season may end, but there will never be an end to my devotion to my love, Prince Rama" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 252).

Sinta remains devoted even when her loyalty is tested when she is caught in the Alengka. She feels miserable and remains silent. Despite the fact that Rahwana offers Sinta everything, Sinta refuses to let Rahwana touch her. In this declaration, she shows her affection for Rama. She will continue to wait for her husband to liberate her from Rahwana's clutches, "It is better that I die rather than surrender to your passion" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 252).

Sinta, on the other hand, seeks to ensure that Rama continues to adore her as a result of her loyalty. That is why she gives Anoman her necklace, claiming that if Rama still loves her, the flame will not die. She asserts in this statement that she must know her husband's affection since she will not fall in love with other guys, “Anoman, I trust you, but forgive me, as I will not give myself to any man other than your master” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 255).

A woman has several different roles, one of the roles is to be a wife (Wadley, 1977). In Hinduism, to be a good woman, she must be a devoted wife. Faithful to her husband means to do according to the woman's role. In addition, the woman's setting is typically within her family's home. Therefore, it is evident that Sinta should go wherever Rama is, as he is her home. Sinta is devoted to her spouse and will obey him with her life. In addition, a good Hindu female must take special care of her marriage since it must last for the final time. In other words, once a woman gets married, it must be eternal (Smith, 2008). Sinta is obligated by Hindu tradition to maintain her marriage to Rama regardless of what happens.

Sinta, in addition to representing Hindu women, also represents Asian women. Women in Javanese should be *satya* and *bekti*. *Satya* refers to a woman's faithfulness to her husband, whilst *bekti* refers to a woman's devotion to her spouse. To be a good wife, a woman must obey her husband's commands as long as they are good (Nirmalawati & Wahyuningsih, 2017).

4.2.3 Forgiving

Sinta continues to comply with Rama's requests despite his repeated misgivings. Sinta is willing to accompany Rama to his trial and even puts on the

ring, as requested by Rama, to demonstrate her love. However, when she attempts to confirm Rama's love by giving him a necklace, Rama continues to prioritise his vanity. The fact that the necklace does not even glow reveals Rama's uncertainty over his affection for Sinta. He sighs in regret and guilt for Sinta, “Sinta, forgive me” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 275).

Sinta's response is not expressly recorded in the text; nonetheless, the fact that Sinta continues to wait for Rama and even dresses magnificently when she first encounters Rama demonstrating her forgiveness for Rama. Sinta's profound love for her husband, once again, enables her to withstand any problems. Sinta exemplifies a feminine quality, the capacity for forgiveness (Wadley, 1977).

4.2.4 Being Comforting

Sinta's affection is compared to the aroma of flowers in this verse, “Sinta’s love felt as soft as the fragrance of the flowers surrounding him” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 122). While the aroma of the flowers is pleasing to the human nose, Sinta's love is pleasing to Rama.

The way a woman speaks reveals her genuine self. A woman must have lovely words in addition to physical beauty to be regarded as a good woman, “Her sweet words were as melodious as lazy dewdrops that dripped from the tips of leaves and flowers as they were blown by the breeze” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 128).

Sinta's words have the power to make Rama happy and serene, “My pure love will never be extinguished; it will never be devoured by misery” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 127). She says those words to assure Rama that she will always love Rama with her whole heart. The pain they are going through will not take away her love.

Despite the fact that Rama must undergo the rigors of living in the forest, Sinta can make living in the forest as lovely and delightful as living in the palace.

The fawn is described in the verse as falling for Sinta's beautiful words, "The fawn was charmed not by the beauty in her lips that were as red as fresh pomegranates, but by the sweet words that flowed from them" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 129). It demonstrates how Sinta is actually a comfort to Rama, since even the animals can see her love. It can be alluded to that if an animal can be soothed by the sweet words Sinta utters, Rama will be soothed by the words as well.

Sinta's manner of comforting Rama is appropriate for a Hindu wife. A wife who continues to serve her husband will enter heaven (Mukherjee, 1994). Sinta's manner of soothing Rama demonstrates how she serves her spouse.

A woman with excellent feminine attributes may also make a man's life more enjoyable. Even if the spouse has to live beneath a tree, that tree will be as warm and cheerful as their home. A spouse who does not have that type of wife, on the other hand, will live in the desert (Mukherjee, 1994). As a result of Sinta, Rama's life in the forest is not as unpleasant as it should be.

4.2.5 Being Patient

Sinta is upset when she hears that Rama intends to prove her purity by putting her finger on a ring. She gives up everything, including her life, but Rama still does not believe in her. Trijata is also irritated, but Sinta controls her emotions and demonstrates patience,

“Trijata, be patient. Love can indeed create everything, even suspicion of my purity, even though I have paid for that purity with deep suffering” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 254).

Sinta barely complains about her life in this story. She constantly presents herself as a caring wife who understands that her husband's pain is equally hers.

A woman should not initiate a fight (Wadley, 1977). The reason for this is because women must be uninterested in their own life. Their primary focus as a woman is on their spouse and family. As a result, even if her spouse is rude, a wife must remain courteous (Young, 1994). A wife should be able to suppress her wrath by being patient in order to be kind.

Sinta, in addition to being a Hindu woman, is also a portrayal of an Asian woman in the narrative. Sapia (2021) stated that the Javanese women had to be *luluh*, or patient.

4.2.6 Being Submissive

Sinta's submissiveness is conveyed by the statement when she decides to follow Rama, “Rama, allow me to go with you, begged Sinta with tears in her eyes” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 112). The context of that line is when Queen Kekayi informs Sinta that Rama has been banished to the wilderness and that Sinta must accompany him. Rama genuinely feels sorry for Sinta and lets her go. Sinta, on the other hand, recognizes her station, which is as Rama's wife. As a wife, she must be present wherever her husband is, regardless of the circumstances. Furthermore, Rama is a source of happiness for her, “There is no longer any meaning in my life now, Trijata.

Allow me to leave this world. Give me the knife so that I can follow my husband, Rama” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 343). She trusts Rama with her life.

Sinta's submissiveness is further demonstrated when she is referred to as a flower for the second time. If Sinta's love is first likened to the scent of flowers, Sinta is the flower in this comparison. A flower is typically used to describe something beautiful but fragile. The beauty of a flower frequently draws someone to pick it. Once plucked, the flower is completely dependent on the picker to care for it. The next verse emphasises that Sinta provides all of her beauty to her spouse, which is a symbol of submissiveness, “I offer you all of the beauty which I possess” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 420).

Aside from being described as heavenly beautiful like a flower, Sinta also possesses a cloud-like body, “Sinta was like a flower with the body of a cloud, ready to offer her beauty to Rama who was at the gate of Argasoka Garden” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 418). The clouds can also symbolize tenderness and meekness, which indicate submissiveness.

It is underlined in another paragraph that she maintains being subservient, “As a woman, I can only latch on to your glory” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 423). A woman had no identity on her own. If the husband finds his glory, so does the wife support him.

According to Gulati (1985), males regard women as a liability rather than an asset. Liability can be defined in two ways: as a burden and as responsibility. It can be understood that the male who is the protector owns the woman's life and body. Because men are the protectors, women should be naturally submissive. It

fits with what ancient scriptures and folktales talk about Hindu wives being submissive and subjugated (Wadley, 1977).

In addition, Manu's Laws stated that women are born with an evil nature (Wadley, 1977). As a result, women must be able to control their evil nature, and God sends males to protect women. In other words, women's primary function is to be subordinate to men.

4.2.7 Being Sacrificial

Sinta is willing to give her life to offer Rama happiness. Sinta's sacrifice is most evident when Rama and she are banished to the forest. The forest is an unexpected location. However, in the preceding verse, Sinta is willing to walk ahead of her husband to ensure that Rama's route is clear and safe,

“That beauty will be even more glorious if I walk in front of you, clearing the way in the forest, catching butterflies to adorn the path of your suffering to transform it into one of joy (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 111-112).”

Sinta feels certain that having her as Rama's companion is preferable. Sinta admits in the next paragraph that she gives up all of her comfort to live a harsh life in the wilderness with Rama,

“Rama, do not worry about my discomfort. I would rather die than be separated from you. I would be devastated if I had to watch you depart for the forest to undergo hardship while I lived with ease in the palace” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 112).

Looking at her sacrifice, Sinta indeed knows her place as a wife of somebody. She appears to recognize that she is no longer a single entity, as she now

joins with Rama as her husband. As a result, she would feel guilty and shattered if she had to leave Rama alone in his suffering.

Sinta's sacrifice also recalls Hinduism's view of women as shakti. Woman is the incarnation of shakti. Shakti, the feminine, is the source of all male strength (Nayar, 2004). In Hinduism, man's nature is to be static and stationary. Consequently, it might be claimed that a man is worthless without a woman (Patel, 1994). Thus, it is evident that Sinta's husband requires her to be his power.

4.2.8 Being Spiritual

Spirituality is concerned with a woman's relationship with herself and how she chooses her own route in life (Nayar, 2004). Sinta demonstrates her independence in this novel by selecting her own way. She seems to have the choice whether she wants to follow her husband or not because Rama himself in the story feels guilty for Sinta. However, Sinta chooses to fulfill her responsibility as a wife. Not only that, but she suffers the trials just as much as Rama. Sinta's decision to spend time with Rama in the wilderness demonstrates her independent will, "Her dedication to the endurance of her trials flowed like the clear sparkling forest streams" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 126-127). Furthermore, the narrative clearly shows that she is with Rama not because of compulsion, but because of love. This demonstrates that she can refuse to be touched by Rahwana even though he repeatedly asks to do so, "Until the day I die, I will never fall victim to the desire of that wicked king" (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 403).

Another evidence of Sinta's spirituality is that she does not immediately comply with Rama's request to demonstrate her virginity. Instead, she states her

belief that she is exempt from the burden of proof because she has maintained her innocence from the very start,

“Rama, I do not wish to prove my loyalty to you because ever since the first time I met you, the purity of my love has remained untouched. I only want to show you how much I love you” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 424).

Sinta, the female protagonist, is portrayed as a loving, but not powerless, spouse. She is still an independent thinker with the capacity to make her own decisions, “Why should I be afraid of fire that will test my purity?” (Sindhunata, 2015, p. 424). Moreover, Hinduism believes several things that can ruin women, one of them is keeping company with bad people (Mukherjee, 1983). Rahwana is classified as a villainous character in this case. Sinta is unaffected by him. In other words, she remains pure and in the correct path.