

TOXIC MASCULINITY AS A MECHANISM OF PATRIARCHAL CONTROL IN FAMILY RELATIONS: A SYLVIA WALBY PERSPECTIVE ON 'ALĀ' NAṢR'S *KĀNAT LI-TAKŪN*

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Toxic masculinity is one of the manifestations of the patriarchal system that shapes power relations within the family through male domination over women. This phenomenon is important to examine because it reveals how patriarchal values are reproduced and normalized in family life through various forms of control and social expectations. The analysis to describe how toxic masculinity is represented within the family as a manifestation of the patriarchal system in the novel *Kānat li-Takūn* by 'Alā' Naṣr. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method using Sylvia Walby's patriarchal theory. The data source is the novel *Kānat li-Takūn* by 'Alā' Naṣr. Data were collected through reading and note-taking techniques and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model by referring to Sylvia Walby's theory of patriarchy. The findings indicate that toxic masculinity is represented through prohibitions and obligations that regulate family relationships. Prohibitions function as a form of control that restricts individual freedom and mobility, while obligations serve as normative demands that direct behavior according to standards established within the family. Both forms create power relations that position men as the dominant party. These findings demonstrate that toxic masculinity in the novel functions as a mechanism through which patriarchal authority is normalized within family relationships, offering new insights into the representation of patriarchy in contemporary Arabic fiction and broadening discussions of gendered power relations.

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INTRODUCTION

Toxic masculinity remains a pervasive phenomenon in society and is often perceived as a normal feature of relationships between men and women. Various controlling practices imposed on women are justified in the name of protection and family honor. However, in many cultural contexts, the family also serves as a site where patriarchal systems are continuously reproduced, positioning men as authoritative figures while women are expected to conform to domestic roles (Russell & Yang, 2024). This structure not only shapes the division of gender roles but also normalizes men's control over women, as it is legitimized by prevailing social norms (Assayuthi et al., 2023). This phenomenon indicates that gender relations within the family are not formed naturally, but rather are the result of social constructions produced by the patriarchal system and passed down from one generation to another through various social practices within family life (Safriyanto et al., 2024). This construction is clearly reflected in the novel *Kānat li-Takūn* by 'Alā' Naṣr, which represents how the patriarchal system operates within the family through various mechanisms of control and domination over women (Aziza & Nugroho, 2025). In the novel, patriarchal values are not only maintained by certain individuals but are also perpetuated through a social system that positions men as having greater authority than women. As a result, gender inequality within the family is often perceived as natural and continues to be reproduced in everyday life (Rahmatullah & Sunarto, 2025).

The phenomena portrayed in literary works can be understood as representations of social reality, since literature is a cultural product that reflects the values, norms, and social structures operating within society. Therefore, the patriarchal practices depicted in *Kānat li-Takūn* may be viewed as a reflection of gender inequalities that continue to exist in social life (Sari et al., 2024). Through the portrayal of characters, conflicts, and plot development, literary works can illustrate how patriarchal norms influence the lives of their characters and shape patterns of relationships between men and women. In this context, literature functions not only as a medium of entertainment, but also as a space for reflection that enables readers to understand various social practices occurring within society (Agustina et al., 2025). The novel *Kānat li-Takūn* by 'Alā' Naṣr (2015) portrays the lives of its characters within a family environment influenced by patriarchal norms, in which men are frequently positioned as the holders of authority within the family. Through various events experienced by the characters, the novel illustrates how behaviors reflecting toxic masculinity emerge in family interactions, particularly in the form of male domination over women and restrictions on women's freedom to determine their own life choices (Beti et al., 2024).

Several previous studies have examined issues of patriarchy, masculinity, and the subordination of women in literary works. Some studies indicate that the patriarchal system plays a role in shaping unequal gender relations and perpetuating male domination in various aspects of life, such as the study conducted by Wahyudi et al., (2022), which demonstrates that men are portrayed according to social constructions within the patriarchal system, where men are constructed as figures who display more dominant attitudes. Other studies have also highlighted how the construction of masculinity within patriarchal societies can give rise to various forms of dominant behavior toward women (Ramadhan et al., 2023). Similarly, the study by Maharani et al., (2023) also highlights that the construction of masculinity commonly occurs within the family. Likewise, (Wulan et al., 2025) argues that gender significantly influences the division of domestic responsibilities within the family.

Most of these studies still focus on the analysis of patriarchy in general. Studies that specifically highlight toxic masculinity within families as a manifestation of the patriarchal system, particularly in the novel *Kānat li-Takūn* by ‘Alā’ Naṣr, remain relatively limited. This study is important because the novel *Kānat li-Takūn* by ‘Alā’ Naṣr presents a representation of gender relations within the family that illustrates how the patriarchal system operates through various restrictive practices over women. By employing Sylvia Walby’s theory of patriarchy, this study is expected to reveal the forms of toxic masculinity in family relationships in greater depth and explain their relationship to the patriarchal structures underlying them. Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich literary studies, particularly in the fields of feminist literary criticism and gender studies, as well as contribute to the development of the application of Sylvia Walby’s patriarchal theory in the analysis of Arabic literary works. Practically, this study is expected to enhance readers’ understanding of various forms of patriarchal domination and their impacts on women within family life, furthermore, as Pangestu et al., (2026) argues, studies on patriarchy can serve as valuable references for future researchers examining issues of patriarchy, gender, and toxic masculinity in literary works.

METHOD

The present study a descriptive qualitative research design aimed at identifying and describing the forms of toxic masculinity in the domestic sphere as manifestations of the patriarchal system in literary works (Ratna, 2021) . This approach was chosen because the study focuses on the contextual and in-depth interpretation of textual data. The data consist of quotations representing toxic masculinity within the family, while the data source is the novel *Kānat li-Takūn* by ‘Alā’ Naṣr (Naṣr, 2015). Data were collected through reading and note-taking techniques, involving a thorough and repeated reading of the text, followed by the identification and recording of quotations containing elements of toxic masculinity in family relationships.

The data analysis in this study follows the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles et al., (2014) , which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The analyzed data are then interpreted using Sylvia Walby’s theory of patriarchy to identify and explain the forms of patriarchy represented in the novel. During the data reduction stage, the researcher selected and focused on quotations from the novel *Kānat li-Takūn* that were related to the representation of toxic masculinity and then categorized them based on forms of power relations within the family. In the data display stage, the reduced data were organized into a narrative description illustrating the patterns of toxic masculinity represented in the text, enabling systematic understanding of the relationships among the data. Subsequently, in the conclusion-drawing stage, the researcher interpreted the displayed data to identify patterns of meaning that reveal how toxic masculinity is represented in the novel. To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, this study employed persistent reading through repeated examinations of the novel *Kānat li-Takūn*. This process was conducted to ensure the consistency of the findings and to strengthen the validity of the data interpretation, thereby ensuring that the results of the analysis are academically accountable.

RESULT

In the novel *Kānat li-Takūn*, Sina’s life cannot be separated from the strong familial pressures, particularly those originating from male figures within the family

structure. The family is portrayed as a space filled with rules, advice, and obligations that must be obeyed, rather than merely a place of protection and affection. These pressures emerge gradually and continue over a long period of time, shaping Sina's lifestyle and way of thinking from an early age. Although these pressures do not always appear in the form of direct or harsh coercion, but are often wrapped in motives of love, concern, and the desire to protect, they essentially contain restrictions that place Sina in a passive and obedient position. Sina becomes accustomed to accepting family decisions without sufficient space to question or reject them, making the relationship between Sina and her family more hierarchical than dialogical.

This condition demonstrates that the family plays a central role in directing the course of Sina's life, both through prohibitions and obligations imposed upon her. These continuous pressures also become a source of psychological conflict that influences her attitudes, choices, and relationships with the surrounding social environment. Therefore, familial pressure in the novel *Kānat li-Takūn* appears through two primary forms: the prohibition against Sina determining her own life choices and the obligation to comply with the conditions imposed by the family, as discussed in the following sections.

Prohibition Against Determining One's Own Life Choices

In the novel *Kānat li-Takūn*, the character Sina experiences various forms of prohibition and is not granted the freedom to make her own decisions. Sina's family imposes several restrictions upon her. There are ten conditions established to determine Sina's choices, and among these conditions, the tenth condition is directly related to freedom in decision-making. The tenth condition states that Sina is required to accept an arranged marriage without having any voice or opportunity to object. This is reflected in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 1.1 Institutionalizing Restrictions

الشرط العاشر: ستجدين هذا الشرط مع نفس الشخص الذي سيعطيك مفتاح المجلد وبدون الشرط الأخير لن يعطيك المفتاح!..

The tenth condition: You will find this condition from the same person who will give you the key to this volume... and without fulfilling the final condition, he will not give you the key!

This quotation illustrates, the condition emphasizes that self-control is considered important within their relationship. Through the data, the researcher found that controlling anger in the novel *Kānat li-Takūn* constitutes one of the conditions imposed by the grandfather upon Sina. In this context, Sina is unable to make her own decisions freely. The prohibition against Sina determining her own life choices begins when she is ten years old, at the moment she receives a strange and large volume from her grandfather. The book is extremely heavy, making it difficult for her to lift, and it is equipped with a lock that can only be opened with a key. This gift marks the beginning of a series of restrictions and conditions that Sina must fulfill before she is allowed to open it. This is reflected in the following data.

Excerpt 1.2 Early Socialization of Obedience

عندما بلغت من العمر عشر سنين، أهداها جدها مجلداً كبيراً كان من الصعب عليها أن تحمله بيديها الصغيرتين، كان شكل المجلد عجيباً حتى أنه أغلق بقفل لا يُفتح إلا بمفتاح، أخبرها

جدها..

When she was ten years old, her grandfather gave her a large volume that was difficult for her to carry with her small hands. The shape of the volume was strange, and it was locked with a padlock that could only be opened with a key...

This excerpt suggests, it can be understood that the grandfather had already predetermined the conditions for Sina. The data further indicate that the large volume given by the grandfather became the starting point for the prohibitions and restrictions that Sina was required to obey. The restrictions imposed upon Sina by her family represent expressions of concern and affection from her grandfather. Sina's grandfather explains that all of the prohibitions and conditions he imposes originate from his love and concern for her. This emerges in the following statement.

Excerpt 1.3 Affection as a Justification for Control

“واعلمى جيدا أننى أحبك كثيرا وما فعلت شيئا إلا لعلمى بك وخوفى عليك..”

Know well that I love you very much, and I have done nothing except because I know you and fear for you...

This evidence indicates that the restrictions imposed by the grandfather are manifestations of his concern and affection toward Sina. Sina's obedience to the conditions imposed by her grandfather does not stem from ambition or curiosity, but rather from love and affection. This is reflected in the following data.

Excerpt 1.4 Internalized Obedience

بسبب عمرها الصغير حينها لم تدرك تمام ما يرمى إليه جدها، ولكنها فعلت كما طلب، ليس فقط لأنها تريد فتح المجلد إلا أنها كانت تحب جدها كثيرا..

Because of her young age at that time, she did not fully understand what her grandfather intended, but she did as he asked, not only because she wanted to open the volume, but also because she loved her grandfather very much...

The excerpt portrays that Sina's obedience is motivated by affection rather than mere personal desire. They further demonstrate that Sina fulfills all the conditions entrusted to her by her grandfather before opening the volume he gave her. Another significant finding is to the grandfather, several other characters also pressure Sina regarding her life choices, namely her father and her future fiancé, Hamzah. Hamzah does not involve Sina in decision-making. In the novel *Kānat li-Takūn*, Hamzah takes the initiative to speak directly with Sina's father regarding a certain matter without first asking for Sina's opinion. This is illustrated in the following quotation.

Excerpt 1.5 Male-Dominated Decision Making

ابتسم وقال لى “إذا سأتفق مع والدك على التفاصيل”.. وعاد إلى صمته مرة أخرى..

He smiled and said to me, ‘Then I will discuss the details with your father,’ ... and returned to his silence once again...

These actions demonstrate that Hamzah tends to dominate the decision-making process, while Sina is not given the opportunity to express her opinion. This indicates

that Hamzah does not first seek Sina's opinion, but instead discusses the matter directly with her father. Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that there are three male figures in the novel *Kānat li-Takūn* the grandfather, the father, and Sina's fiancé who control Sina's life through the imposition of ten conditions that she must fulfill. These conditions are imposed upon Sina from the age of ten. Throughout these ten years, Sina demonstrates patience in facing them. In this context, a pattern of toxic masculinity is reflected in the relationship between Sina and the male figures in the novel.

Obligation to Comply with Family Conditions

Sina never expected that the restriction on determining her own life would begin when she was ten years old, as her journey started with ten simple yet burdensome conditions: she had to wait until the age of twenty before opening the mysterious volume left by her grandfather. Upon reading the first condition, Sina could only embrace her pillow and pray silently as her grandfather had taught her. In her sleep, she dreamed of wearing her favorite veil and standing at a crossroads, symbolizing the life choices she was unable to determine for herself. At dawn, her grandfather woke her with a warm kiss, and she began her journey driven by curiosity, faith, and love. She did not stop there; she memorized the Qur'an with proper tajwid, maintained her prayers and remembrances, performed two rak'ahs of repentance every night, and refrained from marriage before completing the volume. Every condition she fulfilled, whether simple or difficult, became part of her growth and struggle. The final and most mysterious condition was never written on any paper; it could only be discovered through the person holding the key and only when the proper time arrived. Thus, Sina lived her life adhering to the ten meaningful conditions inherited from her grandfather as part of a spiritual journey, maturity, and emotional attachment, learning that obedience is not merely an obligation, but proof of a silent and enduring love.

Excerpt 2.1 Obedience as a Life Journey

الشرط الأول: عليك أولاً أن تبلغى من العمر عشرون عاماً ... عندما قرأت ذلك الشرط... فعلت تماماً كما قال جدها.. ثم وضعت المجلد والورقة جانباً.. وضمت وسادتها إلى صدرها وشدت الغطاء عليها.. وذهبت ف سبات عميق بعد أن ظلت تستغفر الله كما عودها جدها ... رأت ف الحلم أنها ترتدى ذلك الحجاب الذي تعشقه وتقف على طريق به مفارق ولا تدري إلى أين تذهب!؟ أفاقت على قبلة جدها وهو يوقظها إلى صلاة الفجر، فردت إليه قبلته وقامت لتتوضأ وتصلى، ثم قرأت وردتها من القرآن وأذكار الصباح.. وراحت في سبات عميق مرة أخرى.. استيقظت لتتناول الفطور مع جدها.. ذلك الفطار الذي أعدته والدتها.. قبلت يد والدها ووالدتها وتناولت الفطار معهما.. ثم قررت أن تكمل الشروط.. تجاوزت الشرط الأول ثم أكملت...

The first condition: You must first reach the age of twenty years old... When she read that condition, she did exactly as her grandfather instructed her... then she placed the volume and the paper aside... embraced her pillow tightly and pulled the blanket over herself... and fell into a deep sleep after continuously seeking forgiveness from God as her grandfather had accustomed her to do... In her dream, she saw herself wearing the veil she loved and standing at a road with many intersections, not knowing where to go... She woke up to her grandfather's kiss as he awakened her for the dawn prayer...

This scene demonstrates that Sina lives her life by adhering to the ten meaningful conditions inherited from her grandfather as part of a journey of spirituality, maturity, and deep affection. Sina's grandfather is the first person who hinders her from determining her own life choices. He not only gives Sina a mysterious volume, but also imparts profound lessons about life. He fully understands that his granddaughter possesses great curiosity, a characteristic common among children who wish to know everything quickly. However, behind the warmth of his affection lies firmness. He decides not to give Sina the key to the volume immediately, writing.

Excerpt 2.2 Conditional Access to Autonomy

حبيبتي الصغيرة تذكرى لا يجب أن تفتحي المجلد إلا بعد تحقيق هذه الشروط كاملة دون أن ينقص منها شرطاً واحداً.. أعلم أنك فضولية إلى حد كبير، ولكن عليك تحقيق الشروط أولاً... ولعلنى بكمية فضولك.. قررت ألا أعطيك مفتاح المجلد إلا بعد تحقيق الشرط

My little beloved, remember that you must not open the volume until you have fulfilled all these conditions completely... I know that you are extremely curious, but you must fulfill the conditions first... and because I know the extent of your curiosity, I decided not to give you the key until you fulfill the first condition...

Based on this quotation, despite her curiosity regarding the will, Sina remains patient in following the ten conditions established by her grandfather. This demonstrates that the grandfather intentionally withholds the key because he understands her curiosity, yet wishes to teach her the meaning of patience and maturity through the fulfillment of the conditions. Since childhood, Sina has been given conditions by her grandfather that she must fulfill, although she does not yet understand their meaning. However, the grandfather, full of wisdom and affection, understands this. He does not force immediate understanding upon her, but instead chooses a gentle and educational approach by writing the conditions on a sheet of paper and giving them together with the large locked volume. He realizes that time and experience will eventually teach Sina the meaning behind each condition. In this way, the grandfather gives her rather than rules, but also a meaningful process of character and spiritual formation. This can be seen in the following quotation.

Excerpt 2.3 Educational Framing of Obedience

كان جدها يعلم أنها لم تبلغ من العمر الكثير حتى تدرك تماماً ما تعنيه الشروط، لذا أعطى لها مع المجلد ورقة وأخبرها أنه قد كتب بها الشروط.. وأخبرها أن عليها أن تعي جيداً ما تعنيه الشروط قبل أن تقرأ حرفاً واحداً من المجلد..

Her grandfather knew that she was still too young to fully understand the meaning of the conditions, so he gave her a paper together with the volume and told her that he had written the conditions on it...

The quotation reveals that Sina's grandfather realizes that his granddaughter is still too young to fully comprehend the conditions, and therefore writes them down so that she can gradually understand and fulfill them over time. When Sina is ten years old, she begins fulfilling the conditions imposed by her family, especially by her grandfather. At that moment, she receives the conditional volume that changes the direction of her

life, and in the room prepared specifically for her, she begins the long journey of fulfilling those conditions. Many years later, even after her grandfather's death, Sina continues to return to that house, sitting by the window overlooking the sea, her grandfather's favorite place. The house is beyond a building, but an inner emotional space filled with memories, contemplation, prayer, and gradual understanding of the inherited conditions.

Excerpt 2.4 Symbolic Control Through the Locked Volume

عندما بلغت من العمر عشر سنين، أهداها جدها مجلداً كبيراً كان من الصعب عليها أن تحمله
بيديها الصغيرتين، كان شكل المجلد عجيباً حتى أنه أغلق بقفل لا يُفتح إلا بمفتاح، أخبرها
جدها.. أن مفتاحه ف سلسله سُنْدى إليها بعد ذلك واشترط عليها حتى تفتحه شروط، من دونها
لا تستطيع أن تفتح الكتاب.. أو تقرأ أى جزء منه !!

When she reached the age of ten, her grandfather gave her a large volume that was difficult for her to carry with her small hands... it was locked with a padlock that could only be opened with a key...

This passage reflects, it can be understood that the large volume symbolizes responsibility, discipline, and personal development, while the lock and key represent preparedness and maturity in obtaining knowledge and understanding from an early age. When Sina reaches the age of twelve, she begins fulfilling one of the conditions established by her grandfather, namely memorizing the Qur'an with proper tajwid. This memorization is instead of a task, but a responsibility carried out with sincerity and dedication. Under the direct supervision of her grandfather, a figure who is both affectionate and firm, Sina repeats the verses day after day until she finally completes her memorization. This accomplishment not only brings her closer to opening the mysterious volume, but also strengthens the spiritual bond between herself, the Qur'an, and her grandfather.

Excerpt 2.5 Love Reinforcing Compliance

بسبب عمرها الصغير حينها لم تدرك تمام ما يرمى إليه جدها، ولكنها فعلت كما طلب، ليس فقط
لأنها تريد فتح المجلد إلا أنها كانت تحب جدها كثيراً...

Because of her young age at that time, she did not fully understand what her grandfather intended, but she did as he requested, not only because she wanted to open the volume, but because she loved her grandfather very much...

These data reveal that when Sina is twelve years old, she successfully completes the memorization of the Qur'an with proper tajwid as part of an important condition under the direct guidance of her grandfather. The narrative implies that when Sina reaches the age of nineteen, she strongly desires to open the volume given by her grandfather, yet she realizes that the imposed conditions still limit her freedom. She attempts to discover who possesses the key in hopes of opening it sooner, but all of her efforts fail. No one knows, or perhaps they intentionally refuse to tell her. At that moment, Sina begins to realize that the conditions are extends beyond tasks, but barriers obstructing her path. Nevertheless, she remains patient because she understands that all of these conditions are a trust left by someone she deeply loves.

Excerpt 2.6 Delayed Autonomy and Continued Submission

عندما بلغت من العمر تسعة عشر عاماً، كنت متشوقة جداً لقراءة المجلد، فقط عاماً واحداً
لأفتحه.. عاماً واحداً لأقرأ ذكرى من أهم الذكريات لدى من جدي...

When I reached the age of nineteen, I became extremely eager to read the
volume... only one more year remained before I could open it...

The episode symbolizes that at the age of nineteen, Sina clearly realizes that the conditions established by her grandfather have begun to limit her freedom and personal desires, especially when she unsuccessfully searches for the key. Based on the findings above, it can be concluded that Sina lives her life in obedience to the ten conditions established by her grandfather since she was ten years old. These conditions are beyond rules, but pathways toward character formation, responsibility, and maturity. Her grandfather is the most influential figure in directing her life, guiding her through affection and strong moral values. Sina fulfills all of these conditions sincerely, from memorizing the Qur'an and maintaining worship to obeying her parents, driven by her emotional attachment for her grandfather. Her grandfather's house becomes an important place where this process begins and remains a significant part of her memories. Although she sometimes feels burdened by the conditions, she continues to remain patient and obedient, realizing that all of these conditions represent a form of love and a valuable legacy in her life.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that toxic masculinity in familial settings in the novel *Kānat li-Takūn* is represented through the practices of prohibitions and obligations imposed upon the character Sina by male authority figures, namely her grandfather, father, and fiancé. These controlling behaviors place Sina in a subordinate position, where her autonomy, freedom of choice, and right to make decisions are restricted in the name of affection, protection, and moral guidance. The findings confirm that toxic masculinity in literary narratives does not always appear through direct violence or explicit oppression, but can also emerge through subtle and hidden forms of domination embedded within familial affection and patriarchal authority (Simbolon et al., 2025). This representation is in line with the research conducted by Prayoga (2023) which explains that toxic masculinity often functions as a social and cultural mechanism that normalizes male authority and emotional control in gender relations, particularly within patriarchal societies.

The findings further demonstrate that patriarchal power may operate through symbolic and psychological mechanisms rather than solely through physical coercion. Various mechanisms of control represented in the novel function as disciplinary instruments that regulate women's lives, where maturity, worthiness, and social acceptance are measured according to standards established by male authority. This finding is relevant to the concept of hegemonic masculinity discussed by Rohmah and Waro (2026), which explains that patriarchal masculinity legitimizes male domination by constructing obedience and submission as moral values within social relations. In this regard, women's compliance is portrayed extends beyond as a personal virtue but also as a consequence of hierarchical family structures that restrict women's agency and independence. Similar findings were also reported by Gulo et al., (2024), who argue that patriarchal control often operates through symbolic forms of discipline that normalize unequal gender relations.

A further implication is, the article that familial affection may simultaneously function as a mechanism of emotional control within patriarchal structures. Expressions of love, care, and protection are often used to legitimize restrictions and expectations imposed upon women, encouraging them to internalize obedience as a form of emotional responsibility toward their families. This finding reinforces the notion that a novel is not merely a fictional work but also a reflection of social reality (Dalimunte et al., 2025), as literary works frequently represent social conditions, cultural values, and gender relations experienced within society. The findings also indicate that patriarchal practices may operate through emotional attachment and familial responsibility rather than through direct forms of coercion. This interpretation is consistent with the study conducted by (Thavany, Al Shofi, et al., (2024), which argues that patriarchal systems often maintain women's subordination through normative structures that are presented as care, morality, and protection.

The findings also demonstrate that toxic masculinity operates as a structural phenomenon rather than merely as an individual behavior. Within patriarchal family sphere systems, male authority is often normalized through social norms, cultural expectations, and hierarchical power relations that are continuously reproduced across generations. As a result, women are frequently positioned in subordinate roles and excluded from decision-making processes that affect their lives. This finding supports the argument proposed by (Afifah, 2024) . argument that patriarchal domination is sustained through family sphere structures that legitimize unequal gender relations. Similarly, the study conducted by Imani et al., (2023) found that patriarchal culture positions women as passive subjects whose lives are regulated through expectations of obedience and male authority. Beyond direct domination, Adina and Karlina (2025) research on patriarchal discourse in literature confirms that women in patriarchal narratives often experience limitations on their autonomy, life choices, and identities due to the dominance of male-centered values.

Beyond direct domination, the findings highlight the psychological consequences of patriarchal control on women. Continuous exposure to restrictive gender norms and unequal power relations may influence emotional development, self-perception, and the formation of personal identity. Such conditions often generate psychological burdens, emotional repression, and internal conflicts as women navigate the tension between individual autonomy and social expectations. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Pasaribu and Firmansyah (2023), which argues that patriarchal culture in literary works frequently produces emotional pressure and identity conflicts among female characters. A further implication is, the findings suggest that emotional restraint, obedience, and self-sacrifice are often constructed as ideals of femininity within patriarchal systems, thereby reinforcing women's subordination through mechanisms of moral and emotional discipline.

This research shows that literary works function not only as imaginative narratives, but also as reflections of social and cultural realities concerning gender relations and patriarchal structures. The novel *Kānat li-Takūn* illustrates how patriarchal systems regulate women's lives through prohibitions, obligations, emotional discipline, and symbolic authority (Wati et al., 2024) . This study also contributes to feminist literary criticism and gender studies by demonstrating that toxic masculinity in literary narratives may operate subtly through affection, morality, and familial responsibility, rather than solely through aggression and direct violence. Therefore, the novel represents patriarchal domination as a complex psychological and cultural structure deeply embedded within family relationships and interpersonal relationships.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion presented above, it can be concluded that toxic masculinity in family life in the novel *Kānat li-Takūn* by 'Alā' Naṣr represents the operation of the patriarchal system in shaping unequal power relations between men and women. The restrictive practices depicted within the family demonstrate that domination is manifested not only through direct actions but also through the construction of values and norms that are accepted as natural and legitimate. This finding indicates that the family sphere is not entirely neutral; rather, it functions as a medium for the reproduction of patriarchal power that subtly directs the behavior of family members. As a consequence, women tend to occupy a constrained position in exercising personal autonomy and participating in decision-making processes. Therefore, the novel emphasizes that the practice of toxic masculinity is rather than related to individual power but also constitutes part of a broader social system that normalizes gender inequality within family life. The findings to feminist literary criticism and gender studies by providing a deeper understanding of how toxic masculinity operates within family relationships as a manifestation of patriarchal structures in Arabic literary works. This study is limited to the analysis of a single novel and focuses exclusively on the forms of toxic masculinity within the family sphere through Sylvia Walby's theory of patriarchy. Therefore, future studies are recommended to examine toxic masculinity in a broader range of Arabic literary works or employ different theoretical perspectives to provide more comprehensive insights into gender relations and patriarchal practices.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The first author contributed to designing and developing the analysis, collecting data, conducting the analysis, and writing the article. The second author contributed by providing research guidance, offering input on the analysis, and conducting proofreading and article revisions. The third author contributed by providing linguistic and theoretical input related to Arabic language studies, as well as assisting in the refinement of the analytical framework. The fourth author contributed by reviewing the overall structure of the article, validating the interpretation of the findings, and assisting in the final editing process of the manuscript.

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