

PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION OF DISABLED WOMAN IN RACHEL SIMON'S *THE STORY OF A BEAUTIFUL GIRL*

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Abstract: Disability has been one of the significant topics in the academic sphere. There are efforts from practitioners and organizations to bring equality for disabled persons. As in real life, people with disabilities often face prejudice and discrimination. This issue is also described in Rachel Simon's novel *The Story of a Beautiful Girl* (2011). This study analyzes the portrayal of prejudice and discrimination that the main character experiences and her actions to overcome the related challenges. This study uses Julie Smart's theory, which discusses prejudice and discrimination experienced by people with disabilities (PWD). This study uses literary criticism to evaluate and analyze literary works focusing on prejudice and discrimination. It is found out that the character with a disability experiences three types of prejudices: stereotypes, lowered expectations, and hypervisibility. Furthermore, discriminations portrayed in the novel include paternalism, marginality, and viewing PWD as an object of people without disabilities (PWOD). Overcoming prejudice and discrimination, the PWD shows their abilities to perform self-reliance in social and economic contexts, raising awareness in their society about the rights of people with disabilities to create mutual understanding.

Keywords: Women with Disabilities, Discrimination, Prejudice, Marginality, Hypervisibility

INTRODUCTION

Disability is one of the topics that is often discussed on the internet and in the real world. One of the discussions that are often discussed on disability is the form of experiences and problems in the social environment experienced by persons with disabilities related to prejudice and discrimination (Smart, 2001). People with disabilities in the United States had and still have limited rights. This is because state laws and courts do not understand the rules correctly. They always face losing essential rights that people without disabilities have (Pfeiffe, 2006). This can happen because many people without disabilities (PWOD) consider themselves "normal" and judge people with disabilities (PWD) as "other people." The term 'normal' is defined as what it is not, specifically the lack of deviation, disease, or disability (Smart, 2001). On the other hand, persons with disabilities are often called the 'other' because they are considered different from ordinary people and are called strange and different (Smart, 2001), which is indecent because it discriminates based on a person's ability and non-ability so that there is something called prejudice and discrimination towards persons with disabilities. As a result, persons with disabilities may be seen as non-human or as a source of shame, severely affecting their treatment (Rohwerder, 2018). Furthermore, this topic is included as disability studies because it does not treat disease or disability, hoping to cure or avoid them; it studies the social meanings, symbols, and stigmas attached to disability identity and asks how they relate to enforced systems of exclusion and expression (Hall, 2016).

Julie Smart (2001) connects the study of disability studies and sociological theory that addresses disability in society as a phenomenon. Smart argues that the two fields should be studied in tandem.

According to her hypothesis in her work, people with disabilities frequently have harmful interactions with members of society. People with disabilities (PWDs), which is the objective people without disabilities (PWODs) reaction, are also negatively and damagingly affected by those who are members of the racial, ethnic, or cultural minority group; this person without disabilities (PWODs) reaction is aimed at people with disabilities (PWDs) (Smart, 2001). Ableism has a range of visible effects—the primary components of prejudice: benevolence, paternalism, envy, derision and hostility (Wexler, 2021). Prejudice and discrimination are two examples of these. Her book states that people with disabilities (PWDs) frequently face many types of prejudice and monitoring by people without disabilities (PWODs), some of which are listed below.

Disabled people face many types of bias, according to Smart (2001). Ageism, ableism, and other types of discrimination based on race, gender, and sexual orientation are examples. These types of prejudice can range from overt hostility to subtle bias and exclusion. There are many types of prejudice, according to Smart (2001): stereotypes, hypervisibility, and lowered expectations.

Stereotypes are a form of prejudice against a group because of the group's condition, and in disability studies, stereotypes are a form of prejudice against PDWs from people without disabilities (PWODs). For example, physical disabilities, such as disabled legs, are considered lazy. After all, they do nothing because they cannot walk, or people with dyslexia must be stupid because they cannot read and write, even stereotypical beliefs including the perception of them as dependent, incompetent, unemployable, passive, and weak (Rohmer & Louvet, 2018).

This hypervisibility occurs when persons with disabilities become objects of stares from persons with disabilities, but this is not part of the worst thing; the worst thing is that when questions arise that are disturbing and insulting, which will never be asked of persons with disabilities, they are often asked to persons with disabilities (Smart, 2001). Therefore, PWODs often ask things that impress, not knowing the limitations of PWDs.

What is meant by lowering expectations here is related to stereotyping and role entrapment that triggers treatment (Smart, 2001). A suitable description is when people with disabilities (PWDs) do something, people without disabilities (PWODs) consider that people with disabilities (PWDs) cannot do the same thing as people without disabilities (PWODs) and decide to simplify or lower the standard work done by people with disabilities (PWDs).

Discrimination is an action or practice that excludes, disadvantages, or merely differentiates between individuals or groups of individuals based on some ascribed or perceived trait (Pager & Shepherd, 2008 in Smart, 2001). It is a condition in which a group treats another group differently simply because they, the group that is discriminated against, are not the same in terms of class or circumstances as the group that is discriminating. There are several types of discrimination, including discrimination against disabilities (Fulthoni et al., 2009). In disability studies, it is people without disabilities (PWOD) who discriminate and people with disabilities (PWD) who receive such discriminatory treatment. This is an experience that is often experienced by people with disabilities (PWDs) (Smart, 2001). Smart (2001) stated that paternalism, viewing PWDs as objects, and marginality is discrimination towards people with disabilities (PWDs).

There are several journals related to this research from the published journals and theses, most of which used the same topic, namely disability. Several researchers discuss this topic, and the first researcher is Prasetyo (2020), who discusses disability in the film *Taare Zameen Par*, which focuses on depicting the struggles of selected characters during learning. Atifurrohim (2022) in his research, discusses disability studies regarding the depiction of disability in the Novel *Song for A Whale*. Lhotská's research (2013) studied three crucial aspects of disability representation in the novel *The Secret Garden*. Other researchers are Hameed (2018), Mendez (2019), Bustanji (2019), and Abdelmonem (2021), who analyzes the representation of people with disabilities (PWD) in novels.

From all the previous studies mentioned above, it can be concluded that some have discussed characters with disabilities in the novel. What makes this research different from some of the journals mentioned earlier is that this research focuses on kinds of people with disabilities (PWDs) prejudice and discrimination experiences in the novel and how the disabled character overcomes those experiences. Therefore, the primary purpose of this study is to analyze the type of prejudice and discrimination experienced by characters with disabilities and the effort to face these adverse treatments.

The study's finding is beneficial in addressing the kinds of prejudice and discrimination experienced by people with disabilities (PWDs) so that researchers and readers can gain insight into how this impacts individuals and society. In addition, analyzing this topic in a novel can encourage empathy and understanding that not much has been discussed about disability, such as how persons with disabilities remain largely neglected by the international laws, legal processes, and institutions that seek to redress those violations, including crimes against humanity (CAH) (Pons, W., Lord, J., & Stein, M., 2022). By providing readers with engaging narratives that explore the complexities of disability, novels can inspire readers to engage with this issue more thoughtfully and compassionately, both in their personal lives and in the broader community. After all, literary works reflect events in the real world (Wiyatmi, 2013); therefore, bringing up this topic can help increase knowledge about disability.

METHOD

This study uses literary criticism because literary criticism is considered an approach applied to various researches on literary works (Mahayana, 2012). It can be used to analyze and evaluate individual works of art or literature and formulate general methodological or aesthetic principles for examining such works (Thamarana, 2015). This can include poems, stories, novels, plays, essays, memoirs, and any other literary works (Fard, 2016). Literary work is a reflection of a particular era of the author (Rahayu, 2022). The work, history or biography of an author needs to be traced to know politics, economics and the sociological context of his time (Fard, 2016). The data about prejudice and discrimination experienced by disabled persons is primarily collected from *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011) novel by Rachel Simon. The data are categorized based on the theory of prejudice and discrimination theory proposed by Smart (2001). The findings are analyzed and interpreted to show the condition of disabled women in the novel.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Prejudice and Discrimination Experienced by Disabled Characters in The Story of Beautiful Girl by Rachel Simon

In Rachel Simon's novel, *The Story of a Beautiful Girl* (2011), a prominent theme revolves around depicting prejudice and discrimination experienced by characters with disabilities. This theme aligns with the portrayal of disability discrimination discussed in Theory Smart's theory (2001). According to Smart, people with disabilities (PWDs) often encounter various forms of prejudice and surveillance from people without disabilities (PWODs) (Smart, 2001).

The novel portrays disabled characters experiencing prejudice and discrimination due to their disability condition, perpetuated by characters who do not have disabilities. This issue aligns with the observations made by Smart (2001) regarding the experiences of PWDs in facing prejudice and discrimination. By drawing similarities between the novel's portrayal and Smart's theory, this part addresses the first research problem, which centers on examining the prejudice and discrimination experienced by disabled characters in *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011).

The first type of prejudice experienced by characters with disabilities is stereotypes. Stereotypes are a form of prejudice against a group because of the group's condition. In disability studies, stereotypes are a form of prejudice against people with disabilities (PDWs) from people without disabilities (PWODs). In *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011), disabled characters often experience types of prejudice, especially the main character, Linnie.

The first experience of prejudice in the form of stereotypes was experienced by Linnie, a girl with a developmental learning disability. The stereotypes are done by Dr. Collins, one of the attendants working at the School.

Martha winced. The attendant, noticing her reaction, said, "You got to do this. They do not learn anything; they do not understand anything. This is the only way to get them in line."

"But it must hurt." "They don't feel pain. They are not—Look, if she knew right from wrong, she would not have stolen these clothes from you." "I gave her the clothes." (Simon, 2011, p. 21)

In this Datum, Linnie, as people with a disability (PWD) who has developmental learning disability, gets a stereotype from Dr. Collins as people without a disability (PWOD). In datum, Linnie is caught at Martha's house after successfully escaping from the School. Martha sees Dr. Collins stares at Linnie and says, "They do not learn anything; They do not understand anything," and "Look, if she knows right from wrong, She Would not have Stolen These clothes from you." In this dialogue, Dr. Collins stereotypes Linnie, saying that Linnie does not understand anything and does not distinguish right and wrong due to her developmental learning disability, which is one example of stereotyping.

The second form of prejudice often experienced by disabled characters in *The Story of a Beautiful Girl* (2011) is lowered expectations. According to Smart (2001), lowered prejudice occurs when people with disabilities (PWD) being judges cannot do the same thing as people without disabilities (PWOD). Then, they lower the standard for people with disabilities because of this prejudice. This lowered expectation is often experienced by people with disabilities (PWD), as in *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011), especially the character of Linnie and the residents in the School as people with disabilities (PWD) from people without disabilities (PWOD), namely the attendants.

The first depiction of the issue can be seen in *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011) when Linnie was still a child. The first lowered expectation that Linnie received was from her father, which can be seen in the following datum:

Linnie didn't know about dining cottages then. She knew about dining rooms and the underside of the table, where she and her sister kept Betsy Wetsy dolls and looked at Mommy's and Daddy's shoes when they were sitting with serious voices, saying things like "accepting this tragedy" and "her hopeless future" and "we've done nothing to deserve a retarded child," (Simon, 2011, p. 30)

In this datum, not only did Linnie experience prejudice in the form of stereotypes from her father, but she also experienced lowered expectations from her father. It can be seen in the datum in the quote "her hopeless future," which is meant here by her father saying that Linnie's future is hopeless because he assumed that Linnie is "retarded" because of Linnie's disability. After all, Linnie's disability has given lower expectations of her by her father. This kind of prejudice happens in real life, as Smart (2001) said because people with disability (PWD) like Linnie are often seen as incapacitated. Hence, people without disabilities (PWOD) lower the standards for people with disabilities (PWD) just because of their disability, just like Linnie's father.

Next, Linnie also experienced lowered expectations again. The prejudice that Linnie received was not from her father but from her aunts. This lowered expectation was experienced by Linnie when she was six years old, as in the following datum:

"She still doesn't crawl?" Aunt This One said from behind. "She's already six." Aunt That One said, "It's been obvious for years that Dr. Feschbach was right." Mommy said, "She will crawl. She'll walk." "She'll never go to school," Aunt This One said. Aunt That One said, "And think of the shame"—here she whispered—"that her sister will feel once she can understand." (Simon, 2011, p. 31)

On this datum, Linnie's aunts as people without disability (PWOD) give her lowered expectations. They believed that Linnie, as a person with disability (PWD), was incapable of doing the same things as people without disabilities (PWODs) (Smat, 2001). The provided information states that when Linnie was six years old, she could not walk due to her developmental learning disability. Her aunts held lowered expectations for her, as indicated by the quote, "She'll never go to school," reflecting their prejudice. They believed Linnie was incapable and would never be able to attend school due to her disabling condition, which would bring shame.

Hypervisibility occurs when people with disabilities (PWD) become objects of stares from people with disabilities (PWOD) and get asked disturbing questions by PWOD (Smart, 2001). This

issue experienced by people with disabilities (PWD) is experienced by the disabled characters in *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011), especially the main characters. The first character who experiences it is Linnie. She experienced this problem a lot, one of which was when she was a child. It happens when she goes out with her family, and people around her give her this prejudice, as seen in the data below.

Moreover, Linnie could still see a restaurant. She could walk by then, and they went inside and sat at a booth, and her parents asked what she wanted. "Burger!" she squealed, one of the most significant words she knew by then, and people stared. They stared again when the food didn't all make it into her mouth and dribbled like fingerpaint down her face. (Smart, 2001, p. 32)

In the provided data above, when Linnie was young, she was taken to a restaurant by her family. When asked what food she wanted, she shouted, "Burger." The people around her stared at her. Furthermore, she experienced hypervisibility again when she struggled to eat the food, and when it dribbled down her face like finger paint, they stared at her again. This heightened attention towards Linnie was due to her actions from the people around her, which were influenced by her developmental learning disability.

Not only did Linnie experience hypervisibility, but Homan, as people with disabilities (PWD), also experienced this problem because people without disabilities (PWOD). He experienced this hypervisibility when Homan lived with the family that hosted him. The family often gives it Hypervisibility, as in the following datum example.

Just one thing gave him the willies. Sometimes, when he would come inside, he'd catch the Silvers making a look at each other. There was also talking at dinnertime, with eyes flickering in his direction. It seemed the price he was paying for this luxury life was letting himself be talked about. (Simon, 2011, p. 140)

In this datum, it is described that Homan was living with the Silvers, a family who provided accommodation for him. During his stay, the author narrates that Homan sometimes felt the staring when he entered a room where the Silvers were present. They would look at Homan: "There was also talking at dinnertime, with eyes flickering in his direction." As Homan is deaf, they would discuss him while he was present, making him the object of stares. This action falls under hypervisibility, where Homan is excessively noticed and observed due to his disability.

Discrimination Experienced by Disabled Characters in The Story of Beautiful Girl

Not only experiencing prejudice, but the disabled characters in *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011) also experience discrimination from people without disabilities (PWOD). Align with Smart's theory (2001) that people with disabilities (2001) experience exclusions and disadvantages or merely differentiate between individuals or groups of individuals based on some ascribed or perceived trait called discrimination (Pager & Shepherd, 2008 in Smart, 2001) also happens in this novel. There are various forms of discrimination experienced by PWDs, according to Smart (2001), including paternalism, marginality, and viewing PWD as an object; these three things are experienced by characters with disabilities in *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011).

Paternalism occurs when people without disabilities make decisions for people with disabilities and limit their options (Smart, 2001). People without disabilities (PWOD) consider that people with disabilities (PWD) cannot make their own choices due to their disabilities, so PWODs feel the need to help by making choices for PWDs. However, this action makes PWDs unable to choose for themselves because their freedom is taken away. In *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011), disabled characters experience paternalism, especially Linnie, as shown in the datum below.

Then Clarence shoved her, and it all came back. Everything had been taken away. After three days of freedom, she had nothing, not even the choice of where to put her feet. (Simon, 2011, p. 26)

On this particular datum, Linnie experienced paternalism, where she was denied the freedom to make choices due to Clarence's actions. In this case, Clarence took Linnie back to the institution, limiting her options because of her disability. As described by the author in the provided quote, "After three days of freedom, she had nothing, not even the choice of where to put her feet." Due to Linnie's

developmental disability, she is seen as incapable of being independent and making her own choices, as mentioned in Smart's theory (2001). This problem is often encountered and experienced by people with disabilities (PWDs), where their autonomy and decision-making abilities are disregarded.

The second form of discrimination experienced by disabled characters in *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011) is marginality. Marginality occurs when people without disabilities are excluded from society with disabilities (Smart, 2001). Social marginalization has drastic negative consequences for any group in society (FRA, 2010). Moreover, in *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011), the residents, including Linnie, often experience this form of discrimination in the School. The first instance in the novel is when Linnie returns to the school. The residents as people with disabilities (PWD) experience marginalization while at the school because of the attendants, as can be seen in this datum below.

Linnie felt the dress drop to her ankles. "Honestly," Kate said, "I wish you'd gotten away." She unhooked the old lady's bra, noting it with admiration; it was the first bra Linnie had ever worn. The state recently approved funds to fix a hole in the barn roof, though once again rejected the request for brassieres. (Simon, 2011, p. 41)

In this datum, the author narrates that when Linnie is returned to The School after successfully escaping and being recaptured, it is mentioned that "The state recently approved funds to fix a hole in the barn roof though once again rejected the request for brassieres." This action indicates that the request of the residents in need of brassieres, which should be considered a basic necessity for them, was denied, and instead, the funds were allocated to fix a hole in the barn. The state's action in prioritizing the barn over the residents' basic needs represents a form of marginalization that sidelines the needs of the residents as people with disabilities. This decision reflects the prejudice faced by the residents, such as the belief that "they cannot feel or think." The state ultimately discriminates against them due to the prejudice surrounding their disabilities.

The last but not most minor type of discrimination is viewing PWDs as objects. What is meant here is that this form of discrimination occurs when people without disabilities consider people with disabilities as objects for them. In *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011), the characters experience this form of discrimination. The first example is Linnie and the other residents at the School. This discrimination was caused by attendants, especially Uncle Luke, who saw the resident as an object. This form can be proven on the following datum.

That first night so many years ago, the receiving nurse had said Linnie could keep her clothes for special occasions, which turned out to mean whenever Uncle Luke showed officials around, bragging about how wisely the public's money was being spent. (Simon, 2011, p. 40)

Here, Linnie and the other residents, as PWD, is seen and regarded as an object by the attendants at the School. In the quote, "whenever Uncle Luke showed officials around, bragging about how wisely the public's money was being spent," there is a depiction of the attendants instructing the residents, including Linnie, to wear their best clothes to showcase that the public's money is being well spent on them when in reality, it is not. This problem falls under the category of viewing PWDs as objects, as the attendants use Linnie and others as objects to gain money and cover up the misappropriation of funds by the institution.

Not only at that time, but they also experienced viewing as an object by Smokes, a PWOD. This situation happened when Clarence, one of the attendees, told Kate, the other attendee, that Smokes was treating the residents and considered the resident to be the object of a joke, according to the following datum:

Clarence was not keen on working around, as Smokes put it, "a bunch of eeg-its," though Smokes said it was a cakewalk as long as you let them know who boss, which was easy was: They could not think or feel, Smokes said, and were obedient, and you could get a few laughs out of them. Plus, with his brother being the director, "no one's ever gonna say boo." (Simon, 2011, p. 268)

In the data from the novel, Clarence says to Kate that “they could not think or feel, Smokes said, and were obedient, and you could get a few laughs out of them,” where “they” refers to the residents. Smokes perceive the residents as objects of amusement due to their disabilities, believing they cannot think or feel. This incident aligns with Smart's theory (2001), which states that people with disabilities (PWD) are often not seen as fully human but as objects. In this datum, PWDs are treated as objects of amusement that can “make a few laughs out” for Smokes.

The Disabled Characters Overcome Prejudice and Discrimination in The Story of Beautiful Girl

The characters who experience prejudice and discrimination from people without disabilities (PWOD) do not just give up. The main characters, such as Linnie dan Homan, take action by helping other characters, like Kate and Martha, to overcome the prejudice and discrimination they receive. Those efforts show their self-reliance and being productive. Self-reliance requires a strong belief in one's ability (Marwah & Suswanto, 2023), which means the embodiment of the attitude that an individual has who is confident about himself, especially his abilities, is seen in Linnie and Homan when they take several actions to cover themselves who experienced discrimination and prejudice.

Linnie and Homan's first effort that depict self-reliance is believing in their ability to escape from the school. The school is the institution that has subjected them to prejudice and discrimination due to their disabilities, as can be seen in the following datum.

The underground corridors were made of concrete, lit by bare bulbs. Linnie did not like the stretches of darkness, so she was glad to reach a bulb quickly after stepping from the ramp. Bravery was needed here. Buddy had shown his bravery when they'd run through the tunnel, which had won them freedom. (Simon, 2011, p. 104)

From this datum, it can be seen that by successfully fleeing from the school, Linnie and Buddy (Homan) can free themselves from the prejudice and discrimination. The attendants at the school treat them differently than other individuals because of their disabilities. As the quote mentions, “and it had won them freedom,” Linnie and Homan's self-reliance attitude and belief to be free from this school results in their freedom from the prejudice and discrimination at the school.

Through her self-reliance attitude, Linnie is significantly influential in overcoming prejudice and discrimination by sharing her experience of prejudice and discrimination she has experienced. At the school, Linnie is being interviewed by a journalist named John Michael Malone with the assistance of Kate, as described in the following datum.

“Do you?” John-Michael Malone said again. “Do you like living here?” She didn't need to squeeze her fists together for this word. “No.” John-Michael gave her a sorrowful look and said, “If you could walk out that gate right now and never come back, would you?” She shot her eyes toward Kate. Kate turned toward Linnie, and her eyes said it was all right to respond. Linnie nodded. (Simon, 2011, p. 204)

Taxpayers were now demanding changes, so there were fewer residents. Newly concerned officials were poking around, too, so the stench had been blanketed with Lysol. Even Doreen was no longer close enough to lay her hand on Linnie's bed because the cottages had gotten partitions that created sleeping rooms for six, with each resident having lots of room beside her bed and a chest of drawers—for her very own clothes. The drawers weren't locked, either, and the toothbrushes weren't shared, the food wasn't mushed, and the work treatments were supplemented by honest-to-goodness classes. In Linnie's art class, she'd learned painting, etching, and even mosaics. (Simon, 2011, p. 228)

Linnie also tries again to share the prejudice and discrimination against herself and other people with disabilities around her a couple of years after being interviewed by Malone. She is self-reliant and believes that her ability to share her case and her experiences at The School can prevent prejudice and discrimination against PWDs. In her speech, she describes the bad things that happened to her and other residents and the mistreatment they endured because of their disability in the Capitol building. Linnie's action is described in the following datum:

Finally: “Linnie Goldberg.” She rose, smiled at Kate, and went to the front of the room. There, she sat in the big wooden chair and faced the legislators. “I am Linnie Goldberg,” she said, taking care with every word. “From 1957 to 1980, I lived in the Pennsylvania School. I

want to tell you my story and bring something to help me." She unrolled her drawings and held the first one up. "This is how the School looked to me when my parents took me there. I was scared. I didn't know what it was. Bad things happened, and I will not tell you them all. But I will tell you some." And she showed them through her art. Meeting Tonette. Mopping the dayroom. Getting shoved around by angry residents. Eating mush. Folding laundry. Stepping over floor puddles to use the lavatory. Hiding her art in a file cabinet. Being afraid of attendants with dogs. She did not mention Buddy or... Julia. She did not say she looked out her window at night even now, imagining where, under the stars of Cup and Feather, her husband and her child might be. The legislators listened with serious expressions. One woman got wet eyes. One man held his fist to his chin. "That's why we have to close all the institutions," Linnie said when she finished. She stood up and was aware that the other advocates were applauding her. She smiled at them, relieved she'd found the courage to speak for herself—and for so many others, too. (Simon, 2011, p. 288)

From this datum, it can be seen through her actions that Linnie manages to overcome the prejudice and discrimination she faces by having and showing self-reliance, and having self-reliance and taking this action has a broader impact on other individuals with disabilities who have experienced similar treatment due to their disabilities. As a result, the idea emerges that institutions like The School, which houses people with disabilities, should be closed down to free individuals with disabilities from the prejudice and discrimination perpetuated by such institutions. Linnie's actions catalyze change and raise awareness about the need to dismantle harmful institutions and create a more inclusive society.

Apart from demonstrating self-reliance, Linnie's subsequent effort to overcome her problem is to showcase a productive attitude. In the datum below, Linnie organizes an exhibition for her paintings to display her abilities in art. This action can help overcome her prejudice and discrimination, as shown in the following example.

"I want to sell my drawings so I can do this." "Are you sure?" Linnie nodded. "How do you want to do this?" Carmen asked. "On sweatshirts?" "No," Linnie said. "I have a better idea." On the day of the opening at the gallery in Ithaca, the crowds whirled around. "I just love your work," said a tall woman with triangular earrings. "I was expecting primitivism," added a man with a kerchief in his suit jacket. "Yet it reminds me of Howard Pyle, N. C. Wyeth, Frank E. Schoonover." (Simon, 2011, p. 309)

In this datum, Linnie shows she can be productive like PWD by selling her art and holding an exhibition to showcase her artwork, proving that Linnie is able to change people's perception. People no longer see her as unintelligent or "retarded" due to her disability. Instead, they recognize Linnie as a genius because of her artistic abilities. As a result, Linnie successfully overcame the prejudice that she faced regarding her learning disability and also overcame the discrimination that she had previously experienced due to her disability. With her effort, Linnie can prove that people with disabilities (PWD) can be as productive as others. Her artistic talents serve as a means to challenge the stereotypes and negative perceptions associated with her disability, allowing others to see her in a new light.

Not only could Linnie overcome the prejudice and discrimination that she experienced, her friend, Homan, also managed to overcome the prejudice he experienced at the school. by showing he can be productive through helping one of the attendants, Big-Bellied Handyman, fixing a window and assisting him in other tasks, as stated in the datum below.

One day, Homan helped Big-Bellied Handyman set a window straight. Soon, he started getting privileges. Giving, he found, made him proud. And pride made him bolder with doing what he had a knack for—unclogging pipes, oiling hinges, driving the tractor. And doing a good job made him get more privileges. Finally, he was almost as free as a Stuck-for-Life could get. (Simon, 2011, p. 118)

CONCLUSION

Prejudice and discrimination are often experienced by the characters with disabilities (PWD), covering six types of prejudice and discrimination: stereotypes, lowered expectations,

hypervisibility. The forms of prejudice are paternalism, marginality, and viewing PWDs as objects for categories of discrimination against PWDs. The novel *The Story of Beautiful Girl* (2011) portrays Linnie's efforts to overcome these problems. The character with disabilities overcome the problem by having self-reliance and showing productivity. By self-reliance, Linnie believes in her ability to save herself from hurdles at the school and confront the attendants who discriminate against her to retain her rights. Several characters of people with disabilities (PWD) also share their experiences of prejudice and discrimination through dialogues and narration to raise awareness of the issue and prevent the discrimination. Lastly, Linnie proves she can be productive by showing that she can perform the same activities as other people without disabilities (PWOD). The future researcher needs to explore more about the influence of the social environment to empower people with disabilities. It is essential to see what factors significantly promote empowerment among those with disabilities.

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