

**THE MAIN CHARACTER'S STRUGGLE FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN
ELENA FERRANTE'S *MY BRILLIANT FRIEND***

THESIS

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM
MALANG
2023**

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ELENA FERRANTE'S *MY BRILLIANT FRIEND***

THESIS

Presented to Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Sarjana Sastra (S.S.)

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STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled **“The Main Character’s Struggle For Gender Equality In Elena Ferrante’s *My Brilliant Friend*”** is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person except those indicated in quotation, cited as references, and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection or claim from others, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

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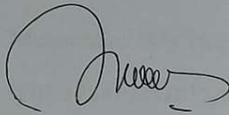
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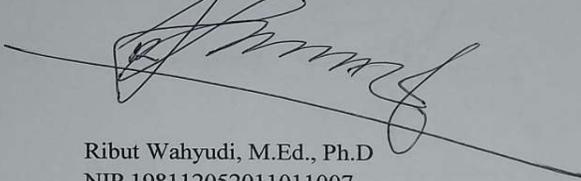
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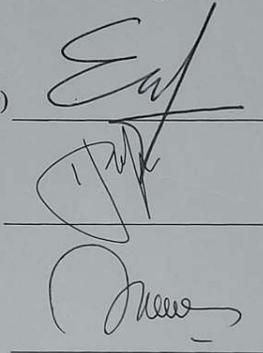
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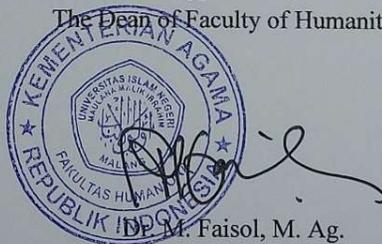
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“Fortis Fortuna Adiuvat”

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

My beloved parents, Mr. Suparman S. Pd and Mrs. Husniati

My honorable advisor, Mrs. Dr.

Istiadah, M.A. All my teachers and my
lectures.

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Ahamdulillahirabbil Alamin, all praise and thanks to Allah SWT who has given mercy and blessing so that the writer can finish this thesis. Second, sholawat and salaam are always given for our Prophet Muhammad SAW, who has brought us from the darkness era to the lightness era. On this occasion, I would like to thank my family, especially my parents, who always prays and support me during my studies at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Secondly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Mrs. Dr. Hj. Istiadah, M.A, as my advisor. Thank you for the guidance and direction from the beginning of writing until the completion of this thesis.

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Malang, May 25th, 2023

The Researcher,
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ABSTRACT

Putra, Bintang S. Dwi (2023) The Main Character's Struggle For Gender Equality In Elena Ferrante's *My Brilliant Friend* . Undergraduate Thesis, Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor Dr. Hj. Istiadah, M. A.

Keywords: Feminism, Liberal Feminism, Feminist Literary Criticism.

This research aims to analyze the behavior of a women named Elena Greco or commonly called Lenu by the author and her best friend Lila Cerullo. The purpose of this research to analyze the feminist object of women in naples, Italy 1950s with female feminism. Even though the novel discusses a lot of characters, the author focuses more on two female characters Lila and Lenu because on the first eighteen chapters discuss lila and lenu. This study uses the liberal feminist theory approach of John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor. Liberal feminism is a development of the feminist movement that rejects views and thoughts that are absolute and dominant power liberal feminist focuses on making women feminists who are free thinking and having broad views, according to their respective desires. And in real life we usually found any kind of discrimination against women especially in Indonesia, the researcher want to looking for the relationship between liberal feminism and literary criticism in novels my brilliant friend. The results of this study shows the forms of woman to achieve Gender Equality. First, women right to get education, women right to get economic opportunity (have a job), and woman right to get freedom of expression. And it's hoped can become a reference for learning literature in Indonesia. The researcher want to focus literary criticism on the novel My Brilliant Friend about the lives of two girls in the midst of the harsh life and culture of their home in a poor neighborhood on the outskirts of Naples, Italy. The study is literary criticism that deals with analyzing the literary work.

مستخلص البحث

دوي بوترا ، بينتاج (2023) نضال الشخصية الرئيسية من أجل المساواة بين الجنسين في صديقتي اللامعة إيلينا فيرانتني ، قسم الأدب الإنجليزي ، كلية العلوم الإنسانية ، جامعة الإسلام نيجري مولانا مالك إبراهيم مالانج. المستشار د. إستيادا ، م

الكلمات المفتاحية: النسوية ، النسوية الليبرالية ، النقد الأدبي النسوي

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل سلوك امرأة تدعى إيلينا غريكو أو تسمى عادة لينو من قبل الكاتبة وصديقتها ليليا سيرولو. الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو تحليل موضوع النسوية الليبرالية للنساء في نابولي بإيطاليا في الخمسينيات من القرن الماضي مع النسوية النسائية. على الرغم من أن هذه الرواية تناقش العديد من الشخصيات ، إلا أن المؤلف يركز أكثر على الشخصيتين الأنثويتين

Lila و Lenu لأن الفصول الثمانية عشر الأولى تناقش **Lila و Lenu**.

سيرتبط هذا البحث بنظرية النسوية الليبرالية ، وهي نوع من النسوية يتطور في مجتمع اليوم. النسوية الليبرالية هي تطور للحركة النسوية التي ترفض الآراء والأفكار المطلقة والمهيمنة. تركز النسوية الليبرالية على جعل النساء النسويات يتمتعن بحرية التفكير ولديهن وجهات نظر واسعة ، وفقاً لرغباتهن الخاصة. وفي الحياة الواقعية غالباً ما نجد أشكالاً مختلفة من التمييز ضد المرأة ، خاصة في إندونيسيا ، حيث تريد الباحثة أن تجد علاقة بين النسوية الليبرالية والنقد الأدبي في الرواية ، أعز أصدقائي بارعة. ومن المؤمل أن يصبح مرجعاً لتعلم الأدب في إندونيسيا. تريد الباحثة أن تركز النقد الأدبي على رواية صديقتي اللامع حول حياة فتاتين وسط الحياة القاسية وثقافة منزلهما في حي فقير في ضواحي نابولي بإيطاليا. الدراسة عبارة عن نقد أدبي متعلق بتحليل المصنفات الأدبية. تستخدم هذه الدراسة مقارنة نسوية ليبرالية لتحليل الشخصيات في هذه الرواية. تهدف هذه الدراسة على وجه الخصوص إلى شرح التحليل النسوي الليبرالي الذي يحدث في رواية صديقتي اللامع. البيانات مأخوذة من تحليل المحتوى في الروايات الخيالية لاستكشاف قضايا النسوية **Elena Ferrante** رواية صديقتي اللامع التي نشرتها لاميكيا جينبال عام 2011. في السياق الخاص

ABSTRAK

Putra, Bintang S. Dwi (2023) The Main Character's Struggle For Gender Equality In Elena Ferrante's *My Brilliant Friend*. Undergraduate Thesis, Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor Dr. Hj. Istiadah, M. A.

Keywords: Feminism, Liberal Feminism, Feminist Literary Criticism.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perilaku seorang wanita bernama Elena Greco atau biasa dipanggil Lenu oleh penulis dan sahabatnya Lila Cerullo. Tujuan penelitian ini untuk menganalisis objek liberal feminism perempuan di Napoli, Italia tahun 1950-an dengan feminisme perempuan. Meskipun novel ini membahas banyak karakter, penulis lebih fokus pada dua karakter perempuan Lila dan Lenu karena pada delapan belas chapters pertama membahas lila dan lenu. Penelitian ini akan dikaitkan dengan teori liberal feminism, yang merupakan salah satu jenis feminisme yang berkembang dalam kehidupan masyarakat saat ini. Liberal feminism merupakan perkembangan dari gerakan feminis yang menolak pandangan dan pemikiran yang bersifat absolut dan dominan. Liberal feminism berfokus untuk menjadikan perempuan feminis yang bebas berpikir dan berpandangan luas, sesuai dengan keinginannya masing-masing. Dan dalam kehidupan nyata kita sering menemukan berbagai bentuk diskriminasi terhadap perempuan khususnya di Indonesia, peneliti ingin mencari hubungan antara liberal feminism dan kritik sastra dalam novel sahabatku brilian. Dan diharapkan dapat menjadi referensi pembelajaran sastra di Indonesia. Peneliti ingin memfokuskan kritik sastra pada novel *My Brilliant Friend* tentang kehidupan dua gadis di tengah kerasnya kehidupan dan budaya rumah mereka di lingkungan miskin di pinggir Napoli, Italia. Kajiannya adalah kritik sastra yang berkaitan dengan analisis karya sastra. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan liberal feminism untuk melakukan analisis karakter pada novel ini. Secara khusus penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan analisis liberal feminism yang terjadi di dalam novel *my brilliant friend*.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The researcher includes the background of study's , previous study, research question or problem of study, scope and limitations, and definitions of key terms in this chapter.

A. Background of the Study

The initial inspiration for the research came after the researcher read Elena Ferrante's novel. Ferrante's narrative triggered in me a certain perplexity, requiring prolonged thought. Reflecting on the story of the two friends, Elena and Lila, central figures of the work in question, enabled realizing the extreme richness of their characterisation and plot construction. It also strikes me how easy it was to find points of contact with perspectives and analyses that feminist theories, particularly the most recent ones, had offered us on the "issues of women. *L'amica Geniale* confronted us with their struggles, their challenges and, with women's need for constant personal overcoming.

While much has been written about the rising popularity of Elena Ferrante (De Rogatis, Milkova, and Wehling-Giorgi 2021), until now no scholarship has been devoted to the way in which the Italian author has been transposed to the stage in the UK. The first theatrical version of *My Brilliant Friend* produced in Britain was written by April De Angelis and directed by Melly Still. The play was based on the translation of Ferrante's Neapolitan novels by Ann Goldstein and opened at the

National Theatre (London) in 2019–20 following its success at the Rose Theatre, Kingston in the spring of 2017.

As a result, literary literature is losing value and becoming increasingly disconnected from the world of ideas. Writing shares nothing practically speaking with itself after some time and is never a similar in any area. According to Kurnia (2006), scholarly work is both an imitation of nature and an expression of inventiveness and creative thought. Literature's features reflect its historical, philosophical, social, and political setting. According to Mohamad (1980), if a literary figure is not seen as a nation's kid, then that character represents the fate of the entire country.

A novel *My Brilliant Friend* is a creative prose-narrative that creatively explores human experience and often follows a connected series of events involving a group of characters in a particular environment. A novel is one that is both very long and very complicated. In a plot grouping, a novel can portray genuine characters, events, and conflicts. Subsequently, the novel is an inventive writing account of impressive length and intricacy that innovatively addresses human experience. In contrast, characters, occurrences, and conflicts in novels can be based on actual people and events (Siswanto, 2008).

The failure of attempts to abolish gender discrimination in people's lives to uphold expectations for equal rights for men and women gave rise to the feminist movement. The feminist movement began as people

became conscious of the inequalities in society structures, systems, and traditions.

Women's activist scholarly analysis, which envelops abstract examination, is utilized in this review. The study's goal is to examine the data related to this study and Elena Ferrante's *My Brilliant Friend*, which examines liberal feminism from a feminist perspective. More specifically, the liberal women's liberation hypothesis of Harriet Taylor and John Stuart Mill, who underlined political freedoms and monetary open door, is utilized in this review. Women should have equal access to education, rights, partnerships, and cooperative relationships with men in this century. Men and women alike have the same reasons for choosing the kind of life they want. Women want to show that men and women can work in the public sector.

One of the references involved by the specialist for this study is a past report. The scientist can work on hypothetical perception in such manner. The novel *My Brilliant Friend* by Elena Ferrante serves as the subject of this study; however, the researcher was unable to locate any previous studies that shared the same subject and title. The researcher cites a number of studies to support the theory. Coming up next are the previous assessments as a couple of journal articles associated with research done by trained professional.

First, Eka Desmawati wrote the diary research with the *title Examination of Woman's Rights in Louisa May Alcott's Novel of Little*

Ladies. This inquiry focuses on how the characters' ongoing development gives the idea of the ladies' independence in general. stated that there are four different kinds of these lifestyles for males (in a society where men are king), in which men find solace in themselves and do what they think is best for her, as well as in their structure of dissension to currently not be the target of men's vengeance.

Second, P. Priyadharshini, S. Mohan, A. Hariharasudan, and J. Sangeeth wrote the research paper titled "*Authenticity of Liberal Feminism in Namita Gokhale's Texts*." The issues of liberal women's liberation thoughts that she reflected throughout her writing are examined in this diary. Rachita, Priya, and Tilottama are the significant heroes that liberal women's activists attribute to Namita Gokhale's works. Each character has the impression of liberal ladies' lobbyist contemplations through their life. John Stuart Industrial facility, Mary Wollstonecraft, Betty Friedan, Rosemarie Tong, Susan Moller Okin, Martha Nussbaum, and Zillah Eisenstein are prominent liberal women's rights thinkers.

Thirdly, Anita Eka Syalina and Eko Cahyo Prawoto presented their findings in a paper that was accepted for publication in the journal *Citra Wanita Tokoh Utama dalam Novel Tarian Bumi Cinta karya Okarusmini, Kajian Feminisme Liberal* (2020). In this diary, talk about the main character's perceptions about herself and other Balinese women. Ida Ayu Telaga Pidada, one of the main characters, is able to leave her public title because she would rather not follow her mother's desires. The smart Tarian Bumi of Oka Rusmini explains this by making sense of the

conflicts between the competing norms in the family and the fighting amongst the ladies. The mother and her youngster's relationship finished when Telaga dismissed the mother. Telaga who eventually left her family and transformed into an all out Sudra woman regardless of the way that she by and large had different ends with her folks in regulation.

Fourth, Linna Astrianti and Sri Rahayu Jayanti's study journal, *Feminisme Liberal dalam Novel Nayla Karya Djenar Maesa Ayu*. This investigation investigates orientation balance in relation to sex among individuals. A woman's resilience in the face of hardship is depicted in the book. The legend is forced to live a mundane existence until he is imprisoned in a huge night sky and a bizarre love triangle. However, in the end, the protagonist overcame difficulties to become a well-known author.

Fifth, the journal article *Feminisme Liberal Tokoh Utama dalam Novel Bidadari Bermata Bening karya Habiburrahman El Shirazy* was written by Endang Dwi Sulistyowati, Irma Surayya Hanum, and Anisa Rizki. This journal analysis discusses how important it is for people to battle against isolation in a world where men dominate society. John Stuart Plant and Harriet Taylor's portrayal of the main character's struggle against liberal women's rights in the 19th century includes the main character's battles in school, her fight against limited marriage, her struggle as a political tool, and her struggle at work.

Sixth, the 2019 release of Defani Amanda Putri's novel

Feminisme Liberal dalam Entrok karya Okky Madasari. According to the findings of the inquiry revealed in Okky Madasari's Entrok book, "Liberal Ladies' Freedom," academic texts are of no use at all, and original texts almost always yield fresh interpretations that were not before suspected. Equivalent privileges or disparity for ladies were found in the Entrok novel, as per scientists. Because of their power, men believe that women are less worthy of respect.

seventh, *Perjuangan Tokoh Utama dalam Novel Pelabuhan Terakhir* karya Roidah, are Dahri D, Akhmad Murtadlo, and Yoga Rohtama. It is an exploration journal titled *Kajian Feminisme Liberal*. The main character's experiences with gender discrimination are examined in this study, which demonstrates that the patriarchal culture of her family is to blame. In light of liberal women's liberation, opportunity and power are at the center of the main character's conflict. By demonstrating that she is responsible for herself and able to make her own choices, the protagonist exemplifies freedom. The protagonist exerts control over her life by means of power.

Eighth, the thesis, "*Women's Struggle against Men's Oppression in Alice Walker's The Color Purple*," was created by Iva Riyadhus Sholichah (2015), a student at the State Islamic College of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. The violence against women is the focus of this study. This explains women's resistance to the patriarchal system's oppression of men, especially in the household. In this study, the researcher takes a radical feminism approach.

Nineteenth, Izzul Millati Umami wrote the proposal. In Han Kang's *The Veggie lover*, the understudy at Islamic State College of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang composed a paper named "*Woman's Struggle against Oppressions as Viewed by Transformative Ecofeminism in Han Kang's The Vegetarian*" This investigation makes use of cutting-edge ecofeminism and focuses on the primary person's explanation and struggle against abuse.

The postulation "*The Struggle of Women against Gender Inequality*" was written by Siti Muniroh (2019), a student at the Islamic State College of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, in Ruth Ware's "*The Woman in Cabin 10*." This thesis concentrates on the gender inequality problems that Laura Blacklock, Carrie, and Anne Bullmer deal with and is based on Ruth Ware's book *The Woman in Cabin 10*. The expert discovered that three characters would required to handle five problems.

The research gap is without a doubt the object used in this study by the researcher. Anuradha Roy wrote the original *Every one of the Daily routines We Never Experienced*, which was published in 2011 by L'Amica geniale. As a result, the researcher read and watched the novel *My Brilliant Friend* to find that the liberal feminism theory of Harriet Taylor and John Stuart Mill had never been studied before. This research looks at individualism, which highlights the value of freedom, especially personal freedom, as well as the problems faced by female characters in achieving their independence and fulfilling their own wishes. Every area of thought is examined, but we pay particular attention to the opinions on

freedom held by female characters who are inspired by individualism.

B. Research Question

Based on the explanation above, the researcher formulated research problem

As follows :

How does Elena struggle for gender equality in Elena Ferrante's *My Brilliant Friend* viewed from Liberal Feminism by Jhon Stuart and Harriet Taylor?

C. Scope and Limitation

In this study, the researcher focuses on feminist literary criticism which uses liberal feminism theory to examine the characters, plot, setting, of Lila and Lenu in novel *My Brilliant Friend*. Researchers also limit research by focusing on research towards feminist literary criticism which focuses on liberal feminism put forward by Jhon Stuart and Harith Taylor.

D. Significances of the Study

It is guessed that this study will contribute hypothetically and for all intents and purposes to the investigation of scholarly analysis, especially woman's rights hypothesis.

Theoretically, this study is meant to advance the scholarly analysis found in *My Brilliant Friend* by Ellena ferrante, particularly in regards to the topic of women's rights and the battle of the sexes as a fresh viewpoint in the knowledge on researching books. Furthermore, it

incorporates literary references, notably those that refer to feminism and the battles and deeds of women.

Practically, this study aims to provide readers with a better understanding of feminist literary criticism and to encourage critical thinking regarding liberal feminism as a subfield of feminism theory and women's struggle. In addition, this study is crucial for students to deepen and broaden their understanding of women's struggle and liberal women's liberation. Consequently, this study will provide others interested in conducting pertinent research with information.

E. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid confusion, the researcher provides definitions for some terms that are utilized frequently in this study. The going with terms occasionally found in this audit:

1. Feminism : The ideology of feminism aims to liberate women by addressing the sexism-related injustices they face. It holds the belief that women are subjected to gender-based inequality and discrimination. Humm, 2002). To comprehend the nature and manifestations of gender inequality, feminist theory provides a theoretical framework. Discrimination, objectification (particularly sexual objectification), oppression, patriarchy, stereotyping in art history, contemporary art, and aesthetics are among the many topics it delves into. 2004 Valentina).

2. Liberal Feminism : As per Tong (Tong R., 2017), liberal women's liberation arose during the eighteenth 100 years and is established in the political philosophy of progressivism. Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill, Harriet Taylor, and Betty Friedan were significant contributors to the development of liberal feminism. The center requests of liberal women's activists rotate around three central rights: the right to training, equivalent social liberties, and equivalent monetary freedoms for all kinds of people. The belief that individuals are independent beings able to determine their own rights and agency through rational thought is the fundamental tenet of liberal feminism. People can understand moral principles and advocate for their own individual freedom by exercising reason.
3. Feminist Literary Criticism : As a subfield of the sociology of literature, feminist literary criticism was born out of the feminist movement's desire to examine the works of women writers in the past. It also aims to reveal instances in which women are oppressed, misunderstood, and marginalized as a result of patriarchal traditions and dominance in the works of male authors. According to Sugihastuti (2010), feminism is a perspective or way of life that originates from a variety of sources and develops in a variety of sociocultural contexts.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW ON RELATED LITERATURE

A. Literary Criticism

Discipline concerned with philosophical, descriptive and evaluative investigations of literature, including what literature is, what its functions are, and what its values are. The Western critical tradition begins with Plato's Republic (4th century bce). A generation later, Aristotle, in his Poetics, developed a set of compositional principles which had a lasting influence. European criticism since the Renaissance has primarily focused on the moral value of literature and the nature of its relationship to reality. In the late 16th century, Sir Philip Sidney argued that it was a feature of literature to offer an imaginary world that was in some ways superior to the real one. A century later John Dryden proposed the less idealistic view that literature primarily had to offer an accurate representation of the world for the "pleasure and instruction of mankind", an assumption underlying the major critical works of Alexander Pope and Samuel Johnson.

The departure from these ideas emerged in the criticism of the Romantic period, exemplified by William Wordsworth's statement that the object of poetry is "truth ... brought to life by passion." The late 19th century saw two distinct developments: the "art for art's sake" aesthetic

theory, and the view (expressed by Matthew Arnold) that literature should assume the moral and philosophical functions previously filled by religion. The volume of literary criticism increased greatly in the 20th century, and the following years saw a radical reassessment of traditional critical modes and the development of the multiplicity of critical factions (see deconstruction; poststructuralism; structuralism).

B. Feminist literary criticism

The desire of female feminism to analyze the writings of women in the past and to highlight the representation of women in the works of male authors, who portray women as repressed, misunderstood, and trivialized by patriarchal dominance traditions, forms the basis of feminist literary criticism, a subfield of sociology of literature. According to Sugihastuti (2010), women's rights can be understood as a perspective or way of life with various social and cultural roots. Therefore, in general, feminism is a historical and contextual analytical tool or movement that addresses issues of women's inequality and injustice in response to the emerging new consciousness. One of the many artistic responses that are based on women's activist ideas, which advocate for equality in education in the presence of women, is women's activist scholarship. By concentrating on the evaluation and evaluation of female researchers and how women are represented in hard copy records, in comparison to males and their neighborhood.

C. The Concept of Feminism

Lady's privileges is a way of thinking of women's opportunity since what is characteristic in its philosophies is all the conviction that women persevere through despicableness because of their direction (Humm, 2002). Feminism provides a framework for comprehending the nature of gender inequality and analyzing it. Among the topics that feminism investigates are discrimination, objectification (particularly sexual objectification), Art history stereotypes, patriarchy, oppression, and modern art and aesthetics are some examples (Valentina, 2004, p. 34). Women's liberation programs for social change are fundamentally based on the association of action and belief, which is a method of both reasoning and acting. Subsequently, the focal point of woman's rights' social change development is on ladies' inclinations. Both the concept of a woman and the idea of equality between men and women are rooted in patriarchy, which is one of the causes of feminism. Thus, lady's privileges arose as a response to those injustices and lopsidedness. In different fields, it takes a gander at ladies' social jobs, encounters, interests, and obligations, as well as women's activist governmental issues. financial concerns, writing, hunches, and advice (Arivia, 2003). The women's activist development has existed for a really long time, and various investigations have been directed on it. Liberal feminism, which will be explored in the next part, is one of them and is congruent with the topic that is discussed in this thesis.

D. Liberal Feminism

One of the most noticeable and notable types of woman's rights is liberal women's liberation, which holds that correspondence among people ought to be a definitive objective. Individualistic liberal woman's rights is a kind of women's activist hypothesis that underlines ladies' capacity to maintain their correspondence through their own decisions and activities. The rights of liberal women are promoted by enlightened ideals, yet people also have idiosyncrasies (Fakih, 1996). Liberal feminists contend that culture supports the stereotype that women are often less intelligent and physically capable than males. Consequently, it frequently treats women differently at work, in public, and in academic settings. Liberal feminists wanted women to have the right to vote at the end of the 1800s and beginning of the 1900s so that they could have individual freedom.

They demanded equality, an end to men's mistreatment of women, and the freedom to seize chances that would allow them to reach their full potential (Valentina, 2004, page 36). They held that no person's personal freedom should be restricted by a law or by the government. Early liberal women's campaigners hoped to disprove the idea that white males should have been the majority of the population. Women's rights advocates including Frances Wright, Judith Boss Murray, and Mary Wollstonecraft fought for women to participate fully in politics.

Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, John Stuart Mill's "The Subjection of Women," and the women's suffrage movement of the nineteenth century gave this position its classic articulation. Its primary goal, which is also emphasized in organizations like the Public Association for Ladies (currently), is that a set of legal and standard rules prevent women from entering and participating in the public arena. Insofar as society maintains the deceit that women are, in general, less intelligent and capable than males, it will abuse women in the workplace, social settings, and commercial settings. Liberal feminists consider this as unjust gender discrimination. Women should have the same opportunities for public success that men do. Liberal ladies' activists claim that in order to have direction value, we must first verify that the game's rules are fair and then make sure that none of the competitors in the race for society's jobs and goods are intentionally hindered (Tong R., 2017, p. 11).

This subset of feminism supports women working alongside men and maintains that there must be a distinction between men and women. Women will be fully integrated into all roles, including working outside the home, and there will no longer be a dominant gender. This gathering has the point of view that it is adequate to remember people for different jobs, remembering those for social, monetary, and political life, as opposed to requiring an adjustment of generally structures. This way of thinking is based on the idea that all humans, men and women alike, were made to be equal and harmonious, and that there should never be oppression between them. On the ontological level, they are very similar, with men's rights typically becoming women's rights. The rationality of freedom and equality in this theory is the primary focus. According to Arivia (2003), women ought to have the same rights as men because they are rational beings with the same capabilities.

Liberal feminist is a viewpoint that views women as having complete and individual freedom. In his book *Women's activist Legislative issues and Human instinct*, Alison Jaggar contends that nonconformists accept that the unparalleled essential human attribute is capacity and sanity. However, liberals use Aristotle's classic argument that humans are animals' rationale (animal ratio) to define rationality in a variety of ways, including placing an emphasis on wisdom and morality. Mary Wollstonecraft argued in her 1792 work *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* that women ought to have the same opportunities in

education and the workplace as men do. Liberal feminists of today hope to achieve equal rights for men and women by reducing the power and influence gap between men and women and increasing women's visibility in international politics (Arivia, 2003, p. 99).

E. Liberal Feminism by John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor

Harriet Taylor Mill and J.S. Mill join Wollstonecraft, highlighting the need of mental health for women. Additionally, John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor emphasize that equality can be achieved by ensuring that both sexes receive the same level of education as well as the opportunity to contribute to the economy and the protection of basic social rights like the right to choose, the right to an informed public discourse, the right to vote, and property rights (Tong R., 2017, p. 26).

Another responsibility of the contemplations of the two of them is that both of them stress the meaning of Tutoring, Affiliation, and Correspondence. Industrial facility puts more emphasis on preparing and honors, while Harriet Taylor stresses affiliations. Mill asserts that men and women are not intellectually superior, and he also questions the superiority of men. Tong R. P., *Feminist Theory*, 2009 says that Mill's ideas are fascinating because the virtues associated with women frequently have a negative impact on women because women cannot be themselves because they will be people who want the community. This is because women will be people who want the community.

There are a number of important indicators in the liberal feminism movement that can be used as guidelines to determine how much someone is said to think liberally. These demonstrate that ladies can think uninhibitedly and reasonably and have options. If it is a woman's choice and she decides to accept that it is in her best interest, she has the right not to get married, work, or improve herself. Working as a domestic worker is not a good option, according to liberal feminism, because it is unviable for women and women themselves are the source of oppression. (Tong R. , 2017).

Independence, which emphasizes the significance of opportunity, particularly the opportunity to choose, has an impact on liberal woman's rights. They wish for a general public in which there are a few similarities between the two because they see a few similarities among people. This development of women's activists aims to give women control over their bodies and public activities (Ray, 2014).

According to Mill and Taylor, allowing people to pursue their goals so long as they don't impede or limit one another is the most frequent strategy to maximize overall utility—happiness or enjoyment. As per Tong R. P., *Women's activist Idea*, 2009, p. 23, Factory and Taylor varied from Wollstonecraft in their conviction that for society to accomplish sexual uniformity or orientation equity, it should furnish ladies with similar political freedoms and valuable open doors as men, as well as schooling.

Taylor believed that whether or whether the activity was beneficial, working for women was psychologically significant. Regardless of whether every woman could rely on males to help her survive at the time, Taylor stated that it would be ideal to suppose that a percentage of that pay came from the real pay, even if the overall pay was just marginally greater than the pay of women. That is, men ought to be able to influence what is produced and serve as the primary supporters of life rather than being subjected to pressure to marginalize themselves. All in all, the spouse should bring in cash beyond the home to be an accomplice and not a captive to her significant other. Women's activist Idea, Tong R. P., 2009, p. 25).

In the book *The Subjection of Women*, factory argued that society would also benefit if women were regarded as completely sane and qualified for the same common freedoms and financial opportunities as men. Plant proceeded farther than Wollstonecraft in examining the counterfeit notion that individuals have identical academic prevalence. He demanded that the only reason men and women differ in academic achievement was that men received more extensive education and were in superior positions. Plant is eager to assert that men are not mentally superior to women and that men will typically exaggerate the impact that women's meticulousness, use of substantial models, and instinct as a form of articulation have on men. common information that men find surprising (Tong R. P., *Women's activist Idea*, 2009, pages 26-28).

Mill says that regardless of whether all ladies are more terrible than all men sooner or later, that doesn't mean ladies ought not be ready to attempt. Because it is too much for women to do on their own, they shouldn't be able to do it again. what women are capable of, but not as effectively as their male rivals. Competition is believed to disadvantage women. According to Tong R. P., Women's activist Idea, 2009, although Factory acknowledges that women will perform well in any competition with men, he also acknowledges that natural sex contrasts will occasionally benefit male competitors.

Both Harriet Taylor and John Stuart Plant accentuated the meaning of accomplishing orientation correspondence. Comparable instruction isn't adequate; Notwithstanding reliable social liberties like the option to arrange, opportunity of articulation, and the option to cast a ballot, as well as confidential property freedoms and other social liberties, one should be allowed the opportunity to take part in the economy.

Aiming to define, develop, and uphold equal political, economic, and social rights and opportunities for women in India, feminism is a movement in that country. Women's activists in India demand orientation homogeneity, such as the choice to labor for comparable salaries, the choice to approach entry to health care and education, and the choice to enjoy comparable political liberties, much as their counterparts internationally (Beam, 2014, p. 13). As a response of Western criticism

of Indian feminist groups, Indian feminists have also battled against culturally specific concerns in India. They were particularly scrutinized for focusing heavily on popular women.

1. Women Right To Get Education

In general, Wollstonecraft was not as aggressive as Mill in questioning the supposed intellectual superiority of males. Even though Wollstonecraft emphasized that men and women have similar mental abilities, she considered the possibility that women might not be able to learn as much as men. Plant did not express any such reservations. He maintained that men's superior status and higher education were the only factors that contributed to the gender gap in intellectual achievement. In fact, Mill frequently erred in the opposite direction, valuing women's intuition, attention to detail, and use of concrete examples as superior cognitive skills that men rarely possess (Taylor, 1997, p. 177). Mill was eager to show that men were not intellectually superior to women.

2. Women's Right to Have Job

Taylor and the plant made sure that people may follow their own inclinations for a longer period of time as long as they didn't confuse, discourage, or damage other people in the process. Furthermore, Taylor and Plant conflicted with

Wollstonecraft by demanding that for society to accomplish orientation fairness, ladies should have similar political privileges, financial open doors, and schooling as men. In her book *Enfranchisement of Women*, Harriet Taylor argues that men and women share the responsibility of supporting life. Ladies should search for valuable chances to become male accomplices in business and receive the rewards, dangers, and pay of useful enterprises, explicitly by working and having a vocation, as well as getting schooling and political freedoms (Tong R., 2017, p. 26).

3. Women's Right to Get Freedom of Expression

To achieve one's own happiness, a personal desire is a form of liking, pleasure, and making it a hobby. One is a human right for everyone. In a similar vein, women have the right to engage in hobbies in order to satisfy their interests and develop their skills. As indicated by the contention made by John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor, "everybody has the option to seek after what they need as long as they don't restrict one another and block the most common way of accomplishing it" (Tong R., 2017, p. 27).

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Design

This research is qualitative research because the foundation of liberal feminism theory by Jhon Stuart and Harrith Taylor is used as choice, so that the research focus is in accordance with the facts in the novel. The feminist literary criticism because applies The liberal feminist of works in novel *My Brilliant friend*. For the reason that the reasearcher uses, of feminist literary criticism by applying the concept of liberal feminist approach in 19th Century. This study aims to examine the data in novel *My Brilliant Friend* written by Elena Ferrante, from a feminist point of view.

B. Data Source

The data source was taken from conversation between Lenu and Lila and character in novel *My Brilliant Friend* by Elena Ferrante that circulated in 2011 by L'Amica geniale, as the object of this investigation. The class of this book is fiction, and it has 26 parts and 288 pages.

C. Data Collection

The specialist finishes various levels to gather the information. The analyst takes the following steps : the first is a thorough reading of

the book. Its purpose is to help readers gain a general understanding of the plot, characters, and significance of the novel. Second, search for data in the form of words, phrases, conversations, and other materials relevant to the research based on the goals of the study. After that, the problem formulation and a thorough examination of the data's correctness serve as the foundation for debate. The data then be identified in line with the problem formulation.

D. Data Analysis

Characterizing the information is the subsequent stage in the wake of gathering the entirety of the information. Elena's conflicts, which are carried out by female characters in the book and include Elena's battles for work, schooling advantages, and the ability to speak, are organized by the expert. The next step is to decode the data according to how John Stuart Plant and Harriet Taylor's and other liberal women's rights movements of the nineteenth century perceived the women's struggle. Introducing the information from the examination's all's outcome is the fourth and last step. The final step is to come to a conclusion using the data that have been analyzed.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the finding and analysis of the data. finding is answering of statements that formulated before. The data are presented based on observation and analysis of the document. In finding, the researcher described the process of calculating and presenting result of the data. Liberal feminism, also known as classical or mainstream feminism, emphasizes the principles of individual liberty, equality, and women's rights within existing societal structures. It aims to secure equal opportunities and rights for women through legal and political reform, advocating for gender equality in education, employment, and social institutions. Whereas; in the discussion section the researcher will analyze the finding. To gain the objectives of the research, the researcher had analyzed the data systematically and accurately. The data was analyzed in order to draw conclusion about the objective of the study.

A. The main Character's Struggle For Gender Equality

1. Women's Right To Get Education

This novel, Elena Ferrante tells the story of Lenu and Lila Cerullo. At that time women lived in the arms of a patriarchal culture. There are many injustices experienced by women, one of which is in terms of education. The thoughts of J.S. Mill and Harriet Taylor also come from Wollstonecraft, who said that if society wants to achieve sexual equality or gender justice, then society must provide equal political and educational rights as enjoyed by men (Tong R. P., *Feminist Thought*, 2009, p. 23).

Happens, it is lived and presented as a fatality that, once and for all, ends Lila's dream (cherished and enthusiastically supported by her

friend Elena)of going back to school In fact, Lila's attitude, throughout pregnancy, is characterised by not only psychological but also physical rejection of something she is not able to fight: her body no longer belongs to her. This can be seen from the excerpts of the script in the novel as follows:

“Yes, but: you lost the bet and now you have to go back to books.”

“Stop it, Lenù. “

“Stefano won't let you? “

“There's the new grocery, I'm supposed to manage it. “

“You'll study in the grocery. “

“No.”

“You promised. You said we'd get our diploma together. “

“No.”

“Why?”

Lila ran her hand back and forth over the cover of the book, ironing it.

“I'm pregnant “, she said.” Chap.23. .

However, she seemed as surprised by my questions as I was by her responses. So she didn't give in to Stefano, even though they went out on their own in the car, even though they were getting married, even though they already had a house that was furnished and a bed with a mattress that was still in his packing. And I had long since stopped kissing, even though I was certain not to get married. chap. 51 (teenagers). Two unexpected moments of the story will reveal Lila's opposition to conventional sexual morality, which views women's bodies and representations as the property of men—whether their father, brothers, or spouse. The subsequent episode, which appears to be fascinating as far as we're concerned to make reference to, matches with Lila's recently married insight and her protection from pregnancy, and underlines her demeanor

and analysis towards the standards upheld on her by male centric culture.

An example of a text that shows this perspective is when Lenù, as the narrator, describes Lila as intelligent and naturally gifted. Lenù notes that Lila, despite not having the opportunities for formal education that she did, is as intelligent and sensitive as she is. This shows that Lila has the same potential and ability to get a good education.

It is shown in the conversation :

MAESTRA: Scanno, brainbox, it's you and Cerullo – sudden death.

CLASS LAUGHS MAESTRA: One thousand doubled, divided by 5, multiplied by the square of four LILA AND ENZO 6,400.

MAESTRA: The square of 30 divided by the fraction expressed as $\frac{3}{4}$.

LILA AND ENZO: 1200. MAESTRA: The cube of 7 minus the square of 7. LILA: 294. ENZO: She thinks she's better than us.

LILA: Is it my fault your mother gave birth to a blockhead? (Part 1, 16).

Furthermore, by depicting the social and economic conditions of their environment, this novel criticizes the injustice of the education system which limits access and opportunities for those who come from poor backgrounds. Elena Ferrante through her narrative emphasizes that Lila and Lenù, like other children, have the same right to get a quality education and develop their potential.

In addition, there are moments where Lenù and Lila support and motivate each other in achieving higher education. They share books, give

each other advice, and encourage each other to keep learning and achieve academic success. This reflects that both characters are considered to have the same right to learn and improve themselves. This is in the translated *My Brilliant Friend* novel :

" No, never stop: I'll give you the money, you have to keep going." I laughed nervously, then said, "Thanks, but at some point, school is over." "Not to you: you're my brilliant best friend, you have to be the best of all, boys and girls." (P.381)

In essence, this novel argues that Lila and Lenù have the same right to get an equal education. They are seen as individuals who have the same ability and ambition to grow and develop through science. Elena Ferrante subtly highlighted the need for educational equality and the importance of giving every individual, regardless of their background, the opportunity to get a proper education.

Lila was waiting for me outside, in the shade. When I came out I hugged her, I told her that I had done really well and asked if we would study together the following year. Since it was she who had first proposed that we meet just to study, inviting her to continue seemed to me a good way of expressing my joy and gratitude. She detached herself with a gesture almost of annoyance. She said she just wanted to understand what that Latin was that those clever ones studied.

"And then?"

"I've understood, that's enough."

"You don't like it?"

"Yes. I'll get some books from the library."

"In Latin?" "Yes."

"But there's still a lot to study."

"You study for me, and if I have trouble you'll help me. Now I have

something to do with my brother.”
“What?” “I’ll show you later.” (P. 93 Chapter 2)

Through Lila's portrayal, this novel highlights the injustice of the education system which provides limited access for those who come from poor backgrounds. Elena Ferrante criticized this inequality and emphasized that every individual, including Lila, has the right to get a quality education regardless of social or economic background. Lila's portrayal also illustrates the need for social change that results in educational equality. This novel gives voice to Lila's desire to change her fate through education and shows that every individual has the same right to develop their potential through fair access to education. By describing Lila's struggle in seeking educational equality, this novel conveys a message about the importance of providing equal access to education for all individuals. It promotes social change that removes barriers and inequities in the education system, so that every individual has an equal opportunity to learn, develop and reach their full potential.

In the novel, the author describes the intelligence and talent of these two female characters. Elena is seen as a diligent and intelligent student, while Lila has a natural ability to assimilate knowledge and master subject matter. Even though they faced various obstacles, such as the pressure to marry or the demands of household chores, they never stopped trying to get an education.

For example in conversation :

“If you pay me I’ll take care of sending her to school,” Rino said.

“School? Why, did I go to school?”

“No.”

“Did you go to school?”

“No.”

“Then why should your sister, who is a girl, go to school?”

The matter almost always ended with a slap in the face for Rino, who, one way or another, even if he didn't intend to, had displayed a lack of respect toward his father. The boy, without crying, apologized in a spiteful tone of voice. (P.56)

In this context, this novel illustrates the importance of educational equality and women's struggle to get equal opportunities in accessing knowledge and personal development. It also criticizes social norms that hinder women from achieving their potential and emphasizes the importance of providing equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of gender, to develop themselves through education.

2. Women's Right to Have Job

The indicator of liberal feminism, which was coined by John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor, is the right to work. Like men, women also have the right to have a career. In the book *Enfranchisement of Women*, Harriet Taylor argues that the task of men and women is to support life. In addition to getting education and political rights, women must also look for opportunities to become male partners in business

and reap the benefits, risks, and income of productive industries, namely by working and 32 having a career (Engels, 2010). Taylor also emphasized the importance of choosing between being a wife and mother on the one hand and working outside on the other. Women can also combine their domestic and maternal responsibilities with a career or work. In the novel *My Brilliant Friend*, the figure of Lenu is described as a woman who is able to take on a role in the family, namely by working and having a career.

This is shown in the story in the following novel :

“«They placated Michele», she said, «just as they placated Marcello. They used me – To them I’m not a person but a thing. Let’s give him Lila, let’s stick her on a wall, since she’s a zero, an absolute zero.» [...] «Forget it, Lila. Ultimately, it’s a nice thing, think about it: they only put actresses on billboards. »«And am I an actress? »«No.»«So? If my husband has decided to sell himself to the Solaras, do you think he can sell me as well? » Chap.25 FERRANTE 2013

From the script Lila seems to want to test her husband and leaves the decision to authorise the use of her image up to him. After some initial resistance, Lila’s husband ends up saying yes, giving in to the economic rise the Solaras possess over him and his family. For Lila, this is confirmation that, for her husband, she is a commodity, an asset owned by him. What is at stake, deep down, is the awareness that women, their bodies, are ultimately objects. Cleverly, with Elena's help, Lila ends up convincing the Solaras to allow an artistic destruction/reconstruction of her image. This comes as a symbol

of what will be her process of liberation from marriage and the neighbourhood's oppressive hierarchical relations. This proves that Lila herself has the ability to get a job, for example being a model for a shoe product designed by Lila herself without any acquisition by Lila's husband.

One example of this depiction is when Lila shows her talent and intelligence in developing and designing shoes. Although Lila has extraordinary abilities and creativity, she is often faced with oppression and restraint by social norms that regard work as a right and the territory of men.

Despite that, Lila shows a tireless passion to pursue equality in the world of work. He tries to go against convention and fights for recognition for his own work and contributions. Lila is constantly trying to prove that she has equal abilities with men and that she deserves the same opportunities.

Once she showed me the designs for shoes that she wanted to make with her brother, both men's and women's. They were beautiful designs, drawn on graph paper, rich in precisely colored details, as if she had had a chance to examine shoes like that close up in some world parallel to ours and then had fixed them on paper. In reality she had invented them in their entirety and in every part, as she had done in elementary school when she drew princesses, so that, although they were normal shoes, they didn't resemble any that were seen in the neighborhood, or even those of the actresses in the photo novels.

"Do you like them?"

"They're really elegant."

"Rino says they're difficult."

"But he knows how to make them?"

"He swears he can."

"And your father?"

"He certainly could do it."

"Then make them."

“Papa doesn’t want to.”

“Why?”

“He said that as long as I’m playing, fine, but he and Rino can’t waste time with me.” “What does that mean?”

“It means that to actually do things takes time and money.” She was on the point of showing me the figures she had put down, in secret from Rino, to understand how much it really would cost to make them. Then she stopped, folded up the pages she was holding, and told me it was pointless to waste time: her father was right.

“But then?”

“We ought to try anyway.”

“Fernando will get mad.”

“If you don’t try, nothing ever changes.”

(P.97-98)

In this context, this novel raises the issue of gender equality and the need for recognition of women's abilities and work in the world of work. Elena Ferrante through her narrative shows the importance of providing equal opportunities for women like Lila to pursue careers that match their abilities and interests, and to receive proper recognition for their contributions.

By describing Lila's struggle and her ambition to achieve equality at work, this novel emphasizes the rights and importance of providing space for women to develop in the world of work without barriers and discrimination based on gender. This is a call for change and awareness of the importance of gender equality in society.

3. Women’s Right to Get Freedom of Expression

Every human being must have a personal desire, which desire is a form of liking, pleasure, and making it a hobby to achieve their own

happiness. Likewise, women have the right to explore their hobbies as a form of achieving pleasure and spilling their talents and interests. John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor argue that every individual has the right to pursue what they want as long as they do not limit each other and hinder the process of achieving it (Tong R. P., *Feminist Thought: Pengantar Paling Komprehensif Kepada Arus Utama Pemikiran Feminis*, 2008). Women have the right to choose, achieve, and receive what they want. There are several struggles carried out by the women character, Lenu, in Elena Ferrante's novel entitled *My Brilliant Friend*, to gain personal freedom, which is contained in the novel's following data fragment.

«Pietro told me you've had lovers.»«I?»
 explicit contempt. Later my in-laws confined themselves to demonstrating in every possible way that, if I insisted on being concerned with myself above all, I had to entrust Dede and Elsa to them.
 I resisted, naturally: there was not a day that I didn't get angry and decide to take my children away with me immediately, to Florence, to Milan, to Naples - anywhere, just so as not to leave them in that house not let them stay in that house a moment longer. But soon I would give in, put off my departure; something always happened that bore witness against me. Nino, for example, telephoned and, unable to refuse, I rushed to meet him wherever he wanted. [...] I separated from them unwillingly. I felt their accusing gaze on me, and I suffered. And yet, already on the train, as I studied, as I prepared for some public discussion, as I imagined my meeting with Nino, an impudent joy began to bubble up inside me. I soon discovered that I was getting used to being happy and unhappy at the same time, as if that were the inevitable new law of my life." Chap. 17. FERRANTE 2015.

Elena's mother's reaction is more brutal, violent, in line with the environment in which she had always lived: the neighbourhood of

alternative Naples. Still, it is, in this regard, close to that of Elena's mother-in-law, so far away from her in everything else, but not apparently when it comes to certain patterns of morality that women should not condone. The above fragment illustrates that no one can take away Elena's freedom in achieving her freedom as an educated woman. even Elena was willing to leave her homeland and her mother and bring her children so that they would not be in that environment.

Lila Cerullo experiences various events and challenges when she tries to marry a rich man. Smart and ambitious Lila has dreams of leaving her life of poverty in her Neapolitan neighborhood and achieving economic stability through marriage. For example in conversation :

LILA: My sister-in-law is driving me crazy. We'll never agree.

LENÙ: Which one do you like? LILA POINTS TO ONE. I'll point to it pretending it's Pinu's choice, make up the kind of shit she would say – I do it all the time at school – it's called rhetoric.

LILA: The rich people's school is teaching you how to con people? Maybe it's not true that Stefano loves me.

LENÙ: He does everything you tell him to. And he's rich.

LILA: He wanted to invite Marcello Solara to our wedding. I made him swear Marcello would never set foot there. But why would he even think it? Do you think I'm making a mistake? Getting married [..]

PINU: ENTERS

PINU: So have you decided yet?

PAUSE LENÙ: This (SHE POINTS) because as you said, Pinu, we want to avoid the meringue, the slut and the nun's nightie.

PINU: I knew I was right. That's perfect. That's the one (Part 1, 54–55).

On her way to achieving this goal, Lila risks many things. She was in a relationship with a wealthy man named Stefano Carracci and they both got engaged. Although Stefano is not Lila's heart's choice, he sees in this relationship and opportunity and better life materially.

However, things didn't go as expected. Although Stefano is wealthy, he also has a violent and domineering nature. Lila experiences suffering and violence in their relationship. Despite this, Lila continues to try maintain the relationship, sacrificing her happiness and dignity.

There are a few plot twists in "My Brilliant Friend" that keep the reader engaged and interested throughout the story. Here are some of the most notable ones:

- a. Lila's disappearance: Towards the end of the novel, Lila disappears without a trace, leaving Elena devastated and confused. The reader is left wondering what has happened to her and why she has chosen to leave without any explanation.
- b. Stefano's proposal: Stefano, Lila's wealthy and abusive boyfriend, proposes to her unexpectedly, and she accepts. The reader is left wondering why Lila would agree to marry someone she despises and what this means for her future.
- c. Nino's appearance: Nino, a boy who Elena has had a crush on since childhood, makes a surprise appearance in the novel, which complicates Elena's feelings and further strains her relationship with Lila.
- d. Marcello's beating: Marcello Solara, a local gangster and Stefano's brother-in-law, is brutally beaten by Lila after he tries to rape her. This

act of violence marks a turning point in Lila's character and sets the stage for future conflicts between the Solara family and Lila.

Overall, the plot twists in "My Brilliant Friend" add depth and complexity to the story, keeping the reader engaged and invested in the characters' lives.

Elena Ferrante's "My Brilliant Friend" portrays a complex and nuanced portrayal of women and the various roles they play in Italian society during the 1950s and 1960s. While the novel challenges many stereotypes about women, it also depicts some common gender equality :

- a. Women are expected to prioritize marriage and motherhood above all else. Throughout the novel, the characters are constantly reminded of the importance of finding a suitable husband and having children. Even the academically gifted protagonist, Elena, is told that her education is only useful for attracting a better husband. This stereotype is particularly evident in the character of Lila, who rebels against the expectation that she should get married and have children, but ultimately ends up conforming to this societal norm.

The assumed that women are expected to prioritize marriage and motherhood above all else is a common cultural expectation in many societies. This stereotype is often reinforced through media, social norms, and expectations placed on women by their families and communities. The pressure to conform to this stereotype can have negative impacts on women's lives, limiting their opportunities for

education, career advancement, and personal fulfillment. It can also perpetuate gender inequality by reinforcing the idea that women's primary role is as caregivers and homemakers. However, it is important to note that not all women choose to prioritize marriage and motherhood, and that each woman's individual choices should be respected and valued. Women should be able to make their own decisions about their lives, including whether or not to get married and have children, without facing stigma or judgment from others.

- b. Women are not capable of pursuing education success. Despite her intelligence and ambition, Elena is constantly undermined and belittled by her male classmates and teachers. Her success is often attributed to luck or her family's connections, rather than her own abilities. This stereotype is also evident in the limited opportunities available to women in the workforce, as well as the societal pressure for them to prioritize domestic duties over professional aspirations.

The assumption that women are not capable of pursuing careers or academic success is a harmful and baseless belief that has been found time and again by research and real-world examples of successful women in various fields. While it is true that women have faced discrimination and barriers in accessing education and career opportunities, it is not because of any inherent inability or lack of intelligence on their part. Rather, these obstacles are the result of systemic biases and societal expectations that have historically favored

men. Fortunately, in recent years, there has been progress in breaking down these barriers and creating more equitable opportunities for women in education and the workforce. Women have demonstrated time and again that they are just as capable as men of pursuing careers and academic success, and it is important to continue to challenge and reject this harmful stereotype.

- c. Women are catty and competitive with one another. The rivalry between Elena and Lila, which begins in childhood and continues into adulthood, is a central theme of the novel. While their relationship is complex and multi-faceted, their competitive behavior towards one another is often attributed to their gender. This stereotype is also reinforced by the portrayal of other female characters, who are depicted as gossiping and judgmental towards one another.

The assumption that women are catty and competitive with one another is a harmful and inaccurate belief that is perpetuated by media and social norms. This stereotype implies that women are naturally inclined to be judgmental, petty, and envious of one another, which is not only untrue but also damaging to relationships between women. While it is true that some women may exhibit behaviors that can be interpreted as catty or competitive, these behaviors are not unique to women and are not inherent to their gender. They can be the result of personal insecurities, societal pressures, or negative experiences in past relationships. In reality, women are capable of forming strong and

supportive relationships with one another, whether in the workplace, community, or personal lives. Many women work together to achieve common goals, collaborate on projects, and offer emotional support to one another. It is important to challenge and reject this stereotype of women as catty and competitive, and instead recognize the diversity and complexity of women's experiences and relationships with one another. By doing so, we can promote more positive and inclusive attitudes towards women and their relationships with one another.

- d. Women are emotional and irrational. Throughout the novel, women are often depicted as overly emotional and prone to outbursts. This is particularly evident in the character of Lila, who is portrayed as volatile and unpredictable. This stereotype is reinforced by the societal expectation that women should prioritize their emotions and relationships above all else.

The assumption that women are emotional and irrational is a harmful and inaccurate belief that has been debunked by research and personal experiences. This stereotype implies that women are unable to control their emotions and are prone to making irrational decisions, which is not only untrue but also perpetuates gender biases and undermines women's capabilities. While it is true that women may experience and express emotions differently than men, this does not make them more emotional or irrational. In fact, studies have shown that men and women experience and express emotions similarly, and

that emotions can actually enhance decision-making processes. Furthermore, women have proven time and again that they are capable of making rational and informed decisions in various settings, including the workplace, politics, and personal lives. Women are just as capable as men of exercising sound judgment and critical thinking skills. It is important to challenge and reject this harmful stereotype of women as emotional and irrational, and instead recognize and value the diversity of emotional experiences and decision-making styles among individuals of all genders. By doing so, we can promote more equitable and inclusive attitudes towards women and their capabilities.

- e. Domesticity: In the novel, women are expected to be good at cooking, cleaning, and taking care of the household. Lila's mother, for example, is a skilled seamstress who makes clothes for the family and also takes care of the house.

The assumption that women are primarily suited for domestic tasks and roles is a harmful and limiting belief that has long been used to restrict women's opportunities and limit their potential. This stereotype implies that women's natural place is in the home, caring for children and performing domestic tasks, which undermines their value and abilities in other areas. While it is true that women have historically been expected to prioritize domestic tasks and child-rearing, this is not because of any inherent differences in ability between men and women. Rather, it is the result of cultural

expectations and societal norms that have historically placed a higher value on men's contributions to society outside of the home. However, in recent years, there has been progress in challenging and rejecting this stereotype, and women have demonstrated their capabilities in a wide range of fields, including business, politics, science, and the arts. Women are just as capable as men of achieving success and making meaningful contributions to society outside of the home. It is important to challenge and reject this harmful stereotype of women as primarily suited for domesticity, and instead recognize and value the diverse skills and abilities of individuals of all genders. By doing so, we can promote more equitable and inclusive attitudes towards women and their potential.

- f. Limited opportunities: The novel portrays the limited opportunities available to women in the 1950s. For example, Lila's father does not believe in educating girls and stops her from attending school beyond elementary grades.

The assumption that women have limited opportunities is a harmful and pervasive belief that has long been used to justify gender inequality and discrimination. This stereotype implies that women are inherently less capable or deserving of opportunities than men, which is not only untrue but also perpetuates harmful biases and limits women's potential. While it is true that women have historically faced discrimination and barriers in accessing education and career

opportunities, this is not because of any inherent differences in ability between men and women. Rather, it is the result of systemic biases and societal norms that have historically favored men and disadvantaged women. Fortunately, in recent years, there has been progress in breaking down these barriers and creating more equitable opportunities for women in education, the workplace, and other areas of society. Women have demonstrated time and again that they are just as capable as men of achieving success and making meaningful contributions to society. It is important to challenge and reject this harmful stereotype of women as having limited opportunities, and instead recognize and value the diverse skills and abilities of individuals of all genders. By doing so, we can promote more equitable and inclusive attitudes towards women and work towards a more just and equal society.

- g. Beauty standards: The novel explores beauty standards and how they impact women. The characters are judged based on their physical appearance, and being beautiful is seen as an asset that can help women secure a better future.

The assumption that women are defined by their beauty and physical appearance is a harmful and pervasive belief that has long been used to objectify and diminish women. This stereotype implies that women's worth and value are primarily based on their physical attributes, which is not only untrue but also perpetuates harmful gender biases and perpetuates unrealistic and damaging beauty standards.

While it is true that women are often subjected to unrealistic and unattainable beauty standards in media and popular culture, this is not because of any inherent differences in appearance or value between men and women. Rather, it is the result of societal norms and expectations that have historically valued women's physical appearance over their other qualities and contributions. Fortunately, in recent years, there has been progress in challenging and rejecting these harmful beauty standards, and promoting more inclusive and diverse representations of beauty in media and popular culture. Women of all shapes, sizes, and appearances have demonstrated that they are valuable and deserving of respect and recognition, regardless of their physical attributes. It is important to challenge and reject this harmful stereotype of women as defined by their beauty, and instead recognize and value the diverse qualities and contributions of individuals of all genders. By doing so, we can promote more equitable and inclusive attitudes towards women and work towards a more just and equal society.

- h. Marriage: Marriage is seen as the ultimate goal for women, and it is expected that they will marry and have children. The novel depicts how women are pressured into marrying young and how being unmarried is seen as a failure.

The assumption that women should prioritize marriage and family over other goals and aspirations is a harmful and limiting belief

that has long been used to restrict women's opportunities and limit their potential. This stereotype implies that a woman's primary goal and purpose in life is to find a husband and start a family, which undermines their value and abilities in other areas. While it is true that many women may choose to prioritize marriage and family, this should not be seen as the only acceptable or desirable path for women. Women are capable of pursuing a wide range of goals and aspirations, including education, career, travel, and personal growth, among others. Unfortunately, this stereotype of women as primarily suited for marriage and family has long been used to justify discrimination and unequal treatment in areas such as employment and education. Women who choose to prioritize other goals over marriage and family have often been stigmatized or penalized for their choices. It is important to challenge and reject this harmful stereotype of women as primarily suited for marriage, and instead recognize and value the diverse goals and aspirations of individuals of all genders. By doing so, we can promote more equitable and inclusive attitudes towards women and work towards a more just and equal society.

- i. Competition among women: The novel depicts how women are pitted against each other and how they compete for male attention and affection. This is seen in the rivalry between Elena and Lila, who are constantly trying to outdo each other.

The assumption that women are inherently catty, competitive, and jealous of each other is a harmful and inaccurate belief that undermines women's relationships and creates unnecessary conflict. This stereotype implies that women are incapable of supporting and uplifting each other, and instead view each other as threats and rivals. While it is true that women, like any other group of people, may sometimes experience conflict and competition, this is not a defining characteristic of women or their relationships. Women are capable of forming deep and meaningful connections with each other, and supporting each other through both the good times and the bad. Unfortunately, this stereotype of women as inherently competitive has long been used to pit women against each other and perpetuate gender inequality. Women who choose to support and uplift other women have often been stigmatized as weak or passive, while those who engage in competitive behavior are seen as strong and ambitious. It is important to challenge and reject this harmful stereotype of women as inherently competitive, and instead recognize and value the diverse relationships and connections of individuals of all genders. By doing so, we can promote more equitable and inclusive attitudes towards women and work towards a more just and equal society.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter is the final part of this research. This chapter provides a brief explanation of the result and findings of the present study. Also, it provides suggestions for future research.

A. Conclusion

Drawing on the ideas of John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor, one can draw several conclusions about the portrayal of female characters and the themes explored in the story. Mill and Taylor's ideas emphasize the importance of individual freedom and autonomy for women. In "*My Brilliant Friend*," the female protagonists, Elena and Lila, navigate a patriarchal society in post-war Naples. Their struggle for self-realization and independence is evident throughout the narrative. They face various societal and cultural constraints that limit their opportunities and choices, but they persistently challenge these barriers and strive for personal growth.

The novel sheds light on the complexities of female friendship. Mill and Taylor recognized the significance of female companionship and solidarity in overcoming societal obstacles. Elena and Lila's friendship serves as a source of strength and support in their pursuit of education and personal development. Despite the challenges they face, their bond endures, illustrating the transformative power of female friendships.

Moreover, Mill and Taylor argued for the equal access to education and intellectual pursuits for women. The novel explores this theme as Elena and Lila, despite their differing circumstances, are both passionate learners and demonstrate exceptional intelligence. They navigate the education system, with Elena eventually gaining more opportunities to pursue her studies. The story highlights the transformative effect of education on women, empowering them to challenge societal expectations and find their voices.

Furthermore, Mill and Taylor advocated for women's economic independence and the dismantling of gendered roles. In the novel, Elena and Lila strive to break free from the traditional gender expectations imposed upon them, seeking economic stability and professional success. They navigate the complexities of work, marriage, and motherhood, attempting to forge their paths while resisting societal pressures. The characters' struggles and aspirations reflect the broader feminist goal of dismantling gendered hierarchies and achieving economic empowerment. Overall, from a liberal feminist perspective influenced by the ideas of John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor, "*My Brilliant Friend*" showcases the journey of two women as they navigate a patriarchal society, striving for self-realization, education, and economic independence. The novel highlights the transformative power of female friendship, the significance of education for women's empowerment, and the challenges women face in breaking free from traditional gender roles. Through the lens of liberal feminism, the story serves as a testament to the

ongoing struggle for gender equality and the resilience of women in the face of societal constraints.

B. Suggestion

My Brilliant friend is a very interesting novel to read. This novel has many sides can be studied further and in depth. The equality of women must be dismantled because it is a harmful and inaccurate portrayal of women that perpetuates inequality and discrimination. gender are often based on assumptions and generalizations that ignore the diverse experiences and complexities of individual women, and instead reduce them to simplistic and limiting. Inequality gender to women as form emotional, irrational, and limited in their abilities has been used to justify unequal treatment and opportunities for women in areas such as education, employment, and politics. This has created significant barriers for women to achieve their full potential and has perpetuated gender inequality.

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