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THE HUMILIATION TOWARD WOMEN ASSEEN IN HENRIK IBSEN'S DOLL'S HOUSE

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Abstract

This research is a study of Ibsen's A Doll's House from the perspective of justice for women. The purpose of this research is to find out and explain the types of women's problems faced by female main characters, to identify and describe the struggles of the main female characters in gaining independence in their lives, and to find out the significant meaning behind the success of the main female leaders' struggles as represented in drama.

Implemented to answer the objectives of this study. This study is a qualitative study described by Creswell. The object of this study is Ibsen's Doll House. This research uses Wolffrey, Robbins, and Womack's theories about men totally controlling women, without any women's rights. There is also the theory of Faqih, and Kate Millet.

The formulation of the problem in this study are (1) What types of problems are faced by the main female characters in A Ibsen Doll House? (2) How did the main female character face problems for her independence at A Ibsen Doll House? (3) What is the significance behind the success of the struggle of the main female character in gaining independence in her life at A Ibsen Doll House? Here we see the social side of this drama is very distorted. It teaches us as human beings to respect each other against men and women, so that there are no gaps in marriage. In conclusion, this study aims for all people to do justice to fellow human beings, whether male or female, in order to live peacefully.

Keywords: Form of Conflict, Cause of Conflict, Result of Conflict

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I INTRODUCTION

In the case of A Doll's House. Ibsen wrote A Doll's House in Norway in 1879, and the play presumably took place sometime in the same decade. Set in an upper middle class home, the play demonstrates the importance of social class in late 19th century Norway. Born into the upper middle class himself, Ibsen not only understood the importance of social class, but also the expectations placed on its

members. Nora and Torvald are living proof that upper middle class life can be a comfortable one. The growth and prosperity of Norway's upper-middle class began in 1843, with a great economic boom. This boom lasted until approximately 1875, meaning that Nora and Torvald were still reaping its effects. This boom can mainly be attributed to Norway's success in foreign trade, mining

and growth in agricultural productivity. Additionally, Norway, which only became an independent nation in 1814, was becoming more industrialized, and therefore bringing more money into the country as well as creating more jobs and opportunities.

As a result, the upper-middle class became larger. Before this class existed, most of the people with wealth were a part of the aristocracy, and therefore born into money. Now, people could work their way up, and enter into the upper-middle class through hard work and education. While this economic boom brought prosperity, it also brought This is evident in the plot of *A Doll's House*. Nora owes Krogstad money, which causes her immense stress. Torvald is obsessed with staying out of debt. Nora and Torvald are thrilled are at the prospect that Torvald might get a raise at the bank, which would mean more money to the entire family. However, Torvald's tight grip around the families funds lead Nora to lie about what she uses their money for, creating tension and dishonesty in their marriage and, ultimately, influencing Nora's decision to leave the house. Furthermore, expectations about being upper-middle class were also forming during this time in Norway.

Commonly referred to as bourgeois respectability, expectations of the upper middle-class included financial success without any debt, good morals, and a stable, patriarchal family. A woman's main responsibility centered around being a housewife, whose most prominent task was to serve her husband and children. The audience sees this patriarchal structure at work when Nora lets Torvald call her his little skylark, who she does whatever her husband says. Torvald is the strong male figure who makes and manages the money, as well as controlling the household. Clearly aware of the subordination of women in late 19th century Norwegian society, Ibsen wrote in his notes for *A Doll's House* in 1878, A woman cannot be herself in contemporary society, it is an exclusively male society with laws drafted by men, and with counsel and judges who judge feminine conduct from the male point of view. This is why Nora's proclamation that she also had a duty to herself shocked audiences of the time. Not only was the patriarchal structure a social tradition and something expected of the

upper middle class, but there were also laws that correlated with its ideology. For example, women were not allowed to borrow money without their husbands consent or vote.

Again, Nora goes against the social norms when she borrows from and repays money to Krogstad behind Torvald's back. Perhaps the only thing about the world of the play that differs from the world of Ibsen is that Nora's behavior was completely unprecedented in the 1870's. Generally as a movement, the history of justice for women movement has developed from time to time. There are three phases or waves of justice for women. The first phase of justice for women took place in the late 18th until 19th, emerging out of an environment of urban industrialism, liberal, and socialist politics. The goal of this phase is to open up opportunities for women with a focus on suffrage. This movement was centered in Europe and moved to America. It marked the birth of the first phase of justice for women along with the emergence of a book entitled *The Subjection of Women* (1869) by John Stuart Mill. *The Subjection of Women* was one of the famous works and had a broad influence on the lives of women in the matter of liberty in a social order.

This work makes a woman as a subject in the discussion of the difficulties involved or get the same rights as men in a social order (Purnama, 2010). Here, Mill argues that the differences in the social relationship between men and women is a kind of something wrong because it can be a bottleneck in human repair and must be replaced with a principle of perfect equality that recognizes the lack of power or the exception between women and men. He also argues that women should be given an equal status as men in the scope of work, family, politics and other aspects of life. The second phase of justice for woman began in 1960s and it focused on the civil rights, specifically social and economic equality (Castle, 2007: 95).

According to Castle, in this phase, sexuality and reproductive rights were the dominant issues and the movement's energy that is focused on passing the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution guaranteeing social equality regardless of sex. Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* is a foundational text and claims that "one is not born, one becomes a woman". Here, de Beauvoir challenges the idea

that a woman's essence is distinct from a man's, and that she is born with certain inherent potential and qualities that define her personal, social, and legal existence. This means that a woman is not born with the characteristics of a woman, other than the physical characteristics. As women, they must create the rest of their life in a way that they think a woman should be. They must be tough and confident with their ability, potential, and quality because women were not defined by people, nature, God, or anything else before their birth. They are defined by themselves with their much potential wealth, so they have to improve theirs in order to show who they really are. The third phase of justice for woman began in the middle of 90's and it was informed by post-colonial and post-modern thinking (Tong, 2009: 9).

Further, it is said that conflict and self-contradiction are the names of the game as women seek new identities for themselves. The distinctive characteristics of the third phases of justice for women is that the justice for woman have no intentions of thinking, speaking, or writing about themselves and other women out of the existence. They aim to answer a woman's questions which are "who is she? And what does she want?" where these questions have never been answered before. This means that in this phase, justice for women try to open their mind. They dig deeper into the exact meaning of being a woman. They think critically about what actually becomes a problem in justice for woman.

The problem is a question about their new identities of being a woman. The phenomena of women's problems and their struggles have still existed in the world. The problems happen not only in Eastern countries but also in Western countries involving everyone in daily life. They are universal and still happen in the real life. They also can be seen from the portrayal of the female characters' struggles in many literary works. Women feel worthless, inferior, and depressed when they are subordinated and discriminated. For that reason, women must solve their problems with their struggles. For centuries, women have been seen as the

subordinate of men. Men are the controller of the society. Women only follow what men say as the head of a society. This happens because the society has been trapped in the patriarchal system. The patriarchal system becomes the obstruction for women to get the equality as men get. The result is that men are superior to women in all segments of life. Moreover, the society still adopts the assumption that men are better than women.

Nowadays, women face many problems in some aspects of life, such as in domestic areas, education, politics, and social life. In fact, there are many discrimination and oppression toward women that happen in the world, not only in the Eastern countries but also in the Western countries. Being a woman is not a fault. It could be a gift because a woman is seen as a symbol of purity. However, women start to realize that they are equal with men. Women begin to think that they are also meaningful. They begin to find their own freedom. They started to regard themselves as individual and independent women. They banded the ideology held strongly at that time, the ideal figure of a "good" woman. They try to see a new meaning of being a "good" woman. They believe that being a good woman does not mean that one could give up what he or she believes to be the right thing to do to be a happy person.

They believe in the pursuit of happiness. Now in the modern era should not be practiced anymore. The society must leave such conservative ways of thinking. The reason why the researcher chooses this topic, the lack of struggles to fight against discrimination and oppression toward women causes the discrimination on women, which still happens until now. Realizing that such problems still occur in many countries, the researcher thinks that the gender issues like discrimination and oppression toward women are still worth discussing. Below are some examples of researches about discrimination and oppression toward women that happen in daily life in many countries in the world, especially in the Western countries.

II RESEARCH METHODS

Defines data as a collection of information that will be used in a research. In the qualitative research usually data are in the forms of nonnumeric but have variety in sources. The struggles of the main female character for life independence and the significant meaning behind the success of the main female character's struggles in gaining the independence in her life. The primary data are the main data obtained from all the words, dialogues, phrases and sentences in the drama. The primary data sources of the study are A Doll's House play by Henrik Ibsen. Secondary data are the supporting data taken from criticism, and some articles related to the drama. The techniques in collecting the data as follows: reading the drama repeatedly, taking notes of important part in both primary and secondary data, underlying the important word, phrases and sentences which are related to the study, arranging the data into several part based on its classification, library research by collecting and selecting both primary data and secondary data, drawing the conclusion of the analysis that has already done in the former chapter and formulating its pedagogical suggestion.

Method of Analyzing the Data

There were several steps to analyzing the data. First, the research data were taken by reading the play comprehensively and by observing the data related to the strong patriarchal power and the weak images of women. Second, the researcher took notes on the detail issues to be analyzed which are related to the data of the kinds of women's problems, the data of Nora's struggles for life independence and the significant meaning behind the success of Nora's struggles in gaining independence in her life. The data of the kinds of women's problems fell into two categories, a strong patriarchal power and the weak images of women. The data of Nora's struggles for life independence fell into five categories. They were no freedom in family matters in solving her husband's financial problem, in expressing her feelings against her husband's domination, in deciding to solve her family problem, in showing her ability in doing domestic work and deciding to do an important

thing in social life. Then those five categories fell into seven classifications.

They were deciding to solve her husband's problem by borrowing some money, deciding to earn money by working to pay for the debt, deciding to show her resistance by speaking up against her husband's domination, deciding to get the loan by forging her father's signature to get the surety of the bond, setting aside money from the monthly living costs, trying to show her attention and affection to her children, and finally deciding to leave her family in gaining independence for her life.

Third, the researcher gave code to each datum. The researcher also did another careful reading along with data interpretation. Finally, the data were categorized into the thematic meaning related to the kinds of women's problems occurring in the play, Nora's struggles for life independence, and the significant meaning behind the success of her struggles. Then the data of Nora's struggles were classified into thematic meaning related to no freedom in family matters in solving her family financial problem, in expressing her feelings about her husband's domination, in deciding to solve her family problem, in showing the ability in doing domestic work and in deciding to do an important thing in her life.

Technique of Collecting the Data

The writer uses the techniques in collecting the data as follows:

- a. Reading the drama repeatedly.
- b. Taking notes of important part in both primary and secondary data
- c. Underlying the important word.
- d. Phrases and sentences which are related to the study.
- e. Arranging the data into several part based on its classification.
- f. Library research by collecting and selecting both primary data and secondary data.
- g. Drawing the conclusion of the analysis that has already done in the former chapter and formulating its pedagogical suggestion.

Technique of Analyzing the Data

Stated that data analysis, which includes gathering and linking the data to find particular phenomena, is the important part of qualitative research. In this research, the phenomena to be found and analyzed are the kinds of women's problems that the main female character faces in her daily life in the play, the struggles of the main female character for life independence, and the significant meaning behind the success of the main female character's struggles in gaining the independence for her life in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*.

The five steps that were conducted to analyze the data are explained as follows:

1. Identifying the data from the play by making some notes.

2. Reading and rereading the whole data and arranging the data into three major topics: the kinds of women's problems that the main female character faces in her daily life in the play, the struggles of the main female character for life independence, and the significant meaning behind the success of the main female character's struggles in gaining the independence for her life in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*.

3. Coding and categorizing the data in the data table into thematic categories related to the kinds of women's problems that the main female character faces in her daily life in the play (the strong patriarchal power and the weak images of

women) and also coding and classifying the struggles of the main female character for life independence. They fall into five categories : no freedom in family matters in solving her husband's financial problem classified into deciding to solve her husband's problem by borrowing some money and deciding to earn money by working to pay for the debt, no freedom in family matters in expressing her feelings over her husband's domination classified into deciding to show her resistance by speaking up against her husband's domination, no freedom in family matters in deciding to solve a family problem classified into deciding to get the loan by forging her father's signature to get the surety of the bond, no freedom in family matters in showing the ability in doing domestic work classified into setting aside money from the monthly living costs and trying to show her attention and affection to her children, and finally, no freedom in family matters in deciding to do an important thing in her life classified into deciding to leave her family in gaining independence in her life.

4. Sorting the data by selecting the relevant data and excluding the irrelevant data. The selected relevant data were classified and interpreted according to its thematic meaning.

5. Finally, making an interpretation of the findings based on the researcher's comprehension about the theory.

III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Kinds of Problems does the Main Female Character Face in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*

For centuries, men and women have been treated unequally in the society which believes in patriarchy system. Patriarchy is the name given to the whole complex system of male dominance by which most societies are run now and were run in the past. In this system, men are the controller and women become the follower. Men have full power to treat and control women and, thus, women only follow what men say as the head of a society. In this case, have no right or chance to break the rules. The result is that men are superior to women in all segments of life such as in domestic areas, education, politics, and social life. Furthermore, this condition raises

many problems between women and men. After exploring the feminist theory and women's problems, the researcher comes to a conclusion that there are two kinds of women's problems founded in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. Those are strong patriarchal power and weak images of women. The description and explanation of the kinds of women's problems in the play can be seen below.

There are many limitations of freedom toward women in all aspects of life. In Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, there are two examples of limitations of freedom toward women in domestic life. They are the limitation in deciding to borrow some money from other people and the

limitation in doing what they like. The first example of the limitation can be seen in the following dialogue between Nora and her husband, Helmer:

Helmer : When did my squirrel come home?

Nora : Just now. (Puts the bag of macaroons into her pocket and wipes her mouth.) Come in here, Torvald, and see what I have bought.

Helmer : Don't disturb me. (A little later, he opens the door and looks into the room, pen in hand.) Bought, did you say? All these things? Has my little spendthrift been wasting money again?

Nora : Yes but, Torvald, this year we really can let ourselves go a little. This is the first Christmas that we have not needed to economise.

Helmer : Still, you know, we can't spend money recklessly.

Nora : Yes, Torvald, we may be a wee bit more reckless now, mayn't we? Just a tiny wee bit! You are going to have a big salary and earn lots and lots of money.

Helmer : Yes, after the New Year; but then it will be a whole quarter before the salary is due.

Nora : Pooh! We can borrow until then.

Helmer : Nora! (Goes up to her and takes her playfully by the ear.) The same little featherhead! Suppose, now, that I borrowed fifty pounds today, and you spent it all in the Christmas week, and then on New Year's Eve a slate fell on my head and killed me, and— Nora : (putting her hands over his mouth). Oh! don't say such horrid things.

Helmer : That is like a woman! But seriously, Nora, you know what I think about that. No debt, no borrowing. There can be no freedom or beauty about a home life that depends on borrowing and debt. We two have kept bravely on the straight road so far, and we will go on the same way for the short time longer that there need be any struggle(Act I, p.4-5).

The dialogue above shows that there is a limitation of freedom toward Nora. She cannot do anything she wants to do in domestic life. It occurs when she asks Helmer to borrow some money from other people when they have no money. In Helmer's view, it is a shame for him to ask for a loan from other people because there will be no happiness in a family if they depend on a loan. In fact, at the beginning of their marriage, Nora needs a certain amount of money, which forces her to borrow some. However, this is an example of a patriarchal culture which is represented by Helmer. Here, Nora has no right to decide anything. The proof that there is a limitation of freedom toward her is reinforced by her old friend, Mrs. Linde. It can be seen from the following dialogue:

Nora : Come here. (Pulls her down on the sofa beside her.) Now I will show you that I too have something to be proud and glad of. It was I who saved Torvald's life.

Mrs. Linde : "Saved"? How?

Nora : I told you about our trip to Italy. Torvald would never have recovered if he had not gone there—

Mrs. Linde : Yes, but your father gave you the necessary funds.

Nora : (smiling). Yes, that is what Torvald and all the others think, but—

Mrs. Linde : But—

Nora : Papa didn't give us a shilling. It was I who procured the money.

Mrs. Linde : You? All that large sum?

Nora : Two hundred and fifty pounds. What do you think of that?

Mrs. Linde : But, Nora, how could you possibly do it? Did you win a prize in the Lottery? Nora : (contemptuously). In the Lottery? There would have been no credit in that.

Mrs. Linde : But where did you get it from, then?

Nora : (humming and smiling with an air of mystery). Hm, hm! Aha!

Mrs. Linde : Because you couldn't have borrowed it.

Nora : Couldn't I? Why not?

Mrs. Linde : No, a wife cannot borrow without her husband's consent(Act I, p.14).

It is clearly stated from the dialogue above that a wife cannot borrow some money without her husband's permission. Here, Nora has to decide to borrow some money for the sake of saving Helmer's life because at that time she needs a big amount of money to pay a journey to Italia aiming to cure her husband's illness due to the doctor's suggestion. In this case, she tries to find a way to help her husband when she knows that her husband's health is getting worse. The second example of the limitation of freedom toward Nora is the limitation to do anything she likes. She has no freedom to do anything she likes even when it is related to only a small thing. Helmer forbids her to eat her favorite candy, macaroon. It is proven from the following dialogue:

Helmer : And I would not wish you to be anything but just what you are, my sweet little skylark. But, do you know, it strikes me that you are looking rather—what shall I say—rather uneasy today?

Nora : Do I?

Helmer : You do, really. Look straight at me.

Nora : (looks at him). Well?

Helmer : (wagging his finger at her). Hasn't Miss Sweet Tooth been breaking rules in town today?

Nora : No; what makes you think that?

Helmer : Hasn't she paid a visit to the confectioner's?

Nora : No, I assure you, Torvald—

Helmer : Not been nibbling sweets?

Nora : No, certainly not.

Helmer : Not even taken a bite at a macaroon or two?

Nora : No, Torvald, I assure you really—(Act I, p.7).

Here, Nora assures Helmer that she does not eat macaroon. Helmer forbids her to eat them because in his opinion it will spoil Nora's teeth. It is clearly seen that everything is under her

husband's control as the leader in the family. He controls Nora's activity in doing everything. This clearly shows the strong patriarchal power at that time.

The strong patriarchal power in domestic life makes women as wives unable to do what they want to. They become the second class and are considered as the other. They only become the complement of men and have the second-class position. They have less importance than men. Therefore, what women do sometimes is regarded as unimportant. For that reason, their voice is also unimportant and cannot be a standard or paradigm, or even cannot be trusted. In Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, Nora has no right to express her true feelings to Helmer. Nora is only affirming what her husband says because she has no right to express her true feelings in front of him. It can be seen from the following dialogue between Nora and Helmer:

Helmer : That is like a woman! But seriously, Nora, you know what I think about that. No debt, no borrowing. There can be no freedom or beauty about a home life that depends on borrowing and debt. We two have kept bravely on the straight road so far, and we will go on the same way for the short time longer that there need be any struggle.

Nora : (moving towards the stove). As you please, Torvald.

Helmer : (following her). Come, come, my little skylark must not droop her wings. What is this! Is my little squirrel out of temper? (Taking out his purse.) Nora, what do you think I have got here? (Act I, p.5).

From the dialogue above, it is clearly stated that at the end of her conversation with her husband, Nora is only affirming her husband's decision not to borrow money from other people. She only follows what her husband says and does not try to reveal her true feelings to him. It is also clearly seen from the following dialogue between Nora and Helmer when Helmer forbids Nora to eat her favorite candy:

Helmer : And I would not wish you to be anything but just what you are, my sweet little skylark. But, do you know, it strikes me that you are looking

rather—what shall I say—rather uneasy today?

Nora : Do I?

Helmer : You do, really. Look straight at me.

Nora : (looks at him). Well?

Helmer : (wagging his finger at her). Hasn't Miss Sweet Tooth been breaking rules in town today?

Nora : No; what makes you think that?

Helmer : Hasn't she paid a visit to the confectioner's?

Nora : No, I assure you, Torvald—

Helmer : Not been nibbling sweets?

Nora : No, certainly not.

Helmer : Not even taken a bite at a macaroon or two?

Nora : No, Torvald, I assure you really—

Helmer : There, there, of course I was only joking.

Nora : (going to the table on the right). I should not think of going against your wishes. Helmer : No, I am sure of that; besides, you gave me your word—(Going up to her.) Keep your little Christmas secrets to yourself, my darling. They will all be revealed tonight when the Christmas Tree is lit, no doubt (Act I, p.7).

Nora tries to persuade Helmer that she will not be able to fight against his wishes due to her effort to be a good wife. Nora tries to fulfill Helmer's wishes such as not to behave inappropriately in social life or not to nibble sweets or eat macaroons since those things can damage her teeth. Here, there is a limitation of Nora's freedom to express her feelings about her husband's domination. Even Helmer says that he is only joking but it implies that he does not like Nora to eat macaroon.

Patriarchal system holds an important role in all aspects of life hence this system controls women's movement. Men, as the biggest part of this system, also hold and control women's movement as the smallest. Women have no power to decide to do anything. Here, women can only be men's followers. It occurs not only in domestic but also in social life. In Ibsen's A

Doll's House, there is a limitation of freedom towards women. It is a limitation to decide an important thing. It happens to Nora when she decides to find a way to help her husband from his illness. She determines to borrow some money from someone named Krogstad. It occurs because Nora and her husband do not have any money at all. She has also forges her father's signature in order to fulfill the requirement to get the loan. It can be seen from the following dialogue between Nora and Krogstad:

Krogstad : Your father died on the 29th of September. But, look here; your father has dated his signature the 2nd of October. It is a discrepancy, isn't it? (NORA is silent.) Can you explain it to me? (NORA is still silent.) It is a remarkable thing, too, that the words "2nd of October," as well as the year, are not written in your father's handwriting but in one that I think I know. Well, of course it can be explained; your father may have forgotten to date his signature, and someone else may have dated it haphazard before they knew of his death. There is no harm in that. It all depends on the signature of the name; and that is genuine, I suppose, Mrs. Helmer? It was your father himself who signed his name here? Nora : (after a short pause, throws her head up and looks defiantly at him). No, it was not. It was I that wrote papa's name.

Krogstad : Are you aware that is a dangerous confession?

Nora : In what way? You shall have your money soon.

Krogstad : Let me ask you a question; why did you not send the paper to your father? Nora : It was impossible; papa was so ill. If I had asked him for his signature, I should have had to tell him what the money was to be used for; and when he was so ill himself I couldn't tell him that my husband's life was in danger—it was impossible.

Krogstad : It would have been better for you if you had given up your trip abroad.

Nora : No, that was impossible.
That trip was to save my husband's life;
I couldn't give that up.

Krogstad : But did it never occur
to you that you were committing a fraud
on me?

Nora : I couldn't take that into
account; I didn't trouble myself about
you at all. I couldn't bear you, because
you put so many heartless difficulties in
my way, although you knew what a
dangerous condition my husband was in
(Act I, p.28).

The dialogue above occurs when Krogstad reveals Nora's secret in forging her poor father's signature to be able to borrow money from him. When Krogstad asks Nora why she does not just send the paper to be signed authentically by her father, Nora states that it is impossible to do that due to his condition which is also dying for illness. She does not want to trouble her sick father with her problem in finding money to cure her husband. He also asks her why she does not give up her effort to save her husband. In this difficult condition, Nora has to decide something which is important that is forging her father's signature in order to get the surety of the bond and then she can get the loan. The following dialogue also shows that Nora will do everything to save her husband's life even though it will risk her own life.

Nora : You? Do you ask me to
believe that you were brave enough to
run a risk to save your wife's life?

Krogstad : The law cares nothing
about motives.

Nora : Then it must be a very
foolish law.

Krogstad : Foolish or not, it is the
law by which you will be judged, if I
produce this paper in court.

Nora : I don't believe it. Is a
daughter not to be allowed to spare her
dying father anxiety and care? Is a wife
not to be allowed to save her husband's
life? I don't know much about law; but I
am certain that there must be laws
permitting such things as that. Have you
no knowledge of such laws— you who
are a lawyer? You must be a very poor
lawyer, Mr. Krogstad.

Krogstad : Maybe. But matters of
business—such business as you and I
have had together—do you think I don't
understand that? Very well. Do as you
please. But let me tell you this—if I lose
my position a second time, you shall lose
yours with me. (He bows, and goes out
through the hall.) (Act I, p. 28-29).

Here, Nora explains that she has to forge her father's signature because of an important reason, which is to get the money soon. She uses the money to go to Italy as the doctor suggested, a place where her husband could possibly get better, but Krogstad does not care about Nora's motive. He only cares about his matter. He also compels her to help him that is to persuade her husband to restore his position in the Bank. If it does not occur then he will reveal Nora's secret to Helmer that Nora has borrowed some money from him and she has also forged her father's signature to get the loan.

4.2 The Main Female Character Face the Problems for Her Independence in Ibsen's A Doll's House.

There are some struggles done by Nora, as the main female character, to live independently against discrimination and oppression toward women in patriarchal society in Ibsen's A Doll's House. Here, she struggles to fight against discrimination and oppression toward women resulted from the strong patriarchal power and the weak images of women. Her struggles are deciding to solve her husband's problem by borrowing some money, deciding to earn money by working to pay for the debt, deciding to show her resistance by speaking up against her husband's domination, deciding to get the loan by forging her father's signature to get the surety of the bond, setting aside money from the monthly living costs, trying to show her affection and affection to her children and finally deciding to leave her family as a result of her profound disappointment. The descriptions of her struggles are as follows.

The first struggle that she makes is deciding to solve her husband's problem by borrowing some money. Here, she decides to do it because of a certain reason. At the beginning of her marriage, her husband is convicted of a serious illness due to his being a workaholic. The

doctor says that her husband should be immediately brought to Italy. Actually, the condition of their finance is not sufficient. Thus, Nora, as a good wife who really loves her husband, tries to do something. She comes to her husband's subordinate, named Krogstad. She borrows two hundred and fifty pounds from him although she is not allowed to do that. It can be seen from the following dialogue between Nora and Mrs. Linde:

Nora : There is no need you should. I never said I had borrowed the money. I may have got it some other way. (Lies back on the sofa.) Perhaps I got it from some other admirer. When anyone is as attractive as I am—

Mrs. Linde : You are a mad creature.

Nora : Now, you know you're full of curiosity, Christine.

Mrs. Linde : Listen to me, Nora dear. Haven't you been a little bit imprudent?

Nora : (sits up straight). Is it imprudent to save your husband's life?

Mrs. Linde : It seems to me imprudent, without his knowledge, to—

Nora : But it was absolutely necessary that he should not know! My goodness, can't you understand that? It was necessary he should have no idea what a dangerous condition he was in. It was to me that the doctors came and said that his life was in danger, and that the only thing to save him was to live in the south. Do you suppose I didn't try, first of all, to get what I wanted as if it were for myself? I told him how much I should love to travel abroad like other young wives; I tried tears and entreaties with him; I told him that he ought to remember the condition I was in, and that he ought to be kind and indulgent to me; I even hinted that he might raise a loan. That nearly made him angry, Christine. He said I was thoughtless, and that it was his duty as my husband not to indulge me in my whims and caprices—as I believe he called them. Very well, I thought, you must be saved—and that was how I came to devise a way out of the difficulty—

Mrs. Linde : And did your husband never get to know from your father that the money had not come from him?

Nora : No, never. Papa died just at that time. I had meant to let him into the secret and beg him never to reveal it. But he was so ill then—alas, there never was any need to tell him (Act I, p.15).

Other people represented by Mrs. Linde consider that the action of borrowing the money without the husband's permission is something imprudent and wrong. However once again, Nora strictly tells Mrs. Linde that the only reason she has bravery to do so is for saving Helmer's life. Unfortunately, Nora does not know that the person who has lent her the money is a sly person. It can be proven from the following dialogue between Nora and Krogstad:

Nora : You don't mean that you will tell my husband that I owe you money?

Krogstad : Hm!—suppose I were to tell him?

Nora : It would be perfectly infamous of you. (Sobbing.) To think of his learning my secret, which has been my joy and pride, in such an ugly, clumsy way— that he should learn it from you! And it would put me in a horribly disagreeable position—

Krogstad : Only disagreeable?

Nora : (impetuously). Well, do it, then!—and it will be the worse for you. My husband will see for himself what a blackguard you are and you certainly won't keep your post then.

Krogstad : I asked you if it was only a disagreeable scene at home that you were afraid of?

Nora : If my husband does get to know of it, of course he will at once pay you what is still owing, and we shall have nothing more to do with you.

Krogstad : (coming a step nearer). Listen to me, Mrs. Helmer. Either you have a very bad memory or you know very little of business. I shall be obliged to remind you of a few details.

Nora : What do you mean?

Krogstad : When your husband was ill, you came to me to borrow two hundred and fifty pounds.

Nora : I didn't know anyone else to go to.

Krogstad : I promised to get you that amount—

Nora : Yes, and you did so(Act I, p.26).

She fully gives her time to nurse her husband who is badly ill. She is even willing to help him although she has to commit a crime, which is borrowing some money from Krogstad without her husband's permission. Nora risks her own life for the sake of her husband's health if one day her crime is revealed. Nora's willingness is seen in her conversation with Krogstad who comes to warn her about the money she has borrowed. Therefore, it is clearly shows how Nora breaks the law.

Women at that time have no rights to do the activity outside the house. Men as the head of the society control every aspect of life. Men are the only one who has duty to fulfill the family needs. Therefore, In Ibsen's A Doll's House, Nora faces a difficult situation. She has to earn money by working to pay for the debt without her husband's consent. She only shares her secret to Mrs.Linde.

Mrs. Linde : (smiling). Nora, Nora, haven't you learned sense yet? In our schooldays you were a great spendthrift.

Nora : (laughing). Yes, that is what Torvald says now. (Wags her linger at her.) But "Nora, Nora" is not so silly as you think. We have not been in a position for me to waste money. We have both had to work.

Mrs. Linde : You too?

Nora : Yes.....(Act I, p.10-11).

Here, Nora reveals her secret to Mrs. Linde that both of them have to work, not only her husband but also her. Nora reveals her secret when Mrs. Linde says that Nora isa great spendthrift in the school time, but now in the present time, she has to work to pay for the debt. She tries to earn money in her own way by working quietly behind her husband's back. This is proven in the following dialogue:

Nora : Well, then I have found other ways of earning money. Last winter I was lucky enough to get a lot of copying to do; so I locked myself up and sat writing every evening until quite late at night. Many a time I was desperately tired; but all the same it was a tremendous pleasure to sit there

working and earning money. It was like being a man.

Mrs. Linde : How much have you been able to pay off in that way?

Nora : I can't tell you exactly. You see, it is very difficult to keep an account of a business matter of that kind. I only know that I have paid every penny that I could scrape together. Many a time I was at my wits' end. (Smiles.) (Act I, p.16).

At this point Nora takes Helmer's duty over to support her family's finance. Nora independently works and earns money when Helmer is ill, which shows her independence. She gets a job in order to pay for the debt. She has a lot of copying to do. It is a very difficult time for her when she has to lock herself up in her room and sit to write every evening until late at night. She feels really tired but there is pleasure for her because it is like being a man whose role is to work hard in order to fulfill the family needs.

As the result of discrimination and oppression towards women, women's voice in patriarchal society is not heard and considered unimportant. They just keep silent and obey everything what men say because women are afraid if their voice is unheard. In Ibsen's A Doll's House, Nora always has the same voice with her husband. She never deny or tries to speak up about her true feelings to him, but at the end of the play the opposite occurs. Nora decides to show her resistance by speaking up about her true feelings to her husband when everything happens not as she wishes. It can be seen from the following dialogue between Nora and Helmer:

Helmer:

Nora : (looking at her watch). It is not so very late. Sit down here, Torvald. You and I have much to say to one another. (She sits down at one side of the table.)

Helmer : Nora—what is this?—this cold, set face? Nora. Sit down. It will take some time; I have a lot to talk over with you.

Helmer : (sits down at the opposite side of the table). You alarm me, Nora!— and I don'tunderstand you.

Nora : No, that is just it. You don't understand me, and I have never understood you either—before tonight. No, you mustn't interrupt me. You must simply listen to what I say. Torvald, this is a settling of accounts.

Helmer : What do you mean by that?

Nora : (after a short silence). Isn't there one thing that strikes you as strange in our sitting here like this?

Helmer : What is that?

Nora : We have been married now eight years. Does it not occur to you that this is the first time we two, you and I, husband and wife, have had a serious conversation?

Helmer : What do you mean by serious?

Nora : In all these eight years—longer than that—from the very beginning of our acquaintance, we have never exchanged a word on any serious subject(Act III, p.73).

Everything is changing when Nora realizes that her husband does not care about what she has done for him as he only cares about himself. This moment brings Nora into consciousness and then she tries to reveal all of her true feelings into her husband. From that moment, she tries to start a serious conversation with him. She says that from the beginning of their marriage they never have a serious conversation. It occurs because Nora always follows what he says. This time, Nora has the courage to say everything she feels to him. It is proven from the following dialogue:

Nora : I am not speaking about business matters. I say that we have never sat down in earnest together to try and get at the bottom of anything.

Helmer : But, dearest Nora, would it have been any good to you?

Nora : That is just it; you have never understood me. I have been greatly wronged, Torvald—first by papa and then by you.

Helmer : What! By us two—by us two, who have loved you better than anyone else in the world?

Nora : (shaking her head). You have never loved me. You have only thought it pleasant to be in love with me.

Helmer : Nora, what do I hear you saying?

Nora : It is perfectly true, Torvald. When I was at home with papa, he told me his opinion about everything, and so I had the same opinions; and if I differed from him I concealed the fact, because he would not have liked it. He called me his doll-child, and he played with me just as I used to play with my dolls. And when I came to live with you—

Helmer : What sort of an expression is that to use about our marriage?

Nora : (undisturbed). I mean that I was simply transferred from papa's hands into yours. You arranged everything according to your own taste, and so I got the same tastes as your else I pretended to, I am really not quite sure which—I think sometimes the one and sometimes the other. When I look back on it, it seems to me as if I had been living here like a poor woman— just from hand to mouth. I have existed merely to perform tricks for you, Torvald. But you would have it so. You and papa have committed a great sin against me. It is your fault that I have made nothing of my life.

Helmer : How unreasonable and how ungrateful you are,

Nora : Have you not been happy here?

Nora : No, I have never been happy. I thought I was, but it has never really been so.

Helmer : Not—not happy!

Nora : No, only merry. And you have always been so kind to me. But our home has been nothing but a playroom. I have been your doll-wife, just as at home I was papa's doll-child; and here the children have been my dolls. I thought it great fun when you played with me, just as they thought it great fun when I played with them. That is what our marriage has been, Torvald.

Helmer : There is some truth in what you say—exaggerated and strained as your view of it is. But for the future it shall be different. Playtime shall be over, and lesson-time shall begin.

Nora : Whose lessons? Mine, or the children's?

Helmer : Both yours and the children's, my darling Nora.

Nora : Alas, Torvald, you are not the man to educate me into being a proper wife for you(Act III, p.74-75).

Nora realizes that she has been greatly wronged, first by her father and then by her husband, who treats her like a doll. In this case, a doll means something that can be played anytime by the owner. It occurs because everything she has done based on her husband's and her father's permission. At the end of the play, Nora has changed her behavior. She tries to speak up about her true feelings even though it hurts her husband. She changes into another person which has courage to speak up about her husband's domination in their marriage.

4.3 The Significant Meaning Behind the Success of the Main Female Character's Struggles in Gaining Independence in Her Life in Ibsen's A Doll's House

From the discussion about women's problems and the struggles of the main female character, it can be concluded that Nora as the main female character has been successful in overcoming her problems. The problems that occur in the play are caused by the strong patriarchal power and the weak images of women. The strong patriarchal power creates many limitations to women's freedom in doing their activities in domestic and social life. The weak images of women create some bad assumptions to women's ability in domestic and social life. Here, Nora tries to fight to overcome the problems with her struggles.

Nora's struggles are deciding to solve her husband's problem by borrowing some money, deciding to earn money by working to pay for the debt, deciding to show her resistance by speaking up against her husband's domination, deciding to get the loan by forging her father's signature to get the surety of the bond, setting aside money

from the monthly living costs, trying to show her attention and affection to her children, and finally deciding to leave her family as a result of her profound disappointment because of her husband's negative response. Through Nora's struggles, Ibsen shows some ways that can be done by women to subdue their problems. Nora's struggles have two significant meanings because Nora, as a woman and a wife, has survived from male domination. First, it is a proof that women are capable of doing many things. This fact can be proven by Nora, who shows her ability in dealing with her domestic and social life.

She shows this ability in order to reject some bad assumptions that are attached to her. Second, it is also a proof that women are independent. This fact can be proven by Nora, who finally turns out to be an independent woman. She has survived against discrimination and oppression in her domestic and social life. Her struggles can be considered as a symbol of independence although she has to leave her husband and children which, in fact, is the hardest thing for a woman. This all happens because she has been disappointed with her husband's response which is far from her wishes after what she has done to him. She also ignores the society who gives negative views on her action in leaving her family.

She risks her own life with her bravery to become an independent woman. Moreover, it reflects the independence to choose the best thing for her. Here, Ibsen uses his works or writings to voice his support to solve women's problems which are related to discrimination and oppression towards them in the world. Through A Doll's House, he tries to emphasize the reader that women can be independent and have the same ability as men's in many aspects of life. Women can prove their ability if they are given opportunity or chance. By giving them opportunity in many aspects, they can show their true ability.

Afterward, there will be no women's problems in the forms of discrimination and oppression towards them anymore because the bad assumptions about women that they are weak, fragile, and submissive are totally not true. To sum up, women's problems that happen in the play are because of the strong patriarchal power and the weak images of women which create many limitations to their freedom in doing their

activities and also create some bad assumptions to their ability in domestic and social life. Nora, as the main female character, tries to fight to overcome the problems with her struggles she takes. Her final decision, which is deciding to leave her family, results from her profound

disappointment because of her husband's negative response. It brings out her desire to be an independent woman without the existence of anyone who is superior to her anymore and it can only be accomplished by means of leaving her family.

IV CONCLUSION

After analyzing Ibsen's *A Doll's House* based on social perspective focusing on women's problems in the play, Nora's struggles for life independence, and the significant meaning behind her success in gaining independence in her life, it can be concluded from the study as follows.

1. Patriarchal system which is adopted by the society in Ibsen's *A Doll's House* creates women's problems. In the play, there are two kinds of women's problems. Those are the strong patriarchal power and the weak images of women. Related to the strong patriarchal power, there are three limitations to women's freedom. They are the limitation to women's freedom to decide to do something, the limitation to women's freedom to express feelings over men's domination, and the limitation to women's freedom to decide an important thing. Related to the weak images of women, the main female character is regarded as incapable of doing domestic work and of deciding an important thing in social life. As a result, they are not permitted to explore and to empower their ability.

2. Nora as the main female character shows her ability for life independence. Her struggles reveal her desire to fight against discrimination and into two categories. The first is the struggles to fight against the strong patriarchal power. Here, she tries to prove her ability in the sense that women can do anything like men do, and they are not the second-class people, who only occupy the second-class position in their society. She decides to solve her

husband's problem by borrowing some money, to earn money by working to pay for the debt, to show her resistance by speaking up against her husband's domination, and to get the loan by forging her father's signature to get the surety of the bond. The second is the struggles to fight against the weak images of women. She sets aside money to pay for the debt, tries to show her attention and affection to her children, and finally decides to leave her family as a result of her profound disappointment because of her husband's negative response. By doing all those struggles, Nora rejects the bad assumption that women are incapable of doing anything.

3. There are two significant meanings behind the success of Nora's struggles in gaining independence in her life. First, woman is capable of doing anything in domestic and social life. Woman can prove her true ability that she is able to do anything if she is given opportunity or chance. Second, Nora's struggles are symbols of independence, the freedom for a woman to choose the best thing for her. By being independent, women can achieve the happiness, and it is hoped that there will be no discrimination and oppression toward women anymore.

In conclusion, Nora as the main female character in the play represents women in general that are capable and independent. She can solve her problems by showing her struggles. She is successful in showing her ability and gaining

independence in her life. Nora does her struggles by doing activities which are not permitted for her. She breaks the rules which limit her movements in domestic and social life. She also refuses some bad assumptions that are attached to her by showing her true ability. Here, she tries to show the fact that she is a capable woman. At the end of the play, she finally turns out to be an independent woman by deciding to leave her family. This final decision occurs as a result of her profound disappointment of her husband's negative response after knowing what she has done for him. Finally, it raises her desire to be an independent woman without the existence of anyone who is superior to her anymore. It is one form of freedom for Nora to choose the best thing for her life.

SUGGESTION

1. To literature students

This research can be a reference to all people, especially in the problems that exist in life. This factor is very difficult to observe in his life, because in real life people follow their respective rules.

2. To the readers

This study shows social values in the context of family discourse. Readers can understand about social not only for the family but for all people, whether male or female, in order to be fair to fellow human beings so that prosperity occurs among fellow human beings, and hopefully every human being can understand each other with each other.

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