

## Gender Discrimination in the Novel *Renjana* by El Alicia

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### Abstract

Literary work is a creation of creative work. One of the functions of literature is as a medium to manifest human life through language. In other words, literature is a reflection of society. Gender inequality has always been an interesting issue because patriarchal culture is still deeply rooted in the Indonesian community. The superiority and domination of men over women are also frequently mentioned and criticized through works of fiction and non-fiction found in films and novels. Especially in books both explicitly and implicitly allude to and review gender issues, as in El Alicia's *Renjana* novel. This research is a type of qualitative research. This research analyzes gender discrimination in the book *Renjana* by El Alicia. The analytical method used is discourse analysis from Sara Mills. The result shows that gender discrimination appears in El Alicia's *Renjana* novel. Including stereotypes, marginalization, violence, and subordination. Explicitly, the definition of stereotypes against women as voiceless creatures whose often opinions ignored in several quotes in the novel. The marginalization of women's illustration shows in the rules that bind the Gentala character as the main character. Meanwhile, the manifestation of violence against women is the domination of male characters who show superiority and power over women, as in one of the scenes of violence that Bestari experienced when he refused to serve Sang Wiyasa. Subordination with women shows in this novel, where often women's voices are ignored in discussions.

### Keywords

Gender Discrimination; Novel; Literature

### INTRODUCTION

Discrimination is the differential treatment of individuals based on ethnicity, race, religion, gender, skin color, social status, political beliefs, and other differences carried out individually or in groups in the economic, social, cultural, and political aspects of life other. Generally, the definition of gender is a social difference between men and women. They emphasized the behavior, functions, and roles determined by the habits of their society. In other words, gender is a concept used to identify differences between men

and women based on socio-cultural aspects. Thus, gender discrimination refers to the differential treatment of men and women.

Gender inequality has always been interesting because patriarchal culture is still deeply rooted in Indonesian society. Patriarchal culture is a social system that gives the central authority to men as the center of control in the social system (Susanto, 2016). Patriarchy itself sees a division of power that favors men, such as patrilineal lineage, the right to firstborn children, individual sovereignty in social relations, participation in public roles in

politics, religion, professionalism, and other aspects of life. The placement of men in a higher value system than women affect other aspects of society, so in a patriarchal society, often, the social structure is dominated by men rather than women. Because patriarchy is rooted in society, it makes some women normalize this behavior and consider it natural that women are second-class members of society whose position is below men's. This culture is one of the factors for discriminatory behavior, restrictions on rights, exploitation, and violence against women.

Gender differences cause gender inequality. Many people still find it difficult to distinguish between gender and sex, so they regard social construction as natural or biological provisions from God. The reflection shows in people's everyday behavior, such as the notion that caring for children and doing housework is a woman's nature. On the other hand, doing homework is part of social construction, just like gender. There are five forms of gender inequality caused by gender differences: marginalization, subordination, stereotypes, double burden, and violence (Fakih, 2008).

Marginalization is an attempt to limit women from acting, expressing themselves, and actualizing themselves (Permana & Maulana, 2020). The cause of marginalization is the assumption that gender is the same as sex. Marginalization can be divided into four, namely.

- 1) Exclusion of women from work or other aspects of life;
- 2) Shifts of women from the labor market, such as technological modernization, which forces women to become agricultural laborers with low wages and are considered unskilled in a sector;
- 3) The process of feminization, namely the division of jobs based on gender so that

women only get work opportunities in specific sectors; and

- 4) The idea is that women work to earn additional income so that there is a wage gap between female and male workers.

Subordination is discriminatory behavior towards gender by grouping sex based on social status (Yusalia, 2014). Society likes to compartmentalize roles for specific genders. In this case, women play a role in the domestic sector, while men play a role in the public sector. This division of roles raises the judgment that a role is higher or superior to others. Thus, as long as the presumption of the superiority of the public role compared to the domestic one still exists, then during that time, discrimination against women will continue (Affandi, 2019).

The following form of discrimination is stereotyping, namely, giving a label, stamp, or image to a group based on subjective judgments. Using stereotypes as an excuse to justify the behavior or action of a group over other groups, this act of labeling aims to subdue other parties because of the existence of power relations. They are pointing out stereotypes of gender by the notion that women dress up to seduce men or women dress to attract men's attention. It leads to victim blaming when sexual violence occurs. In addition, women only served in the domestic sphere and served their husbands. This stereotype increasingly supports and makes it normal for women to have low education.

Violence can occur physically or non-physically perpetrated by a group, family institution, society, or the state against other groups. Violence arises from a misunderstanding in interpreting the meaning of gender and sex, so that masculine and feminine characteristics emerge. Women are considered soft, weak, obedient, and so on. While men are considered dashing, strong, brave, and so

on. These contrasting characteristics make women look down on one eye. Thus, they use this as an excuse to treat women arbitrarily, including justifying acts of violence. In addition, laws not in favor of women and victims of violence are also factors in the perpetuation of violence against women. This violence manifests in domestic violence, catcalling, forced marriages, sexual harassment, rape, etcetera.

Double workload (double burdens) is a situation in which women are responsible for the domestic and public sectors. Today many women are literate in education, so they have the opportunity to work in the public sector. However, women cannot leave domestic work because it is embedded in society that housework is a woman's responsibility. The community's solution to this problem is not dividing domestic tasks among men but giving them to household assistants.

Literary work is a creation or creation of a creative work (Miyasari, 2019). One function of literature is as a medium to manifest human life through language. In other words, literature is a reflection of society. Everything presented in a literary event can happen in real life or outside the real world. However, literature can amaze its audience with the events presented, with all its power in interpreting and associating various realities in human life (Susanti, 2010). A novel is a fictional literary work in the form of prose. Although it is fictional, the novel represents social problems that occur in society.

Discovering the depiction of gender injustice or discrimination in literature is not new. Various problems related to gender issues in society encourage literary writers to present them in their works. *Renjana* by El Alicia is a historical romance novel with a background in the life of the King of Majapahit, that history did not write his

existence. Thick Javanese culture wraps this story. The immortal king meets his wife when she reincarnates as a woman living in the 21st century. This novel setting is in two eras, namely the era of the archipelago and the modern kingdom, so there is a depiction of gender injustice that occurred at that time. This study aims to find out the forms of gender discrimination in the novel *Renjana* by El Alicia and how the characters in the novel represent gender discrimination.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research used in this research is qualitative research with a critical approach. Bogdan and Taylor (1975) inside (Moleong, 1989) define qualitative research as a research procedure that aims to produce descriptive data in the form of writing from the observed behavior or object. The selection of this qualitative method with a critical approach is because this research procedure is based and refers more to the researcher's interpretation of the text. More than that, this method was chosen because the critical paradigm can reveal the implied meanings or ideology of the discourse to be studied.

This research analyzes gender discrimination in the novel "*Renjana*" by El Alicia. The critical discourse analysis used is discourse analysis with the Sara Mills perspective approach. Discourse analysis studies the language used naturally in verbal and written form. The language referred to here is the language used in everyday communication. Sara Mills views discourse as a reaction against traditional, formal linguistic forms. Discourse analysis pays attention to matters related to grammar and sentence structure, while the focus of linguistic studies is not on analyzing the language used (Sobur, 2015).

Sara Mills' discourse analysis emphasizes how women a text represents

women. This critical discourse model focuses more on two concepts. First, the orientation of the subject-object concept is to how the position of ideas, events, and actors in the text shows. Actors can be subjects who tell themselves and have perceptions of the depiction of the world in their opinion. Meanwhile, parties who become objects cannot interpret themselves in the text, and other actors display even their existence. In general, women present themselves as objects, which causes them to always be parties who cannot present themselves (Triana et al., 2021).

Second, the concept of the reader's position focuses on how the sees of reader's position from how the writer places the reader in a particular subject. The reader is not an entity, who's only presented with a text but is also involved in the text. Mills argues that text is the result of negotiations between readers and writers. The data collection method in this study is through documentation and literature study. Documentation is a data collection technique aimed at research subjects. This study's documentation was more about collecting supporting data needed in compiling the research. This documentation is in the form of texts that show gender discrimination in the novel "Renjana". Meanwhile, a literature study is a data collection technique that reviews books and relevant written reference sources. This literature study is an essential part of this research because it can provide important information related to gender discrimination in the novel "Renjana" in more depth.

Primary data in this study were obtained from reading and observing the texts in the novel "Renjana" and selecting texts that contain elements of discrimination against women in the novel "Renjana." This reading process is done legally by buying the original novel "Renjana," which is not the

result of piracy. Meanwhile, secondary data comes from relevant literature and previous research results. This study's stages of data analysis started with data collection, data presentation, data reduction, and conclusion.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before the struggle for equality began, women were still synonymous with dresses, being feminine and gentle, and always dressing up and wearing the best clothes to maintain the dignity of their family and husband. It was the case during the royal period in Indonesia, where they identified women with elegant kebaya clothes that accentuated body curves and tight fingers. Because they require to act femininely and always bow their heads, even kneeling in front of their husbands or unknown men to protect their family's dignity. Women at that time, especially in Java, were also synonymous with the 3M's roles or duties, namely *masak* (cooking), *macak* (dressing up), and *manak* (giving birth). At the same time, school is one of the things that is luxurious for women and intended only for women of the nobility. Through social and cultural structures, women in Java are regulated by formulas and uniformity so that stereotypical views of women continue to be attached to the personality of Javanese women (Budiati, 2010).

Women have experienced many injustices that place them as objects, not as independent human beings who have reason and can determine their attitudes and actions. At that time, there were many rules that limited the movement of women's lives. At a more severe level, even some women at that time would always feel inferior, lose self-confidence, and consider themselves worthless. The superiority and domination of men over women are also frequently mentioned and criticized through works of fiction and non-fiction

found in films and novels. Especially in novel fiction, both explicitly and implicitly allude to and review gender issues, as is the case with the object of this research, namely Novel *Renjana*.

### Description of *Renjana*'s Novel

Gentala Sosrokartono or commonly called Gen, is the second child of the couple Ario Sosrokartono and Astri. She is a student majoring in philosophy at a university in Jakarta. Her parents live in Yogyakarta, and she migrated to Jakarta with her older brother to study at university. Her father was a Regent of Anom and was a government official trusted by the Sultanate of Ngayogyakarta. Gen often experiences magical things and dreams about Lingga and Bestari. Then, she will wake up at Parangkusumo Beach. Since then, she moved to Bantul during junior high school to live with her grandmother and keep her away from these mystical dreams and events. Then, in high school, she returned to Yogyakarta after these dreams stopped bothering her. However, at 19, she suddenly began to dream again about Lingga and Bestari and experienced mystical events. Gen decided to ask her parents when she returned to Yogyakarta during her semester break.



**Figure 1.** Cover of *Renjana* Novel (Source: Research Data, 2022).

At the campus, Gen also met one of her philosophy lecturers, who could be said to have a strange and old-fashioned appearance. Because his vehicle to go to campus is even an old *ontel* bicycle. Also, he only wears shirts of the same color according to the day of the week. His name is Pramoedya Kartanegara Rajendra or commonly called Pram. The lecturer is a perfectionist and a killer person for students who are “less” intelligent or diligent in his classes. However, he is also known as a friendly lecturer for obedient students who do not like to disturb his perfectionist side. Gentala did not expect that she would have anything to do with Pram, even when she returned to Yogyakarta.

Every time she returned to her parent's house, Gen would turn into a graceful girl dressed in a kebaya and her hair in a bun. She will also visit the palace of the Ngayogyakarta Sultanate every day because her father and mother are courtiers or people who serve the palace. Even Gen was considered part of the royal family by Ngarsa Dalem (the palace leader) because of the intensity of play at the palace. It was there that she met her lecturer, Pram. The following days in Yogyakarta were surprising with the many new facts about herself: she gets prohibited from getting close to and touching any man before she turns 21. Because Sang Hyang Karsa destinies her life for one man, Pram. Furthermore, by Kanjeng Ratu Kidul, she was advised to marry Pram immediately. Kanjeng Ratu Kidul also ordered her to change her name to Lestari.

Another fact is that Pram was an immortal who had lived since the Majapahit era. He was a king at the time but chose to erase the history of his leadership because he regretted his wife's death. Then she learned that the Lingga and Bestari who had been present in her dreams were Pram and Gentala in the past. Gentala or Lestari or the

reincarnation of Bestari, the wife of the king of Majapahit, Maheswara Jayawardhana. The dreams about Lingga and Bestari are memories of the past so that Bestari and Lestari's souls can unite in Lestari's bodies. Bestari was a child from a family belonging to the Sudra or the lowest caste. Her parents matched her with a Wiyasa and made her a concubine. When she was washing in the river and lamenting her fate, she met Lingga.

Bestari shared her anxiety, and Lingga said that Bestari could come to his residence if she needed help. However, in the end, Bestari still married and became the concubine of the Wiyasa. When it arrived on the first night of her marriage, Bestari began to know the true nature of her husband, who was rude and liked to belittle and humiliate her. Then Bestari was forced to serve him, even though she did not want to. Wiyasa then strangled her, and Bestari fought back by sticking a knife into her husband's stomach. He died on the spot, and Bestari immediately left the house where Lingga lived. There, she was welcomed and given help by Lingga.

However, Wiyasa's older brother discovers her actions in killing her husband. Bestari was tortured and threatened with death in front of the villagers. Lingga, who knew this, did not remain silent, then saved her from the torment. One day, she dreamed of becoming the wife of the king of Majapahit and giving birth to a successor to the throne who would remember for all time, Hayam Wuruk. Lingga and Bestari eventually married after changing her identity to Dyah Adya. However, her presence as the king's most favored concubine made the other concubines jealous, especially when she learned that Bestari was pregnant. Then, they work together to get rid of Bestari by sinking her into the sea. However, Kanjeng Ratu Kidul saved her, and she could return to the

kingdom and give birth to a successor to the throne.

Those who worked together to get rid of Bestari were annoyed that she had made it back. Their efforts did not stop there. Several years later, there was an accusation that Bestari was having an affair with a keris maker, Mpu Mahesa. Although Lingga believes that his wife is not having an affair, he has no proof whatsoever, and residents tend to think that the news is trustworthy. Then, in the end, Bestari had to be sentenced to death because of this accusation, and evidence revealed that Bestari was innocent. This mistake made Lingga cursed to become an immortal being, and he had to wait hundreds of years for his wife to reincarnate again, and only then could the curse be lifted.

#### **Position of Subject, Object, and Reader**

The subject's position is how the writer displays the characters in the novel. The author in this novel uses an all-knowing third-person point of view to present the player in the story. However, the most frequently told character is Gentala because she is the only essential character in this story. The author tells the most stories, followed by Pram and other supporting characters such as mother, father, Gea, Mas Bara, Gentala's friends, Pram's friends, etcetera. The most dominating character, Gentala, tells many other characters based on her opinion and point of view. For example, she describes Pak Pram as old-fashioned, a perfectionist, and weird because he vomits after eating junk food. This description gives the impression of judging or one-sided judgment because humans will always judge whatever is around them.

The object's position is the actor who cannot tell, and even appears their self in the story. In this novel, the character is Kanjeng Ratu Kidul, whose presence is always

related to Gen or Pram, and she will not appear or move out of her place except to meet the two of them. Even so, the character is one of the key figures in the story to solve the existing plot twist. Therefore, her presence also seems mysterious because she is a Queen who cannot interact with anyone. In addition, the figure of Ngarsa Dalem (leader of the palace) only appears when having a dialogue with Gentala and Pram. Because the role of Ngarsa Dalem was just an extra, that emphasized how Gentala and Pram could be close and were considered like family by the Ngayogyakarta Sultanate.

The reader's position is how the reader places in a story. Because the reader does not only play the role of receiving the text, they also feel what it is like to be one of the actors in a story. In this novel, because the point of view used is third person omniscient, and the character that shows often is Gentala, most readers will place his position as the actor Gentala. Readers can feel Gentala's curiosity about the unreviled of her identity. The readers also can feel how Gentala was shocked when she discovered her arranged destiny in such a way. Also, how Gentala, in the past as a Bestari, felt all the injustice, discrimination, and accusations that befell her.

Pram, as the main character's opponent, can also be one of the most felt by her position as a reader, especially for male readers. Readers can feel how difficult Pram's life was when he had to live his eternal life from the time of the Majapahit kingdom to the 21st century. Readers can also feel how Pram has to see the people he loves leave him one by one. He also has to change his identity within a certain period so that those around him do not suspect his immortal self. Readers can also feel how Pram and Gentala felt when they had to be separated by death. It also includes how Pram felt confused while patiently waiting

for his destiny as an immortal being that he did not know at all.

### **Gender and Female Stereotypes**

Stereotypes or labeling are judgments given by society to conquer other parties. Stereotypes are generally negative and can harm the stereotyped party and other parties. For example, stereotypes about women who are gentle, helpless, only do domestic work, are always obedient and cannot argue, and so on. It is very detrimental to women because they are often underestimated when doing something challenging and think this should be a man's duty. Stereotypes of women in society generally describe that women are weak, oppressed, number two, and the main problem (Wibowo et al., 2015).

Women also find it more difficult to express their voices and opinions because there is a stereotype that women often make decisions based on the emotional side or from the heart and feelings. Opinions and contributions of women are limited because they consider women to must always obey men. If at home, for example, she must obey her father or husband. Meanwhile, when at work, women are considered incapable of becoming leaders, so they must obey the decisions of leaders who are men.

As a result of these stereotypes also causes women to feel inferior and inappropriate because they are afraid of society's assumptions and responses if they do things outside of existing stereotypes. Stereotypes against women also have an impact on men. For example, the stereotype is that crying is for weak people like women, so men who cry seeing as weak men. As a result, men tend to find it difficult to express their emotions. Several stereotypes that harm women find in *Renjana's* novel, including the following.

Then, common sense answered, "As a woman, you should not question the decisions of your husband or parents. Must be obedient and understanding, even though the heart refuses. We are women, creatures without voices (Renjana, 2021:19).

**Figure 2.** Novel Quote 1 (Source: Research Data, 2022).

The author explicitly mentions that women are creatures without a voice. In this quote, it can be seen that the discrimination doctrine has roots in Gentala's mindset. Because that is what her environment has taught her since childhood. It is this doctrine that keeps negative stereotypes of women attached and perpetuated. Many women feel a feminine and obedient woman is "nature", and she cannot argue or challenge this.

This woman's mindset will also make her criticize other women who do not follow this "nature". For example, when there are women who are barbaric and tomboyish, indoctrinated women with negative stereotypes tend to be the opposite and judge that what barbarian women do is wrong. While on the other hand, as a part that is often disadvantaged because of this stereotype, women should work together and support each other to fight it. And not instead bring down fellow women who want to break negative stereotypes.

Because this doctrine also causes negative stereotypes considered "common sense". Meanwhile, in reality, this mindset makes women easily manipulated by their thoughts and physically exploited, especially by men. So, seeing the impact on women, this thought should not be part of common sense. The idea that comes from common sense should be that women are free human beings who can do anything without overthinking how men think of them. So that whatever she does in her life

is for herself and not for other people or any man

The sun was rising, but her mother had told Gen to get ready. Gen wants to cry blood, it feels. She still wants to make love with his childhood bed. Her mother's exclamations are always the same from year to year, such as: 'girls cannot get up too late,' 'girls cannot be lazy,' and various babbles that are always on behalf of girls. Is it true that the world will collapse if girls get up late? (Renjana, 2021: 37).

**Figure 3.** Novel Quote 2 (Source: Research Data, 2022).

The quote above relates to the stereotype of women having to do domestic work. They taught women to get up early because they had to cook breakfast for the family, clean the house, wash clothes, and prepare for other family members' needs. Especially if she is a woman who also works, if she wants everything done without anyone's help, she must get up earlier and do everything more quickly and skillfully. Gentala is an example of a female victim of this stereotype. Mother Gentala's dialogue about girls who are not allowed is a form of stereotype perpetuated, especially in Indonesian society.

Ibu Gentala, in her dialogue, explicitly marginalizes women and deifies men. Because in the sentence, only girls are mentioned, and not 'children' as a whole, both boys and girls. The sentence implements as if only girls are not allowed to be lazy, while boys are allowed to be lazy or not as they please. Because of the stereotype that women are the ones who have to do domestic work, educate children, and take care of their husbands, another stereotype emerges, namely that women should not be lazy. If women become lazy, the work at home will be incomplete, inappropriately educate children, and the husband will not be cared for later.



Meanwhile, all of these tasks should be done together and not only by the women who do them.

Then in the final sentence, Gentala wonders in her mind if when the girls wake up in the afternoon, the world will collapse. This sentence implicitly implies that men cannot live without women. Because all things must be done and served by women, it is synonymous with the stereotype that men should not do domestic work. While in reality, this is part of basic life or survival skills. This ability must be possessed by anyone in order to be able to live their lives independently and reduce their dependence on other individuals. Because not every time a wife will always be with her husband.

They say that night is the most sacred night for women because, on the same night, women officially surrender their bodies entirely to men. Entirely woman's bodies own by a man, which means that only men can determine the will and behavior of the woman. Women obey men, their husbands. Their husbands are the kings of their lives (Renjana, 2021:103).

**Figure 4.** Novel Quote 3 (Source: Research Data, 2022).

The quote above illustrates the stereotype that a woman's body belongs to her future husband. She must look after and beautify herself for her future husband during marriage. Meanwhile, women should have their bodies, not lovers, fiancés, or future husbands. Women do not dress up and look beautiful to attract men's attention but to make them happy and increase their confidence. The sentence in the quote illustrates how patriarchy works to become a doctrine in women's thinking. Because of this doctrine, everything women do seems to require validation from other people, especially their partners.

For example, when a woman takes care of her body and wears make-up, the reason is that other men or their partners are attracted to her. In addition, even though it seems exaggerated, the sentence in the quote above really happens to most women, especially those shackled by several customary rules and who live in a perpetual patriarchal culture. Women are required to take care of themselves for their husbands, women are required to obey their husbands without exception. This stereotype often makes women feel inferior and inappropriate when doing something because they are used to being indoctrinated by all the rules their husbands set. While it should be, household and married life is a mutual agreement between husband and wife and not only based on unilateral decisions.

### Gender and Marginalization of Women

Marginalization relates to restrictions on the rights of women to express themselves. Marginalization generally occurs due to several rules inherent in the patriarchal culture, so these rules limit women's movements. These rules make it difficult for women to express themselves for fear of getting a negative response from society. The following quotes indicate marginalization in Renjana's novel.

When Bestari appoints as a concubine, Linga change her background and everything about her. Her name is no longer Bestari but Dyah Adya, a noblewoman and daughter of a governor. Dyah Adya is a graceful, competent person from the knight caste. Dyah Adya does not climb trees, run around like a child, laugh freely or talk to men like friends (Renjana, 2021: 266).

**Figure 5.** Novel Quote 4 (Source: Research Data, 2022).

Even though it is related to social status, the quote is also related to gender inequality. Gentala, in the story, seems forbidden to act out of bounds like a man. It can see when she is not allowed to climb a tree and laugh out loud because that does not reflect a feminine woman. The change in her name from Bestari to Dyah Adya also seemed to be a burden to her. Because the image pinned on Dyah Adya was very far from her personality, Bestari had to take unwanted actions and refrain from showing his true nature.

Due to her rising status from being a member of the Sudra caste to becoming a king's concubine, Bestari inevitably had to agree to follow the rules of the palace and her husband. Her rise in status also caused her to limit her behavior to look like an honorable noblewoman. While it should be, women from any circle and social status do not need to be shackled by rules that limit women from being themselves. As long as it does not harm other people and is not part of a criminal act, women are free to want to show how they are in society.

### Gender and Violence

The violence experienced by Gentala in the quote above relates to her physical and psychological nature. When Pram pressures her to fulfill his wish, at the same time, it shows men's superiority, domination, and power, which requires women not to argue, or they will get worse consequences. Gestures and the way Pram spoke also indicated intimidation toward Gentala. It happens because a strongly patriarchal culture also grows a sense of superiority in men. In addition, superiority can grow a dominant side, resulting in a man feeling that he can have everything, and everything he has must also be subject to him.

"You did not even change your nickname," Pram said again, adding a little pressure on Gen's chin to make the girl tremble under his control. (Renjana, 2021: 98)

**Figure 6.** Novel Quote 5 (Source: Research Data, 2022).

Meanwhile, Gentala's viewpoint as a victim feels that what Pram had done to her was a trauma. It also makes women afraid to fight men who have intimidated them. Because men consider having more substantial power to make women submit, obey, and obey them.

You are my wife, which means I want my satisfaction tonight. Do not waste how much I owe to your family. I will not hesitate to sell you as an enslaved person if tonight I do not get what I want," the wiyasa threatened loudly and grabbed Bestari's lips roughly. He kissed and bit Bestari's lips until they bled, but again Bestari could not resist. He squeezed the cloth he was wearing with dripping tears (Renjana, 2021:104)

**Figure 7.** Novel Quote 6 (Source: Research Data, 2022).

The violence that Bestari received was because she did not want to meet the Wiyasa's needs. So, she was forced and intimidated into doing things she did not want. In marriage, one goal is to meet both partners' biological needs. However, even so, this must always be done based on consent, without coercion or violence, so both parties must agree on what they want and do not want to do when having sexual intercourse.

Mainly for domestic violence cases, most victims are women because they refuse to 'serve' their husband's lust. Furthermore, men should understand that women sometimes feel tired, not in the mood, or in other impossible conditions. Because in some cases, when sexual desire is

unfulfilled, men can lose their minds. Meanwhile, men should also learn to control their desires and ego to avoid harming other people in terms of sexual intention.

Bestari's survival instinct was so strong that she mustered all her last strength by kicking the stocky man in the groin. The stranglehold on her neck released, causing Bestari to fall and cough on the ground. The stocky man also fell to his knees, holding his groin, feeling so much pain after being kicked by Bestari. Bestari looked at her enemy with a sharp gaze while forcing herself to stand on her two trembling legs. "BITCH!" shouted the bearded man with a sharp look at Bestari (Renjana, 2021:158).

**Figure 8.** Novel Quote 7 (Source: Research Data, 2022).

The quote illustrates that Bestari received psychological, physical, and verbal violence. The violence committed by someone whose body size and strength were not commensurate with her. However, Bestari, who did not want to get oppressed by him, tried to fight the perpetrators of the violence. She has suffered many injuries due to violence perpetrated by her husband. So, she does not want this to happen to her again. Bestari's resistance shows that not only men, women can resist and also commit violence. Of course, this is also not easy because strong motivation or encouragement must enable the victim to do it. Her past experiences drove her and her instincts to survive. So, when she dares to fight back, that power emerges and helps her escape the perpetrator's grip.

### Gender and Subordination

Gentala's voice in the discussion seemed to be ignored and unnecessary, even though she could have wanted to go to college or live out her youth first. However, in the end,

she was still forced to agree to Pram's proposal and had to accept the marriage, which she felt was too soon. Her mother even supported Pram's proposal and ignored Gentala's worries. It causes women to end up often agreeing to whatever the men around them think because she knows that even if she tries to say it, their voice will still ignore and unheard by people.

"I suggest taking January 26 next year. Wage Sunday is a good day for our engagement," said Raden Mas Pram, who was greeted with shocked looks from Gen. This month is December, nearing the end of the year. That means she is getting married next year! This formal proposal seemed too fast and rushed for Gen. "Too fast. Mas," Gen said, finally speaking up. "No. That is a good date," Mother interrupted again, forcing a small smile when her eyes watered again. (Renjana, 2021: 127)

**Figure 9.** Novel Quote 8 (Source: Research Data, 2022).

### CONCLUSION

Gender discrimination has always been an exciting discourse to review. It is due to the strong patriarchal culture, especially in Indonesia. This patriarchal culture is one of the main factors in issues of gender discrimination. Gender discrimination has five forms: marginalization, subordination, stereotypes, double burden, and violence. Everyone can find forms of gender discrimination in the real world and in works of fiction, such as the novel *Renjana* by El Alicia. The book tells the story of a king erased from the Majapahit kingdom's history. He curses to become immortal until he redeems himself at fault with his wife. The novel by El Alicia alludes to many elements of gender discrimination, both implicitly and explicitly.

Gender discrimination in this novel is a stereotype against women described explicitly as voiceless beings whose

opinions ignore in several quotes. The marginalization of women also illustrates in the rules that bind the Gentala character as the main character. Meanwhile, violence against women illustrates by the domination of male characters who show the superiority and power of men over women, as in one of the scenes of violence that Bestari experienced when he refused to serve Sang Wiyasa. Subordination with women finds in this novel, where women's voices ignore in discussions.

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