

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Jennifer Longo's novel *What I Carry* tells the story about Muiriel, who lives in several house during her stay in foster care system. Based on the analysis, the main character, Muiriel, is independent, emotionally prescient, resilient, quick-witted, and sentimental. Muiriel's personality align with the three symptoms of avoidant attachment: positive self-image but negative view on others, emotional detachment, and avoidance of dependence. Later, it is evident that these symptoms and her avoidant attachment are caused by early separation from caregivers experienced by Muiriel as a child. Those caregivers are her biological mother and first foster parents. Other causes that lead Muiriel to experience avoidant attachment are frequent rejection of dependency needs from her foster parents and inconsistent caregiving she experienced during her time in foster care system. Muiriel's avoidant attachment significantly affects her relationship with other character in the novel where she struggles to form emotional closeness especially in romantic relationship as well as emotional and physical withdrawal.

In conclusion, Muiriel develops avoidant attachment because of repeated abandonment and her constant moving due to the foster care situation. Although this avoidant attachment affects her relationships, Muiriel begins to learn that not everyone will eventually leave her. She shows this growth by starting to accept kindness and help from those around her and change to a secure attachment.

Due to the scope of the study, this thesis focuses only on the main character's avoidant attachment in the novel. However, *What I Carry* presents other aspect that can be analyzed. Since the novel focuses on a child in the foster care system, further researchers could apply a sociological approach to analyze foster care system as a social institution that supports children in need.