

EMOTIONAL DEFICIT IN PAUL HARDING'S *TINKERS*

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Abstrak

Tujuan penganalisaan ini adalah untuk mengetahui (1) sejauh mana novel *tinkers* karangan Paul Harding memperlihatkan bentuk-bentuk defisiensi emosional yang dialami oleh karakter, (2) sejauh mana tokoh, konflik, dan latar mendukung penafsiran tersebut, dengan menggunakan perspektif *depersonalization* dari Stein dan Simeon. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa tokoh utama dalam novel tersebut mengalami defisiensi emosional yang dapat dilihat dari ketidak mampuannya mengenali emosi. Hal tersebut dapat dilihat dari kesulitan tokoh dalam mengenali dirinya, ceritanya, dan orang tuanya. Selanjutnya, tokoh mengalami kesulitan dalam mengidentifikasi memori emosional dengan tidak bisa mengontrol ingatannya dan tidak bisa membedakan antara kenyataan dengan imajinasi.

Kata Kunci: defisiensi, *depersonalization*, *emotional deficit*, *emotional memory*

A. Introduction

There are many factors that influence human personality or character development. Those factors are different values, norms, imitation, identification, suggestions, and acculturation. The process appears within the environment such as family, school, workplace, and public area. They offer the positive and negative effect to someone personality. The positive effect of environment makes a good impact on someone personality. However, there are many factors that make the character personality cannot build well. Some of them are genetics illness, unpleasant environment, and childhood trauma. They cause the negative impacts in human development. It can influence human physic or psychology. One of psychological effect is emotional deficit where someone unable to identify his or her emotional perception and memories.

Emotional deficit emerges because of childhood trauma. Childhood trauma is the negative factor that able to disturb someone personality since it is affected by the disappointment. According to Stein and Simeon (2009),

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Early trauma or childhood interpersonal trauma can cause depersonalization. Emotional misuse was the most significant predictor of depersonalization symptoms and disorder, whereas combined emotional and sexual abuse are the main predictor of general dissociation.

The quotation above describes that, the trauma experienced by children makes them suffer from dissociations. One of them is depersonalization. Emotional misuse or emotional abuse is the act of ignoring, acting cruel, isolating, rejecting, and scaring another person. It can lead to ultimately winning control over the victim. If it is combined with sexual abuse, it not only causes depersonalization but also other dissociation. Someone who ever experiences the disappointment will be hard to build his belief toward another person or himself. As an example, a child is accidentally bitten by her father when his father's epilepsy emerges. He is disappointed and mad at his father who hurt him. This bad experience manipulates his life until he is adult.

Emotional deficit is also influenced by the environment. Emotional deficit is a lack of emotional reactivity. It is caused by the unwholesome environment. Moreover, the most dominant environment factor is family. Because, this is the first environmental factor that will determine the development of someone's personality. A child who was raised in a family that tends to cover all the problems enforced this child to understand some experiences based on his limited knowledge. It could lead him to have emotional deficit, as Dugas (1898) says, *it refers to a state in which there is the feeling or sensation that thoughts and acts avoid the self and become strange*. In other words, the people with psychological deficit experience alienation of personality. They do not know about whom they are and what they want. They cannot solve their problem and make a decision for their life. They tend to follow someone's identity who is close to them. They also lose some memory of their childhood because they are forced to grow faster than their age. Finally, they have a tendency to remember the bad memories of their childhood.

Emotional deficit is one of the depersonalization symptoms. According to Baker, et al (2007), symptoms of depersonalization can be seen in five levels. First, is emotional that affects feeling, moods, and numbness. Second, is cognitive that influences thoughts, beliefs, meanings, images, attention and memory. Third, is physical that involves *bodily changes, sleep patterns, and numbness*. Fourth, is behavioural that can be seen through *what someone does more or less of things that he or she avoids*. The last, is environmental *situations, relationships, work, and home*. It perceives that emotional deficit is almost experienced by the sufferer of depersonalization.

Referring to emotional deficit, there is a famous name that suffered from depersonalization that also experiences emotional deficit. She is a new age writer and teacher of spiritual enlightenment, Suzanne Segal. She is known for her sudden experience of depersonalization. Segal relapsed into the uncomfortable state of constant anxiety she had first experienced as a kind of emotional deficit. At this point, she returned to explore psychological themes from her childhood that includes recovered memories of abuse and persistent migraines. She has

written some books based on her experience as a model case of the dissociative disorder condition known as depersonalization disorder (DPD). They are; *Collision with the Infinite: a Life beyond the Personal Self*, The books *Feeling Unreal: Depersonalization Disorder and the Loss of the Self* and *Stranger to My Self: inside Depersonalization; the Hidden Epidemic*. Segal tells about her experience during depersonalization attack in her books. She also combines her experience with her believe, Buddhism. In 1997, Segal's health began rapidly deteriorating and she was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumour and died two months after it.

The phenomenon of emotional deficit in people's life is a very interesting issue to be explored. This phenomenon can be found in literary works since it is a reflection of the reality of human being. The novel *Tinkers* (2009) written by Paul Harding exposes this issue. Emotional deficit in this study deals with how character in the novel experiences emotional deficit as the impact of trauma in his childhood. It is signed by the difficulty in identify emotional perception and memory.

Emotional deficit according to Dworkin (1992) commonly associated with schizophrenia also has a flavour of desynchronise. Additionally, according to Bungener, Jouvent and Delaporte (1998), emotional deficit combines a lack of emotional initiation and reactivity, affective monotony, and anhedonia. According to Baker, et al (2007), emotional deficit means the failure in defensive response. It includes how someone feels, moods, and numbness. Moreover, in this study, emotional deficit means the failure in defensive emotional response. She or he has the difficulty in identify emotional response such as emotional perception and memory.

The character experiences the difficulty in identified emotional perceptions. It can be seen through his thought and actions. He experiences multiple personalities as if someone has replaced his place for years. He does not recognize his voice, story, and his face. He experience anxiety. He scares when he thinks about the epilepsy and when the clocks wound down.

The character experiences the difficulty in identified emotional memory. It can be seen through his way of thinking. He cannot remember his memories. He loses a part of his memory. He cannot solve his trauma. He cannot concentrate. He cannot differentiate between reality and imagination.

The analysis of this novel related to the idea of depersonalization by Stein and Simeon. Emotional deficit is one of depersonalization symptom. According to Stein and Simeon (2009), there are two main symptoms of depersonalization, emotional deficits, and cognitive deficits. However, this analysis focuses on emotional deficits. It is characterized by difficulty in identifying emotional perceptions, and disrupting emotional memory.

It is supported by the idea of Baker, et al (2007). According to them, emotional deficit is the failure in defensive response. People with depersonalization experience an alteration in their perception or experience of the self. Their actions feel robotic as if they are an outside or become observer of their own body and mental processes. It can be identified by some actions. First, sufferers feel that their voice sound unfamiliar and their thoughts, speech, and

actions are no longer feeling spontaneous. Then, an additional feeling of being cut off from the world, and even their self; for example, sufferers feel detached from their own reflection when looking in the mirror. Finally, they have significant levels of anxiety, which can manifest them self as panic attacks or a tendency to worry too much. It makes the sufferer lose his concentration and sometimes cannot differentiate between reality and imagination.

The analysis of this novel is supported by text-based interpretation. Guerin (2005) explains that text-based interpretation focuses on the work itself. The process of this analysis ignores the aspect outside the text. It means that the meaning of the whole story is found from the text by showing the interrelationship of element of the text. They are theme, characteristic, plot, and setting.

The fictional devices in revealing depersonalization in this analysis will be focused on the analyses of the character, plot, and setting. Character is the most important elements in fiction. Roberts (2002) said that character is the fictional representation of a person. In literary works, the characters help us to understand and catch the meaning of the works. Examining the character is not only their behaviours but also through thoughts. Emotional deficit in this novel, is represented by protagonist.

The second device that is going to be involved in this novel analysis is plot, which is focused on conflicts. According to Bokesch (2000), Conflict is the essence of fiction that create plot. It can be identified as one of four kinds that are men versus man, man versus nature, man versus society, and man versus self. This analysis focuses on the conflict man versus self or internal conflict that the enemy is himself.

Another element that supports this study is setting which has the big influence in this novel. According to Madden (2002), setting is location and all of the aspects connected to the atmosphere that makes up the story. In other words, it shows that setting plays as one of important thing to influence the character's condition and situation. Moreover, the setting in this novel that refers to the condition of epilepsy and trauma in the past. It gives contribution to build the conflict of the story.

B. Research Method

The analysis of this novel is aimed at finding one of the symptoms of depersonalization. That is, emotional deficit in Paul Harding's *Tinkers* (2009). It is done through text-based approach. The meaning is explored by analyzing the fictional devices: character, setting, and conflicts. In examining the character, it will provide the conflicts and describe feeling, thought and action of the character. Then, setting deals with the atmosphere, which creates conflict. Moreover, these elements deal with the ideas depersonalization by Stein and Simeon (2009).

C. Discussion

Emotional deficit in this novel is represented by George. It is caused by epilepsy. Emotional deficit is the failure in defensive response. This includes the difficulty in identify emotional perceptions, and emotional memories. It can be seen through character's action and thought.

1. The Difficulty in Identify Emotional Perception

The first difficulty that is faced by the character is multiple personality where he believes someone has replaced him for years. It can be identified by his inability in identifying his voice and story. The character's childhood trauma of epilepsy and anxiety persistently damage him. His voice sound unfamiliar when he listens to his recorded story. It can be seen through the quotation when the character record his own voice and listen to it:

... He imagined that his memoirs might now sound like those of an admirable stranger, a person he did not know but whom he immediately recognized and loved dearly. Instead, the voice he heard sounded nasally and pinched and, worse, not very well educated, as if he were bumpkin who had been called, perhaps even in mockery, to testify about holy things, as if not the testimony but the fumbling through it were the reason for his presence in front of some dire, heavenly senate. He listened to six seconds of the tape before he ejected it and threw it into the fire burning in the woodstove. (Page 23)

The doubt and confusion about himself occurs when the character hears his recorded story and his voice sound unfamiliar for him. The phrase *He imagined that his memoirs might now sound like those of an admirable stranger* explains that the character finds the difficulty to identify his story and his voice. He doubts about his past story that he has recorded. He assumes that the voice and the story is someone else. The words *the voice he heard sounded nasally and pinched and, worse, not very well educated*, strengthen his assumes about that recorded story. The character experiences the internal conflict where he debate with himself and what he believe. His effort to reveal the conflict does not success. Therefore, it damages himself. He does not believe that his voice sounded nasally. His words also sound uneducated while in fact, he is an educated person. It can be seen through the words *it were the reason for his presence in front of some dire, heavenly senate* means that he was a person that have a good reputation and position among society. The setting on this quotation refers to the condition of scared. It damages his emotional perception. It approves that he experiences emotional deficit. Through the utterance *He listened to six seconds of the tape before he ejected it and threw it into the fire burning in the woodstove* reflected how the character cannot accept that situation. Therefore, he burns that cassette. It clearly shows that the character experience emotional deficit.

The second emotional deficit is shown by the anxiety of the character. He experiences the difficulty in differentiates his body and the clocks. The internal conflict reveals from character anxiety that can be seen in his bond with the clocks. The rundown of the clocks, for him, means death because he thinks that the clock is a part of his body. Thus, he prefers to keep it wind down. It is supported by the quotation bellow;

Clocks are all stopped, he croaked to his grandson.

Nana said it would drive you mad.

Drive me mad nothing, he said. Get up and wind them.
And so the young person, whose name he could not recall, moved from clock to clock and wound each one.
(Page 34)

In this quotation, it can be seen that when all of the clocks stop to wind he does protest. The words *Clocks are all stopped, he croaked to his grandson* means that the character is angry. He feels alone and has intense anxiety, so he asks his grandson to turn on the clocks. The utterance *Drive me mad nothing,.... Get up and wind them* shows his anger when someone refused what he wants even though it is the weird thing for the normal person.

The anxiety also comes when the character found the difficulty in identifying his father. This anxiety tends to appear in character's memories. He can describe the haunted time when his father is attacked by epilepsy. It can be seen in this quotation:

... Glass and food and forks and knives were all over the floor and Buddy the Dog whined and barked and Joe and Darla screamed but my father was in the middle of it, strangely quiet, as if concentrating or distracted, as wires and springs and ribs and guts popped and exploded and unrevealed and unenhanced. He was smiling when he nearly bit my fingers off, or it felt like he did and that was quiet, too....(Page 87)

In this quotation is clearly seen that the chaotic situation influences the occurrence of the anxiety. The words *Glass and food and forks and knives were all over the floor and Buddy the Dog whined and barked and Joe and Darla screamed* show the uncontrolled situation in the characters home. The kitchen utensils are not in their proper place. In the utterance, *He was smiling when he nearly bit my fingers off, or it felt like he did and that was quiet, too*. The character thinks that his father does not realize what he did and how chaotic the situation. Those make him distrust his father. He assumes that his father hurts him purposely.

Clearly, the character has experienced emotional deficit. The setting refers to the condition of scared when the character faces the reality. This condition leads him into some difficulty. The difficulties in identifying his voice and story, his face, differentiating his body and the clocks, differentiating his life and the clocks', identifying emotional situation, and identifying his father. Most of the conflicts in this analysis are internal conflict. He cannot accept the reality that is different from his beliefs.

2. The Difficulty in Identified Emotional Memory

The first point of the character's difficulty in identifying emotional perception is arranging many events in his life. He remembers some memories of his life but it seems chaos. It can be seen through his thought in this quotation:

George Crosby remembered many things as he died, but in an order he could not control. To look at his life, to take the stock he always imagined a man would at his end, was to witness a shifting mass, the tiles of a mosaic spinning, swirling, re portraying, always in recognizable swaths of colours, familiar elements, molecular units, intimate currents, but also independent now of his will, showing him a different self every time he tried to make an assessment. (Page 18)

The inner conflict in the character's mind explains the distortion of memories. He loses the control of his own memories. It can be seen from the utterance *remembered many things ..., but in an order he could not control*. The character can remember all of his memories but he cannot recognize it. It happens because he cannot arrange the memories based on his consciousness. It can be analyzed that the character's memories is in chaos. He has difficulty to concentrate. He struggles to take in new information and experience thoughts that are speeds up and confusing. The words *a shifting mass, the tiles of a mosaic spinning, swirling, re portraying*, show that the character's memories is in chaos. His memories appears roughly, they turned to one event to another event vastly and from time to time and repeat. Thus, he cannot make sure it was his memories or someone else. His repressed memories about his father appear in his consciousness. Thus, he feels something miss from his life. He fails to focus his attention into something that appears in his vision although it is his own memories.

The character cannot separate between reality and imagination. The character spends excessive amounts of time worrying about something abstract. It is shown by this quotation below:

... George imagined what he would see, as if the collapse had, in fact, already happened: the living room ceiling, now two stories high, a ragged funnel of splintered floorboards, bent copper pipes, and electrical wires that looked like severed veins bordering the walls and pointing towards him in the centre of all of that sudden ruin. (Page 9)

The quotation above shows his failure of thinking. The character feels that there is something threatens him. It may be around him. Thus, he sees everything around him negatively. The words *imagined what he would see, as if the collapse had*, shows that the character cannot differentiate reality and his imagination. It also implies the character consciousness that his life has been

destroyed. He is haunted by all the negative possibility that can hurt him continuously. His environment has been broke and those things are already to hurt him. He seems desperate so he sees a vision that the wall falls down toward him. It means that the character feels being terror by something.

The second point of the character difficulty in identifying emotional perception is unable to differentiate between reality and imagination. The character cannot think about the proper environment. The environment that he can think is a chaos one. It can be seen the quotation bellow:

The roof collapsed, sending down a fresh avalanche of wood and nails, trapper and shingles and insulation. There was the sky, filled with flat-topped clouds, cruising like a fleet of anvils across the blue. George had the watery, raw feeling of being outdoors when you are sick. The clouds halted, paused for an instant, and plummeted onto his head.

The very blue of the sky followed, draining from the heights into that cluttered concrete socked. Next feel the stars, tinkling about him like the ornaments of heaven shaken loose. Finally, the black visitation itself came untracked and draped over the entire heap, covering George's confused obliteration. (Page 10)

From the quotation above can be seen that the character cannot realize the reality. He tends to be busy with his own thinking and living in his own word. He experiences some wrong thoughts about himself and his environment. The sentence *the roof collapsed, sending down a fresh avalanche of wood and nails, trapper and shingles and insulation* show his vision toward the environment. His environment falls down toward him and everything that must be in that proper place start to break and makes the situation chaos. It also explains his anxiety that threaten him. This setting shows the character's confusing mind. His uncontrolled memories makes him desperate thus, he tends to think about death. It is shown by the words *the clouds halted, paused for an instant, and plummeted onto his head*. The character cannot control his mind to think about the lovely environment. He thinks that his life is over. He is no longer life with his family inside the house but in another world. These words *feel the stars, tinkling about him like the ornaments of heaven shaken loose* show that wherever his imagination brings him, he always thinks about death. It also shows that the character has separated from his environment by does not recognize where he is now.

The character experiences hallucination. When he tries to continue his life by doing some jobs, his trauma make him has the intense anxiety. He wants to remove that memory but he fails. It can be seen in this quotation:

George never permitted himself to imagine his father. Occasionally, though, when he was fixing a clock, when a new spring he was coaxing into his barrel came loose

from its arbour and exploded, cutting his hands, sometimes damaging the rest of the works, he had a vision of his father on the floor, his feet kicking chairs, bunching up rugs, lamps falling off their tables, his head hanging on floorboards, his teeth clamped onto a stick or George's own finger. (Page 20)

From that quotation can be seen that George wants to forget his father. It is proved by the sentence *George never permitted himself to imagine his father*. He wants to forget the memories that make him trauma. He tries to remove that memories but he fails. The character is afraid of his childhood traumatic memories. Then, that experience makes him has the hallucination as if he sees the shadow of his father. The utterance *he had a vision of his father on the floor* explains that his repress memories sometime appears suddenly in his consciousness. He can see his father in his reflection. For George, the image of his father ruins his life and makes him difficult to move forward. The phrase *cutting his hands, sometimes damaging the rest of the works*, shows how the character's childhood thinking never been changed. His imagination about his father's epilepsy haunts him. This traumatic experience hurt characters physically, mentally and closed his way to raise his future. It also means that since the traumatic experience happened, he cannot focus to run his life.

In summary, the character has the difficulty in identify his emotional memories. He remembers many events in his live, but he cannot arrange it. He also cannot differentiate between reality and imagination. The setting refers to the chaos situation in character's mind. Furthermore, it can be revealed from the inner conflict when the character tries to recall his memories. The character thought damage his psychological progressively. Finally he cannot solve his problem of life.

D. Conclusion

The novel *Tinkers* (2009), written by Paul Harding, exposes emotional deficit. It is reflected through text based interpretation by focusing on fictional devices such as characters, conflicts, and settings. In this novel, emotional deficit is represented by protagonists, George. Emotional deficit appears as the result of the traumatic experience in his childhood. This traumatic experience triggers when his father attacked by epilepsy. Emotional deficit in this novel is sign by the difficulty in identified emotional perception and memory.

The character has experience emotional deficit. The first point shows the setting that refers to the condition of scared. It makes him difficult in identifying his voice and story, his face, differentiate his body and the clocks, differentiate his life and the clocks', identify the emotional situation, and his father. Most of conflicts in the first point are internal conflict. The character cannot accept the reality that is different with his believes. The second point shows the character has the difficulty in identify his emotional memories. He remembers many events in his live, but he cannot arrange it. He also cannot differentiate between reality and imagination. The setting refers to the chaos situation in character's mind.

Furthermore, it can be revealed from the inner conflict when the character tries to recall his memories. Finally he cannot solve his problem of life.

Clearly, the character experiences some emotional deficits in this novel. The phenomenon of this issue also can be found in reality. This is a common situation that often happened in a real life. People may suffer from emotional deficit because of childhood trauma. They cannot go out from the situation that holds up their way to move forward in the future because they experience the deficiency in their emotional.

Notes: This article is written based on the Novarianti's thesis under the supervision of Dra. An Fauzia Rozani Syafei, M.A., 1st advisor, and Muhd. Al-Hafizh, S.S., M.A., 2nd advisor.

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