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DANI ARDOR'S TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE, FEELINGS AND STRUGGLE TO GET HER SOCIAL LIFE IN THE MOVIE MIDSOMMAR BY ARI ASTER

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to help people understand Mental Illness. The Writer chooses this Midsommar Movie as the main source for the analysis because the writer sees something complicated and intriguing to be analyzed and it can be used as knowledge and awareness through this movie. The movie is directed by Ari Aster. Additionally, the writer realizes that the issues and conditions that occurred in the movie also happen in real life. This study uses qualitative methods to analyze the data contained in the movie. This movie tells a story about Dani Ardor who just lost her family due to suicide. Dani, experiencing a painful tragedy about her family struggling to process her emotion and try to pretend as if she had overcome her grief by joining her boyfriend and his friends on a trip to Sweden and discovering a terrifying truth about the tradition that occurred in Hargá every year. To analyze the problem formulation in this film, the writer uses Psychological approach and the theories that the writer chooses are Anxiety Disorder, Grief, PTSD, and Social Psychology. By applying the approach and theories, the writer concluded that Midsommar shows the struggle of Dani because she is unable to grieve properly and affecting her mental health. The result of the research shows that people with Mental Illness need support from their relatives.

Keywords : Anxiety, Grief, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Social Psychology

Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk membantu masyarakat memahami penyakit mental. Penulis memilih film Midsommar ini sebagai sumber utama untuk dianalisis karena penulis melihat sesuatu yang rumit dan menarik untuk dianalisis dan dapat dijadikan pengetahuan dan kesadaran melalui film ini. Film ini disutradarai oleh Ari Aster. Selain itu, penulis menyadari bahwa isu dan kondisi yang terjadi di dalam film ini juga terjadi di kehidupan nyata. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk menganalisa data-data yang terdapat dalam film tersebut. Film ini bercerita tentang Dani Ardor yang baru saja kehilangan keluarganya karena bunuh diri. Dani yang mengalami tragedi yang menyakitkan tentang keluarganya berusaha untuk memproses emosinya dan mencoba berpura-pura seolah-olah telah mengatasi kesedihannya dengan bergabung dengan pacarnya dan teman-temannya dalam perjalanan ke Swedia dan menemukan sebuah kebenaran yang menakutkan tentang tradisi yang terjadi di Hargá setiap tahunnya. Untuk menganalisa rumusan masalah dalam film ini, penulis menggunakan pendekatan Psikologi dan teori-teori yang penulis pilih adalah Anxiety Disorder, Grief, PTSD, dan Psikologi Sosial. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan dan teori-teori tersebut, penulis menyimpulkan bahwa film Midsommar menunjukkan perjuangan Dani yang tidak mampu berduka dengan baik dan mempengaruhi kesehatan mentalnya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penderita gangguan jiwa membutuhkan dukungan dari keluarga.

Kata Kunci: Gangguan Stres Pasca Trauma, Kecemasan, Duka, Psikologi Sosial

INTRODUCTION

Trauma, when we hear the word “trauma” we would relate it to someone who experienced terrible events whether the events occurred in their childhood or in the last few months/years. According to a Psychiatrist Van der kolk in his talk on youtube that “trauma isn’t

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a story in the past, trauma is a pain, horror, and fear that exists inside people in the present. It overloads the central nervous system that causes the memories altering themselves” (Van der kolk; 2014).

Thus, trauma solely exists in people’s mind, it’s buried inside their unconscious mind. and this trauma could become worse and affect one’s physical health. When people with trauma go to a therapist to receive treatment, they often have a difficult time talking about what they have been through. Thus, therapists are expected to have good communication and understanding towards the victims to such an extent that people will be comfortable speaking about their struggle to the therapists and the only way for someone to express their struggle is through language. Therefore, language is very important in human's everyday life. Since language is the only tool humans use to exchange information, without language we are not going to understand each other. According to David Crystal in his book *The Penguin Dictionary of Language* that language is a “conventional use of sounds, signs, or written symbols in a human society for communication and self-expression” (1999:184). Thus, people believe language for so many years as a tool for them to communicate to each other whether it is through written expression or verbal expression. Edward Sapir in his book

“*Language, An Introduction to the Study of Speech*” stated that “language is the only tool that humans could use to communicate their ideas, emotions, and desires freely” (1921:7). As stated above, language is a tool that people use to express their desire, idea, emotions, etc to other people so they can be connected and understand each other. Therefore, language is crucial in our life. Since the beginning, language is the only thing humans use to give and take information as well as enable us to develop written works called literature. As it is known, the fundamental of literature is language. Literature helps people to get to know other cultures from various regions. A lot of literature exists because people want to give information to other people. Numerous written works exist and have been delivered to many people to provide them information. Hence, the day literature was born was the day that literature became part of human's life. “Literature is born by human’s desire to express, understand and share their unique experiences’ ” (pickering: 1981: 01: 307). As stated above, literature is a main vehicle for humans to express their unique activity to the world, absorb and understand another perspective so that the people who read the written works can respect the differences. Another definition stated that “literature is not only in the form of written works, literature could be any form depending on what is voiced, what is expressed and what is invented” (Marcus and Sollor: 2009). Thus, literature is a tool for people to understand the complexity of humans and the way they express themselves in the written works. Therefore, literature is not necessarily a dull text but it could turn out to be other forms that are more useful for them. Literature is a written work where some people enjoy expressing themselves in it. Since literature has many forms, certainly people express their desire and ideas through various forms of literature that people could access easily. In that matter, literature is not a boring text anymore, but rather becomes an enjoyable work for people. As mentioned above, literature is not a dull text anymore but rather far more entertaining. This century, people are more keen to watch a film since films are way more entertaining to most people because it offers a story that displays a real person to act on the story. Film is a literary work that is recorded by a camera as a set of moving images that is shown in a movie. Film also provides people with information that is wrapped in an entertaining way. Films have many genres, with various genres people can watch films based on their favorite genre. Nowadays, many films do not only entertain the people that watch the movie but also deliver sensitive topics to the watcher with a language and moving image that makes it more simple to understand. According to P. Anggraeni et al., that “...The reason that film become the most popular literature product is that it offers moral values, produced in a many genres, interesting with many colorful animation and special effects, easy and cheap to get, and often include language and culture content”(2019:9).

As mentioned before, film is a literary work that is wrapped in an entertaining way to provide people with information. With watching films, it is easy for people to understand the message that the filmmaker wants to convey since it is delivered with moving pictures. Filmmakers also could provide subtitles for people that don’t understand the language that the film uses. This is proof that people could enjoy films effortlessly. A film is a story or an event

that is captured by a camera as a series of moving images and shown on a television or in a theater. As stated before, film is a literary work that is made through real life events, history, politics, fiction, etc. all of that involves the filmmaker's imagination. Filmmakers not only make a film based solely on the script but also involve their imagination to make the film so the film has value and could connect to people. The writer chooses a film "Midsommar" by Ari Aster. The reason the writer chooses is because the psychological issues in this novel are interesting to analyze. In the hope of better understanding regarding mental disorders that occurred in the film. The problems that occurred in the film are the way Dani is portrayed in the film, the traumatic experience that Dani undergoes and the reaction of Dani's trauma in the Midsommar film. Midsommar is a movie about Dani (Florence Pugh) and Christian (Jack Reynor), a couple that goes to a rural Swedish village that celebrates a once-in-a-blue-moon festival. This trip leads to terrible tragedies that make Dani suffer a lot (Midsommar, 2019). In the Midsommar movie, people cannot find the medical treatment of the depressed characters but a repression phenomenon. Many traumatic events happen to Dani before and during the trip. Therefore, Dani intends to ignore the events that happen to her. Since, Midsommar shows the psychological phenomena undergone by Dani, it indicates the relation between literature and psychology. The Writer will analyze the psychological approach in this movie. The psychological approach will help the writer analyze the trauma that Dani undergoes in the movie.

METHODS

Qualitative research is a research "expressed in words. It is used to understand concepts, thoughts or experiences. This type of research enables you to gather in-depth insights on topics that are not well understood." (Streefkerk: 2019) Thus, the writer used a qualitative method to answer and find the problems which the writer has found in order to understand the character in the movie profoundly. Another qualitative definition which explains "a research method to explore and understand the meaning that some individuals or groups of people think come from social or human problems." (Creswell: 2014). Thus, qualitative research is a method that requires a deep understanding about humans and their social life. The writer collected the data for the research through a technique called library studies. Since, qualitative research refers to the analysis of written works such as movie, short story, poetry, drama and novel. There are two types of data; they are primary data and secondary data. Primary data is a method in which the writer herself collects the data, such as movie, script, and dialogue. While secondary data is a method of collecting data from existing data from books, journals, articles, etc. in this case the writer uses a secondary data in collecting the data that will be analyzed which is obtained from books of research, articles and journals to analyze the thesis. In analyzing this journal, the writer took several steps. Firstly, the writer watched the movie several times. Then, the writer identifies the problems and formulates them into questions. After that, the writer chooses and applies the right approach and theories to help the writer analyze and answer the problems that the writer has formulated. Lastly, the writer answers the problems formulation with the help of the approaches and theories that the writer chooses and provides evidence from the movie to support the research. In the previous study, I found three sources for my title, they are; First from Charlotte Hollingsworth in horror movie reviews, July 12 2019, the title of her article is 'A story of Trauma and Female Grief'. This is the reference article that I use for my title 'Traumatic Experience'. The second from Sceal Milis in 'Dark Summer : trauma and grief in Ari Aster's Midsommar' August 14 2019, this article helped the writer to formulate the title for 'Feelings'. And the last one is the article from Josh Ramos in Sommartime Sadness : the Grief that Drives Midsommar, July 19, 2019. This is the reference article for my title that represents 'Struggle' for acceptance of her grief.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The writer will analyse the problem formulations that she formulated. The writer elaborates the answers of the problems that she analyses.

In this analysis, the writer discusses problem formulation number one. The writer elaborates the cause of the problems. The first problem comes from the cause of the main character's trauma. It is discusses the root of the main character's issues in the movie

In this analysis, the writer describes and explains the reason for Dani's trauma that turned her life upside down. The cause is

The Cause of Dani's Trauma

The cause of Dani's trauma is her sister's suicide that involved their parents as well that makes dani lost her family. Since then, Dani experiencing the lack of sleep and having an anxiety and PTSD due the the triggers that she experienced in the movie that led her to relive the memory of the traumatic incident again.

Anxiety Disorder

Anxiety Disorder is a typical mental illness that makes someone have an intense fear regarding uncertain things in the future. Anxiety disorder can be experienced by anyone at any age since anxiety is the "anticipation of future threat" (2013: 189). Therefore, people that undergo several traumatic events in their life will likely develop anxiety as a way to protect themselves by anticipating future threats so that they are already prepared for whatever is in front of them.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Generalized Anxiety Disorder is a mental disorder that causes an individual to be weakened by it because of excessive and persistent worry and anxiousness about various aspects of life, commonly without specific cause or trigger. This mental disorder affects millions of people in the world. People with Generalized Anxiety Disorder will experience persistent worry that leads to physical symptoms such as restlessness, muscle tension, and sleep disturbances, which means affecting the individual's daily life. In conclusion, it is important for us to understand people with this type of disorder, thus, we are not going to judge them because of their anxiousness. In the beginning of the movie, it is shown that Dani is calling her boyfriend Christian, regarding her worries about her sister's email that potentially a sign of her attempting suicide. The writer found two proofs which showing Dani's worrisome regarding the future events caused by her sister's email that signaling Dani that she wants to committed suicide.

CONCLUSION

To conclude the writer chose a movie titled Midsommar as her object of study. Midsommar movie by Ari Aster is a movie about Dani and Christian embark on a journey to Sweden to experience the famous midsummer festival in their friend's idyllic rural hometown. However, what starts off as a delightful escape soon spirals into an eerie and unsettling competition, driven by a mysterious pagan cult. The writer chose this movie to be analyzed because the writer would like to help people who suffer from mental illnesses that the writer analyzed to be seen and understood as well as helping other people to understand these mental illnesses profoundly. This movie has a way of describing when someone wasn't in a good state of mind and her boyfriend and friends didnt help them whatsoever to recover from the tragic incident. In analyzing this movie, the writer has found three problems that has been formulated. There are: what causes Dani's trauma? What are the impacts of trauma toward her life? And How does Dani overcome her trauma and get her social life back? To get the answer of the three problems that the writer has analyzed. The writer uses a psychological approach with theories of Anxiety Disorder, PTSD, Grief, and Psychotherapy. The conclusion is then explained by the writer based upon the analysis from chapter III and IV after the theory has been applied. After analyzing chapter III, the writer found the causes of Dani's Trauma. The cause of her trauma is the death of her family. Her sister sent a message implying she was going to end her life not only her life but her parents as well. and then it happened and Dani became really traumatised when she saw her dead sister and mother crying agonizingly.

After Dani witnessing such a horrifying event, The writer found and analysed the impact of her trauma towards her life. The trauma from the event really affected her life. Dani gets easily startled, and she will panic if someone brings up a topic about her family, and she occasionally sees everything that triggers her memory to be a flashback to the incident. The writer also found a way of Dani overcoming her trauma and her social life. Dani was influenced

by Pelle to make her believe that the ritual that his people performed was normal because it was a tradition. Since Dani is in a vulnerable state, her thoughts, behaviour can be driven and influenced easily by Pelle. After this influenced, Dani becomes more open to the cult and starts to accept them as their new family and she finally get her social life and overcomes her trauma. The writer has received confirmation that the subjects she discusses and the explanations she provides with the methods she applies as writing guidelines in those chapters are correct and reliable. The analysis and findings are the solutions to problems she has already written about.

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