

THE SELF-ACTUALIZATION OF SARA CREWE IN *A LITTLE PRINCESS* NOVEL BY FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT

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ABSTRACT

The research was conducted to analyze the character of Sara Crewe in *A Little Princess* novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett. *A Little Princess* was chosen as the novel in this research because the main character, Sara, was described as a brave and tough young girl who could deal with the difficulties in her lives. The objective of this research was to find out the characteristics of self-actualizing person and the imperfection of self-actualizing person in Sara's character by Sara's feeling, behavior, thought and all the factors and events. This research was under a qualitative research and employed literary and psychology approach to get deeper understanding about the main character's characterization. The source of the data was taken from the novel *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnett. Reading the novel carefully and deeply then separating the data by signing and making some notes were the steps in collecting the data. This research used theory of Self-Actualization by Maslow to explain the characteristics of self-actualizing person and the imperfection of self-actualizing in Sara's character. The result of this research showed that from fifteen characteristics of self-actualizing person by Maslow, Sara has fourteen characteristics in her character while Sara also has the imperfection's characteristics such as stubborn, unexpected ruthless and forget the social politeness. Therefore, the researcher found the characterization of Sara through the aspect of psychological and moral, the narration and the conversations in the story.

Keywords: character and characterization, psychology, self-actualization, *A Little Princess* novel

ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk menganalisa karakter Sara Crewe di novel *A Little Princess* oleh Frances Hodgson Burnett. Novel *A Little Princess* dipilih di dalam penelitian ini karena Sara sebagai karakter utama menunjukkan sikap berani dan kuat sebagai gadis muda yang dapat menghadapi kesulitan-kesulitan di hidupnya. Tujuan penelitian adalah untuk mengetahui karakteristik dari keaktualisasian diri seseorang dan ketidaksempurnaan dari seseorang yang mengaktualisasi diri yang dilihat dari karakter Sara berdasarkan perasaannya, perilakunya, pemikirannya dan segala factor-faktor dan kejadian-kejadian yang berhubungan dengan analisa tersebut. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif yang menggunakan pendekatan kesusastraan dan psikologi agar mengerti lebih dalam tentang perrnyataan dari satu karakter. Sumber data diambil dari novel *A Little Princess* oleh Frances Hodgson Burnett. Membaca novel dengan perlahan dan mendalam lalu memisahkan data yang bersangkutan dengan menandai dan membuat beberapa catatan merupakan langkah-langkah dalam mengumpulkan data. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori keaktualisasian diri dari Maslow untuk menjelaskan karakteristik-

karakteristik seseorang yang mengaktualisasi diri serta ketidaksempurnaan dalam mengaktualisasi diri yang dilihat berdasarkan karakter Sara. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dari 15 karakteristik seseorang dalam mengaktualisasi diri oleh Maslow, ada 14 karakteristik yang terlibat di karakter Sara, sementara Sara juga memiliki karakter dari ketidaksempurnaan dari mengaktualisasi diri yaitu keras kepala, kekejaman yang tak disangka, dan melupakan kesopanan sosial. Bagaimanapun, peneliti menemukan perwatakan Sara tersebut melalui aspek psikologis dan moral, pengisahan dan perbincangan yang ada di dalam novel.

Kata kunci: tokoh dan penokohan, psikologi, keaktualisasian diri, novel *A Little Princess*

A. INTRODUCTION

Children's literature is a literary work describes about stories or pictures related to children or something childish. The 19th century is the golden age of children's literature that affected to the availability of children's literature greatly increased, the population grew and literacy rates improved. One famous name with her children's book is Frances Hodgson Burnett (1849-1924). *A Little Princess* as one of her famous children's books is a novel published on September 1905 by Charles Scribner's Sons in New York and Warne in London. The Baldwin Project confirmed *A Little Princess* exhibited as the public domain in the United States as 75 years after published. It is also in the public domain in Canada after Frances Hodgson Burnett died in 1924

A Little Princess tells about a life of an orphan young girl named Sara Crewe who was born in India. Her father, Captain Crewe, is a successful businessman in India. When she has already seven, her father brings her into seminary school in London to take an education which the school owned by Miss Minchin. Miss Minchin loves money and treats Sara as a special pupil when she knows Sara comes from a wealthy family. Nevertheless, her eleventh birthday is the worst day she has ever had because her father dies of jungle fever and bankrupt of business trouble. The miseries come to her, but she can face those all by the maturity and the potentials she owns. Meanwhile, the maturity and the independence issue showed up from Sara's character which those two made the researcher want to link it with the self-actualization theory that Maslow explained as the maturation of humans in doing the things in good and appropriate way. Afterwards, the imperfection of self-actualizing people issue was appeared to see if there is negative effect of Sara as the person who actualizes herself. Then, the two issues of self-actualizing person and the imperfection of self-actualizing person was used to see fully characterization of Sara in the story.

B. RELATED LITERATURE

1. Character and Characterization

Abrams believed character as "the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it—the dialogue—and from what they do—the action" (32). Myers in Vermillion mentioned six elements of characterization; those are looking to the objective details of the character's appearance and action; the character's conversation; the presentation of the character's actual sensations, perceptions and concept; interpretative

comment upon the character; generalized narrative; and the objective details of the character's environment. (4)

2. Literature and Psychology

Pickering, James H & Hoeper, Jeffrey D added “a uniquely human activity, born of man's timeless desire to understand, express, and finally share experiences are what a literature creates in creatively” (307). Wellek and Warren characterized psychological approach in a literary work as "By 'Psychological of Literature', we may mean the psychological study of the writer, as type and as individual, or the study of creative process, or the psychological type and laws present within works of literature, of finally, the effect of literature upon its reader” (75).

3. Maslow's Self-Actualization Theory

Self-actualization is brought to be discussed first by Kurt Golstein. It is used to explain his extensive psychological research which his research is about to analyze the uniquely human need that has own need and it is separated from any other animals. It was Maslow who developed it in his theory of motivation and also described it in hierarchy of needs theory. Maslow added that level of self-actualization is the desire to accomplish the thing you do well that you want to do (113). Maslow in his book *Motivation and Personality* (1954) had explained the characteristics of Self- Actualizing people (153-174), those are:

- a. More Efficient Perception of Reality and More Comfortable Relations with It, is the unusual abilities of self-actualizing people is able to detect the general people about the spurious, the fake and the dishonest in personality; correctly and efficiently in judging.
- b. Acceptance (Self, Other, Nature), is a human's acceptance naturally. They are good and hearty people and enjoy their life even with their lacking.
- c. Spontaneity, Simplicity, Naturalness, mean that self-actualizing people mostly are opened people of their character. Showing their emotional rather than hiding it. “Their ease of penetration to reality, their closer approach to an animal-like or childlike acceptance and spontaneity imply a superior awareness of their own impulses, desires, opinions, and subjective reactions in general” (Maslow, 158).
- d. Problem Centering, means that they are focus on the problem outside them since they are rarely make problems for their self. They break it and not blaming themselves for what a failure will happen. For them, problem is the responsible that they should be done rather than think it as a task.
- e. The Quality of Detachment; The need for Privacy, means that they are tend to make a lonely situation to shape their mind, self-discipline and take the decision of the problem they concern at. They also can smile and look happy while they are in worry, problem and trouble. (Maslow, 161)
- f. Autonomy; Independence of Culture and Environment; Will; Active Agents, means that they are independent active and responsible for their life.
- g. Continued Freshness of Appreciation, means that they like to appreciate things. The feeling is like the first time for them to feel, see, and experience it, but this feeling only happen in certain and unexpected moments.
- h. The Mystic Experience; The Peak Experience, is the special experience that the self-actualizing people can understand well about the meaning of life.

- i. Social Interest of self-actualizing people such as the genuine to help people as if they are a member of family which like an older-brother figure.
- j. Interpersonal Relations is about the circle of their relations of friend may small but they are so close and love each other because self-actualizing people tend to make friend that have similar character with them.
- k. The Democratic Character Structure means that they tend to respect other people. They are humble, tolerant and friendly regardless the class, political belief, religion, race or color, education and power.
- l. Self-Actualizing people also can clearly discriminate between means and ends, between good and evil because they are ethical people and do the right while do not do the wrong.
- m. Philosophical, Unhostile Sense of Humor, is the consideration of them about humor has to have function such as the critical of fatuity, falsehood and deceitfulness of human has done rather than hurt someone's feeling about the lacking.
- n. Creativeness, "Creativeness that this character means is rather to be kin to the naive and universal creativeness of unspoiled children" (Maslow, 170). They have natural potential that is given such a human firstly was born which make them more spontaneous, more natural, and more human.
- o. Resistance to Enculturation; The Transcendence of any Particular Culture, is about their standard for their life. They do what they believe better than other people rules.

4. The Imperfection of Self-Actualizing People

These are some characteristics of self-actualizing people by Maslow:

- a. Self-actualizing people show the lesser human failings, such as boring, stubborn, irritating or even temper outburst are not rare they do.
- b. Self-actualizing people are occasionally capable of an extraordinary and unexpected ruthless. They recovery too fast of the death of people they love.
- c. The independent opinion is also adhering in self actualizing people.
- d. The absorption of them in an impersonal world makes them become humorless, absent-minded and forget their generality social politeness.
- e. Their kindness may bring them into problem.

C. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was a literary research, and it was categorized into qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln reported that "a qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials-case study, personal experience, introspective life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional and visual texts that describe routine and problematic moments and meaning in individuals'lives". (2). This research also used psychological approach to analyze the character related to self-actualization issue of the main character of *A Little Princess* novel that was the focus of this analysis.

The source of this research was a novel titled *A little Princess* published in 1905 by Frances Hodgson Burnett. The novel textually analyzed from the narrations and the

conversations of the characters in the novel. The data was presented in a form of words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs and dialogues that related with the issue of self-actualization that had shown in the novel.

Miller asserted that “the researcher is the key instrument of data collection” (595). Then, the researcher who collected the data analysis was the instrument of this research and the researcher focused on analyzing the novel and the main character that was analyzed.

To collect the data, firstly was reading the novel carefully and deeply until the researcher understand well about the story while also look for the self-actualization issue of Sara’s character. Secondly was identifying by signing and making some notes of those words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs and dialogues of the novel that were related to self-actualization issue that was identified as the data based on the theories, journals, previous researchers that the researcher had read and understood.

In concluding this research, the researcher focused on the issue of Self-Actualization of Sara Crewe in *A Little Princess*. The researcher used theory of Maslow’s Self-Actualization that explain 15 characteristic of self-actualizing people and 5 characteristics of the imperfection of self-actualizing people which those were the indicators to analyze the self-actualization of Sara Crewe. The researcher analyzes the character of Sara based on Sara’s behavior and thought, life activity and social around in the novel story.

D. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. The Characteristics of Self-Actualizing People in Sara’s Character

The self-actualization theory based on Maslow explains about the person who psychologically mature and health. The self-actualizing people are those who doing those things to make themselves better. Here are the characteristics of self-actualizing people seen in Sara’s character. Thus,

a. More Efficient Perception of Reality and More Comfortable Relations with It

Maslow pointed out that this characteristic tends to believe in reality and it easier them to deal with what happen in real life. Sara got this characteristic quality. It was proven in the narration and conversation bellow:

She had liked to think of that. To keep the house for her father; to ride with him, and sit at the head of his table when he had dinner parties; to talk to him and read his books--that would be what she would like most in the world, and if one must go away to "the place" in England to attain it, she must make up her mind to go. (Burnett, 3-4)

The concept of reality seen in the data was about Sara who was a seven years old girl that must live in the seminary school and would be separated from her father. Sara felt fidgety for those all, but eventually Sara tried to make up her mind and dealt with the reality that she took the education of the school and lived separated from her father to make herself better. Sara was not angry to her father like what children would

do and accept it wisely. Those were found from the narration and conversation that made the researcher interpreted it related to the theory.

b. Acceptance (Self, Other, Nature)

Maslow illuminated that acceptance is the character that self-actualizing people tend to be good people and accept the self, other and nature of a world as well

In fact, she had never heard such a nice, friendly sound in anyone's voice before. She was used to being ordered about and scolded, and having her ears boxed. (Burnett, 62)

The data explained the reaction of Becky, who was the servant in seminary, to Sara when Sara was yet rich. Sara treated Becky nicely even though Becky was a servant. Sara accepted who Becky was to be her friend. The characteristic seen clearly from the narration related to Sara was imagined.

c. Spontaneity, Simplicity, Naturalness

Maslow elucidated the spontaneity, simplicity and naturalness of self-actualizing people are showed by them to imply that they have their own desire, opinion and impulse. They are also the most ethical people (158)

"If you please, Miss Minchin," said Sara, suddenly, "mayn't Becky stay?"

"I want her because I know she will like to see the presents," she explained "She is a little girl, too, you know" (Burnett, 84)

Miss Minchin as the owner of seminary asked Becky to not join to the Sara's birthday party since she was a servant. Sara saw it and felling poor for Becky until she asked to Miss Minchin to let Becky stayed. Miss Minchin denied it but Sara as a young girl could show her will and insisted until Becky could join to the party. The basic of Sara's naturalness and spontaneity according to the data above were shown how Sara expressed her impulse toward Becky's condition consider to Sara's character that she was a kind young girl. The characteristic seen from the conversations in the story.

d. The Quality of Detachment; The need for Privacy

This characteristic means that they tend to make a lonely situation to think wisely about the problems they have. This characteristic seen in Sara's character by the following data,

"I have looked it," said a queer, polite little voice from inside. "I want to be quite by myself, if you please" (Burnett, 15)

The problem that Sara's owned was about her father that already gone to India while she stayed in the seminary since she was only seven. She was confused, sad, feel lonely without her father. The only thing that Sara did only locked her door to stay alone in her own room to think of those and calmed down her self rather that crying and screaming aloud like other young girls usually did. The researcher found the data related to the theory from the conversation and the narration in the story which described about Sara's action and how she was interpreted in the story.

- e. Autonomy; Independence of Culture and Environment; Will; Active Agents
This characteristic is about the independent, being active and responsible for their self.

"Soldiers don't complain," she would say between her small, shut teeth, "I am not going to do it; I will pretend this is part of a war." (Burnett, 119)

Sara was only a little girl but she had a hard problem on her shoulders. Sara lived in the attic, became a servant in the school, and did not have family anymore, but Sara was a responsible and independent girl. Even though she was a poor one, but she was rich for her thought. Sara was so smart and she used it wisely to help her poor condition better. The data that she said above was how Sara faced her problem in a good way which was so amazing to have positive way in Sara's condition. The data was found from the utterance of Sara that made researcher built an interpretative about Sara's character related to the theory.

- f. Continued Freshness of Appreciation

Maslow speculated that self-actualizing people like to appreciate for the life and condition that they owned. (163).

Accordingly, Sara was praised for her quickness at her lessons, for her good manners, for her amiability to her fellow pupils, for her generosity if she gave sixpence to a beggar out of her full little purse; the simplest thing she did was treated as if it were a virtue, and if she had not had a disposition and a clever little brain, she might have been a very self-satisfied young person. (Burnett, 38-39)

This characteristic seen from the narration of the story that describe about Sara's thought that she was a lucky girl who had all those factors when she was a rich girl until as a poor one.

- g. The Mystic Experience; The Peak Experience

Those who actualizing themselves usually have a peak experience in their life. When someone experiences the peak experience, a comprehension of a live will be better.

"she says it has nothing to do with what you look like, or what you have. It has only to do with what you *think* of and what you *do*." (Burnett, 69)

Sara explained that people must more concern to what people think and do rather than what people have and look like. Sara understood it. That was the prove that Sara had the peak experience since she could understand well about how a life should be gone and become better. The researcher related the data with the theory based on the interpretation of the researcher from the way of Sara's character was built in the story.

- h. Social Interest

The social interest of self-actualizing people's feeling is like they are a member of a family that so favoring to other people (Maslow, 166).

"She is hungrier than I am," she said to herself. "She's starving." But her hand trembled when she put down the fourth bun. "I'm not starving," she said--and she put down the fifth. (Burnett, 199-200)

From the utterance and the narration of the story, the researcher found Sara who already became as a poor one helped a starving beggar in a street that cold of snow. Sara found pennies and bought six buns which finally she gave five buns and left one for her self who starving too. This was the characteristic of Sara that she had strong empathy to other people even though she was also in a hard condition.

i. Interpersonal Relations

Interpersonal relations is the character whose someone distance his relations circle based on the character he thinks can be his friend in close relationship. It is because he tends to make a small circle of friend but so close and lovely (167).

In the story, the researcher found clearly that Sara had interpersonal relation in her character. She was a friendly, nice and clever, but only several could be her close friend and her friendship also described in lovely way. Sara's friends were Ermengarde, a dumb pupil but kind, Lottie, the youngest pupil but nice and Becky, a servant but lovely to Sara. Their friendship kept going even when Sara turned to a poor one.

j. The Democratic Character Structure

This characteristic is not differentiating what someone has and looks in social environment.

"we are just the same--I am only a little girl like you. It's just an accident that I am not you, and you are not me!" (Burnett, 62)

The data was said by Sara to Becky. Becky was a black young girl and a servant in the school, while Sara was a white young girl, rich and a show pupil in the school. Sara always liked to make friends to other girls even with Becky who was a servant. Sara knew how to respect to others even though she was a little girl, and she used to do it to everybody. The researcher decided that Sara had the democratic character structure in her character. The data was found from the conversation's content in the story that explained well about Sara's character.

k. Discrimination between Means and Ends, between Good and Evil

The mature one must know how to differentiate between means and ends, between good and evil, while even though Sara was only a little girl, she knew to differentiate those in her life and society.

"Besides, she didn't beg," said Janet. "I was so afraid she might be angry with you. You know, it makes people angry to be taken for beggars when they are not beggars."

"She wasn't angry," said Donald. (152)

The condition of the data above was Sara who was already a servant in seminary, was asked to bring something to a place. Sara was walking in the road which looked so poor and messed. Donald saw the poor Sara in the road and gave few pennies he had to Sara. Actually, it was a rude if someone who was not a beggar, but treated as one.

Sara felt a little bit embarrassed but she gave positive response to Donald. Sara knew that Donald only wanted to do a kindness rather than made her embarrassed. That was the prove of how Sara understood the goodness and the badness. The researcher saw the connection of the data and the theory based on the concept and moral that Sara had which were described in the narration and the conversations of the story.

l. Philosophical, Unhostile Sense of Humor

They are not feeling funny for the thing which people in general feel it as funny thing if that funny inserts the badness or sparseness of somebody. . (Maslow, 169)

Her French lesson was pathetic thing. Her pronunciation made even Monsieur Durfarge smile in spite of himself and Lavinia and Jessie and the most fortunate girls either giggled or looked at her in wondering disdain. But Sara did not laugh. She had fine, hot little temper of her own, and it made her feels rather savage when she heard the titters and saw the poor, stupid, distressed child's face. (Burnett, 28)

"It isn't funny, really," she said between her teeth, as she bent over her book. "They ought not to laugh."

The narration had described this characteristic in Sara's character. The data above was about Ermengarde who could not spell French words well. Many pupils laught and even the teacher also did the same, but Sara did not laugh because she had seen and knew that Ermengarde already felt embarrassed and sad for her pronunciation. Sara had been showing that that hurt thing must be not a funny thing for people.

m. Creativeness

Creativeness of self-actualizing people means that when someone makes something so creative and the enculturation not influence them to show their natural potential that was given after each body was born. (Maslow, 170)

....The power that Lavinia and certain other girls were most envious of, and at the same time most fascinated by in spite of themselves, was her power of telling stories and of making everything she talked about seem like story, whether it was one or not. (Burnett, 51)

The narration of the story already explain that Sara was born with a great talent that she had a great imagination and could be talented story teller and those were the creativeness of her. People and life condition of her could change it and Sara still able to hold her imagine and her story teller talent to other people.

n. Resistance to Enculturation; The Transcendence of any Particular Culture.

The resistant to enculturation that Maslow constructed is like the one who able to face the differentiation of a rule that is already settled by people around or the one who has the power and the brave one to step forward as long as he thinks it is not a badness.(172-173)

“I do not know whether your mamma would like you to tell stories to servant girls, but I know *my* mamma wouldn’t like *me* to do it.”

“I don’t believe she would mind in the least. She knows that stories belong to everybody.”(Burnett,55)

At the time of the story, a servant was the lowest level in society. Becky was a servant while Sara was a rich pupil girl. Sara was telling stories to pupils and Becky tried to listen to the stories even though it was interdiction. Lavinia, as a pupil told Sara that Becky listened to the story and actually Sara knew it. This was the characteristic that Sara had her own rule for her self that she believed someone with which level they were had their own right. Sara was never denied someone who want to listen to her stories. Sara thought that social status or what the rule that have settled by society could not change her toward her way treated someone.

2. The Imperfection of Self-Actualizing People in Sara’s Character

Besides self-actualizing people tent to do the good things around them, but it cannot be denied that there are also the lack of people who actualize themselves.

- a. Self-actualizing people show the lesser human failings

"Well," she said, with some fire, "I should like to slap you-- but I don't want to slap you!" restraining herself "At least I both want to slap you--and I should like to slap you--but I won't slap you. We are not little gutter children. We are both old enough to know better." (Burnett, 73)

The condition of the data was Sara felt her temper just outburst because of Jessy, who was a pupil that did not like Sara, made Lottie, the youngest pupil which also Sara’s friend, cried. Sara just felt so angry and almost slapped Jessy but fortunately that she could control herself since she was a self-actualizing that did not like to do the bad thing. This data was found in Sara’s character related to the theory after understanding the conversations of the story.

- b. Self-actualizing people are occasionally capable of an extraordinary and unexpected ruthless.

“if I can work, it will not matter so much. What can I do?”(Burnett, 108)

Sara’s father had just passed away but Sara already thought about work. This is the unexpected ruthless means that Sara unexpectedly ruthless to her father that she loved so much. Sara was too fast to recovery herself from the death of her father. People might think it as a ruthless but for Sara as the one who actualizing herself, it was the way of her to stronger herself. Sara knew that her life still went on and no one took care for her anymore that she should be more independent. The researcher found this data after interpreting Sara’s character related to the theory.

- c. The absorption of them in an impersonal world makes them become humorless, absent-minded and forget their generality social politeness

“When people are insulting you, there is nothing so good for them as not to say a word—just to look at them and think. Miss Minchin turns pale with rage when I do it, Miss Amelia looks frightened, and so do the girls.” (Burnett, 155)

Sara knew how to protect herself when her feeling bruise. She had her own way to treat people who insulted her by staring at them without speaking any word. People might say it as an impolite attitude but for Sara it was better to do. Therefore, the data was explained based on the conversation that explained the action and the character's perception about insulting

E. CONCLUSION

To conclude, from the 15 characteristics of self-actualizing people, only 14 characteristics have owned by Sara. Those are more efficient perception, acceptance, spontaneity and naturalness, the need for privacy, independence of culture and environment, continued freshness of appreciation, the peak experience, social interest, interpersonal relations, the democratic character structure, discriminate between good and evil between means and ends, unhostile sense of humor, creativeness, and resistance to enculturation. Meanwhile, Sara has 3 out of 5 characteristics of the imperfection of self-actualizing people in her character, those are unexpected ruthless, forget the social politeness and such a stubborn person. The characterization related to the theory of self-actualization that are found mostly seen from psychological, moral, the content such as the conversation, narration and utterance and the researcher's interpretation of the character in the story.

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