

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Big Girl is a novel by Danielle Steel, published by Delacorte Press in February 23, 2010. It was written by Danielle Steel, a novelist who is quite famous in America. Danielle Fernandes Dominique Schuelein-Steel was born in 1947 at New York, United States, better known by the name *Danielle Steel*. She is an active person in writing. She has written many novels. *Big Girl* tells about a girl who has a big body and is ridiculed by her own family.

Big Girl is Steel's eighty novel. It talks about Victoria Dawson, a chubby little girl with blond hair, blue eyes, and ordinary looks who has always felt out of place in her family, especially in body-conscious L.A. Her father, Jim, is tall and slender, and her mother, Christina, is a fine-boned, dark-haired beauty. Both are self-centered, outspoken, and disappointed by their daughter's looks. But regardless of her accomplishments, Victoria's parents know just what to say to bring her down. She will always be her father's "big girl," and her mother's constant disapproval is equally unkind. Time goes on while Victoria still gets bullied by her family especially her father and mother who are ashamed to have a child like her. Until she decides to leave home to find her true self. After that, Victoria was quite successful with many achievements but still did not mean in the eyes of her parents, they still did not like her because she was big and it always made her depressed. There are some causes of her depression such as: getting pressure from the father, lacking of self esteem, getting unfair

comparisons and rejected from the society because the depression she gets some impacts such as: weighting loss, sleeping disturbances, feeling of empatines, trying to do the suicide.

Therefore, the depression of the protagonist makes me interested to make further analysis. This is the reason why I choose ‘depression’ to be the subject matter in my study. It is an important topic to study because it may help the reader to understand about the causes and impact of depression. From this study, we can find moral lessons that it can give the motivation to readers of this study, and it can be a guidance for them when they encounter the same experience as experienced by the protagonist in the novel.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the description above, this study is focused on analysis of depression. In order to make simple understanding, there are two topics will discuss that formulated as follow:

1. What are the causes of the protagonist’s depression found in the novel?
2. What are the impacts of the protagonist’s depression found in the novel?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Regarding to the statement of the problems above, this study has two purposes. They are as follows:

1. To reveal the causes of the protagonist’s depression found in the novel.
2. To reveal the impact of the protagonist’s depression found in the novel.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study focuses on the causes and the impact of the protagonist's depression in Danielle Steel's novel *Big Girl*. There are several causes of depression in this novel which would be analyzed in this study, such as : getting pressure from her father, lacking of self esteem, getting unfair comparisons, being rejected from by society. And the impacts are : weighting her loss, sleep disturbances, feeling of emptiness, and trying to do the suicide, Munthe (2007). All the causes and the impact of protagonist's depression reflected by the character of the novel by the name of Victoria Dawson and it would be analyzed in depth in chapter IV of this study.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study has significance for everyone, especially for people who study at school and college not only. in English Department but also in other departments. This study is intended to encourage students to know more about literature and psychology of depression. However, there might be two significances can be taken, theoretically and practically. Theoretically, they can take this study as one of their reference in their thesis. Practically, this study may give moral lesson about life. They may take the causes and the impact of having depression too much in their life, especially when they are encountering depression in their life.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Depression

According Atkinson (2010) depression is a feeling or mood disorder that is accompanied by the psychological components such as sadness, distress, hopelessness and despair along with biological or somatic components such as anorexia, constipation and cold sweats. biological or somatic components such as anorexia, constipation and cold sweat. Depression is said to be normal if it occurs in certain situations, is mild and in a short time period of time. If the depression occurs out of the ordinary and continues then the depression is considered abnormal.

Depression According to Aaron Beck (2009), negative thoughts, generated by dysfunctional beliefs are usually the main cause of depressive symptoms. There is a direct relationship between the number and severity of a person's negative thoughts and the severity of their depressive symptoms. In other words, the more negative thoughts you experience, the more depressed you will be. Beck also asserts that there are three main dysfunctional belief themes (or "schemas") that dominate the thinking of depressed people: 1) I am defective or incapable, 2) All my experiences result in defeat or failure, and 3) The future is hopeless. Together, these three themes are described as the Negative Cognitive Triad. When these beliefs are present in a person's cognition, depression is very likely to occur (if it hasn't already). Then Beck and

Alford (2009) state depression is a psychological disorder characterized by deviations in individual feelings, cognition, and behavior. Individuals who experience depressive disorders can feel sadness, loneliness, decreased self-concept, and show withdrawal behavior from their environment. Meanwhile, Santrock (2003) explains. that there is a term depressed mood in which a person experiences sadness and several other negative affections in a not too long period of time because of his failure to carry out certain tasks. Depression shows symptoms such as the emergence of behaviors and emotions that reflect negative affection.

According to Lumonggalubis. (2016), depression is a word that has many meanings. Most people have. experienced sadness, or aggravation, living a life full of problems, feeling .disappointed, lost and frustrated, which is easily with problems, feeling disapp.ointed, lost and frustrated, which easily leads to unhappiness and despair. lead to unhappiness and hopelessness (Lumonggalubis, 2016). Simply put, depression is the experience of a painful, hopeless feeling. of despair.

Based on the statement about Depression above, it can be stated that depression is also a feeling .of sadness, or grief that is usually accompanied by a slowing of bodily functions and movements. It ranges from a feeling of slight moody to a state of .helplessness. Depression can also be said a mood disorder characterized by characterized by loss of passion/excitement accompanied by other symptoms, such as sleep disturbances and decreased appetite

(Lumonggalubis et al., 2014). sleep and decreased appetite (Lumonggalubis, 2016).

Meanwhile, Nolen-Hoeksema and Hilt (2008) define depression as an emotional and behavioral disorder that appears simultaneously to form a certain pattern. The severity of depression can be affected by different levels of symptoms that include behavioral deviations along with emotional changes.

2.1.1 Causes of Depression

Depression is a common problem that occurs due to several causes, such as changes in physical condition, loss of work, loss of friends, isolation from the environment and loneliness (Hariyanto et al., 2020). Depression is also associated with excessive mental activity (Riyawati, 2008). Besides that, the causes of depression are quite diverse. Munthe (2007) mentions several causes of depression as follows:

- a) Disappointment that comes from pressure, physical exhaustion, or other reasons. Depression can be caused by stress, and the amount of conflict that is a stimulus psychological or physiological stress on an organism; physical and psychological pressures on the body's organs and or the self; a state of psychological tension due to the presence of perceived fear or anxiety so that it will have an impact on physical. Beside that, internal and external pressures and other problematic conditions in life can lead to excessive depression.

b) Lack of self-esteem which tends to be exaggerated to the extreme. It is not only make a person feel a loss of confidence, but also make them lose trust in others. If a person retaliates against the person who has hurt him, he will lose the close relationship that links people together. In addition, a person who commits wrongdoing sometimes does not feel or think that his actions are wrongful and cause others to lose confidence.

c) Unfair comparisons Comparing oneself to others socially is a form of measurement and self assessment to identify where an individual stands according to their own set of standards and emotions about themselves. But comparing two things unfairly can affect our self-esteem and mood.

d) Two conflicting feelings. Conflict means having or showing confusing and mutually inconsistent feelings. Some people currently have conflicts with family and others. They show conflicting feelings about their own problems. People have conflicting feelings about parents, children, work, and family. Constant misunderstandings will result in a person being depressed to judge who is right among them.

e) Rejection or limited relationships with peers. Peer rejection in elementary school and greater involvement with antisocial peers in early adolescence were correlated to adolescent externalizing behavior problems. Experiences of peer rejection can lead to antisocial behavior, as

well as depression from being alone. Externalizing problems were most common when rejection was experienced repeatedly.

f) Unstable goals. Deep sadness and lack of interest in life due to not being able to achieve what you want is one of the causes of depression that results in mental disorders involving mood. Although everyone can feel sad, people who experience symptoms of depression will experience intense and persistent sadness that will trigger a sense of helplessness. If this condition is left without care or treatment, suicidal thoughts will arise and increase.

Meanwhile, according to Santrock (2003), there are several factors that cause depression, they are :

- a) the bond between mother and child that does not provide a sense of safe.
- b) the absence of love and affection in childcare
- c) in this case the mother does not communicate well to provide be able to provide.
- d) communicate her affection to the child, or the loss of one of her children. Parents in their childhood,
- e) thus creating a negative cognitive set.

Based on the above opinions, it can be concluded that depression occurs

because individuals attribute various negative life events such as disappointment, lack of self-esteem, unfair comparisons, two conflicting feelings, illness, excessive mental activity, rejection and unattainable goals. In addition, depression can be caused by several factors such as communication between mother and child, school problems, social rejection, mother's parenting style, having a parent who suffers from depression, lack of optimism (pessimistic) and limited optimism (pessimism) and limited peer relationships.

Therefore, the author refers to Munthe's theory to discuss the topic about depression.

2.1.2 Impact of Depression

Depression has an impact on physical function, psychosocial function and suicide (Dewi, 2014)

a. Physical function

The health status of people with depression can decline if depression who experience depression have an association with somatic complaints compared to those who do not experience depression. The impact of somatic complaints that will appear in depression are will experience symptoms of loss of appetite, weight loss, digestive system disorders, and sleep disturbances.

Additional impact of depressive symptoms are chronic fatigue and with severe depression can cause disruption of psychomotor activities such as slow

body movements, verbal responses, and unwillingness to speak. Other impacts that arise are pain, discomfort, and impaired sexual function.

b. Psychosocial function

Mood changes due to feelings of sadness are not realized. However they often say they are lonely. Impact that often appear are feelings of wanting to cry but not being able to cry, feelings of emptiness, unhappiness, uselessness, and low self-esteem. Unhappy, useless, and low self-esteem. From a psychosocial perspective, symptoms are loss of interest in interacting with others. and abandoning old habits or hobbies. As a result of psychosocial functioning as a result of these psychosocial functions, they begin to neglect themselves and their appearance.

c. Suicide

For people who have been depressed for a long time, suicide is the solution. Prevention of these events can be done by studying risk factors and symptoms that appear. Starting from thoughts of despair and feelings of uselessness due to depression can lead to suicidal thoughts. Furthermore, indirect suicidal behavior will occur such as hunger strikes and not taking medication. After that comes the behavior of hurting behavior such as hanging oneself or drinking poison.

According to Dr. David Hellerstein (2007), a psychiatric specialist from the New York State Psychiatric Institute, depression has impacts:

1. Heart disease

Depression makes a person more susceptible to heart disease due to hormonal imbalances in the blood. When depressed, the brain constantly receives signals of threat. So, the brain releases the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol into the blood. High levels of both hormones increase blood pressure, make your heart beat irregular, and eventually damage blood vessels.

2. Addiction

When depression is not treated properly, you are at a high risk of developing addictions. Be it addiction to drugs, liquor, cigarettes or gambling. This is because some people make the mistake of thinking that their addiction can help them overcome the symptoms of depression. For example, despair can go away for a while because of drug use.

3. Brain damage

Depression causes abnormalities in brain structures in the hippocampus, prefrontal cortex, and anterior cingulate. This can lead to a decline in the brain's cognitive functions of thinking, communicating, making decisions, and remembering things. In some cases, untreated chronic depression can also lead to mental disorders such as schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder and bipolar disorder.

4. Difficulty establishing relationships with others

In addition to the various consequences depression can have on your health, your relationships with those closest to you will also suffer. The human social psyche is regulated by the hormone serotonin. Meanwhile, depression makes you lack serotonin. As a result, it becomes harder for you to socialize and establish good relationships with people close to you such as your spouse, children, and friends. You may prefer to be alone and stay away from your family.

5. Suicide

Left unchecked, depression can gradually increase your risk of suicide. In fact, suicide is highly preventable if you or someone close to you seeks help from a health professional. In people with depression, suicide is not a way to seek attention or a form of revenge on those who hurt them, but rather a biological factor. That is, the serious mental illness they experience makes the brain lose the cognitive ability to think clearly and weigh options. The imbalance of chemicals in the brain also further triggers a sense of hopelessness, as if there is no point in continuing to live.