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BILLY MILLIGAN'S DISSOCIATIVE IDENTITY DISORDER IN DANIEL KEYES' *THE MINDS OF BILLY MILLIGAN*

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Abstract

The title of this study is Billy Milligan's Dissociative Identity Disorder in Daniel Keyes' *The Minds of Billy Milligan*. The objective of this study are to describe the symptoms of Billy Milligan's Dissociative Identity Disorder, the causes, and the effects of the Billy's Dissociative Identity Disorder in Daniel Keyes' *The Minds of Billy Milligan*. This study refers to Dissociative Identity Disorder theory by Davison and Neale from *Abnormal Psychology* book. The researcher applies psychological approach and uses descriptive qualitative method. It is used to analyze the causes and the effects of Dissociative Identity Disorder on Billy Milligan. The analysis reveals that Billy Milligan has lack of connection among his identity, consciousness, and memories as the symptoms of the disorder. His Dissociative Identity Disorder appears because he cannot unify his identity into whole which are emotion, mind, and soul cannot be connected well. The causes of Billy Milligan's Dissociative Identity Disorder are physical and emotional abuse, stress of war in family, and sexual abuse. It leads him becoming an anti-social and introvert person, stressfulness because of war in his family, and having schizophrenia as the effects of Dissociative Identity Disorder.

Keyword: *abnormal psychology, psychological disorder, dissociative identity*

INTRODUCTION

Dissociative Identity Disorder is the complex mental health problem and it can be the disorder for the people who suffering fear or trauma because of child abuse, deep insecurity, loneliness, loss of time and space, emotional instability, and the lack of self-coherent sense. According to Piper & Merskey definition (1998), it is the memories that may not have clear behavioral manifestations and it is hard to measure it empirically. Dissociative Identity Disorder appears in a person when the person have experienced something traumatic experience in his or her childhood (Mayo clinic, 2017). The experiences can be found in his or her family as the internal environment and neighbour

or friends as the external environment. Thus, there are factors like internal conflicts and external conflicts that matters to identify the cause and the effect of multiple personalities or Dissociative Identity Disorder in a character's environment.

Internal and external environment are tight one another. They cannot be separated because external environment can influence the internal environment such as family towards the behavior of someone. The influence is called as "cause" and every cause has the "effect" of it. The cause indicates things that make the personalities in a character appear and the effect describes about the result of the personalities in a character toward its character and society. Based on Mayo clinic test (2020), the factors are used for seeking ¹¹ Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD) or Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID), such as aggression, repetition, transitional phenomena, and identity. It is the strategic integration to know the emphasis that is placed on the MPD's process nature.

In this study, the researcher uses psychological approach to identify the psychology and the condition of the main character, Billy Milligan, in ¹ the novel *The Minds of Billy Milligan* by Daniel Keyes. The researcher has chosen the novel because it is based on real life and it describes the process of a person who has Dissociative Identity Disorder faces every event or problem from his internal and external environments whether it is personal conflict or social conflict. Every personality or dissociative identity in the main character's body would appear based on the situation that is faced by the main character. This study is examined to reveal the psychology of Billy Milligan as the main character who suffering Dissociative Identity Disorder or DID by using Davison's and Neale's Dissociative Identity Disorder theory (2004) to describe the symptoms with the cause and the effect of it.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are several studies that search about psychology that is dissociative identity disorder in literature, which are "Dissociative Identity Disorder Reflected in Frederick Clegg's Character in *The Collectors* Novel" by Janitra Asia and Semanik in 2018, "Alternating Indifference of Billy Milligan's Features in Daniel Keyes' *The Minds of Billy Milligan*" by Nurlianti M. in 2013, and "Paraphilia Addiction on Sara Dillon in Christina Lauren's *Beautiful Stranger*" by Udzlifatinnur Laily in 2020.

The focus of the studies are psychological disorder. Their analysis are also used psychological approach. In this study, the difference of the analysis is the theory to answer the problem statements and to analyze the whole data. This study is used Dissociative Identity Disorder theory by Davison & Neale (2004) to find Billy Milligan's dissociative identities, the causes and the effects of Dissociative Identity Disorder appeared in the main character. For make the analysis more clear, the writer uses Davison's & Neale's Dissociative Identity Disorder theory for describing the disorder of the main character through his childhood and his environment. The writer uses *The Minds of Billy Milligan* novel by Daniel Keyes as the object of this study.

This study uses psychological approach of literature to describe Dissociative Identity Disorder of the main character. The researcher examines the novel; *The Minds of Billy Milligan* by Daniel Keyes with close-reading technique with new criticism and the method of literature. According to Cohen (1971:351), psychology could help about literary problems with literary criticism. The combination between psychology and literary criticism is called psychological approach. Psychological approach gives psychological criticism to explain evidences of character's psychology in literature.

Dissociative Identity Disorder is a disorder for the person who has lack of connection among his or her identity, consciousness, and memories. According to *Abnormal Psychology* book by Davison & Neale (2004), it is abnormal psychology type with stressful and anxiety experiences of a person. Person who suffers from this disorder has less than one personality instead has many personalities in his or her body. Because of that, the name of this disorder from “Multiple Personalities Disorder” has changed to “Dissociative Identity Disorder” for now (Cleveland Clinic, 2020).

The symptoms of Dissociative Identity Disorder could not effective to be seen by other people who do not know well or close to the person who suffers the disorder. Therefore, it is needed close relationship with the person, such as family and old friends for understanding “the switches” of personalities (Spiegel, 2020). It cannot be denied that family as the internal environment and first environment is the important role for building personality. Long-term physical abuse, emotional abuse, stress of war in family, and sexual abuse are the factors of children’s trauma and those would be recorded in the child’s mind as his or her grow up or we can say as memories from childhood. The bad memories will be the causes that can lead a person for suffering the disorder.

Memories which automatically saved by a person in his or her childhood would be long term effects for the child. Children who experience long-term physical abuse, emotional abuse, stress of war in family, and sexual abuse would be risked to be depression, stressfulness, introvert, anti-social, schizophrenia, and coping mechanism of his or her childhood. It can be sure that a person who has bad experiences in his or her childhood would be the biggest subject for suffering Dissociative Identity Disorder as the form to fulfill love and careness that cannot be achieved by the person in his or her childhood.

RESEARCH METHOD

As this study focused on the psychology of a character which Billy Milligan's Dissociative Identity Disorder, an approach that is used in this study is psychological approach. The researcher uses ² descriptive-qualitative method as the methodology of the study. It is used to describe a study or data that are descriptive in nature. It helps the researcher to stay focus or close to the data and interpretation. The researcher uses literary new criticism to find every aspect that is found in the data. The data of this study are from the printed-book version of ¹ the novel *The Minds of Billy Milligan*. The researcher uses online research to find the novel and the data are provided in the printed form which are relevant with the object of the study.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

According to the explanation of Davison & Neale about Dissociative Identity Disorder, there are three signs of the disorder in Billy Milligan. First is lack of connection of his identity that he cannot to express his feeling or emotion towards himself because there are bad or anxiety experiences in his childhood. Second is lack of consciousness or unconsciousness of Milligan because his identity is seperated into several identities which are called as dissociative identity(ies). Third is lack of memories or memory loss because his identity is shattered into several dissociative identities.

Billy Milligan's dissociative identities are devided into two groups, which are desirables and undesirables. Desirable group is for the dissociative identities who often take the consciousness of Billy because they allowed by Arthur as the leader of the Billy's dissociative identities. Whereas undesirable group is for the dissociative identities who

are not allowed to take control Billy's consciousness by Arthur because they do not help the significant of Billy's life.

Lack of Connection and Consciousness

Connection is not just relations from one to another people, it is also the relation that existed in ourselves. There is a connection between emotion and mind in every soul when does something in every event or situation that is called as identity. When someone cannot show or express his true emotion with his mind as a soul, it would be called as lack of connection among his identity (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2018).

The lack of connection is found in Billy Milligan. He cannot control his identity to be a true identity or an identity as a whole. He believes that every different circumstance has also to be faced with different personality, but because he cannot control between his mind and his emotion as one soul, he creates dissociative identities that are seen as new personalities on his body.

When someone has lack of connection towards itself, it can lead the person to the lack of connection between his mind and emotion that is called as identity (M. Kring et al., 2014). His soul would be felt empty. For certain, if someone have lack of connection in his identity, the consciousness of the person would often to be unconsciousness to do every activity because the feeling of empty in his soul.

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Suddenly the cookie jar standing on it came crashing to the floor. He tried to put the pieces together, but they wouldn't stick. Hearing someone coming, he began trembling. He didn't want to be punished. He didn't want to be hurt. "Shawn" opened his eyes and looked around. ... What was it? Why was it broken? (Keyes, 1981: 127)

Billy is always scolded by his parents, whether his mother or his stepfather. Because of that, he tries to find another way to receive the anger. For instance, as the quotation

above, when Billy is broken a cookie jar on the floor. As a child, he just wants to do something by himself and wants to be called mature than naughty or clumsy. Whereas, Billy is too tiny to do everything by himself, he is not in purpose to drop the jar and crash it on the floor. He is extremely scared because of it and tries to escape from it. He knows that his mother, Dorothy, will be angry for his bad behavior. Because of his lack of connection between his mind and emotion, he tries to hide his emotion of fearness with changes his mind become someone else instead of facing the problem and it makes him often unconscious because his memories are separated into several pieces.

He tries to hide his emotion with trying to pretend becoming someone else and the response of his mind are different. His mind completely hiding the event that impact the emotion of Billy, so Billy feels that he is not the identity of Billy. All of his bad experiences which impact his emotion are buried as the secret of his mind and it is called as memories.

Memories

According to Vansintjan & Zlotnik definition (2019), memory is an ability to record every information about every event and thing that receive in mind. It will store in the mind and it could recall the informations that have been received for later time. Billy Milligan is like a person who has lack of memories. He has bad memories which he cannot remember every circumstances with ties to organize because his identity has shattered into twenty-four dissociative identities. The dissociative identities can recall Billy's memories, but it cannot as a soul because they believe that they are different people which also different souls.

Billy has lack of connection through his identity, consciousness, and memories. His mind, soul, and emotion cannot be connect each other in one time and it leads him to be

unconsciousness and certainly, his memories would be misplaced that makes him suffering from Dissociative Identity Disorder. The disorder appeared in Billy Milligan because of some causes. He has passed bad and anxiety experiences in his childhood that makes him suffering from the disorder.

The Cause

Physical abuse, emotional abuse, stress of war in family, and sexual abuse are the causes of Dissociative Identity Disorder, so it depends on the personality of the person facing the experiences and receiving it. Billy Milligan has passed all the causes of Dissociative Identity Disorder.

In Billy Milligan's childhood, he does not have enough love and care by his parents. His father, Johnny Morrison, is an alcoholic and does not always stay at home with his little family. Even when the special events such as Billy Milligan's sister birthday and Christmas, he does not stay for celebrating it with his wife and his children. He spends more his time gambling and does not care about the growth of his children. On the other side, Billy Milligan's mother, Dorothy Sands, spends more her time for work. She has been working in a long time before she had children, but she tries to make more money since she has to settle her husband's loan and borrowing. She works when all of her children are really young.

After Billy's biological father is died, his mother is married with Chalmer Milligan. Chalmer Milligan as Billy's step father has done some terrible things to Billy. He does some violence, physical, and sexual abuse to Billy. Billy cannot tell anyone because he is just a child who is scared with the threat of his step father. Chalmer will bury him in

the barn (the place that Chalmer does the abuse to Billy) and tell his mother that Billy has run away.

Billy is a child that of course would be scared to every threat from someone and promises not to tell anyone about the anxiety experiences that he passed. He chooses silent than tells the others about his experiences. Especially, there is no knowledge from his biological father and his mother about the role of male in life, so he only follows the order from his step father than chooses to tell his bad experiences to anyone.

Billy often experiences sodomy and sexual abuse by his step father. He does not have a friend to share his pain and there is also no support by his family which lead him become an introvert one and lack of motivation in his life as the effect of it. Those bad experiences are created bad memories towards the child and show some effects to his personality.

The Effect

Physical abuse, emotional abuse, stress of war, and sexual abuse are the causes that risked the person to be depression, stressfulness, introvert, anti-social, schizophrenia, and coping mechanism of his childhood. As Billy Milligan has experienced, he has trauma because he is often scared to meet new people around him because his step father is a new person in his life before the anxiety experiences are happened. He also fears of men because of the traumatic experiences and the anxiety experiences from his biological father and his step father who are men or male.

He is diagnosed having schizophrenia. He also has a sense of being psychotic because his lack of memories which makes him far removed from the reality that he cannot conform his conduct to the requirements of every behaviour that he done.

He also becomes an anti-social and introvert person because no one knows and tries to ask about his pain especially his mother and his siblings. He is also diagnosed acute schizophrenia because he has a very restricted capacity to differentiate between himself and his environment.

CONCLUSION

Billy Milligan who suffers Dissociative Identity Disorder have a lot of dissociative identities inside him. He has twenty-four dissociative identities in total. His lack of connection among his identity, consciousness, and memories lead him to be a person who suffers Dissociative Identity Disorder. Because of the lack of connection in his internal environment which is his family, he cannot express his feeling or his emotion. He also does not have a big motivation in his life that makes him having an empty soul. His unconsciousness shows his lack of memory or memory loss and it comes from the memories that misplaced in his mind. Because of his misplace memories, he regards that he is someone else which makes him has dissociative identities and has lack of memories.

Moreover, Billy's anxiety experiences on his childhood bring his identity, which are mind, soul, and emotion, cannot connect each other well as normal people. He feels stress because of war in his family since his childhood and it makes him become an anti-social and introvert person.

He also experiences physical abuse, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse by his step father which are the climax of his Dissociative Identity Disorder appeared. In addition, Billy Milligan who suffersthis disorder is a clever person that can create many different

personalities and skills in his body. It is just Billy can not unify among his mind, soul,
and emotion as a whole (true identity).

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