

SANTIAGO'S WAY TO FIND HAPPINESS IN PAULO COELHO'S *THE ALCHEMIST*

Zindi Nabila Onedani

Alumni of Department of English
University of 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya, Indonesia

Danu Wahyono

Department of English
University of 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya, Indonesia
Email: danuwahyono@untag-sby.ac.id

Abstract. This study is about an analysis of Santiago's way to find happiness in Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist*. Psychological approach and the help of psychological theory that are used in this study to identify the reasons of Santiago's strife to pursue happiness through his journey to Egypt. From the novel, Santiago's family life background is the main reason of his strife to find happiness. The result of the study, researcher finds some indicators of happiness according to Seligman's PERMA in Santiago's journey. Santiago meets *relationship*, *meaning* and *accomplishments* in the end of the journey. He meets the girl, Fatima, as the love of his life. He also finds the meaning of his life, which is to live without any regrets. t h e n , he finally finds the hidden treasure as his dream. The three indicators help Santiago to be happier than before. From the analysis, it can be found that the reason why Santiago feels happier in life is because he never stops encouraging himself with the faith of his dream, the faith of his own destiny, and the faith of his mission in life.

Keywords: *happiness, ways to find happiness, Seligman's PERMA*

INTRODUCTION

Happiness is an important element of life and a requirement for every people. In fulfilling happiness, people have to struggle and sacrifice to pursuit happiness because it isn't easy to get. Happiness can't be bought or asked, it have to be pursued. Happiness is a mental or emotional state of well-being defined by positive or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy, (Compton & Hoffman, 2013: 4). Happiness or simply said as positive mood has become a global issue over decades. It is related to well-being, flourishing and quality of life. Definition of happiness always changes with the times under the human circumstance. Aristotle states that happiness is the meaning and the purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence. As he said on his book, "That which is always desirable in itself and never for the sake of something else." (Nicomachean Ethics, 1097a30-34).

Different with Aristotle's idea, Socrates has shared his thought about happiness that happiness is actually obtained through the human effort. Socrates believed that true happiness could only be achieved through self-knowledge and that only this examination of one's universal soul was true wisdom (Compton & Hoffman, 2013: 11). He believed that key to happiness is to turn attention away from the body and towards the soul. According to the that statements, a happy person is someone who is satisfied with his life and have a strong desire to live. Happiness is all about being satisfied of yourself. It is clearly understood that happiness does not depend on external things, but rather on internal things.

One of example that show about fulfilling happiness is Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist*, in this novel tell about the Santiago's journey from Andalusia to Egypt, a shepherd boy with big dream to pursuit his

dream. As a shepherd boy, he is not satisfied with his current life and decides to change it.

His journey starts with his dream that always appears in his sleep. His dream leads Santiago into a meaningful journey that teaches him about pursuit his dream and find his happiness. On the journey, he meets a lot of people that teaches about life, love and many things. Not only finding his love and his dream but also, he finds a treasure that he dreams about. Then, those make his life change and into the happiest man alive.

In short, the researcher is interested to analyze this novel because the researcher is interested in the story of philosophy and adventure which are reflected in the story of this novel. The novel brings the reader deep into his narration. The story is not just simply imagination, but Paulo tries to give his philosophy of life through Santiago's character. Second reason is because the researcher is interested in the main character's, Santiago. He is described as a simple and poor shepherd who struggles for reaching his dream. In this part, the researcher finds that this is unique and highly motivated. From those reasons, the researcher wants to analyze the reason of Santiago to pursue happiness, to know the obstacles that he must pass through in pursuing happiness and to analyze the way of Santiago pursues his happiness in the novel.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher uses descriptive qualitative method which is taken as the method of analysis, is about discussing, analyzing and finding the reason of Santiago's ways to find happiness in Paulo Ceulho's *The Alchemist*. By using descriptive qualitative method, the researcher is aimed to overcome the problem by describing the data systematically. According to Bogdan and

Biklen (1982:27) qualitative research is descriptive data, which is concerned with collecting data in the form of words or picture rather than numbers. In addition, Yin (2011) explains that the practice of qualitative analysis is derived from a non-numeric data where it tries to capture contextual condition as well as the novel. The psychoanalysis approach is used to interpret the novel, that focuses in the literary works (Wellek and Warren, 1977: 81) Through this approach, the researcher will identify the way of the main character in finding his happiness as the purpose of life. The writer will take all circumstances, obstacles and dilemmas that is experienced by Santiago by using Seligman's Top-down Theory to interpret how Santiago always be positive and optimist in his life.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The reasons and ways to pursuit happiness in *The Alchemist* can be found in the progress of plot that focusses in the main character, Santiago. In the novel, Santiago is a shepherd boy from Andalusia who takes a journey to Egypt. As a shepherd boy, Santiago is not satisfied with his current life and decides to change it. Santiago feels that he needs to pursuit his happiness. One day, he has a dream about finding treasures around in Pyramids at Egypt. The dream leads him into a meaningful journey that teach him about strife to realize his dream and to find his happiness. On the journey, he meets a lot of people that teaches about life, love and many things. But he gets something more important than just a treasure trove in the end. He finds his happiness. Life and happiness are related to each other like a couple and there are things that must be done. Choices must be made in order to pursue happiness.

Santiago's Reason to Find Happiness

There are some of reason that lead Santiago to pursuit his happiness, the first reason is his family, especially his father. Santiago is born in a simple farm family but he gets proper education till he is sixteen. His father wants him to become a priest someday in purpose to bring a pride for the family (Coelho, 2006: 8). Unfortunately, his father idea doesn't meet with Santiago's desire. It brings unhappy feeling that makes Santiago strives to find the questions about life and human's sins. Santiago can see through his father eyes that his father has same dreams with his desire, to travel around the world, that is depicted in this statement

The boy could see in his father's gaze a desire to be able, himself, to travel the world—a desire that was still alive, despite his father's having had to bury it, over dozens of years, under the burden of struggling for water to drink, food to eat, and the same place to sleep every night of his life. (Coelho, 2006: 9)

Statement above show that, his father used to have a dream of being free but he must let away his dream. The spirit of being free comes to Santiago, but it never works the same on him. Santiago's desire is bigger than his father. He does not want life as his father has so far that spends a whole day in farm and work hard just to get water and food, be the same person for everyday and stay the same place to sleep every night. Aristotle's said that what makes someone happy does not mean that another people will be happy with the same thing. It also happens on Santiago and his father.

Selingman (2011: 13) told that pleasure and satisfaction are the indications

of happiness. When someone is unsatisfied with his life, it can direct to unhappy life. the second reason is Santiago starts to criticize his own life which causes to unsatisfied. He is unsatisfied with his childhood life which make him decide to pursuit his personal desire to change his childhood life. It is shown by Santiago's assumption of his purpose in life, "*His purpose in life was to travel, and after two years of walking the Andalusian terrain, he knew all the cities of the region*" (Coelho, 2006: 8). It can be related with Socrates's statement that happiness can be actually obtained through the human effort. Human effort in life must stand along with the purpose of life. It makes Santiago realize that he will be risk his life and his family. Although, His father has persuaded Santiago to stay but he fails. Santiago says to his father that he wants to see the land and the castle of the outsider and wants to know more than Andalusia (Coelho, 2006: 9).

The third reason is loneliness that Santiago feel in his travel, he feels that he is bored journey with the flock. He needs to find someone to express his passion and idea to others human. Then, he starts to think that there is something don't meet his expectations. Santiago realizes that every human need somewhere or someone to be home to always come back. he knows that he misses something that will always welcome him to come home. He realizes that he needs a partner. This feeling is depicted in below,

But in his heart he knew that it did matter. And he knew that shepherds, like seamen and like traveling salesmen, always found a town where there was someone who could make them forget the joys of carefree

wandering. The day was dawning, and the shepherd urged his sheep in the direction of the sun. They never have to make any decisions, he thought. Maybe that's why they always stay close to me. (Coelho, 2006: 6)

That shows Santiago feels unsatisfied with his life. He feels not only unbalance life, but also loneliness. It slowly creates a new standard of satisfaction on Santiago's life. In this part, being free is not the only purpose of his life. He starts to learn that a satisfied feeling comes from the balancing of every aspects of his life. As the time goes by, Santiago realizes that he will not spend all the rest of life forever only with his sheep. He needs to be free as his desire, but he also needs to be a human. A human which needs another human in life. He needs to socialize since human is born as a social creature.

The last reason why Santiago want to pursuit his happiness is his dream about Pyramid's treasure. It is turning point that make him believe that behind its dream has a purpose for him. It also leads him to pursuit his happiness. Although it comes as the magical thing, it is his lifeline of the main character. It is not a usual dream. It is more like the soul of the whole story. The dream about that treasure is depicted in below statement.

"I have had the same dream twice," he said. "I dreamed that I was in a field with my sheep, when a child appeared and began to play with the animals. I don't like people to do that, because the sheep are afraid of strangers. But children always seem to be able to play with them

without frightening them. I don't know why. I don't know how animals know the age of human beings."

"The child went on playing with my sheep for quite a while," continued the boy, a bit upset. "And suddenly, the child took me by both hands and transported me to the Egyptian pyramids."

"Then, at the Egyptian pyramids,"—he said the last three words slowly, so that the old woman would understand—"the child said to me, If you come here, you will find a hidden treasure. And, just as she was about to show me the exact location, I woke up. Both times." (Coelho, 2006: 13)

Santiago dreams about a hidden treasure that he will find at the Pyramids in Egypt. But every time he will be pointed out the location, he wakes up. At first, he does not concern with his dream. But he changes his mind after he dreams the same think twice. He only gives a chance to an old woman who is believed to be able to read dream. Unfortunately, he gets nothing from her. As a return, he must deal with her. He must share one tenth of his treasure when he gets it. The old woman makes him doubt of his dream. He decides not to believe on dream again.

Yet, the appearance of a mysterious man has changed Santiago's mindset of happiness. It encourages him to make his dream come true. It is not the magical thing that changes Santiago's mind. It is because of the old man's learning of life that was given to Santiago. The old man brings him to a new world of omen that show in statement's below.

"In order to find the treasure, you will have to follow the omens. God has prepared a path for everyone to follow. You just have to read the omens that he left for you." Before the boy could reply, a butterfly appeared and fluttered between him and the old man. He remembered something his grandfather had once told him: that butterflies were a good omen. (Coelho, 2006: 29)

He tells Santiago that omens are the key to fulfilling his dream. He tells him not to be afraid of hope. Hope is the power of a dreamer. They who stay in hope will find the goal in the end. He wants Santiago to believe what his biggest desire in life is. Like Dalai Lama has told that everyone should give his best to be closer with his life purpose, happiness. The old man tells Santiago always to keep spirit on achieving his dream, no matter what will happen.

Santiago's Obstacles to Find Happiness

Every journey always has obstacles to deal that is also Santiago's face it. Santiago deals a lot of obstacles which lead him to dilemmas. Dilemmas always happen when a problem offers two possibilities, neither of which is unambiguously acceptable or preferable. On facing dilemmas, human is required to make the most appropriate decision for his/her life. Some of the decision will bring regrets and some of them will bring pride. It can change someone's life better or worse than before.

Santiago's dilemma happens when he needs to leave the family in purpose to pursue his dream of life, freedom for his happiness. His family wants him to be a pride

in the family by becoming a priest. he decides to step further and becomes a shepherd, although he has to leave all his family member.

The next obstacle when he finds that he loses everything after he has arrived at Egypt, he loses all his money and be left alone without any supply. It is his fault to easily trust someone new. He is fallen out to his experience with the old man. For a while, Santiago forgets that there are many kinds of stranger in life. Some of them are very kind and trustable, but most of them cannot be trusted. This situation makes Santiago depressed, he has no more faith to live and even more to continue pursuing his dream of the treasure. Santiago's depression is depicted in statement below.

But now I'm sad and alone. I am going to become bitter and distrustful of people because one person betrayed me. I'm going to hate those who have found their treasure because I never found mine. And I'm going to hold on to what little I have, because I'm too insignificant to conquer the world. (Coelho, 2006: 39)

It needs sometime for Santiago to convince himself again about the dream. He has been giving up since that time. In contrast, Santiago learns something new in life that he must be more careful in the future to trust someone, especially stranger.

The next obstacles that obstructs Santiago ways to find the treasure is he find a love. Santiago meets a local Arabian girl named Fatimah that makes him falling in love. It makes him decision to choose his dream or his love. The meeting with Fatima has changed his purpose of life, he does not

want anything in life but Fatimah as his wife. Even though Santiago's desire to live with Fatimah and forget about the treasure, Fatimah convinces Santiago to continue his journey and waits for his comeback as return. She does not want to be the cause of Santiago's regret in the future once he cannot pursue his dream. Eventually, Santiago accepts Fatima's advice to continue his journey to get his dream.

Santiago's Way to Find Happiness

Santiago faces many kinds of obstacles to strife his happiness, but he works hard to fulfill his dream. In previous chapter, it has been explained about Santiago's strife to face dilemmas in purpose to find his life goal that in that process, Santiago shows some positive attitudes that direct to optimism. Santiago's optimism can be found when he has just arrived at Egypt, he lost all of his and he regrets his decision to sell all his sheep and let go his previous life, it show this statement below.

Even if he never got to the Pyramids, he had already traveled farther than any shepherd he knew. Oh, if they only knew how different things are just two hours by ship from where they are, he thought. Although his new world at the moment was just an empty marketplace, he had already seen it when it was teeming with life, and he would never forget it. He remembered the sword. It hurt him a bit to think about it, but he had never seen one like it before. As he mused about these things, he realized that he had to choose between thinking of himself as the poor victim of a thief and

as an adventurer in quest of his treasure." (Coelho, 2006: 42)

But then, he reminds about his desire in life, that is travelling to a new destination and be free are Santiago's born desire. He gets to know this new place because of his dream. The other example that show about Santiago's optimism is Santiago's attitude in facing the bad circumstances in life is full with optimism. He believes that he will find the treasure which surely brings him the happiness. He knows that he is suffered because of pursuing his dream and also knows that it is the part on his way to get a better life but, he believes that his hard work will never be betrayed in the end.

Santiago's Happiness in *The Alchemist*

In this part, the researcher presents the Santiago's happiness that it found in the novel according to Seligman's PERMA.

Relationships

In Santiago's journey, he meets a lot of people and knows them in personal. He makes a good relation with all of them. He meets the Merchant Man or the Old King, the Englishman in the oasis, and The Alchemist who has taught him the meaning of love and how to live a life with it. By having relation with them, Santiago learns that to be free is not only the term of life which brings him to happiness that he has to make a relationship with other human on earth. That relation cannot be easily ignored because it already becomes the part of Santiago's life. The most important relationship for Santiago that changes Santiago's life is his meeting with Fatimah, a charismatic desert woman who becomes Santiago's love of life. Fatimah brings Santiago's spirit to pursuit his happiness and bring him full excitement.

"But my heart is agitated," the boy said. "It has its dreams, it gets emotional, and it's become passionate over a woman of the desert. It asks things of me, and it keeps me from sleeping many nights, when I'm thinking about her." (Coelho, 2006: 128)

The treasure journey gives him more than just gold or wealth. It gives him the love that will be last forever. Santiago realizes that the point of happiness is love. Love consists of sympathy, reverence with others along with the willing to help each other. Once someone has found the love in his life, happiness will come for next. A victory, success and wealth are just the 'bonus' in life. Fatimah becomes one of Santiago's hidden treasure. he realizes that he will never meets her unless he follows his dream. Once he stayed at Andalusia, he might not have a chance to meet the love of his life. All of the universe conspires to unite them in the name of love.

Meaning

"Maktub" become one of part that leads Santiago to find that happiness is made. "Maktub" also become one of happiness that he pursuit. "Maktub" means "it" written' in Arabic. The omen is one of the indications from "Maktub". In life, people were born with each destiny. Their purpose of life is to pursue that destiny. In the process they still have to follow the sign which leads them to something bigger that has been written for them. In realizing his destiny, Santiago is helped the way to read omen by so many people such as, The old king, the alchemist, Fatimah and the merchant. The merchant is encouraged Santiago by giving himself as the real example of a people who afraid of pursuing dream. More than just a pleasure

which makes Santiago always be positive in life, he realizes that the purpose of human life is following a dream. It is the mission of a born human one earth. They were given choices, to ignore or to make it come true. After the journey, Santiago understands that his choice must be to make it happen. Living a life without regrets is the way of Santiago appreciate the life itself. As been told on above dialogue by the alchemist and below dialogue of Santiago to himself:

Santiago knows that dreams are created to be realized not stuck as a dream forever. Life is full of secret. There is no one knows about the future. Pursuing a dream gives a chance to feel the failure or winning, but the point is that he has tried. Once he meets failure, all the way he needs to do is wake up again and starting from the beginning. It is better than to live a life without a try and still feels failure for the rest of life. That is the meaning of Santiago's life.

That way of life, brings a pleasure in Santiago's life. A pleasure can be derived from a simplest or the hardest thing of the human life. Pleasure is connected to satisfying bodily needs for survival, such as thirst, hunger, and sleep. Whereas enjoyment comes from intellectual stimulation and creativity. This element of the model is one of the most obvious connections to happiness. Being able to focus on positive emotions is more than just smiling, it is the ability to be optimist and view the past, present, and future in a positive perspective. This positive view of life can help you in relationships, work, and inspire you to be more creative and take more chances.

Accomplishment

Santiago meets the pleasure of his journey, once he finally digs out the treasure and finds the gold. He has passed all the

obstacles just to prove his heart that the dream is not a lie. The hidden treasure is real.

After everything that he has been through, Santiago successfully accomplishes a lot of things in life. He finally finds his hidden treasure which are his true love and his unforgettable experiences.

The boy fell to his knees and wept. He thanked God for making him believe in his destiny, and for leading him to meet a king, a merchant, an Englishman, and an alchemist. And above all for his having met a woman of the desert who had told him that love would never keep a man from his destiny. (Coelho, 2006: 160)

Santiago realizes that happiness can also be found in the end of the seeking journey. The journey itself brings the happiness for everyone who can enjoy. A journey gives knowledge, experience and practice in life. Santiago learns about how to be honest and firmly against his own passion in life. As his previous life as a shepherd, his new journey has some similarities. His travel from field to field portrays the Pyramids as the goal of the journey. Meanwhile, he may not abandon his flocks at the same time. The flocks portray the circumstances and experiences that happens during the journey.

As Santiago said to himself, "*It's true; life really is generous to those who pursue their destiny, the boy thought.*" (Coelho, 2006: 166), it is the top of his achievement. He gets the most precious treasure in life. Love, happiness, wealth and pleasure are the part of this achievement.

CONCLUSION

Based the journey, Santiago finally success to overcome all the obstacles and pursuit his purpose in life. By understanding PERMA from Martin Seligman, there are five indicators of someone happiness, they are Pleasure, Engagement, Relationship, Meaning and Accomplishments. According to the nove, Santiago success to reach three from five of PERMA's happiness indicators. They are a long last relationship, a powerful meaning of life and the massive accomplishments. Those indicators can also become a measurement of happiness in literary works.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Coelho, Paulo. 2006. *The Alchemist*. New York. Harper.
- Keyes, C. L. M., & Lopez, S. J. 2002. *Handbook of positive psychology*. London. Oxford University Press.
- Seligman, M. E. P. 2002. *Authentic happiness*. New York. Free Press.
- Seligman, M. E. P. 2011. *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well being*. New York. Free Press.
- Sheldon, K. M. & King, L. 2001. *Why positive psychology is necessary*. Columbia American Psychologist.
- Wellek, R and Warren, A. 1956. *Theory of Literature*. New York. A Harvest Book. Harcourt, Brace and World Inc
- Yin, R. K. (2011). *Qualitaive Research from Start to Finish*. New York: The Guildford press