

MRS. WELLINGTON'S ANXIETY IN GITTY DANESHVARI'S SCHOOL OF FEAR: THE FINAL EXAM

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Abstract. This study is entitled Mrs. Wellington's anxiety reflected in Gitty Daneshvari's *School of Fear: The Final Exam*. This study aims at describing the symptoms, the causes, and the effects of anxiety which is suffered by Mrs. Wellington. This study applies psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud to analyze Mrs. Wellington's anxiety. The symptoms of anxiety that is suffered by Mrs. Wellington are such as feeling anxious, being unable to think about anything but something that makes her anxious, and experiencing trembling, melancholy, and the deepest sadness. There are some causes of Mrs. Wellington's anxiety. First, Mrs. Wellington's anxiety is caused by her stepson, Abernathy, who hates her since he suffers from novercaphobia or well-known as fear of stepmother. The second cause is Sylvie Montgomery, the nosy reporter who always uses her nose to get information or disgraceful secret of Mrs. Wellington and all her students to make an article in order to win the Snoopulitzer, a contest for reporter in Summerstone. The effects of Mrs. Wellington's anxiety are very complete. She feels the behavioral effect, the emotional effect, and the cognitive effect of her anxiety. It can be seen from her negative feeling because something in her past, she experiences trouble of concentrating, and she feels afraid every time she thinks about her fears. Mrs. Wellington's anxiety is categorized of neurotic anxiety. Neurotic anxiety comes from id which is in the form of unconscious feeling so she often loses her emotion such as being sad, angry, panic, and so on. From the analysis, it can be concluded that Mrs. Wellington suffers from anxiety because of her uncontrollable emotion: being anxious and being worried. Her stepson and Sylvie, the reporter, become the causes of her anxiety. She also feels the behavioral, emotional, and cognitive effects. Mrs. Wellington suffers from a type of neurotic anxiety as reflected in its symptoms, causes, and effects.

Keywords: *anxiety, anxious, neurotic*

INTRODUCTION

Human behavior has a close relationship with the psychological aspect of human beings. Unusual behaviors can become the symptoms of a mental illness. One unusual behavior is the act of abuse. According to Litaay, abuse can be regarded a primary social concern in today's society (2018). Unusual behaviours

also various, is not only abuse but also domestic violence.

Child Welfare Information Gateway in Baroroh, M., & Marsih, L. (2018) stated that domestic violence is defined as an attempt to physically hurt a family or home member or to put a family or household member in fear of impending bodily harm through the threat of force. (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2018: 2). There are lots of unusual behaviors that can become the symptoms of trauma.

Trauma, according to Harvey (2002:23), is defined as occurrences that occur as a result of extreme prior experiences and psychological reactions to major losses. Nurhadi, M. (2019) stated that as the effect, sufferers may experience melancholy, shock, denial, guilt, anxiety, and hostility as a result of their traumatic experiences.

Anxiety itself is a behavioral issue that has been a common thing in some countries. People who get anxiety usually feel anxious or overly worried about bad things which are hard to control. While according to Moss, anxiety is a person's overall reaction to a threat or danger. Anxiety is characterized by a sense of risk, thoughts of harm, and a physiological alert and activation process. (2002: 1).

Fear and anxiety are universal human experiences that come and go in the course of life (Moss, 2002: 1). Anxiety appears when we are triggered by something that plays our emotion. The resulting emotion is in the form of feeling restless, anxious, overly worried, and so on. The trigger for this emotion comes from anywhere. It can be from the outside or within. Such emotion can become behavior unconsciously and make a life of people who suffer from that thing messed up. It is hard for them to control their emotion and sometimes cannot do something well.

People often live with an anxiety disorder for years before they are diagnosed and treated (Rector, Bourdeau, Kitchen, Joseph-Massiah, 2005: 1). They do not realize that they are experiencing something more dangerous than just feeling stressed. When people get triggered by something they fear, they will feel uneasy and anxious. Some of them are experiencing strange things in their body, such as sweating a lot or tremors. Because of the consciousness of what is being experienced, people usually ignore

it and assume that it is a normal thing so that their anxiety becomes worse.

According to Freud, there are three important conceptualized parts of human personality that are well-known as id, ego, and superego. Anxiety is the function of the ego to alert the individual of possible imminent danger so that the appropriate adaptive reaction can be prepared. Anxiety itself has a function as a mechanism to protect the ego because anxiety signals when there is danger and if there is no proper action taking the danger will increase until the ego is defeated. Generally, someone who has experience anxiety usually cannot focus on something, has difficulty concentrating, and cannot feel relaxed.

Psychological analysis is about analyzing a person's behavior from their psychological point of view. This article is about the analysis of Mrs. Wellington's anxiety seen in *The School of Fear: The Final Exam*. Mrs. Wellington is the headmistress of School of Fear. She usually helps treat children in reducing or eliminating their phobia, but at this time, she could not do that because she gets some problems. Sylvi Montgomery, a nosy reporter, is planning a scandalous expose on eccentric Mrs. Wellington and her unorthodox teaching methods, and the news is sure to put an end to the school. Besides her problems with Sylvie Montgomery, she also has a problem with her stepson, Abernathy. Abernathy suffers from novercaphobia, which is well known as fear of stepmother. Mrs. Wellington wants to improve her relationship with her stepson, but it is hard for Abernathy to do so because he feels Mrs. Wellington has broken his relationship with his father. In this case, Mrs. Wellington feels so worried about the reporter because she

will not lose her school, and she is anxious if her stepson would hate her forever.

The researcher is interested in analyzing the character of Mrs. Wellington in the novel *School of Fear: The Final Exam* because Mrs. Wellington shows the expression of anxiety that she exactly has to face. By looking at the problems found above, the researcher wants to analyze the psychological aspect that is Mrs. Wellington's anxiety using the psychoanalysis theory of Sigmund Freud.

METHOD

There is a solid correlation between literature and psychology for the fact that both of them deal with human beings and their reactions, perceptions of the world, miseries, wishes, desires, fears, conflicts, and reconciliations; individual and social concerns, by means of varied concepts, methods, and approaches (Aras, 2015:251). The psychological approach to literature is a way to analyze based on psychology point of view and to avoid the assumption that literature is always talking about human life, which is a reflection of the way people face their life (Harjana, 1991:60). Psychology of literature means the psychological study of the writer, as type and as an individual, or the study of the creative process, or the study of the psychological types and laws present within works of literature, or, finally, the effects of literature upon its readers (Wellek and Warren, 1963:81). As it has said by Wellek and Warren, the researcher uses some points of it. The writer uses psychoanalysis as the psychological types and laws are presented within this literary works. The psychoanalysis is used to identify anxiety of the character in this literary work because anxiety as the topic of this research is one of psychological problems.

That is why this research uses a psychological approach.

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method in order to analyze, describe, identify, and classify the data which relate to the topic. John W. Creswell (2003: 19) defines that qualitative approach as constructivist knowledge claims, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and narrative. According to Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009:7-8) qualitative research is research that produces narrative or textual descriptions of the phenomenon under study, so the researcher provides a richer and more in-depth understanding of the data.

This study uses *School of Fear: The Final Exam* by Gitty Daneshvari, which is the third series and also the last series of the novel that contains 325 pages and 23 chapters completely as the data source of this research. The data are in the form of quotations taken from the novel. Other references such as academic journals, thesis, and some relevant written materials are used to support the analysis of the novel. The instrument used in this research is the researcher herself as the participant observer. Robson (1995:195) states that the observer is the research instrument. Great sensitivity and personal skills are necessary for worthwhile data. The researcher arranges the research design, collects the data, and analyzes the data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This part discusses Mrs. Wellington's anxiety consisting of the symptoms, the causes, the effects, and the type of her anxiety.

3.1 Symptoms of Mrs. Wellington's Anxiety

Mrs. Wellington is an eccentric headmistress of School of Fear. She has unorthodox teaching methods to teach her students face their phobias. Mrs. Wellington has to face her greatest fears such as Abernathy, her stepson who hates her because he suffers from novercaphobia or well-known as fear of stepmother and lose her school. Because of both of her fears, she has to suffer from anxiety. There are some common symptoms that become the sign of Mrs. Wellington's anxiety. The symptoms can be known from her feeling, thinking, and experiencing, each of which is analyzed below.

3.1.1 Feeling

One of the symptoms of anxiety is feeling. Some of the sign of feeling are being anxious, afraid, worried, nervous, panicky, irritable, and agitated. Basmati tells Mrs. Wellington that if she cannot find Toothpaste as soon as possible, he will shave her left eyebrow. She cries and feels worried because she will lose her left eyebrow. She will not be living her life with just an eyebrow. The time is running out but Mrs. Wellington still cannot find the bird. She is very panic and she does not know how to find the bird. This can be seen in the quotation below.

"Contestants! We haven't much time! This man is going bananas! Where is the bird?"

"Schmidty, hide him!" Mrs. Wellington hollered frantically.

"Contestants, hurry!" (Daneshvari, 2012: 293)

Mrs. Wellington is panic so much. She asks all of her students to find the bird but they find nothing. If she cannot find the bird, not only her left eyebrow which will be gone but also Basmati will turn

Abernathy out to against her. She asks Schmidty to hide Abernathy from Basmati. And Basmati is being crazier because Toothpaste still cannot be found. From all the events analyzed above, it can be concluded that Mrs. Wellington feels so many feelings which are the symptoms of anxiety and there is also a statement declares that Mrs. Wellington has anxiety.

3.1.2. Thinking

After Mrs. Wellington has felt anxious, worried, nervous, and so on, she also has thought that there is something wrong with her. The thought can be the symptoms of anxiety such as she thinks that she cannot focus on another thing but her anxiety. She cannot calm herself down, she cannot think clearly and she thinks that strange thing has happened to her. Thinking as the symptom of anxiety can be seen in the following quotation.

As they waited for an answer, a tremendous and unexpected sense of failure took hold of her. For all her success as a teacher, she had failed the student who mattered most: her stepson. Suddenly teary-eyed, the old woman distracted herself by smoothing imaginary wrinkles on her periwinkle skirt. There simply wasn't time for such emotional indulgence. Basmati was the last line of defense, and Mrs. Wellington needed to be as strong as possible to deal with him. (Daneshvari, 2012: 141-142)

As the statement above, Mrs. Wellington feels that she has failed to teach Abernathy to reduce his phobia. She cannot handle his stepson by herself even she has asked her students to help her, but they all cannot face it yet. Her thinking

of failure is her anxiety because Abernathy still hates her. This proves that her thought of failure to teach Abernathy is included in thinking as the symptom of anxiety.

3.1.3 Experiencing

Not only feeling anxious and cannot think clearly which are the sign of feeling and thinking as the symptoms of anxiety, Mrs. Wellington also has experienced such as trembling, regret, melancholy, and so on as the symptom of anxiety. Mrs. Wellington feels some symptoms of anxiety, not just feeling or thinking but also experiencing.

"Madame is experiencing emotions such as sorrow, regret, and melancholy for the first time in decades, and understandably she's rather overwhelmed," Schmidty explained as the old woman wiped away tears. (Daneshvari, 2012: 17)

The old man Schmidty, her loyal servant, tells her experiences are the new things that he has just known in decades. Mrs. Wellington shows the symptoms such as sorrow, regret, and rather overwhelmed by melancholy feeling. It can be concluded that her experiencing shows that she suffers anxiety unconsciously.

3.2 Causes of Mrs. Wellington's Anxiety

Mrs. Wellington suffers from anxiety because there are some things that make her anxious. Those are Abernathy, her stepson and Sylvie Montgomery, the nosy reporter.

3.2.1 Abernathy

The first meeting of Mrs. Wellington and Abernathy is when Mr. Wellington, Abernathy's father, comes to School of Fear to send him to school in order to heal his phobia of stepmother. Without realizing it, his father madly falls in love with Mrs. Hersterfield, who then becomes Mrs. Wellington. She is trying to unite with Abernathy because she loves her stepson as her own son. She is afraid if she cannot be with her stepson anymore. Two greatest fears which make her live lonely. Other than that, Abernathy always growls at Mrs. Wellington that is triggering her emotion. How Mrs. Wellington is not anxious if her stepson, the only stepson she loves hates her so much. The hatred of Abernathy to Mrs. Wellington is so much. He always wants to berate Mrs. Wellington even she is not around him.

"That is not true! If she had left me and my father alone, everything would have been fine! I wouldn't have had to break my promise! I would have had a normal childhood, and maybe even turned into a normal adult!" (Daneshvari, 2012: 211)

Basmati reverses his words until Abernathy is confused by his own words in order to heal him from his phobia but before Abernathy is held by Basmati, he will be rough and say something bad over and over again to Mrs. Wellington. Everything that he has done to Mrs. Wellington causes her to suffer from anxiety.

3.2.2 Sylvie Montgomery

The cause of Mrs. Wellington is not only Abernathy but also Sylvie Montgomery. The only one who wants Mrs. Wellington to lose her school is Sylvie Montgomery. Sylvie is the nosy reporter who always uses her nose to get disgraceful secrets of Mrs. Wellington and

all her students in order to make an article to win Snoopulitzer, the contest for reporter only. This is proven as this quotation.

"Leave the students out of this!" Mrs. Wellington snapped ferociously at Sylvie.

"It's a little late for that. I'm including all their weird and embarrassing secrets in the article. It will make the story all the more compelling to the Snoopulitzer committee," Sylvie announced proudly as Mrs. Wellington slammed the door. (Daneshvari, 2012: 91)

Actually Sylvie wants to know the secret of Mrs. Wellington the most but she cannot get it because all the students will not let her in. So, Sylvie has found a way to make the students tell about Mrs. Wellington's secret that is by telling their own embarrassing secrets to themselves.

3.3 The Effects of Mrs. Wellington's Anxiety

Abernathy, her stepson and Sylvie Montgomery, the nosy reporter are her major causes of Mrs. Wellington's anxiety. If there are the causes of her anxiety, there are also the effects of it. She is in danger of losing her school and cannot make peace with her stepson, Abernathy, if the article that is made by Sylvie is published in Snoopulitzer. The effects of her anxiety can be classified into three kinds.

The first is the behavioral effect of her anxiety. She feels the negative feeling because something in the past. It is proven in this statement. *"That boy has been a dark cloud over my life, haunting me, torturing my every second! And yet he's*

angry with me? What have I ever done to him, besides love his father?" (Daneshvari, 2012: 71)

The second is the emotional effect of her anxiety. She experiences trouble of concentrating. It is proven in this quotation. *"Please, Madeleine, I've come to you for your sensible British advice, I need help. Something is very, very wrong with me...." (Daneshvari, 2012: 11)*

The third is the cognitive effect of her anxiety. She feels afraid everytime she thinks about her fear. Her fears here are Abernathy and losing her school. It is proven in this statement, *"There was an understandable urgency in the air as Mrs. Wellington prepared to face her two greatest fears: Abernathy, and losing the school." (Daneshvari, 2012:*

3.4 Type of Mrs. Wellington's Anxiety

Mrs. Wellington has to face her two greatest fears but she often loses control. Her emotion such as being sad or mad, panic, worried, anxious, and depressed come so suddenly. According to Freud, there are three types of anxiety such as neurotic anxiety, moral anxiety, and the last is reality anxiety (Zaviera, 2009: 97). From the three types of anxiety above, there is a type of anxiety which is suffered by Mrs. Wellington that is, neurotic anxiety. Neurotic anxiety can not be controlled by the id.

It is the feeling when a person cannot control her anger, sanity, or her common sense. The reason why Mrs. Wellington is compatible with neurotic anxiety is because her symptoms are almost the same as this type. She feels worried, anxious, emotional, and panic. Those are also the symptoms of neurotic anxiety. The types of anxiety that is the best for Mrs. Wellington is only neurotic

anxiety because the symptoms which she feels are similar to the symptoms of this type, such as being anxious, worried, unable to control her emotion and panic.

CONCLUSION

This chapter provides the conclusion as a result of the analysis of Mrs. Wellington's anxiety. After analyzing the symptoms that Mrs. Wellington feels and experiences, it can be concluded that Mrs. Wellington suffers from an anxiety disorder. The sign of symptoms can be categorized into three kinds: feeling, thinking, and experiencing. The symptoms of feeling are being anxious, worried, and panicked. The symptoms of thinking are such as being unable to think about another thing except for what she is worried about. The symptoms of experiencing are such as trembling, melancholic, and sad. Two causes make Mrs. Wellington suffers from anxiety. The first is Abernathy, her stepson who suffers from novercaphobia or well-known as fear of stepmother. That is why Mrs. Wellington feels so frustrated with him because she does not want him to hate her and she wants to unite with him. The second cause of Mrs. Wellington's anxiety is Sylvie Montgomery, the nosy reporter who always uses her nose to get information or the disgraceful secret of Mrs. Wellington and all her students to make an article in order to make her win the Snoopulitzer, a contest for the reporter in Summerstone. She wants to make an article which tells destruction and unhappy ending of School of Fear. Mrs. Wellington is afraid that she will lose her school and her stepson still hates her if the article has been made. Because of the causes that make Mrs. Wellington suffer from anxiety, Mrs. Wellington feels the three major effects of her anxiety. The first is the behavioral effect of Mrs.

Wellington's anxiety. She feels negative feelings because of something in the past. Second is the emotional effect of Mrs. Wellington's anxiety. She experiences trouble of concentrating. The last effect of Mrs. Wellington anxiety is the cognitive effect. She feels afraid every time she thinks about her fears. The type of anxiety that she has suffered is neurotic anxiety. Neurotic anxiety comes from id, which makes her feel worried, cry a lot, nervous, emotional, and so on. She feels those things intensely.

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