

Narcissistic Personality Disorder In The Novel Best Day Ever By Kaira Rouda

Warham*, Dahlia D. Moelier, Andi Tenri Abeng

English Language and Literature Program, Faculty of Education & Letters Bosowa University

*Email: warhamhayat@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify the causes and types of narcissistic personality disorder in the main character of Kaira Rouda's novel, "Best Day Ever" and hoped to provide a foundation for further research in this area. The data source for this study was the novel itself. Qualitative descriptive research methods were used to analyse the data with a psychological approach, including the techniques of reading, note-taking, and analysis. Caligor et al's and Bursten's theories were used to classify the data. The results of this study reveal that the main character was a narcissist. he had 8 out of 9 signs of narcissistic personality disorder caused by excessive self-importance, fantasies of success, feelings of being special, excessive need for admiration, arrogance, and lack of empathy, and the main character's narcissistic personality disorder was predominantly of the manipulative type

Keywords: Narcissistic, Novel, Personality Disorder



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1. INTRODUCTION

Literature had two functions. The first was literature of power; it meant to move the heart and mind of the readers. The second was literature of knowledge which had the function to teach. It meant that literature held power to present particular values, messages, and themes to the readers, Lorenzo (2014). As an imaginary work, fiction offered various problems of humans and humanity, life, and life. The author lived these problems with full seriousness and wished to return through fictional means in accordance with his views. One type of prose was the novel, Septia (2009).

Novel was part of a work of fiction that contained a comprehensive human experience about the journey of life that was in contact with human life, so that it could be said that a work of fiction in the form of a novel was a portrait of reality that was manifested through aesthetic language. The novel as a work of fiction offered a world, a world that contained an idealized model of life, an imaginative world, which was built through various intrinsic elements such as events, plots, characters, settings, points of view, and so on, Septia (2009). Characters were the people shown in a narrative work, or drama, which was interpreted by the reader as having certain morals and inclinations expressed in speech and what was carried out in action. The importance of characters in a story, there were characters important and displayed continuously, so that it felt dominating most of the stories that were usually called the main character. The main character was the character that was most often told, starting from the main character's childhood, the identity, likes and the main character's personality, Nurgiantoro (2010).

Personality was often equated and used interchangeably with the terms disposition or character and temperament, even though each of these terms was different. Character was the social aspect of human personality, while temperament was the physical aspect of personality,

Rippl (2018). People with narcissistic personality disorder had exaggerated views of their uniqueness and abilities, they were focused with fantasies about success, they demanded excessive attention and adoration and believed that they were special people, their interpersonal relationships were hampered by a lack of empathy, had feelings of jealousy and arrogance and took advantage of others, felt entitled to everything, never stopped seeking attention and adoration, were very sensitive to criticism and very afraid of failure, Davison, Gerald C (2006).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The writer would explain previous studies which have supported this research. There is also an explanation of the theoretical descriptions. In conducting this research. Several previous studies discussed Narcissistic Personality Disorder

2.1. Previous Studies

Some previous researchers have been conducted their research in analyzing Narcissistic Personality Disorder. The following below were related studies conducted by previous researchers:

The study entitled John Bristow's Narcissistic Personality Disorder in Robert Galbraith's *The Cuckoo's Calling* by Septivian (2016). The study analyzed what causes John Bristow's Narcissistic Personality Disorder and the depiction of John Bristow's Narcissistic Personality Disorder using the Theory of narcissism applies from Freud and Kohut. The methods in this research are regarded as descriptive qualitative study and use library research. As a result, John Bristow meets the criteria for Intimacy that is included in the impairment in interpersonal functioning.

The study that entitled Willy Wonka's Narcissistic Personality in Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Pratama and Aji (2017). The study analyzed Willy Wonka's characteristics and explained the causes of the disorder. The methods in this research qualitative research with a research design starting from collecting data, understanding, and classifying the required data. As a result shows that Willy Wonka is innovative, flamboyant, stubborn, arrogant, and authoritarian. He loves to be the center of attention by putting on outrageous attire. The last four characteristics mentioned imply that Wonka has narcissistic personality disorder.

The study Narcissistic Personality Disorder of Gaston's Character in *Beauty and The Beast* Movie Directed by Bill Condon by Akbar (2018). The study analyzed the signs of narcissistic personality disorder and also the types of Narcissistic Personality Disorder. The writer uses a qualitative descriptive method for this research and uses a psychological approach by Caligor, levy and Yeomas. As the result, the author finds 7 signs of narcissistic personality disorder in Gaston's Character. Based on what Caligor's ext said there must be 5 or more signs of 9 from their theory

The study Heathcliff's Personality Disorder As Reflected In Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* Novel : A Psychoanalytic Approach by Rinna (2018). The study find out Heathcliff's personality as the main character in the novel, the conditions that cause mental disorders and the negative effects of mental disorders. The writer uses a qualitative descriptive method for this research and uses Sigmund Freud's theory. As a result, Heathcliff has shown that he has the psychiatric disorder of narcissism. This can be proven by some evidence showing narcissistic personality disorder conditions.

The research is written by Komang (2020) entitled *Narcissistic Personality Disorder Pada*

Tokoh Elena Dalam Komik Tomodachi Gokko Karya Momochi Reiko. This research aims to describe NPD characteristics, the reasons for NPD in the character Elena, and the impact of NPD on Elena and other characters. This research is qualitative research with a research design starting from collecting data, understanding, and classifying the required data, and reading and understanding the research object. The result, Elena's NPD is having an exaggerated view of herself and being jealous of others, busy with fantasies of unlimited success, intelligence, self-beauty, need and requires excessive admiration, has a need to be adored, a strong feeling that they deserve everything, and takes advantage of others for personal gain, lacks empathy, and appears very arrogant and arrogant.

The study that entitled Gangguan Kepribadian Narsistik Tokoh Utama Novel Lady Susan Karya Jane Austen by Saragih (2022). The study analyzed and identified the criteria for narcissistic personality disorder shown by the main character. The witer also explained the impact of the narcissistic personality disorder experienced by the main character. The research method used is descriptive qualitative. As the result, Lady Susan suffers from narcissistic personality disorder due to her high level of narcissism. Feeling that his interests are the main thing, his desire to always get respect, feeling liked because he is beautiful and special, feels that other people are his enemies because he is jealous of his success, and does not have empathy for the difficulties faced by others.

2.2. Related Theories

There are three ways to understand the relationship between psychology and literature, namely: understanding the psychological elements of the author as a writer, understanding the psychological elements of fictional characters in literary works and understanding the psychological elements of the reader. The first discussion relates to the role of the author as a creator, so, literary works are related to the imaginative. Therefore, Wellek and Warren in Ratna (2013) distinguish that the psychological analysis of literature is carried out in two kinds, namely psychological studies that are solely related to the author, while the second study deals with inspiration and other supernatural powers.

Narcissism is a term used to describe the personality trait of someone who is highly obsessed with themselves, very confident, and tends to consider themselves more important than others. Narcissistic people tend to be highly focused on themselves and overly attentive to themselves, Pincus (2010).

Narcissist is a noun that refers to someone who has narcissistic personality disorder (NPD). People who have this disorder tend to have severe symptoms of narcissism that can affect their relationships with others, work, and social life in general. Pincu (2010)

People with narcissistic personality disorder have feelings of great self-importance. They think of themselves as a special people. They respond poorly to criticism and become furious when anyone dares to criticize them, or they may appear completely indifferent to criticism, Kaplan (1997).

The are signs of narcissistic personality disorder according to Caligor Caligor, E., Levy, K. N., & Yeomans (2015) stated there are specific criteria that must be met for an official diagnosis of Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NDP) which are grandiose sense of self-importance, was preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or ideal love, believed that he was unique and should associate with high-status people, had a sense of entitlement, was interpersonally exploitative, lacked empathy.

There are several types of Bursten's narcissistic personality disorder theory in Ronningstam (2005). He identified four types of narcissistic personalities based on their different modes of narcissistic repair, degrees of self-object differentiation, and types of value systems: the craving, paranoid, manipulative, and phallic narcissistic types.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the relationship between psychology and literature is very close in analyzing literary works. However, literary psychology refers to literature rather than practical psychology.

3. METHOD

The research used qualitative descriptive method as one of the types of research. Qualitative descriptive research is the research used the method of collecting, classifying, describing, analysing the data and drawing a conclusion. The data is analyzed descriptively. The main data of this research were from novel *Best Day Ever* that written by Kaira Rouda. Novel was published by Graydon House, Australia Pty Lt, with a length of this book is 368 pages. First, the writer read the novel several times accurately to gain the essence of the research to make it easier for the writer to analyse. Second, the writer noted and quoted every expression and statement that supports the data to identify the sign and types in the main character which is Paul. The writer used qualitative descriptive method to identify signs of narcissistic personality disorder that may have existed in the main character's personality using Caligor, Levy and Yeomans's theory and to find out the type of narcissistic personality disorder in the main character's personality using Bursten's theory.

4. RESULTS

Based on the objectives of this study, the writer divided the data into two part as follows:

4.1 Sign of Narcissistic Personality Disorder

The writer found Data 23 which identified Paul Strom as Narcissist.

Has Grandiose Sense Of Self-Importance

In data 1: In the sentence, *Oh, look, there's handsome, wealthy city-dweller Paul Strom* it showed signs of having a grandiose sense of self-importance because Paul was indicating that he felt very presidential and saw himself as someone who was both handsome and wealthy. *Oh, look, there's* was a sign that he wanted the people around him to see him in this way.

In data 2: In the sentence *All those guys are older than me in there* Paul felt that the people in the magazine looked disgusting if they were to be seen with him. *It's not real. That's all* indicated that Paul denied that he looked old and felt that he was still young.

In data 3: In the sentence *It didn't take long for me to teach her how the world works* indicated signs of Paul's sense of uniqueness, where he felt he had taught Mia how the world works. That feeling indicated that he used to be a nobody.

In data 4: In the sentence *he's afraid of me. Not afraid I'm going to hurt him physically, of course. He was just afraid that I was going to take his job* depicted how Paul felt very special in his job, so much so that he felt he was admired by all of his coworkers. He also felt that he was a great person who could take the position of his former manager.

In data 5: In the sentence *My life has more of everything* Paul felt that he had everything his parents had and more. *I wanted them to see that showed that* Paul wanted to be seen as special by showcasing how happy he was with his life and having a beautiful wife.

Preoccupied With Fantasies Of Unlimited Success, Power, Brilliance, Beauty, Or Ideal Love

In data 6: In the sentence *I'll likely have one again one day*. it indicated Paul's fantasy of owning a sports car one day. That feeling was a form of obsession with success and unrealistic expectations.

In data 7: In the sentence *I'd get her a large home in the suburbs* Paul had a fantasy of an ideal love with Gretchen, his affair partner. The fantasy of owning a large house in the suburbs was unrealistic for Paul's situation

Believes that He Or She Is 'Special' And Unique And Can Only Be Understood By Or Should Associate With, Other Special Or High-Status People.

In data 8: In the sentence *Rebecca More could not work at Thompson Payne. She wasn't cool enough*. it showed that Paul Strom felt that he was more special than Rebecca More and felt that she should not work there. *I almost started to laugh* indicated that Paul looked down on Rebecca More and felt that his status was higher than hers.

In data 9: In this situation, Paul questioned whether Mia wanted someone who was better, wealthier, and a truer husband. This had reflected Paul's tendency to have low opinions of others, as seen in his statement *No, he wasn't. Just differing degrees* where he had implied that men who had a different social status than him were not worthy.

Has a Sense Of Entitlement

In data 10: In the sentence, *She should be thankful for everything she has, everything I've provided* Paul felt that Mia should acknowledge and appreciate everything he had provided for her.

In data 11: In this situation, Paul was at a bustling store and he met Gretchen. During their conversation, Paul talked about the quality of the silk and his travels to Asia. He added his story by saying *given my extensive travels to Asia* showed how extraordinary he was, and that he should be directed to the high-end lingerie section of the store.

In data 12: In the sentence *How dare Caroline, someone I had helped grow and prosper at the agency, turn on me?* This feeling showed that Paul wanted Caroline to take action to give him credit for what he had given her, and How dare Caroline expressed his disappointment towards Caroline.

Is interpersonally Exploitative

In data 13: In the sentence *if you ever want to see your grandkids, you better make sure the king is happy* Paul exploited his position as a father to obtain the trust fund they wanted to give to Mia. This threat showed Paul's self-centered nature and his lack of awareness of the impact of his relationship on Donald. In this case, it indicated that Paul was interpersonally exploitative.

Lack Empathy

In data 14: In this situation, Buck was talking about his wife's death due to her illness. The sentence *Worse for her* depicted Paul's response to Buck's emotions, which demonstrated his lack of empathy towards Buck.

In data 15: The sentence *I don't feel guilty about my fling with that woman client* portrayed Paul's lack of empathy as he did not feel remorseful about his infidelity. This statement indicated that Paul did not consider his wife's feelings.

In data 16: Paul's statement *You need to go back to your empty life and leave my wife alone* showed a lack of empathy as he said it to Buck. He had no regard for Buck, whose wife had

already passed away and was being unceremoniously kicked out. He even wanted to hit him.

In data 17: In this situation, Buck was talking with Paul. The sentence *Besides that, you hadn't had a very notable life* indicated Paul's lack of empathy towards Buck, and 'I'm afraid' depicted Paul's disregard for other people's feelings.

Is Often Envious Of Others Or Believes That Others Are Envious

In data 18: In that situation, Paul was in a checkout line to make a payment for the items he had purchased. *Whatever, dickhead* was the remark from the working man because Paul took too long to make the payment. All of his credit cards were not working. The sentence *I know working-man is jealous of me and my life: my closet full of designer clothes* reflects Paul's feeling that the working man is envious of him by comparing his full closet of designer clothes.

In data 19: In the sentence *His handsome news anchor face is not cheerful* described Paul's feeling that Buck was jealous of him because he touched Buck's wife. He felt that being intimate with Buck's wife made Buck jealous even though she had passed away.

In data 20 : In that situation, Mia told Paul that he had actually been fired from his job. The sentence *You believed what John said, someone who was jealous of me and my success* showed Paul's feeling that John was actually jealous of him. Paul felt that he had more success than what John wanted for employing Mia in his office.

In data 21 : In The sentence *why anyone would want to follow a successful businessman going to work each day and returning home* to his beautiful family in their gorgeous suburban home described that Paul felt that others were envious of him because they had followed him and felt dissatisfied with what he had, a beautiful family in their gorgeous suburban home.

Shows Arrogant, Haughty Behaviours And Attitudes.

In data 22: In The sentence *flashing my pearly white teeth and cutting* indicated that the Paul intentionally showed their white teeth in contrast to the yellow teeth of the working man. This could be considered as arrogant and haughty behavior, as Paul have felt that they were superior to the working man because of their whiter teeth. Additionally, the words *Did I find everything I need? Well, no, of course not. Do we ever?* showed a demeaning attitude towards the worker, suggesting that the worker was incapable of providing what Paul needed. The combination of this arrogant and demeaning behavior towards others indicated an arrogant and haughty attitude and behavior.

4.2 Type of Narcissistic personality disorder

The Craving Type

In data 23: In that situation, Paul spoke with Donald, Mia's father. The sentence *I'm not sure why you don't like me, but I wish you and I could build a relationship. It could benefit both of us, you see* showed that Paul had an insatiable desire for a relationship with Donald, even though Donald may not have liked him. Paul wanted to be appreciated and loved by Donald and was willing to take a trip with him to try to build that relationship. This was typical of The Craving Type, as Paul sought attention and recognition from Donald.

In data 24: In the sentence *If you Google Paul Strom, you'll get pages of accolades. ADDY Awards for advertising campaigns I helped lead, civic awards for the community activities I've been involved in and, of course, links to my very famous father-in-law, too. I'm all over the internet, as I should be* shown that in the past, Paul had an insatiable desire for attention and recognition from others. He took pride in his achievements and wanted others to know about

them. He mentioned his awards and activities, as well as his famous father-in-law, to demonstrate his importance and to seek recognition from others. This was typical of The Craving Type, who looked for ways to get attention and praise from others.

The paranoid Type

In data 25: In the sentence *This is ridiculous. I will not sit here while my wife spews out baseless accusations* showed Paul was hypersensitive and suspicious of his wife's accusations, even if they were baseless. He immediately became defensive and angry, which was a typical behavior of The Paranoid Type. The Paranoid Type often felt spoken to or cheated by others, and their distorted thinking led to excessive anxiety and suspicion. The use of the word baseless in this sentence suggested that Paul may have been distorting the facts to fit his own narrative and may have been exhibiting paranoid behavior.

Manipulative Type

In data 26: In this sentence *There is nobody who loves and cherishes women more than me, Rebecca. I've promoted women all of my career. I prefer working with women over men. That is the opposite of harassment* Paul tried to manipulate Rebecca by portraying himself as a champion for women and denying any wrongdoing, even though he was accused of harassment. He used his position of power and authority to make Rebecca doubt her own judgment and perception of the situation. This behavior was consistent with the Manipulative Type, which seeks to maintain control and power over others through deception and manipulation.

In data 27: In the situation below, Paul manipulated Mia by convincing her that if she became the owner of the cottage, he would not sell it and that her children would inherit it, even though he actually intended to sell it and live with Gretchen. Data from 28 showed Paul as The Manipulative Type using phrases such as *Trust me and You'll have this cottage for as long as you live. Heck, the boys will inherit it. It will be a Strom family asset, for generations* Paul used words that showed trust and false promises to manipulate Mia into believing him and not realizing that he planned to sell the cottage and live with Gretchen. Paul also made Mia believe that the cottage would remain in her family for several generations, making her feel like she owned and was bound to the property

In data 28: In this sentence, *Drink up, honey. It will help warm you up, and then I'll finish the job* Paul used manipulation by encouraging his partner to drink brandy, even though he knew she didn't like it. He also said that the drink would help her feel warmer, and therefore, Mia would experience relief after drinking the brandy. This shows that Paul attempted to use manipulative tricks and manipulate his partner to fulfill his desires, which is consistent with the behavior of a manipulative type.

In data 29: In this sentence *People don't "leave" me. I "leave" people when I'm finished with them* it showed that Paul manipulated his relationships with others and viewed himself as superior to others. Additionally, another sentence that demonstrated Paul's manipulative nature was *It's nothing. I was just simplifying things, getting a handle on them, and then I was going to share the good news* in which he hid information from Mia and planned to tell her later after he had gained an advantage from the situation. Thus, Paul was a manipulative type who tended to use tricks and tactics to prove his superiority and gain advantages over others. He also enjoyed succeeding in manipulating others.

In data 30: In this sentence *What they don't realize is I will tell the court I was threatened, forced to sign this agreement against my will* Paul was planning to make false accusations against

his former partner by claiming that he was coerced into signing the agreement through threats. This action shows that Paul tended to use manipulation and deceit to achieve his goals, which is consistent with the behavior of a manipulative.

5. DISCUSSION

The writer found 30 data of 2 problems in the *Best Day Ever* novel by Kaira Rouda contained. Data were discussed below:

5.1. The Sign of Narcissistic Personality Disorder in The Novel *Best Day Ever*

There were some signs of Narcissistic Personality Disorder that Paul Strom Had in the novel *Best Day Ever* and identified as a narcissist.

Paul Strom showed various signs of Narcissistic Personality Disorder. These traits were evident through his behaviors and attitudes. Firstly, Paul demonstrated a grandiose sense of self-importance. He constantly sought recognition and superiority, as seen when he referred to himself as a "handsome, wealthy city-dweller" and denied his age to appear more exceptional. He also believed he had a unique understanding of the world, asserting his importance through teaching someone. Similarly, Paul's inflated self-view was evident in his ambition to take his former manager's position.

Secondly, Paul was preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, and ideal love. He envisioned owning a sports car and sought to provide Gretchen with a luxurious home, indicative of his unrealistic expectations and fixation on perfection. This preoccupation influenced his interactions and led to unrealistic hopes.

Furthermore, Paul believed he was special and associated only with high-status individuals, reflecting a superiority complex. He belittled Rebecca More's suitability for his workplace and questioned whether others were worthy of his attention, highlighting his disdain for those he considered beneath him.

Paul also demonstrated entitlement and exploitative behavior. He expected special treatment from Mia and Caroline, believing he deserved it without having to earn it. His manipulation of Donald's emotions to fulfill his own desires illustrated his exploitative nature.

A crucial aspect of Narcissistic Personality Disorder was the lack of empathy, which Paul exhibited consistently. He disregarded others' feelings, such as Buck's grief over his wife's death, and dismissed their emotions. Paul was also envious of others and believed they envied him, attributing his success and possessions to provoke jealousy.

Lastly, Paul displayed arrogant and haughty behaviors. He sought attention, recognition, and praise, and interpreted situations as evidence of others' envy towards him, highlighting his insatiable desire for admiration.

5.2. Type of Narcissistic personality disorder in The Novel *Best Day Ever*

The writer found there were 3 types of Narcissistic Personality Disorder that Paul Strom Had which were craving, paranoide and manipulative.

Paul Strom showed some types of narcissistic personality disorder, encompassing three distinct ones which were Craving, Paranoid, and Manipulative. The Craving Type was characterized by an incessant desire for attention, recognition, and affection from others. Data 24 and 25 highlighted Paul's yearning for acknowledgment and love, evident in his pursuit of a relationship with Donald and his tendency to boast about his accomplishments to validate his importance. This insatiable need for attention aligned with the attributes of the Craving Type.

The Paranoid Type was characterized by skepticism, jealousy, and the attribution of sinister motives to others. Data 26 showed Paul's hypersensitive and defensive reaction to his wife's accusations, showcasing traits consistent with the Paranoid Type. His tendency to dismiss allegations as baseless and impute malevolent intentions to his wife reflected the suspicious and argumentative nature of this type. This behavior indicated a potential classification of Paul's actions as those of the Paranoid Type.

Furthermore, the Manipulative Type employed subtle forms of manipulation, deception, and superiority to fulfill their desires. Data 27, 28, and 39 illustrated how Paul utilized his position of power to manipulate others, portraying himself as a champion for women, using false promises, and exploiting trust. Data 30 showed his inclination to manipulate relationships to assert his superiority. Consequently, Paul's actions aligned with the Manipulative Type, characterized by his deceitful tactics and unbalanced relationships with others.

The writer concluded that this research describe of narcissistic personality disorder within the character of Paul Strom in *Best Day Ever*. By meticulously evaluating Paul's narcissistic personality disorder and theoretical typologies, the study confirmed that Paul Strom as a narcissist with manipulative type.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the theory that there must be 5 or more signs of the 9 signs of narcissistic personality disorder, we can diagnose that person as a narcissist. The researcher concluded that Paul Strom was a narcissist because he had a grandiose sense of self-importance, was preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or ideal love, believed that he was unique and should associate with high-status people, had a sense of entitlement, was interpersonally exploitative, lacked empathy, believed that others were envious of him, and showed arrogant, haughty behaviors and attitudes. All of these mentioned caused Paul to be a narcissist.

After knowing Paul Strom as a narcissist, the writer found the type of narcissistic personality disorder that Paul had. According to Bursten's theory, he identified four types of narcissistic personality disorder which are craving, paranoid, manipulative, and phallic narcissistic types. Based on the data, the writer concluded that Paul Strom was categorized as the Manipulative Type. It was the most dominant type of narcissistic personality found in the novel *Best Day Ever*.

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