Teenager Value in Mark Twain's the Adventure of Tom Sawyer

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Abstract

This research aimed to find out the kind of values in the teenager characters of Mark Twain's *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* as well as to find out its similarities with the character of Indonesian teenager. Library research (documentation) and descriptive qualitative method were used to conduct the research. The data findings were identified by using Peterson and Seligman's *virtues and character strengths* (2004) then the researcher found out the similarities with the characters of Indonesian teenager based on Indonesia Ministry of Education's *Character Education* using checklist and simple tabulation. The results showed that: 1) There were 22 type of values found in the teenager characters of Mark Twain's *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* namely curiosity, creativity, open-mindedness, love of learning, wisdom, bravery, honesty, persistence, vitality, love, kindness, social intelligence, fairness, leadership, humility, prudence, self-regulation, appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, and spirituality; 2) There were six similar traits that are presented in 22 type of values found in the teenager characters and characters of Indonesian teenager (Character Education) namely religious, honest, creative, curiosity, love to read, and care about social. To conclude, there were two points about this research as follows. 1) Teenager characters of Mark Twain's *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* dominantly had good personality based on Peterson and Seligman's *virtue and character strengths*. 2) There were six similar values (religious, honest, creative, curiosity, love to read, and care about social) between the characters of Indonesian teenager and teenager values from Mark Twain's *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*.

Keywords: Character Education; Teenager; Teenager Values.

Introduction

Teenager is defined as a male or female individual who is in a period of transitional change toward maturity (Karaman, 2013: 138). Rousseau (as cited in Santrock, 2014: 3) stated teenager in the age of 12 to 15 are driven by the curiosity to learn or do something new. That curiosity might lead teenager to some negative behaviors such as problems in school and illegal behaviors i.e drunk, smoke in public, delinquency, thievery, fight, and ran away from home (Dryfoos and Barkin, 2006). Teenager might do all of these things because they hardly control it because a teenager is demanded to reflect on problems, make the best choices, be responsible, and adapt in the society (Berger, 2003: 452).

However, in the age that was considered young and fresh to learn about new things, the teenagers were supposed to own several positive traits. Those traits purposed to shape the character of readers so they got used to behave positively so the society acceptted them (Peterson and Seligman, 2004; Snyder and Lopez, 2002). Hence, there were two aims of researcher for conducting this research. Firstly, to find out the kind of teenager values in novel *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* written by Mark Twain. Secondly to find out the similarities between character of Indonesian teenager and teenager characters in novel *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* written by Mark Twain.

There were several significances of this research i.e academically and practically. First, as academic importance, the findings of this research such as values of teenager that were reflected on the characters could be used as a positive guide for the readers' life. Second, as practical importance, this research could be a reference to next researchers and this research could enlight the English major student or everyone who want to learn about the ideal traits of Indonesian teenager and teenager traits presented in a American novel in 19th century.

Every research must include previous studies so they could be used as reference and guide especially for the novice researchers. As pivotal reference in a research, the researcher cited some related previous studies for the guide as follows, Ibrahim (2018) investigated the values in a classical novel by Mark Twain entitled *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*. He found out three values namely hard work, brave, and responsible. However, his findings were too simple because he aimed to find out the values in **a main character** of this novel and to find out the way author present the novel

characters. Meanwhile, other researcher that conducted by Julita (2018) explored about values of childhood in C.S Lewis's *The Voyage of the Dawn Trader*. She found out that there were two kinds of values in the novel, terrible values (selfish and greedy) and nice values (fun, loyalty, bravery, honesty, friendship, sadness, and sympathy) among **three main characters** of the novel. Also, her research showed some benefits of these values for children's education. After briefly elaborating these previous researches, the researcher found the gap based on these studies. To conclude, both studies aimed to find out values on the main characters while this research was not only to find out values on **qualified teenager characters** in a classic novel but also to find out the similarities between the teenager traits and the characters of Indonesian teenager.

There are many benefits of studying the literature, especially fiction according to Burns (2011) and McKee (2003:14), namely as a worth entertainment, as a learning medium, and as a source of knowledge that can improve reading quality. In addition, Sari (2013:155) stated that literature that is taught to the students can shape their behavior, make them to have good judgment of moral, and influence their emotional intelligence. Because fictional literature especially novels generally comes from the realities and norms that occur in the society or it can be from the imagination of a selected author. After the message from the author is totally conveyed, then a literary work is created with a entertaining function and educational value. Moreover, novels usually have one of good elements that is values or messages which are represented by the characters. After reading the novel, the readers can imagine then empathize immediately towards the condition and culture of the characters when the novel was written (Lombardi, 2020).

A research is based on the curiosity of the researcher not only to do a test on a theory but also to expand the skill in certain field of knowledge. This research used a theory that is proposed by Peterson and Seligman in the field of positive psychology regarding human traits in a literature work. The researcher aimed to find out the kind of values in the teenager characters of Mark Twain's *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* as well as to find out its similarities with the character of Indonesian teenager. The researcher assumes that novel readers can imitate the good values of the novel that they read, especially if the readers are students. Novel can be taught at junior high school to higher level meanwhile values of a novel can be learned by all levels of education.

Therefore, the researcher analyzed a novel to find out the types of values in it, then the researcher compared the findings of these values with the ideal personalities of Indonesian teenager.

Research Methodology

Descriptive qualitative method and library research used to conduct this research. Nassaji (2015) defined descriptive research as an explanation of real condition of the research object in a natural way. Meanwhile, Creswell (as cited in Maxwell, 2012: 14) argued qualitative method as a study that based on logic, relies on textual data, and aims to understand research object from the main source of the data. In addition, library research (documentation) was a process of data collection from literature (journal, books, and some secondary sources). A novel entitled *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* that was written by Mark Twain and was published in 1876 became research object. While the most recent version of this novel was published by ICON Group International in 2006 by Philip M Parker. The data findings processed based on researcher's inductive and comprehensive ability (*library.uaf.edu*).

The researcher obtained the required data from the research object. In order to collect the data from novel, the researcher used library research. Library research (documentation) was an important and careful process for gathering data from the literature. To support the data, the researcher added journal, books, and some related previous studies that became secondary sources to this research. There were some stages of data collecting (Arikunto, 2014) as follows. (1) Selecting the classical novel, (2) Reading whole content of the novel, (3) Finding teenager values in the novel, (4) Categorizing the found teenager values based on classification.

Meanwhile, the first action that the researcher take to analyzing data was selecting the necessary data. Then the researcher used five stages of analyzing data by Maxwell (2012) as follow: 1. Reading the Mark Twain's novel *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* carefully; 2. Identifying teenager values in the novel. The researcher is quoting and bolding the selected teenager values to mark the data finding; 3. Interpreting the teenager values on the novel and finding the similarities of it with standard characters of Indonesian teenager; 4. Concluding the analysis results of teenager values; and 5. Reporting other teenager values.

Findings and Discussion,

Findings

Teenager values

Teenager values are the focus of research because the values are come from the traits of teenagers in Mark Twain novel entitled *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*. The characters of the novel were said as teenagers because they are still going to school, having friends that are of the same age, and several characters lived with guardian or parents. After conducting the research, the result in the table shows 22 values of teenager in the novel based on Peterson and Seligman's theory (2004). In the categories of wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity, and transcendence, all teenager values are founded. However, teenager values from the categories of justice and temperance are incomplete because citizenship and forgiveness/mercy are not found among teenager characters in the novel. To get the clear results, the founded teenager values were described as follows.

Table 1: The Categorization of Teenager Values Founded in Mark Twain's *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*

No	Category	Values	Character
1	Wisdom and Knowledge	Curiosity	Ben, Tom, Sid, Huck, Becky
		Creativity	Tom
		Open-mindedness	Sid, Tom
		Love of learning	Mary, Sid, Becky
		Wisdom	Huck, Tom, Joe
2	Courage	Bravery	Sid, Alfred, Becky, Tom
		Honesty	Tom, Joe, Huck, Sid
		Persistence	Tom, Ben, Becky, Alfred
		Vitality	Tom, Joe, Huck
3	Humanity	Love	Tom, Becky, Mary, Sid
		Kindness	Mary, Sid, Tom, Huck
		Social intelligence	Huck, Tom, Alfred

4	Justice	Citizenship	**NONE**
		Fairness	Huck, Becky, Tom
		Leadership	Tom
5	Temperance	Forgiveness and Mercy	**NONE**
		Humility	Huck
		Prudence	Tom, Joe
		Self-regulation	Tom, Becky
6	Transcendence	Appreciation of beauty and excellence	Tom
		Gratitude	Tom
		Hope	Tom, Huck
		Humor	Tom
		Spirituality	Mary, Tom

One of teenager values that found was curiosity. Curiosity is a condition where people take an interest in the ongoing experiences, subjects, or topics that are fascinating enough to urge them to try and experience it (Loewy, 1998; Peterson and Seligman, 2004). Those people will do anything to resolve their curiosity. They will not stop trying to achieve their goals and will continue to find out ways to get things done. The value of curiosity is reflected in the quotation below.

Value	Character	Utterance
Curiosity	Ben	Ben watching every move and getting more and more interested, more and more absorbed. Presently he said: 'Say, Tom, let ME whitewash a little.' (ATS*, ch. 2, p.17)
	Tom	'Hucky, do you believe the dead people like it for us to be here?' Then Tom whispered: 'Say, Hucky — do you reckon Hoss Williams hears us talking?' (ATS*, ch. 9, p.81)

*ATS = The abbreviation of *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*

Ben who was a supporting character started to put some attention to Tom Sawyer's task. It was a sunny Saturday morning, most children spent their time playing and relaxing. Tom was the only teenager who worked to whitewash the fence. He got

a punishment from Aunt Polly because of his mischief. In the middle of doing his punishment, he saw Ben Rogers and other children who played excitedly. Ben insulted Tom for doing a job in a weekend. Unexpectedly, Tom's effort managed to attract Ben's attention as quoted in, "**Ben watching every move and getting more and more interested, more and more absorbed**". After Tom successfully made Ben enchanting and be curious, Ben fell into Tom's words. He quickly asked Tom to let him whitewashing the fence. In short, Ben wanted to experience the whitewash like Tom did. He was so curious that his eyes followed every movement of Tom. He did not even realize that he had been manipulated.

Besides, there is another example of curiosity at a different event as follow. That night Tom and Huck were in a quiet graveyard. They were very tense when they were there. Tom was honestly scared but he was curious. To confirm his curiosity, Tom asked Huck the question in the following quotation, "…**do you believe the dead people like it for us to be here?**" with a small voice. Then Huck answered the question neutrally. Again Tom asked Huck opinion by asking this, "…**, Hucky — do you reckon Hoss Williams hears us talking?**". In a short time, Huck confirmed it. Huck answered his curiosity that the spirits of deceased people could hear the conversations of living people even if they had been buried.

Character of Indonesian Teenager and Teenager Characters in Mark Twain's *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*

Table 2: The Similarity between Character Education and Finding of Teenager Values in Mark Twain's *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*

No.	Teenager Values	Available	Character Education	Available
1	Spirituality	✓	Religious	✓
2	Honesty	✓	Honest	✓
3	Creativity	✓	Creative	✓
4	Curiosity	✓	Curiosity	✓
5	Love of learning	✓	Love to read	✓
6	Social intelligence	✓	Care about social	✓

The above table shown the values found in Mark Twain's The Adventure of Tom Sawyer among teenager characters have several similarities with 18 characters or traits in character education. The example of both similarity was spirituality and religious, honesty and honest, and so on. The similarity can be from the definition of ideal characters of Indonesian teenagers that are formulated by the Ministry of Education (2010) program namely *character education*. Character education consists of 18 characters that are considered ideal and wished to be presented in every Indonesian teenager. Teenager values found in novel are similar to the character education namely religious, honest, creative, curiosity, love to read, and care about social. This similarity shows that the values from the theory of Peterson and Seligman (2004) and the program of the Indonesian Ministry of Education (2010) share the same meaning and aim because these human characters can be considered as positive values that aim to shape an individual to have the appropriate traits. Moreover, Lickona (1996) added that these positive values help an individual accepted in the society.

One example of similarity between character education and virtue-character strengths shown froem the definition of religious (Indonesian Ministry of Education, 2010), religious is a situation where someone obeys and worships according to beliefs for peace in life. This concept of religious based on character education definition shares a similarity to the concept of spirituality according to Peterson and Seligman's (2004) theory, it defines as a person's belief in sacred things to provide security and calmness in life. An example of religious is at the time Mary was able to get two free Bibles from memorizing 2000 verses in two consecutive years. Mary is a character who is very diligent and religious. She is able to take care of herself without hurting others. She used her religiousness to get a free bible by only remembering 2000 Bible verses. Not only is the Bible free, but she also gets another one by trying it for two consecutive years.

Discussion

This research aimed for the values of teenager from novel characters could be used as a positive guide for the readers' life and the finding revealed that the ideal traits of Indonesian teenager and teenager traits presented in a American novel in 19th century. After researcher conducted the research, there were 22 values on teenager characters (Tom, Huck, Joe, Becky, Mary, Sid, Ben, and Alfred) in The Adventure of Tom

Sawyer novel by using the theory of Peterson and Seligman (2004: 29) with the requirement that the values of teenager character in the novel was appeared at least three times in the different event. After that, the researcher found out about the similarities of characters of Indonesia teenager and teenager values found in Mark Twain's The Adventure of Tom Sawyer. Out of 22 values of teenager found in the novel, there were six similar traits in 18 ideal characters of Indonesian teenager, they were religious, honest, creative, curiosity, love to read, and care about social. This similarity indicated that both theories shared a similar concept about human positive traits namely definition and aim about positive traits of humans so they have the appropriate traits until they are mature. Based on the definition, teenager values (Peterson and Seligman, 2004) are traits or characteristics that have been acknowledged by philosophers and spiritual thinker as the collection of values of an individual that can positively give life satisfaction and well-being. Meanwhile, according to character education (Regulation of Indonesian Ministry of Education No. 20 Article 2 of 2018) is an educational program in the curriculum 2013 that is used not only to educate students in the classroom but also to give examples to them to have ideal personalities as well as good behavior in social life.

The presented results in this research have similarities and differences to the several previous studies. The similarity between this research and three other previous ones that conducted by Ispriyani (2008), Ibrahim (2018), and Julita (2018) are using a novel as the object of research. The novel used in this research is plainly similar to Ibrahim's (2018) object of research. The usage of novel is dominant as an object of research because the novel contains various complex events that occur in the characters in it. Hawthorn (1997) argued that novel is inspired by "disagreement and social pressure" which is then included by an author in his work so that valuable messages from the social reality are intended to every reader. Moreover, the researcher simply wanted to know whether the values contained in the classic novel are similar to the values from the present times. There were some similarities between the past values and the present values after investigating a classic novel as a research object. In addition, there are differences between the previous studies by Ispriyani (2008), Setyoasih (2014), Latif (2015), Ibrahim (2018), Julita (2018) and this research such as the five studies only focused on the values portrayed only on the main characters of

the novel, while this research aimed to find out all kinds of values that appeared at least 3 times on a teenager character of the novel. Another differentiation between this research and previous ones is the topic of the research. The previous studies are mostly finding out the moral values of the characters, whereas this research aims to find out the appeared values based on the age of dominant characters. In fact, this research shares a little bit resemblance with Julita's (2018), the characters in the novel of the former are dominated by teenagers whereas the characters in the novel of the latter are dominated by children. It can be concluded that the topic of research comes from the dominant characters' age of the literary work itself. These explanations provide a number of differences between this research and some previous literary studies.

Conclusion and Suggestion

There were two points about the conclusions of this research as follows. 1) Teenager characters of Mark Twain's *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* dominantly had good personality. Based on Peterson and Seligman's *virtue and character strengths* theory used by the researcher, the qualified teenager characters indicated as nice human with positive traits. 2) Religious, honest, creative, curiosity, love to read, and care about social in the characters of Indonesian teenager were similar with teenager values from Mark Twain's *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*. After the researcher found out teenager values of the qualified teenager characters, there were several similar values too despite the difference of the context i.e American in 19th century and ideal traits of Indonesian teenagers. The lack of this research was teenager values should be appeared at least 3 times among teenager characters of Mark Twain's *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*. Some teenager characters that fulfill the criteria namely Thomas "Tom" Sawyer, Huckleberry "Huck" Finn, Rebbeca "Becky" Thatcher, Joseph "Joe" Harper, Sid, Mary, Benjamin "Ben" Roger, and Alfred Temple. While the rest teenagers were not include because of they were not fulfill the criterion.

Besides, this research can be the reading references for intermediate readers such as senior high school students and university students. However, the values that can be found in this novel can be learned by all levels of education such as elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school. In addition, there are several advices such as future researchers can use the most recent novel as object of research. For

instance, the value that will be analyzed can be based on the gender of the characters of the novel; teachers can give a chapter or a part of the event that reflected the value in the novel to the students; lecturers can give a task to analyzing the content of an English novel to the students about specific topic such as values, elements, etc.

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