



THE PORTRAYAL OF MALIGNANT NARCISSISM IN THE VILLAIN CHARACTERS OF DISNEY MOVIES

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Abstract

The uncomfortable condition of people to talk about mental illness often leads to its misinterpretation and stereotype. It includes to Malignant Narcissism. Therefore, this research aims to discuss about the portrayal of Malignant Narcissism in the villain characters of Disney Movie, which are the character Jafar in Aladdin movie (2019) and Cinderella's Step Mother character in Cinderella movie (2015). By using Disney live-action movies as the object, this research aims to find the symptoms of Narcissistic Personality Disorder and Malignant Narcissism in the sufferer through the villain characters, and to find the impacts of the sufferers to their surroundings.

This research used descriptive qualitative method typically library research with textual analysis since the data of this research are in the form of sentences and dialogues. The primary data sources are Aladdin (2019) and Cinderella (2015) movies, and the secondary data sources are journals and previous studies. This research used psychology of literature and psychology film as the approaches. In order to answer the research question, the researcher used Narcissistic Personality Disorder and Malignant Narcissism symptoms according to Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder.

The results of this research show that both Jafar character in Aladdin movie and Cinderella's Step Mother in Cinderella movie suffer Narcissistic Personality Disorder, specifically with the type of Malignant Narcissism based on the symptoms that identified in both characters.

Keywords: *Disney movies, narcissistic personality disorder, malignant narcissism*

INTRODUCTION

The evolvement of the term Narcissistic Personality Disorder or NPD came from Sigmund Freud, who believes that narcissism was a phase of development when a person does not transfer his or her self-love to other people or objects (Thurschwell, 2000). Narcissists will require constant adoration and recognition from their surroundings. The emergence of individualism in society, focus on the self and the individuals' inner feelings, and also the decline in social-norms, affect the decline in social fabrics (Kardiansyah, 2017). The rise of individualism is a signal of the situation where the community and family are no longer provide support as they usually did. Individualism also results in a decrease in the quality of communication with each other. Consequently, it became much harder to meet the basics need for meaningful conversation. The discussion of this paper focuses on one of the types of NPD, which is malignant narcissism. The term Malignant Narcissism or MN was first used by the psychologist Erich Fromm in 1946, as a severe mental disorder, and called as the quintessence of evil (Samanik, 2018). The portrayal of NPD or specifically MN can be seen from the movies. Therefore, in this research, the researcher will use children's movies as the object of analysis of this research. By considering some factors, the researcher will take two live-action movies from the Walt Disney Company, which are Aladdin and Cinderella. In addition researcher analyzed further how the live-action movies intended for children from Disney portrayed the symptoms and existence of Malignant Narcissism, which can acknowledge and give insight to society of how movies portrayed the bad characteristics of the sufferer of mental illness.

Freudian Psychoanalytic is used by the researcher to analyze the psychological problems of the characters (Amelia & Dintasi, 2017). Freudian believes that human has three psychology elements which are Id, Ego, and Superego (Setri & Setiawan, 2020). Freudian Literary Criticism is useful to analyze the existence of psychological conflicts, or in this research Malignant Narcissism, in movies, because it uses the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud to help the researcher interpret the works. By using Freudian Literary Criticism, the actions and/or psychological problems suffered by the characters can be analyzed using the three personality elements (Lina & Setiawan, 2017). Psychologists believe that movies have deeper impact to the audiences, especially in shaping the opinion and perception, because of the cognitive ability of human on seeing moving image. Thus, in analyzing

the existence of mental illness in movies, every detail such as the dialogues, scenes and expressions are very important (Yunara & Kardiansyah, 2017). Sigmund Freud, as the founder of psychoanalysis, declared the concept of narcissism. Freud stated that all humans have their own level of narcissism throughout their development, Freud defines narcissism as the adoration of themselves. Sigmund Freud believes that narcissism was a phase of development when a person does not transfer his or her self-love to other people or objects (Thurschwell, 2000). Kernberg (1984) described Malignant Narcissism as a mental disorder characterized by the symptoms of Narcissistic Personality Disorder. Kernberg pointed out that the antisocial personality was the fundamental that causes the occurrence of Malignant Narcissism. The specific criteria of Malignant Narcissism are; 1) Take advantage of others to get what they want; 2) Be envious of others and believe others envy them; 3) Behave arrogantly or haughtily; 4) Have difficulty in regulating emotions and behavior (Mayo Clinic).

The researcher formulates two research question such as how disney live-action movies portray the sufferer of malignant narcissism through the villain characters and What are the impacts caused by the sufferer of Malignant Narcissism to their surroundings as portrayed through the villain characters in Disney live-action movies. Thus, the research objective of this research describes the symptoms of malignant narcissism and impacts caused by the sufferer of malignant narcissism portrayed in the villain characters of Disney's live-action movies.

METHOD

This research considered a textual analysis, which explains and reveals the portrayal of Malignant Narcissism, this research is fully use the descriptive qualitative method. By using a descriptive qualitative method, this research focuses on discovering the nature of the specific topic under study (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). Additionally, by using descriptive qualitative method, the researcher focused on the content of analysis and the actions that were done by the characters (Aryangga & Nurmaily, 2017; Farras & Nurmaily, 2020). The analysis with qualitative method is different from quantitative method because the object and result are not focused on number (Rido, 2015). The data is in form of dialogues, pictures, and scenes (Istiani & Puspita, 2020). The researcher focuses on the object of the research used in the analysis as the main source of data (Kuswoyo & Siregar, 2019). Moreover, to narrow the choice of movies, the researcher chose the movies that have villain characters in it. The lists of the movies were taken from the list of The Top 10 Disney Live-Action Remakes, Ranked According to Rotten Tomatoes by ScreenRant in 2020. Thus, the researcher finally found two movies, which are Cinderella that was released in 2015 and Aladdin that was released in 2019. In analyzing the portrayal of Malignant Narcissism in Cinderella and Aladdin, the researcher uses two sources of data, as follows: 1) Primary Data Sources; 2) Secondary Data Sources. The Primary Data Sources are Cinderella movie (2015) that was produced by Walt Disney Pictures, and Aladdin movie (2019) that was produced by Walt Disney Pictures, Rideback, and Marc Platt Productions. From the movies, the researcher took the movie scenes and scripts as the source to analyze the existence of MN. The script can be used to facilitate the researcher in writing the sentences and dialogues of the characters (Pranoto & Afrilita, 2018). Besides to support the movie scene, script is also seen as one of the core data and data source which is in textual form and is essential to be considered. Books, book chapters, essays, interviews, talks, newspaper headlines and articles, historical documents, and conversations are included as texts (Afrianto, 2018). Meanwhile, the Secondary Data Sources are the materials related to Disney, Malignant Narcissism, and the portrayal of mental illness in the movie

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, There are movie scenes and movie script that taken from the movies based on the characteristics of Malignant Narcissism according to Diagnostic and Statistical of Mental Disorder. Besides, Malignant Narcissism, the characteristics of Narcissistic Personality Disorder or NPD as the fundamental basic concept of Malignant Narcissism are important to be discussed at the first place before revealing further about the Malignant Narcissism found in two Disney movies characters, Jafar in Aladdin movie (2019) and Cinderella Step Mother in Cinderella movie (2015).

Narcissistic Personality Disorder

NPD can create human who highly have sense of self-importance or uniqueness, have fantasy about unlimited power, beauty and brilliance, requires admiration and attention constantly, have feelings of anger, and have disturbance in personal life (Mertania & Amelia, 2020). Those characteristics of NPD are proven in Jafar in Aladdin movie (2019) as and Cinderella's Step Mother in Cinderella movie as it is discussed below.

Sense of Self-importance and/or Uniqueness

This NPD's symptom is found in Aladdin movie, the sense of self-importance and uniqueness of NPD clearly portrayed in Jafar character when he got mad because his servant said that he was the second. Jafar who already mad because the servant failed to bring the magic lamp explained the reason why he deserved to be the first because he had sacrificed many things. It is seen through dialogues in the minute of 12.15 below:

"I do not understand what could possibly in that cave, that could help man as great as you. You are already the second only to the Sultan."

"And you think second is enough?"

"Of course, you are not born to be sultan".

"Do you know what I had to do to get the power that I had? The sacrifices that I have made, the bodies that I have buried? The five years that I have spent in Shirabad jail? People need to understand that they will pay if they underestimate me. The second is not enough and it will never be enough! That's why I need the lamp, and why I no longer need you!" (Aladdin movie Script, 2019)

From the dialogues above, it is clearly portrayed that Jafar thought himself as powerful man who had done many things to get everything. He never put his doubt to take revenge to those people who underestimate him. It is seen that people must know him as the one who could be able to do everything therefore he needed the lamp to crave his goal.

The fact that thief is immoral, but through this dialogue it is clearly understood that Jafar tried to make himself even special as a thief in which he had bigger ambition to steal kingdom no longer stealing small things like what Aladdin had done. Meanwhile, in Cinderella's Step Mother character, it is portrayed when Cinderella's Step Mother came to her house as the new wife of her father.

Fantasize about Unlimited Power, Brilliance, Beauty, or Ideal Life

This second NPD's symptom is found in Jafar Character in Aladdin movie (2019) as he really crave for the magic lamp that he believed he would give anything that he want include Agrabah Kingdom. It is proven in the minute of 12.15 as it has been explained in the first symptom of NPD and also proven in the minute of 01.31.45 when he finally succeeded to steal the lamp from Aladdin and has imagined that he would finally rule the world by it. His first wish to be powerful is seen through the scene in the minute 01.42.02 shown through dialogues: "Genie! I wish to become the most powerful sorcerer in there is." "As you wish master" (Aladdin movie Script, 2019). After he finally owned the lamp, his greediness had mastered himself, he thought he finally ruled the world, and he even wanted to be the most powerful human being in the world, as it is seen in the minute 01.49.12 and 01.51.37 in the dialogues:

"I told you before to think bigger, you could've been the most powerful man in the room. But now I hold the lamp, I hold the power."

"You can't find what you looking for in that lamp Jafar, I tried and failed, and so will you."

"You think so? But I am Sultan! I am the greatest sorcerer the world has ever seen. I will create an empire that history cannot ignore. I can destroy cities. I can destroy kingdoms. And I can destroy you." (Aladdin movie Script, 2019).

The dialogue is clearly portrayed the ironic symptom of NPD in which the individual must always think about something good for himself. It is in line with the theory that person with NPD think that they are the center of the universe (Thurschwell, 2000, p.83). Meanwhile, this symptom also appears in Cinderella's Step Mother Character as it is narrated by the narrator when Cinderella's Step Mother believed that her ambition could light out Cinderella's family after she become the new wife of Cinderella's father. It is proven in narration in the minute of 10.58: "Ella's step mother, high-spirited lady that she was set out to restore life and laughter to the house." (Cinderella movie Script, 2015). However the fact in that scene, her goal was not to make Cinderella and Cinderella's Father happy but she rather did it for herself.

Cinderella's Step Mother's fantasy to have power in her life is also shown through movie scene when the king invited all citizens to come to the ball. She believed that was the best moment for them to get better life if one of her two daughters could be the prince's wife. It is seen through dialogue in the minute of 36.21 below: "Calm your-self now listen to me. One of you must win the heart of the prince. Do that and we can unwind the debt in which we were ensnared when we came to this backwater." (Cinderella movie Script, 2015).

Feelings of Anger

In this symptom, both villain characters; Jafar and Cinderella Step Mother, always show their anger whenever they realize that the world does not seem run smoothly as they want. In Aladdin movie, Jafar character frequently shows his anger because he had his great ambition on the magic lamp and to be the most powerful man in the world. He would easily angry if he was underestimated and insulted. It is proven in the movie scene when his servant told that he was the second, in the minute of 12.15. He was actually angry when the Sultan reminded him about his position in the minute of 21.10 that could be seen through his facial expression. Further, he was really angry when he failed to retrieve the lamp in the cave, in the minute of 39.50. In the ending of the movie, Jafar was also angry when Jasmine ran away from their wedding ceremony, then chased after Jasmine and Aladdin by creating big storm in the city.

Meanwhile, In the Cinderella movie (2015), Cinderella Step Mother could not handle her emotion when she found out that Cinderella was the mystery princess in the ball and she forbid Cinderella to meet the prince who came to their house to test the glass shoe. It is clearly portrayed in the minute of 01.32.30 through dialogue: "I forbid you to do this!" (Cinderella movie Script, 2015).

Requires Admiration and Constant Attention

Jafar with his great dream to become the sultan of Agrabah wanted to be respected and to be the reason why people afraid of him. He wanted to be someone who cannot be easily forgotten because of his power. It is clearly portrayed in the minute of 01.49.12 through dialogue: "you think so? But I am Sultan! I am the greatest sorcerer the world has ever seen. I will create an empire that history cannot ignore." (Aladdin Movie Script, 2019). The previous dialogue is clearly indicating that person with Malignant Narcissism requires admiration and attention, as it is portrayed through Jafar as villain character in Aladdin movie (2019). Meanwhile, Cinderella's Step Mother started to seek an attention when she thought she had a chance to do in the ballroom. It is portrayed through the scene in the minute of 36.40 through dialogue when she intended to make fine dresses: "You must return to town right away and tell that seamstress to run us up three fine ball gown." (Cinderella Movie Script, 2015).

Disturbance in Personal Life

The behavior of expecting special favor without reciprocal responsibilities as the symptom of NPD (Lianasari & Samanik, 2016), is also shown in the character. In which, Cinderella's Step Mother wanted Cinderella to do everything good to her and her two daughters, but she had no willingness to do the same as the Cinderella's new mother. Ironically, she made Cinderella suffered all the time.

Diagnostic Criteria of Malignant Narcissism

After the analysis of Narcissistic Personality Disorder has been discussed above, it is important to discuss further about Malignant Narcissism symptoms as the specific type of Narcissistic Personality Disorder portrayed in the villain characters of Disney movies, Jafar in Aladdin movie (2019) and Cinderella's Step Mother in Cinderella movie (2015). Both Jafar and Cinderella's Step Mother are the sufferers of Malignant Narcissism since they both have all the symptoms of Malignant Narcissism itself.

Take Advantage of Others to get what they want.

Jafar, as the villain characters in Aladdin movie, always took advantage of others to get what he wants. In 21.09 he tried to instigate Sultan to invade the Shirabad Kingdom. In that scene, Sultan did not want to invade Shirabad, therefore Jafar, as the vizier of the Sultan, bewitched the Sultan with his wand to agree to his decision. It is portrayed through dialogue: "But if you don't reconsider i think you will see is invading Shirabad is right thing to do." "invading Shirabad.. is..." (Aladdin Movie Script, 2019). Further, he also took an advantage from Aladdin's innocent to get the magic lamp. It is seen through dialogue in the minute 32.07:

"I can make you rich. Rich enough to impress the princess. But nothing comes for free. " "So what I have to do?" "There's a cave nearby, and in it a simple oil lamp, retrieve it for me and I'll make you wealthy enough to impress the princess. You're nothing to her but you could be. Your life begins now, Aladdin." (Aladdin Movie Script, 2019)

However, since Jafar was sly, he never really had intention to make Aladdin rich to impress the princess. What he only wanted was just the magic lamp. Therefore, when Aladdin successfully got the lamp, Jafar kicked Aladdin's hand and eventually did not help him. It is seen through the movie scene in the minute 38.53: "Can you give me a hand?" "First the lamp, we don't have mu time. Give me the lamp" "Your hands, now your hands" "how about my foot?" (Aladdin Movie Script, 2019). Unfortunately, Aladdin as the one who successfully got the

magic lamp must face the cruel of Jafar. It is clearly portrayed through the scene when Jafar tried to grab back the lamp from Aladdin by threatening Aladdin's life, threw him to the sea. It is seen in the minute 01.23.05 with dialogue.

"It's clearly been some short of misunderstanding, I am Prince Ali"

"If I throw you out of that balcony and you are who you say you are, you will die a watery death. If you survive, it can only be because of the lamp. In which case, I will have my answer. For the last, where is the lamp?!"

"Listen to me, I don't know who you think I am."

"Good bye Aladdin!" (Aladdin Movie Script, 2019).

From the dialogue above, it is clearly understood that Jafar portrayed the symptom of Malignant Narcissism since he used Aladdin to prove that the lamp was owned by him and he tried to grab it back in the sake to fulfilling his goal. Meanwhile, the intention of Cinderella's Step Mother was clearly to take over everything that Cinderella had. She exploited Cinderella's kindness to get everything she wanted in the house. It is firstly portrayed in the movie scene when Cinderella offered her bedroom for her step sisters, but what actually happen was Cinderella's Step Mother asked Cinderella to stay in the attic. In the minute of 15.25 through dialogues:

"I think they're finding the sleeping quarters rather confining."

"Oh well my bedroom's the biggest besides yours and father. Perhaps they'd like to share it."

"What a wonderful idea. What good girl you are."

"I can stay in the...."

"The attic. Quiet so." (Cinderella movie Script, 2015).

Cinderella's Step Mother treated Cinderella as their assistant for many things; include preparing breakfast and preparing the gown for them. It is portrayed in the minute of 36.40 through dialogue: "You must return to town right away and tell that seamstress to run us up three fine ball gown." (Cinderella movie Script, 2015)..

Be Envious of Others and Believe Others Envy them

In Aladdin movie (2019), Jafar who never sincerely accepted himself as the vizier always envy towards the Sultan and want to usurp the kingdom. Therefore, that was the reason he really wanted to have the magic lamp. After suspecting Aladdin who pretended to be Prince Ali who owned the magic lamp, he tried to make a deal with Aladdin, as it is portrayed in the minute of 01.03.18 through dialogues:

"I could be a valuable ally to help you get what you want. " "I will think on that I don't wanna give the princess waiting." "Perhaps I'm not making myself clear. This offer will not be under table for long you see." (Aladdin Movie Script, 2019). From the previous dialogues, it is clearly portrayed that Jafar tried another way to get the lamp by giving offering to Aladdin but Aladdin refused it.

Meanwhile, it is in the minute of 01.24.03 Cinderella could not handle more her Step Mother cruelty, through dialogues: "And though no one deserves to be treated as you treat me, why you do it? why? Why?" "Because you are young, and innocent and good, and I.."(Cinderella Movie Script, 2015). From the previous dialogues, although the motif of Cinderella's Step Mother's cruelty does not seem clear, but the reason that Cinderella's personality made her always mad at Cinderella is indicating the important point of Cinderella's Step Mother's envious.

Behave arrogantly or haughtily

Arrogant and haughty are part of Malignant Narcissism symptom that mostly found in villain characters. It is proven in Jafar character. His arrogances could be seen in the minute 22.17. He underestimated Jasmine who could not be Sultan because she is a woman with less experience to be a leader. He indirectly showed that he was more able to be the Sultan because he had experience as vizier of the Sultan. It is also clearly portrayed in the minute 23.00 through dialogues:

"Books? Which cannot read experience. Inexperienced is dangerous. People left unchecked will revolt. Walls and borders that unguarded will be attacked." (Aladdin Movie Script, 2019)

"Life will be kinder to you Princess once if you accept the tradition and understand that better to you to be seen and not heard." (Aladdin Movie Script, 2019)

The fact that Jafar frequently show his arrogance and haughty convincing this analysis as it is further portrayed in some movie scenes. One of the important parts of his arrogance is portrayed in the minute 01.29.02 when he put to the jail by Hakim under the order of Sultan: "You should think about how quickly the sand have power shift in the storm, Hakim." (Aladdin Movie Script, 2019). From the previous dialogue it could be interpreted that although he was jailed, but Jafar was confident enough to change the condition in which he could take revenge to those who made him feel unfair. Further, he asked the Guards to intimidate Princess Jasmine as it is portrayed in the minute of 01.35.48 through dialogue: "I think we've heard enough from you Princess. It's time you start doing what should have done all along. Stay silent! Guards remove her!" (Aladdin Movie Script, 2015). The previous dialogue shows that the way Jafar underestimated the Princess Jasmine clearly portrayed her arrogance and haughty in which woman must be silent and follow a man as the best leader for the kingdom. Meanwhile, Cinderella's Step Mother Character found arrogant is in the scene of Cinderella's grief after her father passed away. Rather than encouraging Cinderella's heart, in this scene is when her Step Mother started her cruelty. It is portrayed in the minute 14.59 through dialogues: "Now now. Mustn't blub." "Yes step mother." "Oh you needn't to call me that. Madam will do." (Cinderella Movie Script, 2015) Cinderella who never put bad prejudice to her mother started to become the victim of her step mother arrogance. Cinderella's Step Mother also did not hesitate to consider Cinderella as the one who had lower social degree than her. It is portrayed when Cinderella wanted to go to the ball too but her Step Mother forbids her to go while insulted her too. It could be seen in the minute of 41.47 through dialogues:

"I don't want to ruin anything. I don't even want to meet the prince."

"Oh and you won't. because there's no question of your going."

"But all of the maidens of the land are invited by order of the king"

"It is the king I am thinking of. It would be an insult to the royal personage to take you to palace dressed in these old rags." (Cinderella Movie Script, 2015)

The previous dialogues show that Cinderella's Step Mother always feel haughtily in this case she never wanted Cinderella as part of her family, since she recognized Cinderella as their servant.

Have Difficulty in Regulating Emotions and Behaviors

Someone with Malignant Narcissism must suffer unstable emotions and even could act dangerously towards other people. This is because based on the theory discussed in the chapter two, that Malignant Narcissism leads somebody to have sadistic behavior without moral (Kernberg, 1984). It is proven in Jafar characters in Aladdin (2019), in the minute of 13.00, when he felt insulted by his servant, he mad and directly killed the servant by pushing him to fell down to the well. Meanwhile as the villain character of Cinderella movie (2015), Cinderella's Step Mother shows her bad emotion and behavior through sarcastic words. It is clearly portrayed in the minute of 20.55 when she heard Cinderella's father passed away through dialogue: "Can't you see? None of that matters. We're ruined. How we will live?" (Cinderella Movie Script, 2015). In another scene, Cinderella's Step Mother showing her difficulty in regulating her bad behavior when Cinderella came down the stair intended to go to the ball, in the minute of 42.23, she mangled Cinderella's dress while saying:

"I will not have anyone associate my daughters with you. It would ruined their prospect to be seen arriving with a ragged servant girl. Because that is what you are and that is what you will always be. Now mark my words! You shall not go to the ball!" (Cinderella Movie Script, 2015).

In the previous dialogue, it is clearly portrayed that Cinderella's Step Mother associate her bad temper through her miserable behavior and face expression towards Cinderella. In this case as well, Cinderella's Step Mother shows her feelings of her anger as the symptom of NPD that lead her into bad behavior as the symptom of Malignant Narcissism.

The Impact of Malignant Narcissism Sufferer towards their surroundings

The symptoms of Malignant Narcissism that portrayed in the two villain characters Jafar and Cinderella's Step Mother are impactful towards their surroundings in the movies. There are three great impacts found in the movies caused by the two villain characters; Jafar and Cinderella's Step Mother. They hurt other people mentally and or physically, they seized other people's right and even they made people in danger caused by their anger.

Similar to Jafar whose mental disorder hurts somebody else, so does Cinderella's Step Mother. Cinderella's Step Mother cruel treatment frequently made Cinderella in sorrow. It is clearly portrayed in the minute of 26.11 when Cinderella loss her focus and break the plate because her Step Mother did not let her eat breakfast with them

as it is narrated in the movie: “And of a sudden it seemed to her that her step mother and stepsisters had indeed transformed her into merely a creature of ash and toil.” (Cinderella Movie Script, 2015). Cinderella’s Step Mother took over the owning of the house and Cinderella’s owning. It is clearly portrayed in the scene of 15.25 when she asked Cinderella to stay in the attic and out from her bedroom, and gave it to her stepsisters. However, accordingly, Cinderella’s Step Mother never put Cinderella in danger that can threaten her life.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, in order to know that someone suffer Malignant Narcissism and the impacts of its disorder towards his or her surroundings, it is important to observe behavior then use precise theory as a guidance to find the result. This kind of method could be implemented as well in analyzing Malignant Narcissism in a fictional character in a literary work. Perhaps, for the future researchers who are interested to conduct broader discussion on Malignant Narcissism could focus on the relation with another issue, so that there will be an improvement in the psychological knowledge among society.

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