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Deviations and Good Moral Values in the Novel *Pukul Setengah Lima*: A Pragmatic Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the moral values both positive and negative depicted through the characters' actions in the novel "Pukul Setengah *Lima*" using a pragmatic literary criticism approach. This approach helps researchers interpret the novel's messages, allowing readers to clearly understand its moral implications. The study employs a qualitative descriptive analysis method, presenting findings through detailed written descriptions. "Pukul Setengah Lima" is a romance novel by the well-known young writer Rintik Sendu. It narrates the love story of a woman and an adult man while exploring various personal and professional conflicts. The novel conveys both commendable moral values that can be applied in real life and negative moral lessons that serve as warnings for readers. Through character analysis, this study identifies negative moral values such as low self-esteem, dishonesty, domestic violence, and betraval. Conversely, it highlights positive values, including compassion, resilience in facing life's challenges, and filial piety toward parents. These values are examined through character dialogues and the author's narrative descriptions. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how literature conveys moral teachings through character interactions and storytelling. Expanding on the pragmatic literary criticism approach with specific examples enhances the clarity of the study's findings.

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INTRODUCTION

Literature serves as a medium for expressing emotions, imagination, and everything a creator wishes to convey so that it can be experienced by the general public. A literary work presents beauty, moral messages, happiness, sadness, and various perspectives on life that can be felt by its audience. According to previous research, literature is a means for writers to express their thoughts through reflections on life experiences (Laia, 2023). Another study revealed that literature serves as a tool for channeling inspiration, experiences, or imagination into a unique language, giving it artistic value (Farihah & Sari, 2022).

Literary works are generally divided into three categories: prose fiction, poetry, and drama. One form of prose fiction is the novel. A novel is a collection of writings derived from the author's thoughts or experiences, arranged in a structured and complete manner (Ainy et al., 2024). This study discusses literary criticism centered on a novel titled At Half Past Five, which contains interesting elements for analysis.

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The novel *Pukul Setengah Lima* is written by a woman known by the pen name Rintik Sendu. It belongs to the romance genre and tells the story of a woman who faces various life conflicts, particularly in love, while also depicting her struggles in navigating the hardships of life. Although the novel primarily focuses on a love story, it conveys numerous moral messages that closely reflect real-life experiences. This study focuses on literary criticism. A literary work that circulates freely in society, including *Pukul Setengah Lima*, carries meanings that can be explored in depth. Literary criticism itself involves evaluating or appreciating a literary work, which may include both praise and constructive feedback.

There are several reasons why the author chose this novel for analysis. First, the novel's title highlights time as a central theme. Not only is time emphasized in the title, but it also plays a significant role in the development of the storyline. Second, the novel presents strong conflicts, both external and internal, in the lives of its characters. The protagonist is portrayed as a highly prominent figure, experiencing various conflicts related to life choices, societal issues, and psychological struggles. These aspects invite literary criticism that explores the complexity of human relationships and the novel's impact. Additionally, the novel is set in a socio-cultural context that is interesting to examine. It portrays modern society and its various social and psychological challenges. Through literary criticism, this novel can be analyzed in terms of its depiction of social and psychological issues, such as overcoming social inequality, modernization, and moral values in society. Furthermore, the novel explores universal themes such as love, sacrifice, self-discovery, family, and friendship. These themes make the novel suitable for analysis through various literary criticism approaches, including structural, sociological, and psychological perspectives.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to one article, researching literary works or any aspect of literature requires a specialized and in-depth understanding based on knowledge of the field (Nuha & Afnita, 2024). This study employs a pragmatic approach in literary criticism. The pragmatic approach views literary works as a medium for conveying messages to their audience, which may include moral values, beauty, religion, education, and more (Angraini & Permana, 2019). Therefore, the pragmatic approach primarily focuses on the impact of a literary work on its readers, providing both information and lessons (Mawardy & Nurcholish, 2021).

This study examines moral values and their lessons by analyzing depictions of social deviations in literary works through a pragmatic approach. The pragmatic approach has key principles related to the analysis of moral values, such as evaluating the influence of literary works on readers, analyzing the lessons derived from the social deviations presented in literary works, and assessing the role of literature in reflecting social realities.

The author has specific reasons for choosing the pragmatic approach for this study. First, this approach analyzes how textual elements such as plot, characters, and conflicts intertwine to create a moral impact on the reader. Second, the novel addresses contemporary societal issues in Indonesia amidst the fast-paced nature of modern life. Through pragmatic criticism, this novel serves as an effective social representation and critique. Additionally, the storyline is highly relevant to real-life experiences, encompassing themes of romance, friendship, family, and the protagonist's mental struggles. These aspects make the novel well-suited for analysis through a pragmatic approach, encouraging readers to reflect on their own lives.

Applying pragmatic criticism to examine social deviations and moral values in *Pukul* Setengah Lima enhances the understanding of how literary works can significantly influence moral learning. From this perspective, it can be concluded that pragmatic criticism plays a crucial role in shaping the moral awareness of both readers and society.

METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative method combined with a pragmatic

approach in literary criticism, focusing on how literary works influence readers in terms of moral values and social learning. This approach is applied through a qualitative method, beginning with the selection of the novel *Pukul Setengah Lima* by Rintik Sendu as the research object. This novel was chosen due to its depiction of complex life conflicts and its rich moral messages.

Data collection is conducted by identifying quotations in the novel that reflect both positive and negative moral values, conveyed through character dialogues and the author's narrative descriptions. Data analysis follows pragmatic literary principles, evaluating the impact of literary works on readers, analyzing lessons from various social perspectives within the novel, and examining the relevance and contribution of literature in assessing social realities.

The analysis focuses on the revelation of positive moral values, such as compassion, resilience in facing life's challenges, and filial piety, as well as negative moral values, including arrogance, dishonesty, domestic violence, and infidelity. Each moral lesson and transgression is analyzed using relevant quotations and contextual interpretations to highlight the messages conveyed to readers.

The results of the analysis are presented in a straightforward manner, demonstrating how literature not only provides moral guidance but also serves as a tool for reflection and education. The novel maintains a balance between depictions of moral deviations and ethical values, ultimately encouraging readers to reflect on their own lives and recognize the importance of moral values in everyday experiences.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Deviation of Moral Values

Morality refers to an individual's actions in life (Masruroh & Setyarum, 2022). Moral deviation, on the other hand, refers to human actions that do not align with societal norms.

a. Low Self-Esteem

Low self-esteem is an attitude that affects an individual's relationship with themselves or their inner self (Fernando & Nurdianingsih, 2024). This feeling or attitude is considered a negative deviation because it leads to self-perception of unworthiness and a diminished sense of value.

Data	Title
Data 1	Tio bisa memberiku itu, tapi aku tidak. Aku malah memberinya ketidak beruntungan; nasib buruk yang tidak pernah dia bayangkan. Siti benar, aku egois dan aku tidak melakukan apa- apa, selain melepaskan atau mungkin menyelamatkan tio dari diriku sendiri. (pg. 36)
Data 2	Wah ternyata dia udah gila. Udah sakit dia. Aku?orang yang menyenangkan? Well, aku memang pernah kagum akan sebuah kata lestari yang keluar dari mulut seseorang. Sekarang, aku sungguh- sungguh kasihan padanya. Kamu salah Danu, bukan itu kata yang tepat untuk kamu pilih dari kamus bahasa. Harusnya kamu memilih kata menyedihkaa, itu baru benar. (pg. 80)
Data 3	Tio bukan lagi Tio yang aku temui di Blok M kala itu. tio sudah tidak sehat. Aku menularkan penyakit menyedihkan kepadanya. (pg. 113)

Data 1 illustrates Alina's deep sense of self-doubt and guilt, as she believes she is a negative influence on Tio and unworthy of their relationship. The phrase "*Ketidakberuntungan*" reflects her feelings of worthlessness and the belief that her existence harms others. She explicitly acknowledges her selfishness in "*Siti benar, aku egois*," humbling herself and accepting others' judgments. Her humility is further evident in "*selain melepaskan atau mungkin menyelamatkan Tio dari diriku sendiri*," where she sees herself as a burden that others should distance themselves from.

Data 2 highlights Alina's negative self-perception, as she constantly doubts her abilities and refuses to believe the compliments she receives from others. This suggests that she struggles with self-worth and has a tendency to devalue herself, reinforcing her low self-esteem.

Data 3 reveals Alina's perception of herself as a burden, believing that she is responsible for turning Tio into a miserable figure. She sees herself as the source of his suffering and assumes that her presence has led him into hardship. Together, these data points depict a character consumed by self-blame and insecurity, struggling with feelings of unworthiness and guilt.

Dishonesty

Table 2. Table's Dishonesty		
Data	Title	
Data 1	"Aku marni". Pukul setengah lima. Aku menjadi orang lain akhirnya. (pg. 53)	
Data 2	Ini tidak benar. Ini benar-benar tidak benar. Ada sesuatu tentang kebohongan ini yang terasa nikmat dan membuatku hanyut dalam ketidaknyataan. Kebohongan yang kuciptakan tempo hari berhasil membawaku pergi sedikit lebih jauh. Dan, aku ingin pergi semakin jauh lagi. (pg. 79)	
Data 3	Kebohongan adalah hiburan tanpa tujuan. Dan itu alasanya Danu senang terhadap Marni. Karena Marni adalah sebuah kebohongan. Jadi, tentu saja Marni akan menghiburnya dalam ketidaknyataan yang sementara. (pg. 81)	

Alina's deception is evident in her choice to conceal her real name, as shown in Data 1, where she introduces herself as "Marni" instead of revealing her true identity. Data 2 highlights her growing entanglement in the lie—although she is fully aware of its falsehood, she finds herself drawn deeper into it, feeling an urge to continue the deception. Data 3 further emphasizes her internal conflict; while she acknowledges that Marni is a fictional persona, she also recognizes that the lie has brought happiness to both her and Danu. Despite this, she remains aware that it is all an illusion, reinforcing her struggle between reality and deception.

c. Family violence

In this novel, violent behavior is carried out by the father figure of the main character. The violence committed by his father against his mother and himself is done verbally and non-verbally simultaneously.

Data	Title
Data 1	Kadang aku bingung, kenapa cerita horror harus tentang hantu? Kenapa tidak tentang bapak yang selalu memukuli ibu? Kenapa tidak tentang luka lebam di sekujur tubuh ibu, juga tubuhku? (pg. 8)
Data 2	Tak jarang aku berpikir Bapak sebenarnya juga butuh ditolong. Dia jelas sakit. Sebab tidak mungkin ada manusia yang bisa sekeji itu. tidak mungkin seorang laki-laki menyakiti perempuan yang dicintainya. Sayangnya Bapak tidak mau ditolong. Bapak seakan menyukai perannya menjadi gila.
Data 3	(pg. 11) Aku tidak takut sendiri. Aku tidak pernah takut. Oh. Aku pernah takut,

Alina's experience of horror is not derived from ghost stories but from the real-life trauma she endured, as described in Data 1. She and her mother suffered repeated beatings, leaving them bruised, as a result of her father's violent behavior. Data 2 reveals Alina's awareness of her father's psychological condition—she recognizes that he is unwell but refuses to seek treatment. She struggles to reconcile the idea that he could love her mother while simultaneously treating them with such cruelty. Data 3 highlights the impact of this violence on Alina's character, shaping her into an independent and resilient individual. The hardships she faced made her immune to fear and more prepared to confront life's obstacles.

d. Infidelity

The infidelity deviation behavior in this novel is described by the character Siti. She is an office friend of Alina and can be proven from the following data:

Table 4. Tanel's Infidelity		
Data	Title	
Data 1	Dia sering cerita soal hubungannya dengan salah satu atasan kami. Hubungan yang tidak ada namanya, bahkan mungkin harusnya tidak perlu sampai disebut sebagai hubungan. Siti jatuh cinta pada laki-laki yang (mungkin) mencintai istrinya. Kadang aku bingung, mengapa orang masih saja percaya manusia bisa mencintai beberapa orang sekaligus? Mengapa Siti juga percaya pada laki-laki itu? Padahal dia hanya laki-laki biasa, entah apa yang Siti lihat padanya. (pg. 17)	
Data 2	Kado paling tepat buat Siti adalah perpisahan. Kado itu tidak harus bagus, yang penting baik, meski menyakitkan saat diterima. Masih banyak laki-laki di luar sana yang pantas untuknya, yang setidaknya bisa cukup dengan satu perempuan saja (Benar masih ada,kan, ya?). (pg. 40)	
Data 3	Dari sela kaca jendela, aku melihat Siti duduk bersimpuh di lantai. Rambutnya berantakan. Dia hanya menunduk dan menangis tanpa suara. Sementara itu, Farid berusaha menenangkan istrinya. (pg. 128)	

The analysis reveals the complexities of Siti's forbidden love and Alina's perspective on the situation. Data 1 highlights Siti's deep feelings for a married man, leaving Alina puzzled about what Siti sees in him. Data 2 shows Alina's strong disapproval of the relationship, as she believes separation is the best outcome for Siti, hoping she will find someone else. This is evident in the quote, "The most appropriate gift for Siti is separation." Data 3 depicts the turning point when Farid's wife discovers the affair. Siti chooses not to defend herself, fully aware that she has no right to justify the situation. Together, these points illustrate the emotional turmoil and moral dilemmas surrounding Siti's illicit relationship.

2. Good moral values

Good moral value is one of the actions recognized by layers of society that the action is in accordance with the prevailing norms (Kasmawati, 2022). In this novel, good moral values are found as follows:

a. Strong

Table 5. Tanel's Strong	
Data	Title
Data 1	Ibu setia pada Bapak,pada hidup, pada luka, pada air mata, pada trauma,juga pada kesengsaraan. Ibu tidak pernah berkhianat,sekalipun pengkhianatan itu bisa menyelamatkannya.Tidak, Ibu tidak pernah ingkar janji, sebab Ibu kuat. (pg. 55)
Data 2	"Itu cuma luka", "itu cuma memar", "itu cuma sebentar", "itu cuma sakit sedikit". Ibu sungguh-sungguh Marni sejati. (pg. 56)
Data 3	Aku tidak takut sendiri. Aku tidak pernah takut Oh. Aku pernah takut, ketika untuk pertama kalinya Bapak menamparku. Tapi, habis itu sudah. Aku sudah tidak takut lagi. Memang butuh waktu, butuh banyak waktu. Seperti yang pernah Ibu bilang, "Luka adalah Boresan pertama, yang setelahnya sudah bukan lagi luka namanya." (pg. 64)

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The analysis highlights the mother's extraordinary resilience and strength in facing life's hardships. Data 1 portrays her unwavering loyalty to her husband despite enduring immense

suffering. The phrase "setia pada Bapak, pada hidup, pada luka, pada air mata, pada trauma, juga pada kesengsaraan" emphasizes her steadfastness, showing that she remains faithful even when betrayal could cost her everything. Data 2 further illustrates her resilience through the repeated use of the word "Cuma," which signifies her ability to endure pain and view suffering as something minor. This repetition reflects her optimism and mental fortitude in navigating life's challenges. Data 3 reveals her wisdom in teaching Alina about resilience. The phrase "Luka adalah goresan pertama, yang setelahnya sudah bukan lagi luka namanya" conveys her belief that wounds should be seen as a process of growth rather than prolonged suffering. Additionally, her advice "Memang butuh waktu" reinforces the idea that healing is a gradual process. Through these lessons, the mother instills strength in Alina, shaping her into a mentally resilient individual unafraid of traumatic experiences.

b. Caring

Table 6. Tanel's Caring		
Data	Title	
Data 1	"Al, ngomong dong, kamu nggak perlu hadapin semua ini sendiri. Ada aku," sambungnya lagi, karena aku masih saja diam dari tadi. (pg. 19)	
Data 2	Siti bersedekap, "Nggak ngerti lagi gue sama lo, Al.Kenapa lo harus nggak apa- apa? Kenapa sih lo harus selalu oke? Kenapa lo nggak sedih? Kenapa kata-kata Tio nggak nyakitin lo? Kenapa lo harus baik- baik aja?" (pg. 123)	
Data 3	Namun ada yang berbeda malam itu, kulihat Ibu menungguku di depan pagar. Ibu tidak pernah begitu. Maksudku Ibu sudah lama sekali tidak melakukan itu. Terakhir kali, seingatku, waktu masih SMA. Ibu selalu menungguku di ujung gang tempat aku turun- naik angkot sepulang sekolah, kadang membawa payung atau semangkuk gelisah di wajahnya. (pg. 177)	

The analysis highlights the theme of concern and care shown by different characters toward Alina. Data 1 illustrates Tio's deep concern for Alina's well-being. His words reflect his awareness of her struggles and his encouragement for her to share her burdens. The phrase "ngomong dong" expresses his strong desire to understand her problems, while "kamu nggak perlu hadapin semua ini sendiri" signals his wish for her not to carry everything alone. His statement "ada aku" reassures Alina that he will always be there to support her. Data 2 focuses on Siti's concern for Alina's emotional state. Her questions, "Kenapa lo nggak sedih? Kenapa kata-kata Tio nggak nyakitin lo?" reveal her anxiety and refusal to accept Alina's seemingly indifferent attitude, emphasizing her worry about Alina's mental health. Data 3 highlights the mother's protective instincts, as seen in her waiting by the fence when Alina comes home late. Although she has not done this since Alina's high school years, her action reflects her continued concern and care for her child's safety. Together, these data points illustrate the deep emotional support Alina receives from those around her.

a. Filial piety

Table 7. Tanel's Filial piety		
Data	Title	
Data 1	Tio tidak bisa memilih meskipun ingin sekali kerja di pemerintahan, sesuai bidang kuliahnya dulu. Dia pernah beberapa kali mendaftar dan lolos seleksi, tapi selalu	
	berujung menguburkan impiannya. Bapaknya begitu mencintai rumah makan itu, dan Tio harus mengalah. (pg. 137)	
Data 2	"Deket sih, memang. Tapi ibuku sendirian di sini, jawabnya sambil menyelesaikan makannya. "Aku tuh anak bungsu, kakakku ikut suaminya yang kerja di Makassar. Jadi ibuku sendiri di sini." (pg. 140)	

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Data 3 Aku hanya mengubur kelemahanku agar tidak menambah beban pikiran Ibu. Aku tidak kuat, tidak per.nah. Aku hanya melawan ketakutanku sendiri dengan pura-pura berani, agar Ibu tidak perlu menggandakan masalah hidupnya gara-gara aku. (pg. 108)

The analysis highlights the theme of personal sacrifice made by the characters for the sake of their loved ones. Data 1 illustrates Tio's decision to give up his dream of a government career to take over his parents' restaurant business. Despite his personal aspirations, he prioritizes his father's passion and responsibility as the only successor. Data 2 focuses on Danu, who sacrifices his career advancement to stay by his mother's side. As the only one living with her, he willingly abandons his promotion, which requires him to move away, out of concern for her well-being. Data 3 shifts to Alina, who suppresses her own pain and struggles to avoid adding to her mother's burdens. She consciously hides her emotions to maintain her mother's sense of calm, understanding the hardships her mother has already endured. These examples collectively emphasize the theme of selflessness and the sacrifices individuals make for family and loved ones.

CONCLUSIONS

This novel presents a complex storyline by combining various moral deviations and positive values. Through a pragmatic approach to literary works, the novel Pukul Setengah Lima demonstrates its impact and benefits for readers. The novel portrays several forms of moral deviation, including low self-esteem, dishonesty, family violence, and betrayal. These elements serve as a reflection of reality, offering readers an opportunity for self-reflection in understanding moral values.

On the other hand, the novel also conveys important moral values such as compassion, resilience in facing life's challenges, and filial devotion. These values are expressed through character dialogues and directly emphasized by the author.

From the perspective of the pragmatic approach, this literary work creates a significant impact in several ways. First, it raises awareness of moral deviations and the importance of goodness in society. Second, it encourages readers to perceive moral deviations from a different perspective, helping them recognize underlying lessons. Third, it offers insights into the consequences of actions, allowing readers to reflect on their own choices. Lastly, it emphasizes that for every negative action, there is always an opportunity for redemption and goodness.

In conclusion, this novel is not merely a source of entertainment but also a medium for conveying meaningful values. Through the pragmatic approach, readers gain insights into moral values in everyday life and understand the intricate balance between moral deviations and virtues, which are deeply interconnected.

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