

Dysfunctional Family in "the kiss" by Kathryn Harrison

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Abstract

This study aims to reveal dysfunctional family issues and their impact on the main character. The object of this research is a novel entitled The Kiss (1997) by Kathryn Harrison which tells the story of a child who has bad experiences in a dysfunctional family and does not get the role of her parents until she grows up. This study focuses on discussing the portrayal of dysfunctional families through the psychological point of view proposed by Sheryl Benton and the impact of dysfunctional families on children by Sharon Martin. A qualitative approach is used in this study which presents the analysis in the form of an essay. The results of this study indicate that the main characters in the novel experiences a dysfunctional family due to the behavior of both parents who are not ready to start a family. The final result shows that this dysfunctional family has a bad impact on the main character as a child and continues until the child grows up and starts a new family of her own.

Keywords: *dysfunctional families, psychoanalysis, qualitative*

A. Introduction

Family is a place that will accept all the shortcomings that exist in humans and it is an important thing for every humans. According to Harta Berharga song lyric, the soundtrack of Keluarga Cemara movie harta yang paling berharga adalah keluarga shows that family is the important thing in human's life because the first environment in every human is family. This first environment will affect every human's life and they are connected emotionally through interactions that take place within the family. According to The Bowen Center, "People solicit each other's attention, approval, and support, and they react to each other's needs, expectations, and upsets" (2021). The quotation shows that humans, especially in the family need sympathy from other family members and sympathize with other family members. Humans cannot stand alone in all aspects such as material and psychological. The interdependence of each other between family members makes the family happy.

A happy family is what every human being wants and it can be seen from the roles of each family member for one another. The family is a communication interaction in which each member, from newborn to old age, influences the nature of

the entire family system as stated by Lederer and Jackson (1968, p. 14). The role of communication that exists in each family member can form an emotional attachment that has an impact on the future of the family, especially children. If the communication that is established in a family goes well, it will have a good impact on the future of the child, and vice versa if the communication does not go well. When all family members have deep emotional attachments and fill each other's feelings of emotional need so that they know how to solve problems in their family, it can be said to be a healthy family of the many reasons people get married, love is the best reason. When a man and a woman love each other and decide to get married, certainly they have a dream to have a healthy family.

The desire to have a healthy family will only be wishful thinking without effort and a good parenting strategy because in its application it will not be as easy as imagined. This will eventually lead to a dysfunctional family. According to Benton (1993, p. 1), "Family dysfunction can be any condition that interferes with healthy family functioning. Most families have some periods of time where functioning is impaired by stressful circumstances (death in the family, a parent's serious illness, etc.)". From the notion, it shows that dysfunctional families are an essential condition in social life that can have an impact on children's psychological conditions if parents cannot handle the situation. The condition can continue into adulthood through experiences in dysfunctional families, even when the child starts a family of their own. Not even everyone is aware of this condition. There are many reasons for dysfunctional families to occur, but society's stigma often refers to broken homes of parents' divorce which cause dysfunctional families. Whereas dysfunctional families can occur due to domestic violence, economic problems, parents with mental illness, parents who are not ready to start a family, and many more.

However, a family can be said to be dysfunctional when they face these problems but have no intention of ending their relationship, so dysfunctional families can happen to any family at any time. Dysfunctional families can have an impact on the mental and behavior of all family members, especially children. Benton stated states that "Children are consistently treated with respect, and do not fear emotional, verbal, physical, or sexual abuse. Parents can be counted on to provide care for their children." (1993, p. 2) The quotation shows the difference between healthy and dysfunctional families. Children who are treated like these quotations will later grow up to be children who can respect each other and with themselves. On the other hand, if children have been shown fears of a problematic parental relationship since childhood, they will leave an imprint on their memories until adulthood. Children will live their lives in the shadows of their painful past so that their behavior and mental disorders are disrupted and make it difficult for them to achieve their dreams and even live their daily lives.

Understanding how dysfunctional families affect children's mental and behavior through literary works, it can be done by understanding what is happening in society, the psychological condition of a person through his behavior in the present, as well as exploring the history of psychological conditions in the present. Like in the novel *The Kiss* by Kathryn Harrison where a dysfunctional family case is found. *The Kiss* tells the story of a daughter name Kathryn from a dysfunctional family due to her parents'

problems that affect her life from childhood to adulthood. Her parents' divorce had been carried out since she was two months old and caused her to lose both of her parents' figures. She did not learn what a father should be because her father left her and her mother, nor did she know what a mother should be because her mother had been indifferent to her child since the divorce. Until she finally met her father after a long time and the conflict began when her father started to do sexual things to her during their first meeting. Regarding this study, the writer analyzed the portrayal of dysfunctional families in the novel and reveal the impacts of dysfunctional families on children who are the main characters of this novel.

There are several related studies conducted by several college students which focused on a dysfunctional family. These related studies were used as a comparison to support this study. The first study was conducted by Andhika (2019) Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, whose study was entitled "The Impact of Dysfunctional Family on Lucy Barton's Behavior in Elizabeth Strout's *My Name is Lucy Barton*". The study focuses on psychoanalysis from Murray Bowen, finding the kind of dysfunctional family by using Sheryl Benton's theory, the impacts of the dysfunctional family, and the recovery by using Sharon Martin's theory. The writer uses the qualitative method. The findings of this study show that the main character in the novel is a child who tried to save himself from a dysfunctional family, it is also impacting the main character's behavior who often feels lonely, insufficient, has no hope, and feels not loved. That impacted were recovery through the healing process like trusting others and accepting his true feeling. On the whole, this result shows that the novel is a portrayal of psychological problems faced by a child who had been an adult.

The second study was conducted by Arfiyanti (2013) Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, whose study was entitled "Dysfunctional Family and Its Impacts on Veronica's Life in Anne Enright's *The Gathering*". This study is focused on the depiction of the dysfunctional family and the impacts on the child's psychological condition which is the main character of the novel. In the depiction of a dysfunctional family, the writer is using the three overviews defined by George A. Boyd and Erikson's psychosocial theory to reveal the impacts of the dysfunctional family. The qualitative research methodology is used in this study. The result of this study is the novel shows that the parents do not run/operate the function as parents properly and affect the main character have an aversion to the mother. Furthermore, the effects of this dysfunctional family are influenced by the social life of the main character in her adolescence and after marriage, she hard to handle her own family.

The third study was conducted by Alzoubi (2016) University of Leicester, England. This study was entitled "Bowen Family Systems Theory and Family Disintegration in Tennessee William's Drama". This study focuses on the Bowen family system as the literary criticism media to raise the family disintegration theme in the drama. This study uses the eight concepts of the family system by Murray Bowen who defined the family as an emotional system which interrelated. The result of this study shows that the drama finds the family system however the family members were not functioning separately but in the context family system, they shape their feeling, thought, and behavior.

The three previous findings above have similarities and differences. Similarly, the first and second findings are focused on the kinds of dysfunctional families and their impacts on their children. Whereas, the third finding is focused on the shape of feeling, thought, and behavior of the family members through the eight concepts of the family system which in the practice was finding that the family members not functioning properly. These three findings refer to the issue of the dysfunctional family but in different ways. The first and third findings used Bowen as the primary theory of the study, while the second finding used the theory of George A. Boyd.

Furthermore, to analyze the dysfunctional family in the novel, the writer uses two theories. *Dysfunctional Families: Recognizing and Overcoming Their Effects* by Sheryl Benton (1993) is used for the analysis of the dysfunctional family and its types; Abusive, Deficient, and Controlling Parent. The roles of parents are the important things for their child's growth. Some parents, let their children survive for themselves, the others, control their children and do not allow them to grow up with their choices, and other parents, are inconsistent with their children (Benton, 1993).

Whereas to analyze the impacts of the dysfunctional family on the main character, the writer uses *The Effects of Growing Up in a Dysfunctional Family* by Sharon Martin (2018). Martin stated, that to thrive, physically and emotionally, children need to feel safe—and they rely on a consistent, attuned caregiver for that sense of safety. But in dysfunctional families, caregivers are neither consistent nor attuned to their children (Martin, 2018). There are six impacts explained by Martin, but there are 3 impacts that indicate in this study: highly stressed and anxious, alone and hopeless, and repressing their feeling.

The theories are explained in detail in the sub-sub-chapter. Some opinions by some experts to support the theory of this study are also provided. Psychoanalysis can be called a theory that analyzes the feelings and thoughts of characters. As the father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud defined psychoanalysis as an individual's behavior that is driven mostly by the unconscious which wild thoughts are stored, but which only appear in deviance, desire, or periods of stress (Freud, 1949). This statement shows that a person's behavior can be analyzed through what appears to that person. A person's deviant behavior can occur because of an event in the past and affect the future. As discussed in this study, deviant behavior can occur from the first environment that is obtained, it is the family. An unhealthy family environment can affect behavior and change habits experienced by a person and they are connected to each other emotionally. Therefore, each family member will need each other to carry out their roles which can later affect the behavior of each family member. It can be said as a family system. Humans have behavior that views the family as an emotional unit and describes complex interactions within that unit as proposed by Murray Bowen through family systems theory. According to The Bowen Center,

Families so profoundly affect their members' thoughts, feelings, and actions that it often seems as if people are living under the same "emotional skin." People solicit each other's attention, approval, and support, and they react to each other's needs, expectations, and upsets.
(2021)

The quotation states that humans can become emotionally united and easily understand a problem when viewed in the context of family ties and relationships. Not all family members have closeness, but they will still depend on each other. What happens to one member of the family can have an impact on other family members, for better or for worse.

Family is the first place to socialize, children grow up to be prepared to face the outside world. However, not everyone has a family that functions like this. Some people experience life in a dysfunctional family. According to Boyd, dysfunctional families are tensions and unnatural that occur in family relationships, such as between parents and children. It happens because there is a problem in one family member that has a big impact on other family members (1992). This shows that dysfunctional families have an impact on children's growth and development because the children feel they have not received lessons from their parents. Parents in this family are trapped in carrying out too many roles and cause obsessive or unnatural traits in the child. In the end, family members feel that all these deviant events are a form of learning about normal family functions.

Dysfunctional families usually occur because of problems that exist in parents, then the impact occurs on their children. According to Benton,

Healthy families tend to return to normal functioning after the crisis passes. In dysfunctional families, however, problems tend to be chronic and children do not consistently get their needs met. Negative patterns of parental behavior tend to be dominant in their children's lives.
(Benton, 1993, p. 1)

From the notion, it shows that the role of parents towards children in the family is very important. It is not only important when they are children but also important for the process of child growth and development until adulthood. What happens to a family where there are children in it, will have an impact on the future of the child. When the family is dealing with problems in a healthy way, children can instill in themselves what a healthy family looks like. Vice versa, children whose families do not face problems well, will grow into children who have different mindsets. One of the most common reasons for dysfunctional families is poverty and violence as well as the unpreparedness of parents to build a family, children eventually grow up without feeling the parental role they should have.

The emotional needs needed by children are erased and to become well-developed adults requires parental attention. This shows that children seem to be forced to grow up quickly without understanding the role that adults should play. According to Benton, there are several types of dysfunctional families, including:

1. Alcoholic Parents

One or even both parents experience addictions or compulsions such as alcohol, drugs, gambling, and promiscuity which influence family members. According to Benton,

Rules that apply one day don't apply the next. Promises are neither kept nor remembered. Expectations vary from one day to the next. Parents may be strict at times and indifferent at others. In addition, emotional

expression is frequently forbidden and discussion about the alcohol use or related family problems is usually nonexistent. Family members are usually expected to keep problems a secret, thus preventing anyone from seeking help. (Benton, 1993, p. 2)

This shows that families with parents like this tend to be chaotic and unpredictable. What parents say like this today will be different in the following days, this shows parents are not being consistent. This inconsistency makes children feel insecure, frustrated, or even angry, they will blame themselves for the behavior of their parents.

2. Abusive Parents

There are several kinds of abuse, such as verbal, physical, and sexual abuse. As Benton points out, some verbal abuse is direct, others disguised as humor by the use of subtle ridicule. Verbal abuse can be in the form of criticism directed at the appearance, intelligence, abilities, or basic values of the child (1993, p. 2). Verbal abuse with disparaging criticism can certainly have a long and lasting effect until the child becomes an adult.

Afterward, physical violence. Many parents physically abuse their children intending to help them as a form of discipline. However, according to Benton, "Physically abusive parents can create an environment of terror for the child, particularly since violence is often random and unpredictable. Abused children often feel anger." (1993, p. 2). Physical abuse of children will make it difficult for them to feel trusted and safe even when they are adults. However, parents often justify physical abuse based on a form of disciplinary action against children.

Furthermore, sexual violence is the most striking example of adult abuse of children only for the satisfaction of the adult. As Benton states,

Sexual abuse can be any physical contact between an adult and child where that contact must be kept secret. Demonstrations of affection—such as hugging, kissing, or stroking a child's hair -- that can be done openly are quite acceptable and even beneficial. When physical contact is shrouded in secrecy then it is most likely inappropriate. (Benton, 1993, p. 3)

Physical contact between an adult and a child that is required to be kept confidential constitutes sexual violence. This can happen to both boys and girls with men and women perpetrators. Most children who are sexually abused grow up to be self-loathing, ashamed, and worthless because they are too afraid to tell or ask other adults or family members for help.

3. Deficient Parents

Deficient parents offend their children because of their negligence. Parents who have chronic mental problems can lead to the inability of parents to raise children. It makes children as stated by Benton "Children tend to take on adult responsibilities from a young age in these families." (1993, p. 2). Usually, the emotional and non-emotional needs of parents will take precedence over the needs of their children. The impact on children, children become caregivers for their parents, and children feel inadequate and wrong because children are not able to carry out adult roles and take

care of their parents. These feelings can carry over into adulthood and often lead to depression.

4. Controlling Parents

Controlling parents can occur by one parent or both controlling. Parents continue to dominate and make decisions about what children should do. Benton (1993, p. 2) stated that such parents cannot trust and allow their children to do their own responsibilities at their age because these parents are afraid that their children will betray and leave them when the children become independent.

A dysfunctional family is an undesirable condition for both parents and children in the family itself. Often parents do not know what to do when dealing with problems in their family as well as children who feel the same can accept or ignore what is going on in their family. The impact of dysfunctional behavior is not only on a child's mental or psychological condition but also a physical condition. Most children may engage in self-blame and self-harm. This dysfunctional condition can occur repeatedly as stated by Smokowski & Kopasz that this worst memory may stay throughout the child's life and continue into adulthood as anxiety and depression (2005). In conclusion, dysfunctional children find it difficult to behave like normal children or children who have never faced a dysfunctional family. Because bad memories always haunt the victim and live from bad experiences of the past in childhood, present, and future when the child decides to create a new family of his own.

According to Sharon Martin through the article (2018) *Dysfunctional Families Find It Difficult to Deal with Feelings in a Healthy Way*. Dysfunctional parents are always busy dealing with their problems and don't have the time, energy, or emotional intelligence to pay attention to, respect, and support their child's feelings. And that's the result of Childhood Emotional Neglect (CEN). Children in dysfunctional families do not learn to respect their feelings. They focus on the feelings of others because their safety depends on others. As a result, children undermine self-esteem as a child and cause the emergence of thoughts that they are not important and do not deserve to be loved or cared for.

According to Sheryl Benton in *Dysfunctional Families: Recognizing and Overcoming Their Effect* (1993), when problems and circumstances such as parental alcoholism, mental illness, child abuse, or extreme parental rigidity and control interfere with family functioning. Like the effects, children can sometimes linger long after these children have grown up and left their problem families. Adults raised in dysfunctional families frequently report difficulties forming and maintaining intimate relationships, maintaining positive self-esteem, and trusting others; they fear a loss of control and deny their feelings and reality as stated by Vannicelli in Benton's journal (1993).

These impacts can be detrimental to the child and the severity of the bad memories will always be carried by the child into adulthood. This can lead to self-rejection, self-doubt, and even self-harm. Worse, children may take the same path as their parents to suppress pain or existing problems with alcohol, drinking, gambling, and pornography. There are impacts of the dysfunctional family according to American psychiatry, Sharon Martin (2018):

1. Children feel highly stressed and anxious. Children often experience erratic

behavior from their parents, it makes children feel anxious when they have to deal with parents.

2. Feel unimportant and unworthy. Parents who are too busy with their own problems and pain, tend not to have the time, energy, or emotional intelligence to appreciate, care for, and support their children's feelings. This can damage a child's self-esteem and cause them to feel unimportant and unworthy of attention and love.

3. Feel alone and hopeless. Dysfunctional families often forbid their family members, especially their children, to talk about their family problems both to their parents and other people outside their family. The children were forced to look fine, and nothing happened to their family. Since no one is allowed to speak, children will feel that they are alone and hopeless and imagine that no one else is going through what they are going through.

4. Don't trust anyone. Children in dysfunctional families have difficulty developing trust and security because their parents are inconsistent and unreliable. They are often exposed to dangerous people and situations and fail to protect them from harassment. The difficulty in trusting others eventually extends beyond the family.

5. Repress their feelings, numb themselves, and try to distract themselves from the pain. Parents in dysfunctional families often numb their feelings with alcohol, drugs, pornography, and are rarely disclosed and handled in a healthy way. Children quickly learn that trying to express their feelings at best will lead to neglect and at worst lead to violence, blame, and shame.

6. Shame. Children in dysfunctional families often blame themselves for their parents' incompetence or for being mistreated or neglected.

B. Method

The approach which used in this study is qualitative research. According to Leavy (2017), the qualitative approach was purposed to generate create meaning and get more descriptive data by observed the meaning, though understanding and revealed the topic. This study focused on the process of analyze the elements which show the dysfunctional family and the effect using Sheryl Benton and Sharon Martin's theory of the dysfunctional family. The data of this study were presented in a form of an essay.

The main data source for the analysis of this study was taken from the novel *The Kiss* written by Kathryn Harrison. The novel was published in 1997 by HarperCollins and contains 184 pages. The data was taken in the form of words. The data taken from the novel can be in the form of words, phrases, or sentences.

Moreover, the data were collected through several steps. First, read the novel as the literary work that would be used in the analysis. The second step identified the issue from the narrative elements in the novel. The third step highlighted the quotations which support the issue from the narrative elements in the novel.

Furthermore, the data which has already been collected from the novel entitled *The Kiss* were analyzed by using Benton's theory to identify the type of dysfunctional family depicted in the novel. Furthermore, the collected data were also

analyzed to reveal the impacts of the dysfunctional family by using Martin's theory. Furthermore, the step is classified as the data related to the theory, and the last step describes all data into an essay.

C. Findings and Discussion

Portrayal of the Dysfunctional Family in the Main Character's Family Life

Many things happened during the main character's life from childhood to adulthood, starting from the mother who did not play her role as a mother to the loss of a father figure which made her not understand the figure and role of a father in general. Her life has been started with many dysfunctional families since her parent divorced. Several things happen in this family that can be categorized as dysfunctional families. This sub-chapter will discuss and portray the family dysfunction that occurs in this family.

Abusive Parent

In this part, the element of family dysfunction will be dismantled through violent behavior perpetrated by parents against the main character as a child. The abusive things that occur in this family consist of physical abuse, verbal abuse, and also sexual abuse.

The abuse that happened to the main character has been experienced from childhood to adolescence. The first violence that she experienced was physical abuse, as in the following quotation, "The next day she takes me to the teacher, and with her hand tight around the back of my neck I confess." (Harrison, 1997, p. 20) That quotation shows that the main character was cheating on her French exam and her mother was angry about what she did. The torture that the main character got because of the actions she did not know which were good or bad thus would cause physical abuse in a dysfunctional family. It was the duty of parents to give direction to the child about the behavior that can and should not be done, in dysfunctional families it was something that was missing from the role of parents. In that quotation, her mother did not carry out the role to guide her daughter and when the main character made a mistake, her mother could not control her emotions and taught her a lesson, to be honest, and admitted her lies during exams. However, the way the mother gave the lesson showed physical abuse to the daughter where she forced the daughter to admit the cheating act with physical abuse by tightly gripping the back of her neck in front of the teacher. Cheating on exams should not be done because it is tantamount to lying about the abilities that have been given to the teacher, but the main character did this because of her ignorance of the consequences of this action. The main character just wanted to give good results to her mother without thinking about anything else. That could happen because it was something that the main character did not like and did not want to learn. Something that was forced on the child without knowing if it did not as the child would indeed cause the next problem.

It did not stop there; the mother gave the punishment to the daughter by dropping her on the side of the road on the way home. "In the driveway, she reaches across my chest to open the passenger door. "Get out," She says. I do, and she leaves"

(Harrison, 1997, p. 20). From the notion, it shows that the mother gave punishment to the daughter for the mistakes made by the daughter. Almost all children when a child makes a mistake do not want to be treated like the quotation above, because it will worsen the child's condition both mentally and physically. When children make mistakes, it can be caused by the role of parents, in supervision or roles. In a situation like this, what parents should do is give good advice thus it does not happen again, or the child can get better in the future. This form of punishment is intended to teach the daughter a lesson in discipline. However, instead of providing lessons on discipline, it leads to abuse because it has a negative impact on her.

Deficient Parent

Apart from parental abuse, there are other things that cause family dysfunction, the mental readiness of parents. Parents have an important role in carrying out responsibilities for children's development, in terms of finances, parenting, and others. As described in this novel, it is about the preparation of parents to carry out family functions. As shown in the following quotation,

My mother sleeps. For as long as she lives with us, in her parents' house, she sleeps whenever she can. She sleeps very late every day, as much as six or seven hours past the time when I get up for breakfast. I stand beside her bed as she sleeps. (Harrison, 1997, p. 7)

This quotation shows the role of parents, especially the mother who did not work according to their function. There are several reasons why parents cannot carry out their roles, especially mentally. The novel also shows the mentality of parents who were not ready to carry out their roles as parents who could lead the development of their children because they were not mentally or materially prepared to carry out their parental responsibilities. Parents in dysfunctional families still thought of their own interests over the interests of their children and dysfunctional parents were still looking for happiness for themselves which they should be able to do before they became parents. Getting married at a young age is not a bad thing if they already have matured mental and material preparation. The problem that arises when getting married at a young age is that it is difficult to choose the interests of themselves or the child when they already have children. As a result, the main character's mother often spent her time sleeping and keeping quiet and sleeping where or whenever she could sleep. Also, the mother did not take care of the child generally, such as getting up early, preparing breakfast, and taking care of the child.

Controlling Parent

Furthermore, the attitude of parents who are too domineering for children to determine the choices that children have to make. This attitude can happen to one parent or both. It can be one of the causes of family dysfunction. As the main character feels in the novel *The Kiss*.

The main character as a child felt that her parents dominate about decisions that her parents think were good for their daughters. This is proven through the following quotation, "I learn French, never with ease of other subjects and never with

pleasure, but I learn it well enough so that I can still read a French novel.” (Harrison, 1997, p. 21) The quotation shows, that the controlling parent behavior carried out by the mother, this behavior could have a bad impact on the daughter to do unexpected things. The main character did not think she was smart enough to learn French and she ended up cheating to get a good score. ““I can’t!” I cry. “I did it with this.” I shove the grubby crib note at her.” (Harrison, 1997, p. 20) She cheated for fear of being scolded by her mother for low scores on the exam the main character's test results were very good but she could not lie to her mother anymore, she admitted that she cheated to get good scores. Children would do whatever they do to avoid being punished, one of which is cheating. The main character got pressure from her mother to be able to satisfy her mother's wishes, this pressure made the main character do bad things that make her mother angry. Her mother must be angry because it turns out that the good results of the exam were not purely because of her daughter's ability as her mother punishes her in order to confess to her teacher for what she did. If this attitude continues to be carried out on the child, the worst possible for the child is that it is difficult to determine the choices they will face when they grow up because they cannot choose their own path and are always given choices by their parents without thinking about the needs of the children themselves.

Impacts of Dysfunctional Family to the Main Character

To reveal the impact of a dysfunctional family on Kathryn's life's novel, this study will use the theory of Sharon Martin (2018). It discusses the impact of dysfunctional family life on a child's mental, psychological conditions, and physical conditions. This impact can be focused on the habits of victims of dysfunctional families, which is children. A bad incident experienced by a child has negative impacts on the child, such as always feeling guilty, and becoming stressed and anxious which causes her to often repress or keep her feeling. It is caused by the expectations and prohibitions that parents give to the child for the benefit of the parents, and it makes her alone and hopeless because she feels unloved. The bad experience will continue to follow the victim from childhood, present, or future until they start their own family.

A very common cause that can cause adverse effects of family dysfunction for victims is dysfunctional parents are always busy with their problems and do not have the time or even do not take the time, energy, or emotional intelligence to provide supervision, role, respect, help and understanding the child's feelings. There are some impacts of the dysfunctional family according to an American Psychiatry, Sharon Martin (2018).

Highly Stress and Anxious

External coping strategies mean women who do this mechanism will need the help of others The effects created by dysfunctional families start with a lot of pressure due to the expectations that are placed on parents to children. These expectations can be one of the reasons for the bad impact of the child's habits because it can cause the child to become stressed to satisfy or reach the expectations given by parents. This can be seen in the following quotation,

Anorexia may begin as an attempt to make myself fit my mother's ideal and then to erase myself, but its deeper, more insidious and lasting seduction is that of exiling her. Anorexia can be satisfied, my mother cannot; so I replace her with this disease, with a system of penances and renunciation that offers its own reward. That makes mothers obsolete.
(Harrison, 1997, p. 39)

The quotation reveals the impact of the child who gets anorexia. Her mother's dream made him suffer from the disease, she wanted to be what her mother wanted her to be. Anorexia is an eating disorder that is seen from very low body weight and is not common, in addition, sufferers will feel excessive anxiety about gaining weight, and have a wrong view of weight. This disease includes mental disorders that arise due to environmental, psychological, and biological factors. The mental disorder suffered by the main character is caused because she only feels she is valuable if she is thin, she does this to be considered important by her parents, especially her mother. This impact occurs because of the treatment of parents on high expectations for children and makes them feel high anxiety and stress when dealing with their parents. This can be seen when she has to deal with her parents, as told in the novel.

Alone and Hopeless

Dysfunctional parents often forbid their children to tell their problems to others outside the family. Children often get pressure not to talk and make the child forced to look fine when outside the home. This causes the child to feel alone, lonely, and hopeless. The hopelessness arises because the child thinks that no one else will understand their feelings and no one else can feel what he feels other than himself.

As experienced by the main character, as a child from a dysfunctional family, she feels alone and hopeless,

Alone in apartment, I receive no guests, I rarely go out. having stopped out of school, I've lost contact with my friends: I've withdrawn from them, and they from me. (Harrison, 1997, p. 115)

As the quotation above, the main character has no friends or boyfriends. She could not enjoy her teenage years to be able to learn many things like children in general, having friends, close friends, or boyfriends. These people can change the way she views life and can even help her to get through the problems she is experiencing. This incident makes the main character alone and lonely because no one can help her to get through her problems. Children who are affected by dysfunctional families will think that no one else will experience the same thing as her, that's why the main character cannot have friends, or people around her to help and encourage her and even understand her feelings.

Repress Their Feeling

Dysfunctional parents always prioritize their own emotional and non-emotional needs. This makes the child experience a lack of affection and not understand his feelings. Children in dysfunctional families find it difficult to respect their feelings because they are more concerned with the feelings of others. This causes

the child to find it difficult to appreciate or even to suppress and keep his feelings to himself, as happened to the main character in the following quotation,

I begin to learn the wisdom of keeping my feelings to myself, a lesson reinforced often during a childhood of female warfare and tricky, shifting alliances, so often that my genius for evasion at last approaches that of my mother. She may sleep with a mask, but by the time I am a teenager I have made one within myself, I have hidden my heart.
(Harrison, 1997, p. 36)

The quotation above explains the impact of the child's habits that suppress the feelings they feel. They learn to suppress their feelings through circumstances, the behavior of their parents, or those around whom they often meet. This behavior is formed when she is still a child because when she is small the child thinks that the problems that come to her parents or family are caused by her. This happens because parents when they get into trouble, they always vent their emotions to the child. The inability of parents to contain their emotions causes the formation of bad effects experienced by the child. In addition, they do this to be able to distract her from the pain she will experience.

D. Conclusion

From the discussion that has been done in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that there are several types portrayed dysfunctional families experienced by the main characters, there are abusive, deficient, and controlling parents. The reason comes from the lack of preparation of parents in caring for the child, such as mental and knowledge. The main character's parents were abusive, the most frequent abuse was physical abuse which was mostly done by her mother when she was young and sexual abuse by her father when she grew up. The father also never played the parental role that he should have done because he had separated from the main character's mother when she was three months old, thus making the main character confused about her father's treatment of her, whether it was love or not. However, sexual abuse is not a form of affection but only to satisfy the desires of the adult.

Not only the various abusive experienced by the main character, but the main character's parents were also deficient. The main character's parents could not be a companion or became a support system for the child when the child was having problems. This is due to mental disorders that cause parents to not have the ability to raise and teach their children. The main character also becomes a caregiver for her mother when her mother cannot take care of herself.

The main character was often controlled by her mother as a child to do activities her mother wanted her to do without validating whether the main character wanted it or not. Afterward, when she was a teenager, she was also often controlled by her father, her father was too possessive. Her father forbade his daughter to play with her school friends and her boyfriend, it was because her father was jealous because the role he was playing was not what it should be.

From every bad incident experienced by a child in a dysfunctional family, this incident also has a negative impact on the habits and thoughts of the child such as always feeling guilty – becoming stressed and anxious which causes her to often repress or keep her feelings. It is caused by the expectations and prohibitions that parents give to the child for the benefit of the parents, and it makes her become alone and hopeless because she feels unloved. In addition, this impact can make changes in the behavior of the main character in the future, such as having difficulty trusting others, being difficult opening up to others, and feeling that no one cares about them. The bad experiences experienced will continue to carry over until the main character matures, even to the point of starting to create a new family in the future.

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