

**STRIVING FOR SUPERIORITY OF UNCLE TOM
IN HARRIET BEECHER STOWE'S *UNCLE TOM'S CABIN*:
AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH**



RESEARCH PAPER

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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Human beings, as long as they live, are individual creatures. They have the capability to create their feeling and want something. People in their lives always get in touch with other people or their society. In reality there are a lot of problems that appear in their daily lives. People cannot avoid problem that can appear from both internal and external factors.

“A problem exists when there is a discrepancy between your present state and your perceived goal state and there is no readily apparent way to get from one to the other. In situations where the path to goal attainment is not clear or obvious, a problem exists, and you will have to engage in problem-solving behaviors” (Gerow, 1989: 27).

In fact people cannot solve their problem automatically through their daily lives. Human being cannot be separated from the phenomenon and reality of life. Some people can drive and solve the problems. But some person give different response; they may see the problem as a border and find no way to solve the problem. One of the complexities of the problem itself consists of sadness. It appears when people have unfaithful feeling, hesitation and anxiety, which appear, in life as evident that as a human being has thought and feeling to face and try to solve his problem.

Human being in facing their problem some-times use their superiority to face their problem. Superiority is one of individual psychological principles. The person is indivisible unity in regard both to the mind-body

relationship and to the various activities and function of mind. Furthermore, actions are guided by person's fundamental attitudes toward life. Individual psychology insists on the fundamental unit of personality. Adler (in Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992: 141) believed that the major purpose of a personality theory should be to serve as an economical and fruitful guide of therapists, and ultimately for everyone, in effecting change toward more psychologically healthy behavior. Individual psychology insists on the fundamental unity of personality. All apparent dichotomies and multiplicities of life are organized in one-self consistent totally. No definite division can be made between mind and body, between conscious, or between reason and emotion. All behaviors are seen in relation to the final goal or success.

Each individual is forced by drives to be superior, powerful and regard. This is the response of feeling of inferiority, by inferiority feeling; person will make some efforts to cover it. Person will strive to cover his or her weakness to be perfect, superior and regarded. The one dynamic for behind the person's activity is the striving for success or superior (Feist, 1985: 68).

Adler (in Fredenburgh, 1971: 219) stated as follows:

“I should like to emphasize first of all that striving for perfection is innate, this is not meaning in a concrete way as if there were a drive, which would later in life be capable of bringing everything to completion and which only needed to develop it. The striving for perfection is innate in the sense that it is a part of life as striving an urge, a something without which life would be unthinkable.”

Indeed, *striving for superiority* is one fundamental motive toward all of people and it manifests in different ways. So, the goal of superiority will be a negative (destructive) and a positive (constructive) direction. A negative

direction is a case of poorly adjusted people who strives for superior through selfishness and concern for personal glory at the expense of others. In contrast, well-adjusted express their striving in a positive direction (Hjelle, 1992:144).

Adler (in Fiest, 1985; 70-71) stated as follows:

“This striving, however, much is activated. Its development begins as a response to feeling inferiority, which originates in organ deficiencies. The response is not merely a positive reaction, but the working of the creative power. This creative agent gives direction to the striving force by incorporating it into the final goal. “The striving is innate not acquired; it’s existed at birth”. Without the innate movement towards perfection human will never feel inferiority, but without feeling inferiority one would never set a goal of superiority or success

Based on the theory above, Stowe in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* gives some description about a man who tries to have freedom and gets better life.”

In this novel, Stowe describes the striving for superiority of the major character Uncle Tom when Tom is consistently trying to improve him self in his limitation as a slave. Moreover, Tom does not accept his position of inferiority. Stowe describes the characteristic of Uncle Tom with strong characters. He is an old black slave living in the North American which is kind person who has a passive Christ figure who manages to spread some of the love and god will of his religious beliefs helping to alleviate the pain of the slavery and enhance the hope salvation.

<http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/ucletom/term/char1.html> (on April 29th 2008)

The story of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* focuses on conflict of different characters, some good and some bad.

Uncle Tom’s Cabin describes the superiority of Uncle Tom when Tom is consistently trying to improve him self in his limitation as slave. He is an

old black slave living in the North American who is kind of person who has a passive Christ figure who consistently forgives the wrong committed against him and turns to god in times of crisis.

Based on explanations above, the writer is interested in observing Uncle Tom's superiority when his problem appears and he has to solve his problem That is the reason why the writers is interested in understanding the novel based on psychological approach for his paper entitled: **STRIVING FOR SUPERIORITY OF UNCLE TOM IN HARRIET BEECHER STOWE'S *UNCLE TOM'S CABIN*: AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH.**

B. Literary Review

Novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in Stowe's represents old story, but it is interested to be analyzed. As long as the researcher knows, it has been studied by other researchers in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta by Wita Setiyanty in his research paper entitled:Need for Love and Belongingness in Harriet Beecher Stowe "Uncle Tom's Cabin": A Humanistic psychological Approach. The writer analyzes the content of the novel by finding the kinds of needs for love and belongingness in life, such as; love in the family, love to the opposites, and love in the society to be related with the major principles of Humanistic Theory. The novel is also interesting to be analyzed in viewed from individual psychological Approach

C. Problem Statement

Considering the phenomenon clarified above, the researcher proposes the problem “How is Uncle Tom’s striving for superiority reflected in Harriet Beecher Stowe *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*?”

D. Limitation of the Study

In this study, the writer will focus on the major character’s Uncle Tom in his striving for superiority viewed from the Individual Psychological Approach.

E. Objectives of the Study

The writer has some objectives to describe as follows:

1. To analyze the novel based on the structural elements.
2. To analyze the novel based on Individual Psychological Approach focused on striving for superiority.

F. Benefit of the Study

The writer divides the benefit into two categories, they are:

1. Theoretical Benefit

This study is purposed to give a contribution to the body of knowledge particularly the aspect of Individual Psychological Approach in literary study.

2. Practical Benefit

Particularly the study can increase the knowledge of the writer about Individual Psychological Approach applied in a literary work, particularly on Harriet Beecher Stowe *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

G. Research Method

1. Object of the Study

The writer takes the novel Harriet Beecher Stowe *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as the object of study.

2. Type of the Data and the Data Source

The writer divides the data source into two categories, there are:

a. Primary Data Source

The primary data source of the study is the Novel. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

b. Secondary Data Source

The writer takes the secondary data sources, including references and materials related to the study whether takes from books or Internet.

3. Technique of the Data Collection

There are some procedures in library research, there are:

- a. Reading the novel several times.
- b. Identifying important and relevant elements.
- c. Taking notes or makes a mote of relevant elements.
- d. Classifying the data into categories.
- e. Drawing conclusion to get the result.

4. Technique of the Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study consists of three steps: classifying data, verifying the data, and interpreting the data based on underlying theories into conclusions.

H. Research Paper Organization

This research paper consists of five chapters. Chapter I is the Introduction, which contains background of the study, literary review, problem statement, limitation, objective of the study, benefit of the study, research method, theoretical approach, and research paper organization. Chapter II is underlying theory. The structural analysis of the novel is presented in chapter III. In chapter IV, the writer discusses the psychological analysis of the novel itself. While in chapter V, the writer concludes the entire research paper.