THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF ON INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR AT CHARLES DICKENS’ *A CHRISTMAS CAROL* (1843) NOVEL: A BEHAVIORIST PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This study is proposed to show the religious belief which is get from learning process represented by the entire characters at A Christmas Carol novel by using a behaviorist perspective. It is done by analyzing the novel based on the behaviorist perspective. This is descriptive qualitative research. In this method, there are two kinds of data source, primary and secondary data source. The primary data source is A Christmas Carol novel by Charles Dickens and secondary data source of the research are taken from books and internet related to the study. Based on the behaviorist analysis, the researcher concludes that religious belief has a great influence on individual behavior.

Keywords: Religious Belief, A Christmas Carol, Behaviorist Perspective
A. Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Religion is an important thing in life. Religion contributes to lead the human’s life and the way of life of every human. Hick in Pandey (2009: 50) has classified various definitions of religion under following heads: phenomenological, psychological, sociological, naturalistic, and religious.

Belief is the main measure used in literature, because that is how religion itself measures its successes or failures. Every religion wants more believers, even if they do not follow all its commandments. A public statement of faith is considered sufficient for membership in many religious groups, and this makes sense from a social-psychological point of view. A public stand means public commitment, and that is what any group would wish to have. Data about both rituals and beliefs should not be based on official dogma, but on what believers say (Beit-Hallahmi and Argyle: 1997: 40).

Belief means to admit or believe the truth. Beliefs are matters relating to admission or faith of the truth. Religious beliefs are the things associated with recognition or conviction of the truth of religion. Even though religious beliefs are not based on any evidence, they do not fail to impress so many people (Pandey, 2009: 01).

*A Christmas Carol* is a novel by English author Charles Dickens, published by Chapman & Hall on December 19th, 1843. Dickens divides the book into five chapters, which he labels "staves" in each chapter. The novel tells about Ebenezer Scrooge who didn’t believe at Christmas tradition. Scrooge’s assume that christmas is like a time for paying bills without money and time for finding yourself a year older but an hour richer.

There are four reasons why the researcher is interested in studying this novel; the first reason is because this novel tells about religious belief influence on individual behavior, the second reason is the novel tells the story of a character that is very wealthy, but he is very stingy and tends
outs of social life, the third reason is the setting of the story is very interesting, because the story is set in an ancient London where Dickens’ live in the 19th century and the last reason is because this novel is so well known at the time, so the researcher is interested to see more of the content of the novel.

Based on the reason in the background above, the researcher is interesting to studying more detail about Charles Dickens’s novel namely *A Christmas Carol* by using Behaviorist Perspective. The writer gives the title: **THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF ON INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR AT CHARLES DICKENS’ A CHRISTMAS CAROL (1843) NOVEL: A BEHAVIORIST PERSPECTIVE.**

2. Literature Review

A Christmas Carol novel (1843) written by Charles Dickens is very popular. Some people have been attracted to conduct research toward this artistic work. The first researcher who studied this book is Alex Syahputra (2008) entitled *The Traumatic Experience Of An Accountant In Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol: A Psychological Analysis.* Syahputra (Silvya, thesis, 2011) reveals the impact of traumatic experiences and analyses how the Ebenezer Scrooge each element of mind (id, ego, and superego) leads to the performing of each his action. This thesis focuses on the traumatic experience which influences the id, ego, and superego then the effect toward his life. Therewith, Syahputra is intended to analyze the mental process of each behavior by relating to Scrooge experience in his life. Thus, the findings of Syahputra’s psychological analysis will be much more different with the writer Marxist study that reveal about the bourgeois ideologies in Victorian Era along with the contradictions and conflicts of capitalist society reflected in the literary work.

The second researcher is Dery Silvya (2011) from Andalas University entitled *The Bourgeois Ideologies in Charles Dickens’ a Christmas Carol: a Marxist Study.* She analyzes her novel use Marxist
Theory by Karl Mark and Frederick Engels focusing on the emerging ideology of the capitalist system.

The third researcher comes from University of Sumatra Utara named Junastri Elfina R. Siahaan (2010) with the research title *An Analysis of Moral Lesson in Charles Dickens ’ A Christmas Carol*. Her research is conducted to analyze morals through some major character concerns to human behavior as depicted in the novel *A Christmas Carol*.

The fourth researcher is written by Novi Kresnawati (2006) entitled *The Impacts of Industrial Revolution on English Society as Seen in A Christmas Carol By Charles Dickens*. In analyzing her thesis, Kresnawati applies the theory of Allan Swingewood on sociology of literature that focus on the perspectives that analyze literary work as the reflection or social document of society.

The fifth researcher is by Dessi Fatrahuty (2007) entitled *Moral Values in Charles Dickens A Christmas Carol*. In her thesis, Fatrahuty applies the theory of Hans Bartens that focus on three moral values as reflected on Ebenezer Scrooge character they are responsibility, obligation, and conscience. The bad behavior of Scrooge as depicted in the first of the novel implies that he does not achieve his responsibility, obligation, and conscience until he warns and transforms to be a good behavior man. In her thesis, Fatrahuty indicate that the transformation of Scrooge has brought him to fulfill the responsibility, obligation, and conscience that refer to moral values.

The sixth researcher is from international journal by Lee Erickson (1997) from United States with the research title *The Primitive Keynesianism of Dickenses A Christmas Carol*. His journal describes about the transformation of Ebenezer Scrooge in " A Christmas Carol " reflects Dickens' understanding of the psychological basis of economic activity and the financial depression that gripped England in 1843.

The seventh researcher is by Michael Timko (2001) from United States with the research title *Why Dickens’ wrote A Christmas Carol*. His
journal discussed about why Charles Dickens wrote “A Christmas Carol,” noting that the novel is a product of the quintessential Dickensian mixture of sentimentality and commercialism. Desperately seeking recognition in the 1840s, Dickens was the inventor of a completely new genre, a muted social commentary presented in the form of an inspirational seasonal story.

The last researcher comes from Sanata Dharma University named Susana Sunarsasi (2002) with the research title The Cold and Closed Heart Character of Ebenezer Scrooge, the Main Character in Charles Dicken’s A Christmas Carol. Her analysis focuses on Ebenezer Scrooge as a main character of the novel. Her study aims at showing the readers that there are a lot of supporting experience, persons, actions, and events that could influence a person becoming whoever he is.

So the researcher uses a behaviorist perspective to analyze the data and using A Christmas Carol novel as an object. The researcher analyzes The Influence of Religious Belief on Individual Behavior at Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol (1843) Novel: A Behaviorist Perspective.

3. Problem Statement

The writers proposed the problem statement of this research “How does the religious belief influence on individual behavior at Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol (1843)?”

4. Objective of the Study

Based on the problem that has been stated above, the objective of the study is to analyze the religious belief influence on individual behavior at Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol (1843) based on behaviorist perspective.
5. **Benefit of the Study**

The researcher really hopes that her research on *A Christmas Carol* (1843) has benefits. The benefits of the study will be distinguished into two benefits:

1. **Theoretical Benefits**

   The result of the study is expected to be able to give information and contribution the development of the knowledge, an academic reference by other researchers to conduct further research and particularly the literary studies on *A Christmas Carol* novel.

2. **Practical Benefits**

   The study is expected to enrich knowledge and experience of the writer.

6. **Underlying Theory**

   In order to know the influence of religious belief on individual behavior at Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* (1843) uses behaviorist perspective. This approach is appropriate to analyze the influence of religious belief on individual behavior. The researcher will present the notion of behaviorism and religious belief.

**B. Research Method**

1. **Type of the Study**

   In this research, the writer uses a qualitative research. It is library research while data sources are using library data. The purpose of this research is to analyze novel using Behaviorist Perspective. The steps to conduct the research are (1) determining the type of the study, (2) determining the object of the study, (3) determining data and data source, (4) determining technique of data collection, (5) determining technique of data analysis.
2. **Object of the Study**

   The object of the study is religious belief influence on individual behavior at Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* (1843) based on behaviorist perspective.

3. **Type of the Data Source**

   There are two kinds of data source, primary and secondary data source. The primary data source is *A Christmas Carol* novel by Charles Dickens and secondary data source of the research are taken from books and internet related to the study.

4. **Technique of Data Collection**

   The method of collecting data in this research is note-taking *A Christmas Carol* novel. So the writer has some steps in analyzing the data as follows: reading *A Christmas Carol* novel to understand the novel deeply, reading some related books to find out the theory and information which is required, taking notes of important thing both of primary and secondary data sources, selecting particular parts considered important and relevant for analysis, and drawing conclusion and formulate its pedagogical suggestion.

5. **Technique of Data Analysis**

   The technique used in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis. It concerns with the structural elements of the novel and Behaviorist Perspective.

C. **Research Finding**

1. **Source of Influence**

   a. **Before believing Christmas**

      Belief is believed on truth. In *A Christmas Carol* novel it is reflected at Ebenezer Scrooge’s behavior. At this novel, Dickens tells
that Scrooge is old man who didn’t believe on Christmas. He assumed that Christmas is stupid things to lost money and marriage is the other ludicrous things in addition to Christmas.

The influence that makes Scrooge not believe on Christmas was getting from his believed that Christmas remembered his bad memories at the past, because Scrooge got a bad experience at Christmas Eve and Christmas day. The first experience could be read at Stave I when Ghost of Christmas Past brought him to his old school, at this scene little Scrooge was reading book and grew older but he was alone again when the other boys enjoy their jolly holidays.

Suddenly, his sister (Fan) comes to bring Scrooge back home, because their father gives permission to bring him back home. So, they can enjoy and together all the Christmas long. The second experience, Jacob Marley died seven years before at night before Christmas day or also called Christmas Eve. Marley is the one and only one of Scrooge’s business partner. Scrooge was left alone by his partner and Christmas was remembered him to this event.

From these experiences, Scrooge believed that Christmas just brings bad memories for him. Christmas will take his money, Christmas is humbug and he hates it.

b. After believing Christmas

After finished the journey with the three ghosts, Scrooge got a lesson and took the conclusion that Christmas is something that would he saved in his heart and he believed on Christmas. The source that makes Scrooge believe in Christmas gets from Ghost of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come which shows the scene of young Scrooge, Mr. Fezziwig’s party, Mr. Cratchit’s household, and about man’s death.
1) **Ghost of Christmas Past**

The influence is from Ghost of Christmas Past. Ghost of Christmas Past is the first spirit who visits Scrooge. The Ghost tries to help Scrooge with showing his past.

The first manner is showing Scrooge when he was child. The spirit reminds Scrooge about his little sister (Fan) who had a large heart. At this scene a little Fan came to bring a young Scrooge back home from his boarding school.

The second manner is showing Mr. Fezziwig’s great Christmas party. Young Scrooge worked for Mr. Fezziwig. He revisits the memory of his employment with Mr. Fezziwig. This scene tells that Mr. Fezziwig is wealth but he still celebrates his Christmas with his entire employee. This scene also showed that Scrooge still enjoyed and celebrates Christmas.

The last manner is showing the girls who Scrooge loves, Belle. This scene tells why Belle leaves Scrooge at these times. Scrooge changed, he is afraid the world too much. He doesn’t want to be poor again.

2) **Ghost of Christmas Present**

The next influence came from Ghost of Christmas Present. Ghost of Christmas Present is the second spirits who come to Scrooge. This spirit tells Scrooge about the present thing in around him and the joyful of Christmas.

The fist manner is showing Bob Cratchit’s household. Cratchit is Scrooge’s clerk. The Ghost shows how poor they are, but they are still happy with their togetherness when celebrated Christmas. Scrooge feels pity to Tiny Tim who has a cripple leg.

The second manner is showing Fred’s (Scrooge nephew) dine. The Ghost shows to Scrooge about Fred’s conversation which talked about him. They feel pity to Scrooge who has never
celebrated Christmas although he is very rich. Scrooge had his doubts of this after heard their conversations, because the Christmas Holidays appeared to be condensed into the space of time they passed together.

3) Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come

The last influences come from Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come is the last ghost who visits Scrooge. This ghost shows about the future. This spirit showed the scene of someone’s death to Scrooge, but no one feels sad about the death. Scrooge thinks that Tiny Tim who is dying, but when he enters to his counting house he reads upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name “Ebenezer Scrooge”. He was surprised to know it.

After it all Scrooge promised to keep Christmas in his heart and hopes the future will change. He wakes up and aware that the accident happens in one night, and it’s Christmas day. He asked the children in front of his house to send a large turkey to Cratchit’s house, he came to Fred’s dinner and enjoyed his Christmas, Scrooge raised Bob’s salary and he became a second father to Tiny Tim.

2. Positive and Negative Influence on Scrooge’s Behavior

Belief can influence on individual behavior. The influence which is accepted by every individual is different. In A Christmas Carol, the main character gets a positive and negative influence on his behavior.

a. Positive Influence on Scrooge’s Behavior

1) Friendly

In the beginning of the novel, Scrooge described as a person who has a hard character. When he walked in a street at town,
everyone avoided him. He never asks a question or greets the person who was walking in around him.

At the end of the story he became friendly to everyone he met after entire of experiences he got from the three ghosts of Christmas. He does not only smile to everyone in a street, but also became a second father to Tiny Tim who had a cripple leg. He called the boy who helps him to buy a large turkey for Bob Cratchit’s family with “my fine fellow” and gives him 1 shilling for his help.

2) **Generous**

In the earlier of the novel, the writer told that Scrooge is a stingy man. He pays 15 shillings for one week to his clerk (Bob Cratchit). Scrooge refuses to charitable when two portly gentlemen asking for donations for the poor people. He does not want his wealth to decrease because he is generous to other people.

At the end of the novel, Scrooge became generous to everyone. He raised the salaries of Bob Cratchit and sent him a large turkey when Christmas day. Scrooge gave a half of his wealth to the poor. He enjoyed a Christmas dinner with his nephew, Fred.

b. **Negative Influence on Scrooge’s Behavior**

1) **Stingy**

In the beginning of the novel, Scrooge is described as a person who has a hard character. When he walked in a street at town, everyone avoided him. He never asks a question or greets the person who was walking in around him.

Scrooge is very afraid when he became poor. He is afraid to lose his money for something which is not important to his life. He chooses to be a stingy man to raise his wealth.
2) **Hard**

In the beginning of the novel, Scrooge is described as a person who has a hard character. When he walked in a street at town, everyone avoided him. He never asks a question or greets the person who was walking in around him.

Scrooge not believes to another people. After his partner (Jacob Marley) dead, he chooses to live alone at his big house. He makes triple key to his accounting house and his house. He wants to save his wealth.

3. **Value Learned**

An individual has bad and good behavior. The behavior can be seen in their daily activity. The experience which they get everyday can change their old behavior. To obtain those experiences people need learning process which must they do. When people get effect or experience with the learning process, it means that the people also learn values from the learning process.

In *A Christmas Carol* novel, Scrooge got many experiences especially when Scrooge was visited by three ghosts. There are many values that Ebenezer Scrooge got from the learning process, they are:

a. **Respect to other people**

In the beginning of this novel, Ebenezer Scrooge is an old man who has a stingy character. He does not care about the other people. Especially to Bob Cratchit (his clerk) and two portly gentlemen which came to his accounting house.

After he meets Ghost of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come; he became a better man who respects to other people in around him. They are showing the scenes in around him from his past at boarding school, Mr. Fezziwig’s party, Mr. Cratchit’s household, and about man’s death. Scrooge changes his behavior and be a better man. He
sends a large turkey to Bob Cratchit’s family and haves a good dinner with Fred.

b. Wealth didn’t guarantee happiness

In the beginning of the story, the writer tells that Scrooge is a rich man who has a counting-house but he lives alone at this house. In the other scene the writer tells about Bob Cratchit’s family. They were poor but they are happy with their togetherness.

After visited by three ghosts, Scrooge was aware that togetherness is more important than money. He was rich enough but he was alone all of time. While Bob Cratchit who was poor, happy all of the time with the togetherness with his large family.

D. Discussion

A Christmas Carol is a novel by Charles Dickens. It tells about man who changed his behavior influenced by religious belief. The influence gives an important influence in changing Scrooge behavior. In describing every component which expands his behavior, it is needed to gather and relate these components into discussion. It is an exciting illustration of the influence of learning process as a kind of behavioral sense. In life, people needed learning process to be better person.

In this novel, the writer wants to tell that the novel full of message which will describe. This novel tells about the learning process became an important aspects in change individual behavior. It is reflected at in A Christmas Carol novel that the writer made the main character namely Ebenezer Scrooge who gets some lesson from the three ghosts. In the beginning of this novel, Scrooge is a rich man who has stingy character. He does not care about other people in around him. During he visited by three ghosts, he learns many lessons that give positive influence on his behavior. Scrooge learns from Cratchit’s family who’s still cheerful although he is poor and he feels pity to Tiny Tim (Cratchit’s son) because he has a cripple legs.
After that, Scrooge felt sympathy to Cratchit’s family, he sent a large turkey to them when Christmas day and he became a second father to Tiny Tim. It can be seen at the end of the story.

An individual has bad and good behavior. The behavior can be seen in their daily activity. The experience which they get everyday can change their old behavior. To obtain those experiences people need learning process which must they do. When people get effect or experience with the learning process, it means that the people also learn values from the learning process. After Scrooge gets the influences from scene shown by the three ghosts, he gets influence to change his behavior. Diego learns from Cratchit’s family, Fred and peoples in around him that he must respect to other people and think that wealth didn’t guarantee happiness. It can be seen when he send a large turkey to Cratchit’s family and be the second father to Tiny Tim (Cratchit’s son), also enjoying the dinner with Fred. The readers can see that Scrooge changed to be better man and believed on Christmas.

When Scrooge was visited by Jacob Marley and told him that three ghosts will visit him in three nights. Marley tell that during 7 years he traveled far and wide, no break and no peace. The Ghost of Christmas Past, Present and Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come give huge influence to him. They are showing the scenes in around him from his past at boarding school, Mr. Fezziwig’s party, Mr. Cratchit’s household and about man’s death. At this stage Scrooge remembered about the joyful of Christmas. They show the scenes in around Scrooge. From the scene Scrooge learned numerous courses and he becomes a respect man.

In the beginning of the story Scrooge's partner, Jacob Marley; dead for seven years visits him in the form of a spirit or ghost. He has come to warn Scrooge, he tells him Three Spirits will come to him in three nights. Ghost of Christmas Past shows Scrooge scenes from the past. Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge several scenes of Christmas joy and charity, shows him the Cratchit (Scrooge’s clerk) household and Fred's party (Scrooge’s nephew). The last Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come shows Scrooge several
scenes of people discussing someone's death; no one seems pained by the death, and most are happy about the death. He expresses the hope that these scenes of the future can be changed, and vows to incorporate the lessons of the past, present, and future into his adoption of the Christmas spirit. He woke up after the three ghosts came to him. It happened in one night not like Marley’s explain that Scrooge will be visited by three spirits over the next three nights. Finally Scrooge is friendly to everyone, he sends a large turkey to Cratchit’s family, gives a donation to the charity worker he previously refused, and has a great time at Fred's party. The next day he gives Cratchit a raise. Scrooge continues his kindly ways after Christmas and he never sees the three ghosts again (A Christmas Carol: 1843).

The writer makes A Christmas Carol novel be popular. It’s got a lot of attention from the readers. It gives stimulation or inspiration to the reader that they can celebrate their own Christmas with their manners. Ebenezer Scrooge, the major character of the novel got trouble to socialize with other people, he does not care about people in around them. He does not believe on Christmas tradition and refuse the joyful of Christmas. The trouble like that can change because the influence of religious belief which they got from the learning process.

E. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of Charles Dickens’s A Christmas Carol novel by using behaviorist perspective, it can be assumed that the religious belief influencing on individual behavior of the person, especially Ebenezer Scrooge. All of the major and minor characters influence Scrooge to believe on Christmas. They have a great influence in change Scrooge’s opinion about Christmas. In this novel the setting of place involves some place in England, where the writer stays. The setting of time in this novel is when a Christmas Eve or the day before a Christmas day.

The influences of religious belief in individual behavior do not only give positive influence, but also sometimes give negative influences. The
influences which they give are in many methods. There are from experiences, attitudes or behavior. Those methods can change their behavior; they can choose the good things or bad things for them self. In *A Christmas Carol* novel, the main character, Ebenezer Scrooge tries to take entire of experiences and apply in his life. The people around him can change his religious belief and can change his behavior to be better.

Based on behaviorist perspective, there is has relationship between the story of the novel with the real condition where the writer live. The story of the novel tells the condition in a Victorian era. At this era finds strong differences in life between a rich and poor family reflected a major character, Ebenezer Scrooge and peoples in around him.


