

Child unconsciousness in *A Handful of Dates* by Saleh Tayib and *The Veldt* by Brad Bury

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Article Info

Abstract

*Article History:*  
Received  
8 February 2021  
Approved  
18 April 2021  
Published  
23 April 2021

**Keywords:**  
unconsciousness,  
parental behavior,  
psychoanalytic, short  
stories

A disappointment in parental behaviour towards children sometimes does not realized by parents. How parents raised their children is one of the reasons children unconsciously experience disappointment, reflected in the short story *A Handful of Dates* by Tayeb Salih and *The Veldt* by Ray Bradbury. This study shows that parental attitudes affect children's behaviour. This research uses the close reading method which includes: (1) analyzing the character of children and parents (2) identifying child's unconsciousness (3) drawing conclusions about the effect of unconscious parental behaviour on children. This study uses psychoanalytic approach. Moreover, this study shows that parents' behaviour toward children's unconsciousness can influence children's bad behaviour.

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**How to cite (in APA Style):**

Ardani, M. P. (2021). Child unconsciousness in *A Handful of Dates* by Saleh Tayib and *The Veldt* by Brad Bury. *Rainbow : Journal of Literature, Linguistics and Culture Studies*, 10(1), 69-76. <https://doi.org/10.15294/rainbow.v10i1.44784>

INTRODUCTION

Literature can be said to be a reflection of life experiences that we have experienced and then put together in a written form. The transformation and development of literature that has occurred to date, literature can also be said to be an instrument to reflect on people's life experiences. Literature must be able to present life experiences in the form of a collection of writings. In addition, literary works are also made to arouse the critical spirit of society in meeting spiritual and intellectual needs.

This research uses research objects from short stories. This research also aims to raise another function of literary works that literature is not only a collection of life reflections but literary works can also be a medium for people to think more critically, awaken their common sense and

guide people who read literature to learn life lessons.

Life learning and critical thinking can be obtained from reading literature (Sean A. Mckitrick & Sean M. Barnes, 2012). In addition, it can be said that literature can be an instrument for learning life. A person's experiences and conditions, physical conditions and mental condition, are formed from a life experience they have experienced. Childhood experiences are experiences that play an important role in shaping our current behavior. The good or bad things that we have been through in the past can have an effect on our mental state and also the nature of our current behavior because they are formed from experiences. The experience can be formed from the social conditions experienced by the child in his childhood, the condition of the environment

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p-ISSN: 2252-6323  
e-ISSN: 2721-4540

around the child when growing up, and also the way he environment views life about the good and bad, can also affect the current mental condition. This study focuses on how the unconscious behavior of parents towards children can affect children's behavior in the future.

Many parents are not aware of their behavior towards children so that children have hidden disappointments that they are not even aware of (Huston, 2002). In addition, it is the children's disappointment that they are not aware of which can affect children's behavior in the future. The relationship between parents and children shows the family system. The relationship between parents and children shows that the quality of family relationships and children's behavior is complex and dynamic but integrated. Relationships that also vary over the course of the children's journey. Every member of the family influences and is influenced, as is the involvement of parents in their documents by all other members (Goldberg & Carlson, 2014). During childhood, it is believed that role models or parental centrality to children can affect children's growth and can affect the character and character of children in the future. In addition, parents play an important role in providing physical, social and positive learning for children's development because parents are central to them (Bornstein et al., 2017). More precisely, this study is interested in how the interaction of children and parents and the behavior of parents towards children can greatly influence children's behavior in the future. How children get their perceptions of themselves and children's perceptions of other people depends on how the family treats them since childhood. Before children enter the school world, interactions that play an important role in children's behavior are family interactions, especially interactions between the roles of children and parents. The role of parents is very important because parents can recognize children's growth and development and teach good or bad things and provide examples of good things to children so that children can apply them in everyday life. Basically, parents need to guide and direct children in a positive environment

so that children behave positively and also reach their maximum potential (Mulyani et al., 2019).

The role of parents on the side of the child when the child is still small is very important to teach valuable things. Meanwhile, parents who do not accompany their children when they were children are parents who cannot provide roles as examples and mentors. According to (Bundi-Faizoli et al., 2009), parents who work and cannot accompany their children when they were children will be in the weakest position in the process of shaping children's character. Sometimes the unconscious behavior of parents towards children is something that often occurs in everyday behavior. Parents feel unaware of the behavior they do towards children, even though this is very important to pay attention to because it will have a big impact on children in shaping children's character (Dewi, 2017). Many working parents leave their duties as parents to babysitters. However, this can have a negative effect because parents cannot control it directly.

The unconsciousness itself is a part of the id according to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory. Unconsciousness, in Freud's analysis, can be said in the form of tongue sprains or mispronunciation, daydreams, fantasies, dreams and also misbehavior (Zaenuri, 2005). Even Freud also said that what we do in everyday life, including our behavior towards others, is a conscious behavior that we are not aware of or can be said as conscious behavior in the unconscious. The unconscious mental state is the state of the brain intrinsically influencing the unconscious aspects of reality. According to Freud, the unconscious is something like an event that we are aware of but that is not aware of the impact of our behavior (Vollmer, 2008). Conscious behavior is a hidden behavior from things that we are not aware of so that it affects our conscious behavior (Zaenuri, 2005). In addition, unconsciousness is a form of human behavior that is independent of conscious control. The unconsciousness that is produced in a literary work appears in the form of language with an arbitrary sign structure, although not all literary works are like that, however, many

literary works use this structure, giving rise to new meanings for these markers.

The short story "A Handful of Dates" (1964) by the Sudanese writer Tayeb Salih tells the story of a child's admiration for his grandfather because his grandfather was a kind person, wise, compassionate, highly respected and also, he thought his grandfather was everything because he had a kind and wise character. Over time, his grandson found something disappointing about his grandfather so that his grandson's admiration for his grandfather turned into disappointment. In this short story, it tells the problem between Masood and his grandfather. In addition, the Gandfather admitted that he greedily owned Masood's land. It is said that at harvest time, his grandfather tricked Masood into working in his land for the harvest and paid their debt. Based on the situation, the grandson was deeply hurt knowing that his grandfather was not the kind and wise person he had imagined.

"The Veldt" is a science fiction short story by American writer Ray Bradbury. This short story tells about a mother and a father who use advanced technology to replace their role as parents, so that their home is equipped with sophisticated and modern technology to replace their role. They use sophisticated and modern technology to control and care for their children just like the role of parents towards children. However, this has a negative effect on their children. Their children become uncooperative due to a lack of discipline.

## METHODS

In order to find out the various effects of children's unconsciousness that can adversely affect children's behavior, the data of this study were taken from a short story "A Handful of Dates" (1964) by Tayeb Salih and also "The Veldt" (1950) by Brad Bury. The two short stories were chosen because they reflect the relationship between the child and the parent and there is disappointment of the child towards parent's behaviour Furthermore, research with descriptive methods means observing and being used to identify the characteristics, trends, and correlations of the short

stories. Qualitative research methods are aimed at knowing the unconsciousness of children on parental behavior which can affect children's behavior in the future. First, a close reading of Salih's short story "A Handful of Dates" and the short story "The Veldt" was carried out to analyze the characters reflected in the story. Second, this study tries to identify children's unconsciousness which has a negative impact on parents. Specifically, children's unconsciousness is identified from the interactions between the main character and other characters. Third, the final step in this research is to look at the influence of children's unconsciousness on children's development.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Freud argued that personality develops from the interaction of three fundamental structures, namely Id, Ego, Superego (Rusell, 2012). This third structure has conflicts and attempts to determine how we behave. It also has to do with balancing what we achieve in a given situation and also defines the aggressive biological combat versus our internal control that the fight socializes. Freud also argued that Id is the primitive structure of the three structures that have been affected. The id deals with instant gratification of a basis and basic physical needs and needs. Furthermore, the Id goes without realizing it or thoughts of human thought. The second structure is the Superego. In addition, the Superego is related to moral and social rules or what is known as "conscience." Superego develops when a child learns about their culture and what their culture is about right and wrong. Different from the two previous structures in that Id is a structure that instingual and superego is about moral, Ego is structure that reason, pragmatic from our personality. Freud considered structure to be "self" because of its duty to balance the demands of the Id and the superego in the form of practical reality. In this context Freud argued that the id, ego and superego always exist in a conflict about a person's personality and behavior. In addition, Freud argued that someone who has a strong ego is a person who has a healthy

personality and that the imbalance between the Ego Id and the Superego can cause neurosis (things we perceive as victims and depression and unhealthy behavior) (Russell, 2012).

### Parents Behaviour

In this section the researcher identifies the role of the family, especially the role of parents towards children who can contribute to children's lives and behaviors. Family is the child's first stage in learning something, apart from this, the environment also plays an important role in influencing the child's mindset especially parents who contribute greatly in shaping children's attitudes. Parents behavior can affect the superego in a person, because basically the superego is related to moral and social rules and the superego develops in a person's culture which is basically taught from the parents and the child's environment (Longuenesse, 2017). The community also assesses children's behavior in relation to their parents. The results of the behavior, nature, and intellectual property of children must be related to their parents because parents are the centralization of the family. In Tayeb Salih's "A Handful of Dates", the main character has a close relationship with his grandfather. His grandfather took care of his grandson and raised him alone. In this story, it is described that his grandfather became a substitute for the parents of the grandchildren. In addition, his grandfather played an important role in the boy's development. For the narrator, his grandfather plays an important role in caring for his grandchild. It can also be seen that his grandfather was the closest family member to his grandson from an early age. Salih describes the relationship between the grandfather and grandchildren and grandparents who have as close a relationship as parent and child.

"The strange thing was that I never used to go out with my father, rather it was my grandfather who would take me with him whenever he went, except for the mornings when I would go to the mosque

to learn the Koran" (Salih, 2000, p. 56).

The grandson is so close to his grandfather that he considers his grandfather to be a parent.

The grandson always saw that his grandfather was a good person, a wise person and also a person who he really admired. His grandfather's behavior was seen by his grandchildren here as very depicting goodness and wisdom without evil.

"I used to know when my grandfather wanted me to laugh, when to be silent; also, I would remember the times for his prayers and would bring him his prayer-rug and fill the ewer for his ablutions without his having to ask me" (Salih, 2000, p.60).

The grandson always saw the kindness and wisdom that his grandfather did. The grandson also always saw his grandfather without looking bad at all. His grandfather was a kind person who was diligent and had devotion to religious principle. The relationship between the positive aspects of the relationship between parents and children's behavior is very influential. (Oostdam & Hooge, 2013) Furthermore, parental support, as well as a positive attitude from parents and the ability to communicate with children to have a positive relationship with their children will make children see this from the positive side (Goldberg & Carlson, 2014).

"When he had nothing else to do, he enjoyed listening to me reciting to him from the Koran in a lilting voice, and I could tell from his face he was moved (Salih, 2000, p.60)."

It is the obedience of the grandfather's worship that makes the grandson always admires his grandfather. The grandson always thinks that his grandfather is someone who always gives him positive parenting. The grandfather's care for his grandchildren which is very influential for the behavior of his grandchildren can be seen from the grandchild who has positive, kind and obedient characteristics. The importance of modeling behavior for parents towards children can be a good controller for children. Positive parental attitudes and behaviors are also found in the short story "The Veldt" which tells about parents who want to make their children as a great child with the development of modern technology. In the parenting style, the parents use modern technology to raise their children without interacting directly with their parents.

"They walked down the hall of their soundproofed Happy life Home, which had cost

them thirty thousand dollars installed, this house which clothed and fed and rocked them to sleep and played and sang and was good to them. Their approach is sensitized a switch somewhere and the nursery light flicked on when they came within ten feet of it. Likewise, behind them, in the halls, lights went on and off as they left them behind, with a soft automaticity." (Bury, 1950, p. 3)

The parents always think that the advances in technology used will make it easier for them to educate their children and can make them adapt to the times.

"They stood on the thatched floor of the nursery. It was forty feet across by forty feet long and thirty feet high; it had cost half again as much as the rest of the house." But nothing's too good for our children, "George had said." (Bradbury, 1972, p. 3)

The father in this story is named George. He always thought that the higher the technology they used to help them raise their children, it is better for the children too. The child's parents hope that the technology and development they use can help the child's growth and development.

"The lions were coming. And again, George Hadley was filled with admiration for the mechanical genius who had conceived this room. A miracle of efficiency selling for an absurdly low price. Every home should have one. Oh, occasionally they frightened you with their clinical accuracy, they startled you, gave you a twinge, but most of the time what fun for everyone, not only your own son and daughter, but for yourself when you felt like a quick jaunt to a foreign land, a quick change of scenery. Well, here it was!" (Bury, 1950, p. 3)

Even George also considers that the technological advances he uses are not only influential for children but also very influential for parents. In this short story the role of parents is replaced by genius technology in the hope of being able to educate their children well.

### **Child Unconsciousness**

This part is focusing on the child unconsciousness that is felt by the child which without realizing it can adversely affect their own behavior. Child unconsciousness relates to the Id structure, because the Id relates to instant gratification and also the Id develops on the basis of a need. Child unconsciousness relates to the Id

because Freud argued that the id structure operates completely without realizing it or outside human conscious thought (Galison, 2012). In the short story "A Handful of dates", the unconsciousness felt by the grandchild is when the grandson continues to think that his grandfather is a good and wise person. The grandson always thinks that the grandfather is a person who can be used as a good example and that his grandfather has no big mistakes. The grandchildren always think that no big mistakes has ever been done by the grandfather.

"While most of the children of my age were grumbled at having to go to the mosque to learn the Koran, I used to love it. The reason was, no doubt, that I was quick at learning by heart and Sheikh always asked me to stand up and recite the Chapter of the Merciful whenever we had visitors, who would pat me on my head and cheek just as people did when they saw me with my grandfather." (Salih, 2000, pp. 59-60).

The grandson always makes his grandfather a role model. The grandson makes his grandfather an exemplary person and can be used as a role model, such as a role model in worship and a role model in reading newspapers. However, there is unconsciousness that is felt by her grandchildren. The grandson never realized that his grandfather was not what he had previously imagined. Without his grandson knowing it, his grandfather was a cheating person and used Masoon took advantage of him and hired Masoon only for his own benefit. The grandson never realized that his grandfather was not completely a good person and according to the grandson, his grandfather never made a big mistake. His grandfather's behavior, which he does not know, can disappoint him

Child unconsciousness also occurs in the short story "The Veldt". In the short story, it is told that modern technology that is applied by parents to their children at home, in fact, unwittingly damages the child's mental and behavior. The parents of the children in this story hope that the application of modern technology in their homes can ease the burden on their parents in caring for their children and can improve their intellectual abilities and children's development. However, without realizing it, this would lead to a decline in the child's mental health.

"And here were the lions now, fifteen feet

away, so real, so feverishly and startlingly real that you could feel the prickling fur on your hand, and your mouth was stuffed with the dusty upholstery smell of their heated pelts, and the yellow of them was in your eyes like the yellow of an exquisite French tapestry, the yellows of lions and summer grass, and the sound of the matted lion lungs exhaling on the silent noontide, and the smell of meat from the panting, dripping mouths." (Bury, 1950, p. 6)

They use sophisticated and very real technology, with the hope that they will replace their role as parents to nurture and educate their children properly. However, without being realized by the child and the parents, this actually damages the child's mentality and has a bad effect on the child's mental

"I don't know - I don't know," she said, blowing her nose, sitting down in a chair that immediately began to rock and comfort her. "Maybe I don't have enough to do. Maybe I have time to think too much. Why don't we shut the whole house off for a few days and take a vacation?" (Bury, 1950, p. 9)

With sophisticated technology, they can change anything in their house. However, in that way the child's mental becomes damaged, the child often experiences hallucinations and deep fear because he often sees things that are not real but very real every day.

#### **Unconsciousness effect on child's behavior**

Unconscious behavior that is often done by parents towards their children is sometimes for a good purpose but does not all end well. This is related to the ego structure of Freud's theory because. Furthermore, the effect of child unconsciousness is a moral. The imbalance of Id and Superego that affects the ego so that the effect of child unconscience can be analyzed by using Freud's Ego theory (Rusell, 2012). Parents should be more attentive to what they do to their children so that bad things do not happen. Parents' unconsciousness in "A Handful of Dates" can be seen from the role of the grandfather who is not aware that his bad behavior can affect the attitude of the grandchild in the future. The grandfather always covers up all the bad things he did to Masood so that the grandson who always thinks that his grandfather is a good person. However, the

grandson does not realize that the grandfather has done bad things and disappoints him when the grandson realizes it.

"You're still fifty pounds in debt to me," said my grandfather to Masood — I ran off into the distance. Hearing my grandfather called after me, I hesitated a little, then continued on my way. I felt that moment that I hated him." (Salih, 2000, p.63).

The grandson's disappointment with his grandfather was caused by the grandson's unconsciousness of his grandfather's bad behavior so that the grandson's assumption of his grandfather about all his grandfather's goodness was wrong. The grandson was disappointed and bad things happened. The grandson told his grandfather that he hated him. This should not happen if the grandson realizes from the start that the grandfather is not as good as he imagined. The disappointment experienced by the grandson was not due to the grandfather's bad attitude and behavior towards his grandson, but his grandfather's bad attitude and behavior towards other people, namely Masood. The grandfather's unconsciousness of his behavior and also the grandson's unconsciousness of his grandfather's behavior damaged the relationship between the grandfather and grandson. The grandson is disappointed with his grandfather's behavior that does not appreciate other people and takes advantage of others for his grandfather's benefit. The grandfather's unconsciousness of his behavior towards others turn out to be bad because his grandfather thought that if his behavior towards his grandson was good everything would end well, but it was not. The grandson is disappointed with the way the grandfather treats others even though the grandfather's behavior towards his grandson is very good.

Unconsciousness also occurs in the role of parents towards children in the short story "The Veldt". Unconsciousness occurs when children accept all the technology their parents use in their daily lives. Parents' unconsciousness of the bad effects provided by this technology will disrupt their child's mental health and end badly towards child's mental health.

"Walls, Lydia, remember; crystal walls, that's

all they are. Oh, they look real, I must admit - Africa in your parlor - but it's all dimensional, superreactionary, supersensitive color film and mental tape film behind glass screens. It's all odorophonics and sonics, Lydia. Here's my handkerchief. " (Bury, 1950, p. 8).

The children often feel scared because what they see from their parents' crystal wall looks very real. Their mental health is also impaired because they cannot tell what is real and what is not. The child often screams or even screams in fear when the crystal wall shows wild animal, and it is looks very real. Parents' unconsciousness about the facilities they provide to their children has a bad impact on their children

"You know how difficult it is Peter is about that. When I punished him a month ago by locking the nursery for even a few hours - the tantrum he threw! And Wendy too. They live for the nursery. " (Bury, 1950, p. 9).

Parents' unconsciousness also occurs when they give punishment to their children when their children often scream to themselves because of the fear caused by the crystal wall. However, the parents' unconsciousness has a negative impact on their child's mental health. Peter for example, he has tantrum disease which will often recur when under pressure.

"As for the nursery, thought George Hadley, it won't hurt for the children to be locked out of it awhile. Too much of anything isn't good for anyone. And it was clearly indicated that the children had been spending a little too much time on Africa. That sun. He could feel it on his neck, still, like a hot paw. And the lions. And the smell of blood. Remarkable how the nursery caught the telepathic emanations of the children's minds and created life to fill their every desire. The children thought lions, and there were lions. The children thought zebras, and there were zebras. Sun - sun. Giraffes - giraffes. " (Bury, 1950, p. 11).

The sophistication of the technology applied by the parents is like a wall that will capture children's thoughts and can display them on the screen, unconsciously affecting the child's mental. The unconsciousness of the child in thinking so that it raises the object they are thinking about is sometimes scary for them, but the parents don't realize this and instead think that it is okay if they lock their child in a room.

## CONCLUSION

This study has found that a literary work can be an object for broadening horizons and can be an object to better understand moral life. This is intended to be a reflection for parents to better understand and be more aware of the impact of what happens to children on their behavior. "A Handful of Dates" and also "The Veldt" can be used as lessons for parents to be more aware of their behavior. After analyzing the two short stories, this study shows that parents' unconsciousness and children's unconsciousness in parental behavior can have a negative impact on the child himself. Parents' unconscious behavior about parenting patterns and their behavior will have a bad impact if we don't care and are not aware of the risks of our behavior. This study shows the two sides of unconsciousness as well as the effects that this unconsciousness causes. The first side is parental unconsciousness, and the second side is the child's unconsciousness. The first side, parents' unconsciousness of their behavior, although the purpose is for the good but not based on awareness of the risks, will end up with a negative impact on the child. The second side, the effect of children's unconsciousness on parental behavior has an impact on the child's opinion that what their parents do is the best for them. The effect of the unconsciousness of the child and the parents is on the child's attitude and behavior and can also have a negative impact on the relationship between the two. In this case, parental unconsciousness which leads to poor mental health in children is reflected in the short story "The Veldt". This short story shows the selfishness of parents in educating their children and their unawareness of the risk of their behavior having an impact on their child's mental health.

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