

THE DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY REPRESENTED ON KARTIKA'S CHARACTER IN PURSUING EDUCATION IN *MIRACLE IN CELL NO. 7*

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ABSTRACT

Films function not only as entertainment but also as a medium for representing psychological development and educational values. Miracle in Cell No. 7 (2022) portrays Kartika's psychological growth as she pursues education despite experiencing parental loss and social adversity. This study aims to analyze the representation of Kartika's developmental psychology by applying Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory and Lazarus and Folkman's Cognitive Appraisal Theory. This research employed a descriptive qualitative design using twenty-eight selected scenes as the primary data. The data were collected through documentation and analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model. The findings indicate that Kartika's psychological development is represented through three major aspects: parental emotional support that fosters competence and learning motivation, adaptive coping strategies that strengthen resilience in overcoming adversity, and educational experiences that shape her professional identity as a lawyer committed to justice. These findings suggest that education is represented not only as academic achievement but also as a process of psychological development that builds resilience, identity, and moral responsibility. This study contributes to literary psychology by explaining the relationship between education, developmental psychology, and coping in cinematic narratives.

Keywords: *Developmental Psychology; Literary Psychology; Education*

ABSTRAK

Film tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai hiburan, tetapi juga sebagai media untuk menggambarkan perkembangan psikologis dan nilai-nilai pendidikan. Film *Miracle in Cell No. 7* (2022) menggambarkan pertumbuhan psikologis Kartika saat ia terus mengejar pendidikan meskipun mengalami kehilangan orang tua dan kesulitan sosial. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penggambaran psikologi perkembangan Kartika dengan menerapkan Teori Perkembangan Psikososial Erikson serta Teori Penilaian Kognitif Lazarus dan Folkman. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kualitatif deskriptif dengan mengambil dua puluh delapan adegan terpilih sebagai data primer. Data dikumpulkan melalui dokumentasi dan dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa perkembangan psikologis Kartika digambarkan melalui tiga

aspek utama: dukungan emosional orang tua yang menumbuhkan kompetensi dan motivasi belajar, strategi koping adaptif yang memperkuat ketahanan dalam mengatasi kesulitan, serta pengalaman pendidikan yang membentuk identitas profesionalnya sebagai pengacara yang berkomitmen pada keadilan. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan tidak hanya diwakili sebagai prestasi akademik, tetapi juga sebagai proses perkembangan psikologis yang membangun ketahanan, identitas, dan tanggung jawab moral. Studi ini berkontribusi pada psikologi sastra dengan menjelaskan hubungan antara pendidikan, psikologi perkembangan, dan mekanisme koping dalam narasi sinematik.

Kata Kunci: Psikologi Perkembangan; Psikologi Sastra; Pendidikan

A. Introduction

Film has long been recognized as an important form of literary expression because it represents human experiences through visual narratives, dialogues, and character interactions. Beyond entertainment, films portray social realities, cultural values, and psychological phenomena that can be analyzed using literary theories (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013; Monaco, 2009). As a literary work, film provides opportunities to examine how characters think, behave, and respond to various life experiences, making it a valuable object of literary and psychological studies.

One approach commonly applied in literary studies is literary psychology, which explores the thoughts, emotions, motivations, and behaviors of fictional characters through psychological theories (Tyson, 2006; Wellek & Warren, 1949). Among

various psychological perspectives, developmental psychology is particularly relevant because it explains how individuals develop emotionally, socially, and psychologically through interactions with their family, education, and surrounding environment. Erikson (1968) emphasizes that psychological development occurs through a series of psychosocial stages in which supportive relationships contribute to the formation of competence and identity. In educational contexts, these developmental processes are closely associated with children's ability to overcome challenges and achieve personal growth.

The relationship between psychological development and education is clearly represented in *Miracle in Cell No. 7* (2022), an Indonesian adaptation directed by Hanung Bramantyo. The film tells the

story of Kartika, a young girl whose educational journey is profoundly influenced by her father, Dodo Rozak, who has an intellectual disability. Following Dodo's wrongful imprisonment, Kartika experiences emotional loss and social adversity but continues pursuing her education until she becomes a lawyer determined to restore her father's dignity. Through Kartika's experiences, the film portrays education not only as academic achievement but also as a process of psychological growth, resilience, and identity formation.

Previous studies have examined *Miracle in Cell No. 7* from various perspectives. Handayani and Rochim (2023) analyzed the film's moral messages, while Ayuni et al. (2024) explored its representation of moral values through a semiotic approach. Ratuliu and Mustofa (2024) focused on educational values portrayed in the narrative, whereas Ratnasari et al. (2025) discussed the social values reflected in the film. In addition, Suryasuciramdhan et al. (2024) investigated the issue of legal injustice represented through the experiences of marginalized individuals. These studies demonstrate that the film

contains rich moral, educational, social, and legal dimensions.

Despite these contributions, limited attention has been given to Kartika's psychological development in pursuing education. Existing studies primarily emphasize moral values, educational messages, and legal issues without explaining how Kartika's educational experiences contribute to her psychological growth. Furthermore, previous research has not integrated Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory (1968) and Lazarus and Folkman's Cognitive Appraisal Theory (1984) to explain the relationship between psychosocial development, stressful experiences, and adaptive coping. This gap indicates the need for a psychological interpretation that comprehensively examines Kartika's developmental journey.

To address this gap, the present study analyzes the representation of developmental psychology in Kartika's character by applying Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory and Lazarus and Folkman's Cognitive Appraisal Theory. Erikson's theory is used to explain Kartika's psychosocial development and identity formation, while Lazarus and Folkman's theory

provides a framework for understanding how Kartika cognitively appraises stressful experiences and develops coping strategies to maintain her educational commitment. The integration of these theories enables a more comprehensive interpretation of the relationship between education, resilience, and psychological development.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze how developmental psychology is represented in Kartika's character in pursuing education in *Miracle in Cell No. 7*. The findings are expected to contribute to literary psychology by extending the application of developmental and coping theories in film analysis. In addition, this study offers a deeper understanding of how education and supportive family relationships contribute to the development of resilience, identity, and moral responsibility as represented in cinematic narratives.

B. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to investigate the representation of developmental psychology in Kartika's character in pursuing education in

Miracle in Cell No. 7 (2022). A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study focused on interpreting dialogues, character interactions, behaviors, and significant events that reflect Kartika's psychological development rather than measuring variables statistically (Ary et al., 2010; Creswell, 2014).

The primary data source was the Indonesian film *Miracle in Cell No. 7* (2022), directed by Hanung Bramantyo. The data consisted of verbal and non-verbal expressions, including dialogues, actions, facial expressions, and interactions involving Kartika throughout the film. From the entire narrative, twenty-eight scenes were purposively selected because they directly represent Kartika's psychological development in pursuing education.

Data were collected using the documentation technique. The researcher repeatedly watched the film, identified scenes relevant to the research objectives, transcribed important dialogues, and documented significant actions related to Kartika's educational experiences and psychological development. The collected data were then classified according to the indicators of

developmental psychology derived from Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory and Lazarus and Folkman's Cognitive Appraisal Theory.

The data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During data reduction, the researcher selected scenes that specifically reflected Kartika's psychological development while excluding data unrelated to the research objectives. The selected data were subsequently organized into thematic categories to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn by interpreting the findings through Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory (Erikson, 1968), particularly the concepts of psychosocial development and identity formation, and Lazarus and Folkman's Cognitive Appraisal Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), focusing on cognitive appraisal and coping strategies in response to stressful experiences.

To ensure the credibility of the findings, each selected scene was reviewed repeatedly and interpreted consistently with the research

objectives and theoretical framework. This process enabled the researcher to produce findings that accurately represent Kartika's developmental psychology as portrayed in *Miracle in Cell No. 7*.

C.Results And Discussion

The analysis of the twenty-eight selected scenes indicates that Kartika's developmental psychology is represented through a continuous interaction between parental support, educational experiences, and life adversity. The findings reveal that Kartika's commitment to education is established from childhood through her close relationship with her father, Dodo Rozak. Despite his intellectual disability and limited economic condition, Dodo consistently provides emotional support and encourages Kartika to value education. He accompanies her daily activities, motivates her to complete every task, and creates a supportive learning environment through simple but meaningful interactions. These scenes demonstrate that parental involvement plays a significant role in shaping Kartika's confidence and learning motivation.

One of the most representative scenes occurs when Dodo reminds Kartika to finish everything she starts while accompanying her study session. Although his guidance is expressed in simple language, it reflects the values of responsibility, perseverance, and discipline that later become essential characteristics of Kartika's personality. The findings suggest that Dodo's educational support is not reflected in academic instruction but in the consistent emotional encouragement that enables Kartika to appreciate learning as an important part of her life.

These findings are consistent with Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory, particularly the stage of Industry versus Inferiority, in which children develop competence through encouragement and recognition from significant adults (Erikson, 1968). Dodo's continuous support allows Kartika to develop self-confidence despite growing up in a socially and economically disadvantaged environment. Instead of experiencing inferiority because of her family background, Kartika develops a positive attitude toward education, demonstrating that emotional support contributes

substantially to healthy psychosocial development.

The findings also reinforce Dewey's (1916) view that education develops through meaningful experiences in everyday life. Kartika's learning process is not limited to the classroom but is continuously shaped by interactions within her family. Through daily communication and shared activities, Dodo introduces values such as honesty, responsibility, and persistence, illustrating that family serves as the first educational environment in children's psychological development. This representation is also consistent with Freire's (1970) perspective that education empowers individuals by developing awareness and preparing them to confront future challenges.

Kartika's developmental process changes considerably after Dodo is imprisoned. The selected scenes portray her emotional distress as she experiences separation from the person who has always provided affection and guidance. Nevertheless, the findings demonstrate that Kartika does not abandon her educational aspirations. During prison visits, Dodo continues to encourage her, expresses pride in her academic

achievements, and motivates her to pursue her dreams despite their difficult circumstances. His emotional support remains present even though physical interaction becomes limited.

From the perspective of Lazarus and Folkman's Cognitive Appraisal Theory, Kartika's response reflects an adaptive coping process. Initially, her father's imprisonment is appraised as a stressful event that threatens her emotional security. However, continuous encouragement from Dodo enables Kartika to reinterpret the situation as a challenge rather than an obstacle to her education. This process illustrates the role of cognitive appraisal in helping individuals maintain psychological stability while facing adversity (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

The findings further indicate that Kartika's resilience is strengthened by secure emotional attachment with her father. According to Bowlby (1988), children who experience secure attachment are more capable of adapting to stressful situations because they possess a stable emotional foundation. Similarly, Lamb (2010) emphasizes that fathers contribute significantly to children's confidence and emotional well-being

through consistent involvement in their lives. In *Miracle in Cell No. 7*, Dodo's affection and encouragement continue to influence Kartika's psychological development despite his imprisonment, demonstrating that emotional presence may remain influential even in the absence of physical proximity.

These findings support previous studies that identify parental affection and educational values as central themes in *Miracle in Cell No. 7*. Handayani and Rochim (2023) argue that the film emphasizes sincerity, patience, and parental love, while Ratuliu and Mustofa (2024) highlight its educational values. However, the present study extends these findings by explaining that parental support functions not only as a moral value but also as the psychological foundation that fosters competence, resilience, and educational persistence. By integrating Erikson's developmental theory with Lazarus and Folkman's coping theory, this study demonstrates that Kartika's educational journey is simultaneously a process of psychological growth.

The findings further demonstrate that Kartika's psychological development continues as she

gradually transforms childhood adversity into personal motivation. Following Dodo's imprisonment, Kartika remains committed to her education despite experiencing emotional loss and social challenges. The selected scenes show that she continues her schooling while receiving support from people around her, indicating that educational perseverance becomes an important coping resource throughout her developmental process. Rather than allowing traumatic experiences to interrupt her education, Kartika consistently maintains her determination to achieve the future envisioned by her father.

As Kartika reaches adulthood, the film portrays the culmination of her psychological development through her decision to become a lawyer. During the courtroom proceedings, she reconstructs the chronology of her father's case, presents witnesses, and argues that Dodo Rozak was convicted without sufficient evidence. Her professional performance reflects not only legal competence but also the successful internalization of the values instilled by her father during childhood. Education, therefore, is represented as a transformative process that

enables Kartika to convert painful experiences into professional responsibility and moral commitment.

This transformation is consistent with Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory, which explains that successful psychosocial development enables individuals to establish a stable identity and meaningful life goals (Erikson, 1968). Kartika's identity as a lawyer is not portrayed merely as a career achievement but as the outcome of continuous psychological development shaped by parental guidance, educational experiences, and perseverance. Her professional commitment demonstrates that identity formation develops through the integration of childhood experiences into adult responsibilities.

The findings also reflect the process of problem-focused coping proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). Instead of remaining overwhelmed by grief and injustice, Kartika actively seeks legal evidence, challenges the previous court decision, and uses her educational background to defend her father's innocence. Her response illustrates that coping involves not only emotional adjustment but also

constructive action directed toward solving the source of stress. Through education, Kartika acquires the knowledge and confidence necessary to confront injustice effectively.

Another important finding is represented in the final meeting between Kartika and Dodo before his execution. Although the scene depicts profound sadness, Dodo continues to encourage Kartika to live honestly, remain kind, and pursue a meaningful life. These final messages become enduring psychological resources that continue to guide Kartika's personal and professional development after her father's death. The emotional bond between father and daughter therefore remains influential despite their permanent separation.

This finding supports Bowlby's (1988) concept of secure attachment, which suggests that strong emotional bonds continue to influence an individual's psychological adjustment even after physical separation. Likewise, Lamb (2010) emphasizes that fathers contribute significantly to children's emotional security and long-term confidence through consistent affection and involvement. In Kartika's case, Dodo's encouragement becomes an enduring source of

resilience, enabling her to transform loss into determination rather than despair.

The culmination of Kartika's developmental psychology is represented in the final courtroom verdict. After successfully proving her father's innocence, Kartika openly acknowledges that every educational achievement she attained was inspired by Dodo's unwavering support and sacrifices. Her farewell to her father symbolizes the completion of a developmental journey in which education, resilience, and family affection become inseparable elements of her identity. The film therefore represents education not only as academic success but also as a lifelong process of psychological growth that enables individuals to overcome adversity and pursue justice.

The findings of this study complement previous research on *Miracle in Cell No. 7*. Earlier studies primarily emphasized the film's moral messages (Handayani & Rochim, 2023), educational values (Ratuliu & Mustofa, 2024), social values (Ratnasari et al., 2025), justice and humanity (Ayuni et al., 2024), and legal injustice (Suryasuciramdhan et

al., 2024). In contrast, the present study demonstrates that these aspects are interconnected through Kartika's developmental psychology. By integrating Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory and Lazarus and Folkman's Cognitive Appraisal Theory, this study explains how emotional support, stressful experiences, adaptive coping, and educational perseverance collectively contribute to the formation of Kartika's identity. Consequently, the study extends previous research by showing that *Miracle in Cell No. 7* represents education as a developmental process through which resilience, competence, and moral responsibility are continuously constructed.

D. Conclusion

This study examined the representation of developmental psychology in Kartika's character in pursuing education in *Miracle in Cell No. 7* (2022) by applying Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory and Lazarus and Folkman's Cognitive Appraisal Theory. The findings reveal that Kartika's psychological development is represented through three interconnected aspects: parental emotional support, adaptive coping

strategies, and educational experiences that contribute to identity formation.

The analysis demonstrates that Dodo Rozak's affection, encouragement, and involvement in Kartika's education establish a strong psychological foundation that fosters competence, confidence, and learning motivation. Furthermore, the challenges resulting from Dodo's imprisonment encourage Kartika to develop adaptive coping strategies that enable her to maintain emotional stability and continue pursuing her educational goals. These experiences ultimately shape her professional identity as a lawyer committed to restoring justice for her father.

The study concludes that education in *Miracle in Cell No. 7* is represented not merely as a means of academic achievement but as a lifelong psychological process that promotes resilience, identity development, and moral responsibility. By integrating developmental psychology and coping theory, this study contributes to literary psychology by providing a deeper understanding of how educational experiences and family support

influence character development in cinematic narratives.

Future studies may examine developmental psychology in other literary works or films using different psychological perspectives to broaden the understanding of psychological growth and educational experiences in literary representations.

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