

Guru Abdi's Short Story A Servant's Ideal Self-Representation

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Abstract

The teaching profession plays a crucial role in shaping the future of younger generations. However, in many regions, the welfare and recognition of teachers do not align with the significance of their contributions to society. This social inequality serves as one of the main inspirations behind I Made Sugianto's literary work, particularly his short story *Guru Abdi*, featured in the collection *Ngipiang Jokowi*. This study aims to explore how the short story reflects the psychological experiences of teachers, especially in relation to self-concept and societal recognition. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through literary analysis and interviews. The study applies Carl Rogers' theory of self-concept, supported by Higgins' discrepancy theory, to analyze the main character, Kadek Arya. The findings reveal a state of congruence in Kadek Arya's self-concept despite facing numerous challenges, which fosters a consistent positive attitude. Although moments of fear and anxiety-indicative of agitation-related self-do emerge, they do not diminish his overall optimism and dedication. This research concludes that literary works such as *Guru Abdi* can serve as reflective mediums that highlight the inner strength and resilience of teachers in the face of societal undervaluation.

Keyword: Short Story; Self-Concept; Congruence

Introduction

Education is one aspect of life that plays an important role in improving the quality of human life. Education is a conscious effort to prepare students through guidance, teaching or training activities for their roles in the future (Syarafudin & Ikawati, 2020). This statement is in line with Ningsih's et al., (2020) thinking that education is very important for forming human character, plays a role in forming the human person normatively. The government is aggressively handling the education sector with the hope that improving the education system can produce the next generation who are qualified and competitive in society, nation and state.

Improving the quality of education is determined by the readiness of human resources involved in the educational process, in this case teachers (Rosmawati et al., 2020). Teachers are individuals who play an important role in the education and development of students. Teachers are required to work by providing the best possible service to school users such as students, parents and the community (Halisah, 2022). A teacher's circumstances can vary greatly depending on various factors, including place of residence, education, and the existing educational system. Several things that can influence include salary and welfare.

Teacher salaries can vary significantly by country and region. Some teachers may face low salaries and difficult working conditions, while others may enjoy relatively high salaries and additional benefits such as health insurance and pensions. Another factor is related to recognition and appreciation. The level of recognition and appreciation of teachers

also has an impact on their situation. Countries or societies that value the role of teachers tend to provide more support and appreciation to them. Besides that, the work environment also plays a role. Work environment conditions, including school facilities, educational resources, and administrative support, can influence teacher satisfaction and effectiveness. Changes in education such as curriculum, teaching methods, or evaluation systems mean that teachers must continually improve their abilities. Teachers must continue to follow educational developments to remain relevant in their work.

The use of technology in education can influence the role of teachers. Some teachers may have to adapt to new technology in their teaching. It is important to remember that work as a teacher is a job that is very influential in shaping the future of the younger generation. Recognition provided through teacher certification, training, guarantees of comfort and safety in completing learning assignments, providing incentives according to duties and responsibilities, including monitoring progress and evaluating student learning can improve the quality of education in schools (Damani et al., 2022). Therefore, efforts to improve teacher welfare and appreciate their contribution to education are very important.

Unfortunately in some places teachers' circumstances often do not reflect the appreciation they should receive for their important role in society. This especially happens to honorary teachers or those who are often called still serving. It is common knowledge that the salaries of honorary teachers in Indonesia can be said to be quite small. Under the pretext of loving work and great dedication, honorary teachers persist even though the wages they receive are not commensurate with what they do, so the economic life of an honorary worker is still far from decent (Yosal, 2022). Many teachers earn inadequate wages for the work they do. A low salary can make it difficult to meet daily needs and make you feel less appreciated.

With such meager salaries, teachers often face a very heavy workload, including lesson preparation, teaching in class, evaluating student work, and carrying out administrative tasks. This high workload can result in stress and fatigue. Teachers may not receive enough support in their professional development. This can leave them feeling isolated and less empowered to cope with changes in education. In some places, contract or temporary teachers even face job insecurity, which can undermine the stability of their lives. Not to mention when teachers have to be faced with various challenges in teaching, such as dealing with individual differences between students, dealing with disciplinary problems, and dealing with complicated situations inside and outside the classroom.

All of these challenges can affect teacher motivation and teaching quality. This inequality was at least one of the inspirations for I Made Sugianto in creating short stories. *Guru Abdi* was also present as one of the titles in his short story collection entitled *Ngipiang Jokowi*. This short story provides an overview of the life of Kadek Arya, a servant teacher who graduated in English literature with various problems that he had to face. Welfare matters that are clearly inadequate often spark arguments between him and his wife. However, this can always be handled well in one's own style and way. Even though the wages are not much, this does not make Kadek Arya reduce the quality and loyalty of his teaching.

He is known for having good teaching skills, so many parents direct their children to take lessons at his place. In the midst of unresolved welfare issues, he was again bombarded with intervention matters. One of the council members with the power he currently has promised a contract employee decree if Kadek Arya would help him get the youth's vote. Appointment as a contract employee should give Kadek Arya some way out of the welfare problems he is currently facing. However, what is interesting about this story is that Kadek Arya actually refused the offer. He said that gathering young people in the banjar hall to learn

English was based on a feeling of sincerity. He didn't want to take advantage of the situation for his personal gain. Even though this rejection caused Kadek Arya to finally encounter new problems, the integrity shown by Kadek Arya represents a person's steadfastness in maintaining the truth even under pressure and in bad circumstances. The social criticism reflected in *Guru Abdi*'s short story also emphasizes the mission of social control. Therefore, it is important to explore further the self-scheme shown by Kadek Arya in facing various problems in his life as an honorary teacher.

Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design with a literary psychology approach, aiming to explore the self-concept of the main character in the short story *Guru Abdi* by I Made Sugianto. The primary data sources were the short stories in the collection *Ngipiang Jokowi*, with *Guru Abdi* as the main focus of analysis. Supporting data were obtained through interviews with the author, which served to strengthen the validity and contextual understanding of the text. The informants in this study were determined through purposive sampling, selecting the author as a key informant due to his direct relevance and insights into the meaning and background of the work. The research instruments consisted of document analysis guides for literary texts and semi-structured interview guides for collecting data from the author. Data collection techniques included (1) literature study, involving close reading and interpretation of the short story, and (2) interviews, which were conducted to triangulate and enrich the textual analysis. The data were then analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis, guided by Carl Rogers' theory of self-concept, complemented by Higgins' discrepancy theory. These psychological frameworks were used as analytical tools to interpret the character's internal experiences, values, and reactions within the narrative.

Results and Discussion

Self-concept is someone who already knows himself, both strengths and weaknesses his own needs (Yusuf et al., 2021). But, In the context of self-concept, Rogers and Higgins have important views. Rogers' theory of self-concept argues that maintaining congruence between views of the actual self and the ideal self is the key to maintaining one's mental health. This means that a person must have a match between how they see themselves currently and how they want to become (Feist et al., 2016). Deaux, Dane and Wrightsman explain that self-concept includes a person's beliefs and feelings about themselves, including talents, interests, abilities, physical appearance, and others (UI Faculty of Psychology Writing Team, 2009).

From this belief, feelings about oneself emerge, which can be feelings of pride or displeasure, happiness or displeasure, as well as positive or negative feelings towards oneself. A person also has a view of their ideal self, which includes the positive attributes they would like to have. Mental health often depends on the extent to which congruence between views of the actual self and the ideal self is maintained. If there is a discrepancy, such as depression, anxiety, or low self-esteem, it could indicate incongruence. Self-concept influences a person's behavior and how they interact with the world and their experiences.

This concept refers to a relatively stable set of perceptions that individuals believe about themselves (Wirman et al., 2021). The decisions a person makes reflect the extent to which they realize who they really are. Higgins, in turn, developed the concepts of actual self, ideal self, and ought self. Actual self is how someone is currently, ideal self is how they

want to be, and ought self is how they should be. The gap between the three, called discrepancy, can motivate change or trigger negative emotions (UI Faculty of Psychology Writing Team, 2009). If someone does not succeed in overcoming the discrepancy between the actual self and the ideal self, it can give rise to emotions such as depression and sadness, which are called *dejection-related emotions*.

Meanwhile, the mismatch between actual self and ought self can cause emotions such as fear and anxiety, which are called *agitation-related self*. If a person does not experience these negative emotions, this shows that the individual has succeeded in achieving harmony between the actual self and the ideal self, as well as between the actual self and the desired self, which is called congruence. Overall, Rogers' ideas about self-concept and Higgins' ideas about actual self, ideal self, and ought self have a strong relationship. A person's mental health often depends on the extent to which they can maintain harmony between various aspects of their self-concept. Kadek Arya as the main character in the short story *Guru Abdi* shows his situation which is congruent with the characteristics of positive feelings such as not having the slightest burden in carrying out his duties even though he gets very minimal wages. He did all of this based on sincerity as stated in the following quote:

Tamat Fakultas Sastra Inggris, ia ngasukang lamaran dadi guru abdi di SMP Jaya Kumara. Ia katerimakerana sekolah kuangan guru bahasa Inggris. Diastun maan upah satak tali abulan, ia seleg ka sekolah. Tusing demen ngrenggeng nguyutang gaji. Dadi guru sangkaning las (Sugianto, 2019).

Translation:

After graduating from the Faculty of English Letters, he submitted an application to become a civil servant teacher at Jaya Kumara Middle School. He was accepted because the school lacked English teachers. Even with a salary of only two hundred thousand a month, he still goes to school diligently. He doesn't like to fuss about salary. Becoming a teacher is because of his sincerity.

Apart from that, this congruent situation is also shown by the expression of Kadek Arya's feelings, who said he became a teacher because he really liked that profession. Additionally, he believes that President Jokowi's government is free from CPNS brokers.

KadéK Arya dadi guru sangkaning demen. Pangaptiné menék ngancan ada lowongan CPNS. Ia percaya, pemerintahan Présidén Jokowi bresih tekéning calo CPNS (Sugianto, 2019).

Translation:

Kadek Arya became a teacher because he liked her. The hope is that in the future, there will be CPNS vacancies. He believes that President Jokowi's government is free from CPNS brokers.

The next congruent situation was when Kadek Arya managed to make his wife smile again after previously being angry with her. This situation can be seen in the following quote:

KadéK Arya setata nyidang nyautin munyin somahné ané sepet. Dueg ia nimbali apang somahné ngenduk. Makenyem somahné ninghang tuturné KadéK Arya. Bli mula dueg, ento ané ngaénang titiang jatuh ati. Bli mula liu kuangan, nanging bli masih ada lebihné. Lebihan gombal! saut somahné sambilanga nyigit lengenné. Nepukin somahné makenyem, girang kenéhné KadéK Arya majalan luas negakin cekéténné (Sugianto, 2019).

Translation:

Kadek Arya can always answer what his wife says when she is angry. With his cleverness, he helped his wife become calmer. His wife smiled at Kadek Arya's

words. Bli is really smart, that's what madame fall in love. Bli indeed has many disadvantages, Bli fire also has advantages, namely the advantages of being cheesy! said his wife while biting Kadek Arya's arm. Seeing his wife smiling, Kadek Arya felt happy and left on his battered motorbike.

The main incident which also shows the congruence of Kadek Arya in this short story begins when the council members lure Kadek Arya in return for being appointed as a contract employee on the condition that Kadek Arya wants to persuade the youth to vote for him during the upcoming election. With the power possessed by the council member, he promised the contract employee's decree to Kadek Arya. He said that his authority could make the Regent sign the decree right now. This situation is seen in the quote:

Pak Ketut Ar ngaku sawai blolongina teken yowanané. Pipis wantuan jemaka, nanging using nyoblos. Ningehang pangidih anggota déwanné, Kadék Arya rumasa kena jaet. Aget jaet kekawa, nyidang ia kelés. Kadék Arya nyambatang munduhang teruna-teruniné di balai banjar malajah basa Inggris sangkaning las. Tusing nudukin pipis. Tatujoné apang teruna-teruniné bisa mabasa Inggris apang nyidang ngalih gaé. Mungpung bapak ngelah kuasa, kal baang SK pegawai kontrak. Jani nyidang merintahang bupati nekén surat kontraké! (Sugianto, 2019).

Translation:

Pak Ketut Ar admitted that he was often cheated by young people. The aid funds were taken, but the names were not put on the ballot. Hearing the council members' request, Kadek Arya felt trapped. Luckily, when he was caught in a spider trap, he was able to escape. Kadek Arya explained that gathering young people at the banjar hall to learn English was based on a sincere feeling. Does not collect funds. The aim is for young people to be able to speak English and can use it to find work. As long as you have the power, you will give a decree to contract employees. In this second, you can order the Regent to sign the contract!.

Kadek Arya, who carried out his profession as a servant teacher with sincere feelings, certainly felt turbulent in his heart when he was pressured like this. Moreover, what he does to young people is solely for the progress of the young people themselves. So that they can speak English and these skills can be used to find work. Again, he did this sincerely without charging a penny. This situation indicates that basically Kadek Arya carries out his service activities with full sincerity.

He does not want to take any advantage from the situation, especially if the profit is not actually his right. This upheaval initially gave rise to negative feelings in Kadek Arya. There was a feeling of fear that arose in him when the intervention occurred. Plus the anger shown by the council members because Kadek Arya refused his request made the situation even more hostile. This feeling of fear, in Higgins' discrepancy theory, is classified as an aspect of agitation-related self, namely the existence of a gap between the self that one should be and the current self. This incident can be seen in the quote:

Brangti anggota déwan kerana pangidihné tusing kaisinin. Nrugtug jantungné Kadék Arya ningehang pasaut anggota déwanné. Apabuin Pak Ketut Ar mula kasub liu ngubuh préman. Yén kenéhné katulak, bégat kaperintahang ngrejek (Sugianto, 2019).

Translation:

Council members were angry that his wishes were not fulfilled. Kadek Arya's heart was beating wildly when he heard the council members' answers. Moreover, Pak Ketut Ar is known for having a lot of thugs. If his wish is rejected, then the robber will act.

This situation is increasingly not in favor of Kadek Arya. This is where his integrity begins to be tested. In the midst of the intervention of a ruler, even in a threatened situation, Kadek Arya's attitude did not change. The tempting rewards also didn't make Kadek Arya flinch. However, if he wanted to, he should be able to easily take advantage of the situation. But he didn't do that. He chose to reject the offer and continued to stand by the attitude he thought was right, as stated in the following quote:

La mategar nyaurin, apang anggota déwanné tusing salah tampi. Yadiastun tusing dadi pegawai negeri, yadiastun tusing dadi guru kontrak, ia tetep bagia dadi guru abdi nyalanang isin hatiné. Bandingang dadi pegawai negeri lan guru kontrak nanging kena jaet (Sugianto, 2019).

Translation:

He answered carefully, so that the members of the council would not be offended. Even though he did not become a state official, even though he did not become a contract officer, he was still happy to follow his heart as a servant teacher. Compared to it being a state official and contract teacher but stuck.

This situation is the integrity shown by Kadek Arya. Even though he only has the status of an honorary teacher, he still maintains the principle of truth. He didn't immediately take advantage of the situation. The servant teacher or honorary teacher in this story can be said to represent someone whose social status is often seen as being at a lower level. In contrast to their level, people with lower social status actually show a high positive attitude. Even though he was under pressure, he was still able to show a positive self-concept and stand tall with his integrity to defend what he thought was right. On the other hand, council members who have high positions use lowly means to fulfill their interests.

However, the problem for the servant teacher in the short story is apparently not over. *Buin duang mingguné, kepala sekolah ngelurin Kadék Arya apang masadu arep di ruangganné. Kepala sekolah nyambatang guru ané paling sayangina di sekolah tuah Kadék Arya. Ento makerana nyabran Soma rikala upacara bendéra setata nyambat adané apang katuladin olih guru ané lénan. Unduké jani suba malénan. Ngamengmeng paningalan kepala sekolahé ngraos ajak Kadék Arya. Yen Kadék enu ngajahin dini, bapak kena mutasi!* (Sugianto, 2019).

Translation:

Two weeks later, the principal summoned Kadek Arya to come to his room. The principal said the teacher he loved most was Kadek Arya. That's why every Monday during the flag ceremony he always mentions his name so that other teachers will emulate him. But now the situation has changed. The principal's eyes filled with tears when he spoke to Kadek Arya. If Kadek is still teaching here, you will be transferred!.

The school principal, who is actually Kadek Arya's superior, is also unable to protect or solve the problem. There is even a tendency for self-preservation efforts to come at the expense of others. The unsolved problem of Kadek Arya as a servant teacher in this short story is a sign that the problem of servant teachers in society is also not resolved. The new problems that arise in Kadek Arya's life after the rejection also represent that the servant teachers are still struggling with the problems that keep coming to them. This is reinforced by the results of an interview with the author, I Made Sugianto, who said that this short story was inspired by a true story.

He also said that most of the works he creates are personal experiences, either those he experienced directly or those he saw in other people's situations (Interview, June 17, 2023). The figures of council members and school principals reflect high-class officials, but

they use inappropriate methods in solving problems. Meanwhile, the teacher servant figure represents the lower class of society, but has a highly positive attitude in defending the truth. The intersection of attitudes presented in the short story is a reflection of social criticism of the problems that occur in society. The author's hope for this short story is that those in power do not act arbitrarily even though they are of different colors (Interview, June 17, 2023). This hope is also an attempt at social control that the author emphasizes in his work.

Conclusion

Guru Abdi's short story is a portrait of the life of an honorary teacher with various problems. Not yet finished with welfare matters, a servant teacher also has to face various other problems in carrying out his work. This problem cannot be resolved by just one party. Society and government have an important role in improving teacher welfare by providing support, appropriate rewards, and reform in the education system. Teachers are a valuable asset in building the future of future generations, and it is important for society to provide the necessary support to improve their lot. Therefore, what an honorary teacher needs is support, not pressure. A positive attitude should be developed by all parties in order to resolve problems, from top officials to the lowest level of workers.

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