JASON WALKER'S MOTIVATION TO SURVIVE IN BRANDON MULL'S NOVEL SERIES BEYONDERS: A WORLD WITHOUT HEROES

M. Wahyuddin Masdin¹, Nurindah², Yulius Tandi Sapan³

mwahyuddinmasdin@gmail.com

¹Halu Oleo University, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Motivation, Personal Construct Theory (PCT), Psychological Approach.

How to cite:

DOI:

ABSTRACT

Literature is a written work that have intellectual and imaginative ideas with a neat and organized structure. Novel as a kind of literary works is a piece of writing in form of prose which has complex attribute such as complicated plots, various settings, and a great variety of characters. One of the best fantasy works is *Beyonders* series, written by Brandon Mull. *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes* is the first of *Beyonders* trilogy series. The story of *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes* novel is about a thirteen years old boy named Jason Walker who trying to find a way to go back to his world. From *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes* novel, things that stand out are the story of a struggle to survive and find the way to go back home. Therefore, one of the particular elements to build the story in the novel is motivation of the major character. Motivation helps to achieve something that can make a better circumstance, we will not be able to achieve anything if we do not have any desire to achieve it. This study aimed to analyze Jason Walker's motivation to survive in Brandon Mull's novel series *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes*. This study used Personal Construct Theory (PCT) which classified emotions to analyze Walker's motivation to survive as to which emotions caused Walker to be motivated to survive. This study found that Walker's motivation in real world is his interest towards animals was what motivated Walker to study in zoology major. Trapped in unreal world made Walker motivated to survive to find a way home and as setting and conflict influenced, Walker's motivation has grown to save Lyrian from Maldor. By using Kelly's Personal Construct Theory (PCT), this study found that anxiety on why Walker was stranded in unreal world, guilt of involving Lyrian's people and did not want to make his family and friends worried about him, threat from Maldor,

and fear of getting caught by Maldor's army were what motivated Walker to survive.

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature is a written work that have intellectual and imaginative ideas with a neat and organized structure. According to Wellek and Warren (1956), it is apparently good to specify the term of literature as an art of literature which is an imaginative literature. Literature is the author's imagination. Literature is not only facts in writings, it is not just a set of real life accidents though may occur in real life. A story can be made by literature as a work of unlimited imagination. In other words, literature is not only some collection of facts nor story of real life events, but literature can be also made by author's imagination.

There are many forms of literature; they are novel, poetry, prose, short story, drama, comic, graphic novel, digital literature, and film or movie. According to Abrams (1999), the term novel is various kinds of writing written in prose formed with an extended attribute of works. Its measure sustains a lot of various characters, complicated plots, slow phase of environment, and sustainable character development. It means that, novel is a writing work in form of prose which has complex attribute such as complicated plots, various settings, and a great variety of characters.

Farner (2014) stated that work of fiction is a creative imagination work, so the reader does not think of a reality event. In other words, fiction work comes from the author's imaginative idea of every elements of the story. Fiction novel has a few of genres such as sci-fi, romance, horror, fantasy, comedy, and crime. Many works of fantasy genre fiction novel are taken place in imaginary world, this genre uses magic or supernatural factors as the main plot, characters, and settings factors. Magical or supernatural creatures do exist in fantasy genre. Furthermore, fiction novel is a creative work with lots of imagination which the characters or events are commonly not related to people or accidents from reality.

One of the best fantasy works is *Beyonders* series, written by Brandon Mull. Mull is an American author and known as the author of fantasy series, such as *Fablehaven*, *Five Kingdom* series, and *The Candy Shop War*. *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes* is the first of *Beyonders* trilogy series. The story of

Beyonders: A World Without Heroes novel is about a slightly dormant thirteen years old boy named Jason Walker trying to find a way to go back to his world after being swallowed by a hippopotamus, he stranded in another world called Lyrian, while traveling Lyrian he found a mysterious book in a huge library, Walker discovered that there's a way to defeat Maldor, the only magician that rules most of Lyrian land. The way to defeat him was to find six powerful syllables that has the power to defeat Maldor, there was only one syllable in that mysterious book. Because of that, Maldor discovered that Walker was trying to defeat him. Walker had to run away from library or else he would get caught by Maldor's soldiers. Because of this, he had to survive in Lyrian, the only way was to defeat Maldor by searching another five syllables that were located at different places and finding a way to go back to his world. This novel is interesting to read, it has a good plot that makes the reader becomes really curious on what will happen and what Walker will do to survive in Lyrian. Thus, this study aims to investigate what makes Walker motivated to survive in Lyrian based on his circumstances being stranded in Lyrian.

From *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes* novel, things that stands out are the story of a struggle to survive and find the way to go back. The struggle can be seen from the characteristic of the major character in the novel, Jason Walker. Walker was told to find the special magical word with six syllables that was separated in different places for each syllable. He had to run away and could not stay too long every time he visited a city or a village because of Maldor's soldiers kept trying to chase him everywhere and bring him to Maldor and will be tortured. The struggle cannot be separated from the desire to keep surviving from death. Therefore, one of the particular elements to build the story in the novel is motivation of the major character.

This novel is worth to read for teenager who loves fiction novel, because it will lead your mind to explore all imaginative things brought by the author's imaginative idea of Jason Walker's journey in different world to go back to the earth. There's a criticism of this novel, reviewed by Kirkus Review website, it said that the readers who likes to read fantasy novel will be pleased by the first

Beyonderstrilogy series. There are two reasons why this study will be conducted. First, the novel tells about the struggle of Walker to keep surviving in Lyrian and to find the way to go back to earth, he had to move to every places to stay away from the soldiers that kept chasing him while trying to find the special magical word to defeat Maldor. It tells the reader that motivation plays a big role in Walker so that he can survive. The last is it has a moral message about why it is important to have motivation to the reader, it teaches us that having motivation can lead you to make action and achieve something. Therefore, in this study Jason Walker's motivation to survive in Brandon Mull's series novel *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes* is going to be analyzed.

Motivation is a desire to do something that can be because of joy or even for getting a reward. Morris (1990) said that motivation is a particular necessary, desire, or will that gives energy and behavior to achieve goal. In other words, motivation is an important factor to make the people will do something to achieve their goal. Motivation helps to achieve something that can make a better circumstance, we will not be able to achieve anything if we do not have any desire to achieve it. Motivation can arise because the achievement can result in rewards, and motivation can also arise within ourselves because of our own will such as we do things because it gives pleasure or it is a hobby. According to Kelly (1955) in his *Personal Construct Theory* (PCT), humans are born motivated, and there's no more addition to be said, every person has motivation that there's no other excuses other than that people are alive. Therefore, motivation comes ever since we were born and it is a desire to do something that can be because of our own will or to get a result.

Based on the explanation above, this study aims to analyze Jason Walker's motivation to survive in Brandon Mull's series novel *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes* using Kelly's *Personal Construct Theory* (PCT).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Characterization

The characterization of character in fictional work can be described either by implicit or explicit illustration. Abrams (1999) stated that what they say (the

dialogue) and what they do (the action) are what describe the image of character. The alternative methods available by author in characterizing the persons in a narrative are *showing* and *telling*. In *showing* (also called *the dramatic method*), the author simply presents the characters talking and acting and leaves the reader to conclude the motives and personality that lie behind what they say and do. It means that the author does not describe or express the character explicitly; the reader is free to appreciate the characterization of the character based on their subjectivity. Meanwhile in *telling*, the author itself is involved in order to describe, and often to evaluate, the motives and personality of the characters. With the *telling* method, the reader is straightly given the description of the characterization by the author. In other words, the description is not implicitly described in the dialogues, but usually is described explicitly in the narration.

Setting

Setting is one of the elements in literary works that is used to tell the reader about places and time which the character exists in the story. Allport (1990) argued that a character is simply a passive reactor to the environment. Rather, a character's behavior is produced by personality structure. It means that, environment or setting is one of the factors that build character's behavior and personality, the settings can be family, people in surrounding area, and office. Wellek and Warren (1956) stated that setting is environment mainly the domestic interior may be viewed of metonymic, metaphoric, expression of character. For example, a man goes to school, school expresses that the man is still a student, and he goes to school to study. Furthermore, setting is one of the elements that can be used to describe more about the character.

Conflict

Other element that supports a story is conflict. Roberts and Jacobs (1989) said that the most important element, the core, of story is conflict. They also state that conflict is one of the major elements to create story. Furthermore, conflict is the important part to build story that leads character to take an action. According to Wellek and Warren (1956), conflict is a dramatic set up that match among equal forces, occurring action and counter action. It means that, conflict affects the

action and reaction of character including emotion and mental process in character itself.

Literature and Psychology

Both literature and psychology have relationship since authors create their work from their idea based on the things they have experienced in real life and use it as the reference to make their works. Literature and psychology are related that they study in the same area about human's life. Wellek and Warren (1956) said that with psychology literature, we may have psychological study of the author, as a type and as individual, or the study of the creative process or the study of psychological types and laws present within works of literature, the effect of literary upon its reader's psychology. In other words, literature has relation with psychology; it studies psychology in the works of literary.

Motivation

According to Kelly (1955) in his *Personal Construct Theory* (PCT), humans are born motivated, and there's no more addition to be said, every person has motivation that there's no other excuses other than that people are alive. Furthermore, it is important to have motivation because people already have it since they were born and thus motivation can help any people to achieve thing whether because of inner desire or for getting outcome. This study used *Personal Construct Theory* (PCT) which classified emotions to analyze the motivation of the major character to survive as to what leads him to survive and which causes his reason in increasing his feeling to be motivated to survive. The classification of emotions proposed by Kelly (1955) is described as follows.

Anxiety

Extremely, life can be become very unpredictable that leads to an exact thing that can be predicted as death. Anxiety is caused by the uncertainty that leads when a person cannot predict accurately. In other words, anxiety is a feeling of worry or unease about upcoming event or something with uncertain result.

Hostility

Anxiety must be avoided, when people have a feeling that they fail to conclude the situation properly which is the anxiety is unavoidable, they may

decline to accept it and effort to demand the proof from the environment. The demand is characterized as hostility. In other words, hostility is described as an act to fight when they do not agree with something.

Aggression

Aggression is an active expansion of a person's emotion. Aggressive people chose to extend their feeling rather than define it. They seek adventure rather than security. They seek to expand their feeling so includes the expanding the range of events. In other words, aggression is an interaction with the intention of giving damage or other unpleasant impact upon another individual.

Guilt

Inconsistency in a relationship is what caused a sense of guilt, however, guilt can be destructive. In other words, guilt is an emotional experience when individuals realize or aware that they have committed an offense, crime, violation or wrong against law and moral standard.

Threat

People feel threatened when people's thought for dealing with external events lose to make sense. It means that, threat is a feeling or being in a situation that something unpleasant, unwanted, or violent will happen.

Fear

A person may experience fear if a friendly dog he or she knows growls at him or her, so that changes his or her interpretation to the dog because the fear that was occurred before, for instance, a friendly dog now becomes a friendly dog that sometimes growls. Furthermore, fear is an unpleasant feeling or being afraid of something dangerous, painful, or bad that will hurt an individual that causes of being in sense of afraid.

Psychological Approach

According to Hornby (1974), psychology is knowledge, learning the thought and its operation. In other words, psychology is a science of mind and its activity. Psychology as the science or study of mind and its process can be used to analyze literary works. Another contribution of psychology toward literary work is related to character that can be good, bad, or frustrated. Psychology is the

knowledge about human beings and the condition of their character. Literature, on the other side, has a relation to the human expression in the forms of literary works. This approach has a view that, psychology, the science of the study of mind and its process, can be used to explain, interpret, and evaluate literary works.

Previous Studies

This kind of study is not the first time being done. There are some that need to be reviewed related to this research. The first one is ZaenalAbidin's journal entitled "An Analysis of a Main Character's Motivation in Nicholas Sparks' Novel Entitled "A Walk to Remember"". This journal concludes that motivation is a character's desire into something. It can be a desire to love, money, woman, position, and so on.

The second previous study is a thesis from Firda Budi Puspitasari entitled "The Motivation to Chase a Dream of Main Character in the Novel *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho (1988): Individual Psychology Analysis". In her thesis, she concludes that motivation is what delivers the character to achieve the goal, all the struggle of the character is driven by motivation. The character has motivation to reach the goal. Motivation directs us to a better condition, to go through the struggle, and always have a positive mind even though we are in a bad circumstance.

The last previous study is a thesis from Helen Monica entitled "The Main Character's Motivation in Saving Viscos as Seen in Paulo Coelho's *The Devil and MisPrym*". The story is about a woman named Chantal who tried to save her village called Viscos. The result of this research shows that Chantal's motivation to save Viscos came up from her responsibility because she had taken a wrong decision before.

Based on the review of previous studies above, it is interesting to analyze major character's motivation in a novel, in this case, this study aims to analyze Jason Walker's motivation to survive in Brandon Mull's series novel *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes*.

3. METHODS

This study was a qualitative research. Creswell (1998) stated that qualitative research is an investigation process of understanding based on different traditional methodology in investigation that explores human issues. It constructs a complex and whole images, analyzes words, reports detailed information, and organizes the research in natural procedures. In other words, qualitative research is a research that investigates social or human issues by describing factual observed information, writings, pictures, speech, or human's behavior that does not need to get the data in numbers. As for analyzing the data, this study used structuralism method. Structuralism method is used to describe specific structure of the literary text. Stanton (1965) said there are main elements that construct unity in literary works, they are plot, characters, and setting. Based on the statement, it can be said that the method used for this research is structuralism method. The method describes the problem or case proposed based on the available facts, the specific ones, then be investigated to solve the problems and draw the general conclusion. To discuss major character's motivation to survive, content analysis would be used. Krippendorff (1980:21) stated that content analysis is a technique to make a conclusion by paying attention to the text. Content analysis was used to examine the content of the novel by analyzing major character's motivation to survive through psychological approach by using Kelly's *Personal Construct Theory* (PCT). In this study, the source of the data was the first trilogy series novel *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes* by Brandon Mull which shows the form of words and phrases used by Mull in the novel. *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes* was first published in 2011 in United States and already published in several versions, editions, and different publishers, and it is also available to read online. This study used the novel that is available online and downloaded in PDF file in 297 pages.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Social Background of Jason Walker

Jason Walker's social background is a thirteen years old boy who lives in Vista, Colorado, his height is six feet tall, he has sandy hair and blue colored eyes,

his outfit appearance is he wears a shirt with a vest and he wears trousers and work books in his journey to survive in Lyrian and he is given a dagger and a ring, in his journey he earns a noble status as Lord of Caberton and chancellor in Trensicourt, he has a good relationship with others such as he has baseball team mates named Tim and Matt, and he has class mates named April and Holly, and after travelling to survive with Rachel it turns out that he likes Rachel more than any girl, his education describes that he is a middle school student which he is a honor student in his class and he is smart in biology, he is skilled in baseball, and his future education has been decided by his parents that he is going to become a dentist. Getting new equipment in unreal world is related to the application of Kelly's theory of motivation, sense of fear and threat which causes him to be more cautious from Maldor and his army.

Psychological Background of Jason Walker

Jason Walker's characterization can be concluded as a thirteen years old kid who lives in Vista, Colorado who has blue eyes color with sandy hair with six feet tall in height who volunteered to work in a zoo. Walker's personality mostly shows as a good person, he is obedient to his parents, and has gown a responsible character, not giving up on his interest that makes him honest and determined, a curious person, skilled in baseball, not only sport that he is skilled but he is smart and clever in study, he is kind for caring about others, but sometimes he is pessimist. Walker's determination and not giving up character are related to Kelly's theory of motivation, sense of anxiety on not knowing where he is has made him determined to survive to find a way home.

Setting Influences Jason Walker's Motivation

The characterization of Walker influenced by the settings of the story in novel is described as a good person that he cares about the people in Lyrian who have to live under the cruel ruler Maldor, a responsible person trying to finish the quest to defeat Maldor and never quit and abandon the mission, he is honest, a curious person, smart, he does not forget to have a good manner when staying in someone else's place, sometimes he is pessimist about himself to survive in Lyrian but as he travels together with Rachel he becomes more determined to

survive in Lyrian then his determination grows from just to survive in Lyrian becomes more determined to save Lyrian from Maldor, all the clues, syllables, Lyrian people's pain, and friends are what motivates him to find a way home by survive in Lyrian to defeat Maldor then go back to his world and he becomes more cautious around him while he is traveling to every places in a mission to collect syllables, he has become a brave person to get all the syllables and face many obstacles and winning all challenges, and sometimes he is humorous trying to calm down a tense condition, in Lyrian he gets social status as Lord of Caberton given by Galloran the Blind King and becomes the chancellor of Trensicourt after challenging Copernum, his feeling towards Rachel has changed from disliking her becomes liking her and he sometimes feels lonely when he is not with Rachel. Seeing and involving Lyrian people in his journey to defeat Maldor is related to Kelly's theory of motivation, sense of guilt, and getting all the syllables has overcome Walker's fear to defeat Maldor.

Conflict Influences Jason Walker's Motivation

Walker's characterization where conflict influenced is described as a good person where at first he was scared from the mistake he has done that makes him running away at the first conflict, but as he faces many obstacles and conflicts he has become responsible and brave to do the quest in order to survive in Lyrian, and he is determined to defeat Maldor because he really cares about Lyrian people, knowing Lyrian people's pain is what changes his motivation from finding a way home by surviving Lyrian has become defeating Maldor his priority first then find a way home, he also cares about Rachel very much whenever he is not with her, he is curious and smart, and he is a loyal person that he rejects Maldor's offering to serve him because he does not want to abandon all his friends that have been together with him traveling together in order to finish the mission so they can survive in Lyrian. Walker's inner conflict has raised his cautious to stay focused and remain calm. Scared of the mistake he has made makes him running away is related to Kelly's theory of motivation, sense of fear, and Walker's inner conflict is related to anxiety and fear.

Jason Walker's Motivation to Survive

The motivation of Walker to survive in another world named Lyrian is based on Kelly's *Personal Construct Theory* (PCT). Kelly (1955) stated that *Personal Construct Theory* (PCT) is a theory of personality and cognition, the principle of the theory is an individual's psychological processes which are channeled by the way an individual anticipates events, where anticipation and prediction are the main drivers of our mind. In his theory, Kelly (1955) classified emotions which drive our mind to become motivated, they are feeling of anxiety, hostility, aggression, guilt, threat, and fear. This study finds that four of six of Kelly's *Personal Construct Theory* (PCT) emotions are what motivate Jason Walker to survive, they are anxiety, guilt, threat, and fear.

Anxiety

Walker's motivation to survive because of anxiety occurs because he does not believe that he is stranded in another world by being swallowed by hippopotamus and leaves him many questions on how he gets into Lyrian or how he can go back to the zoo, and he also feels anxious that he thinks coming in Lyrian is because he is already dead and coming to the afterlife, but after reading the book of Salzared, his anxiety has become clear that Lyrian is real so he has to survive from Maldor's army and spy hunting him, and sometimes he feels anxious whether he will die and everyone will forget him but to overcome his anxiety he becomes motivated to be focused and positive-minded to survive in Lyrian.

Guilt

Walker is motivated to survive in Lyrian because he feels guilty that Maldor takes people's life just because Walker tries talking with them, this fact makes him guilty to other people that involve with him and becomes angry at Maldor to easily take someone's life and becomes motivated to defeat him so that he can survive in Lyrian.

Threat

The threat from Maldor gives Walker big impact to be motivated to survive in Lyrian by defeating him with collecting all the syllables, another threat

comes from Copernum that Walker is going to be dead by sunrise has increased Walker's motivation to survive by staying more cautious.

Fear

Walker's motivation to survive is because of the fear of being chased by his enemies so in order to keep surviving in Lyrian he has to run away from them such as by the rescue squad and to escape the cavern, and in fear of Maldor makes him motivated to survive in Lyrian by stay focused and optimist collecting all the syllables and to be brave meeting Maldor to defeat him.

5. CONCLUSION

After analyzing the major character of Mull's *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes novel* in terms of his characterization where setting and conflict that influence his characterization, it is found that Walker's is a thirteen years old kid who has blue colored eyes, has sandy hair, his height is six feet tall, he is a good person where he is obedient to his parents, he cares about other people, he is a responsible person to finish the quest given, honest, he is a curious person, his curiosity is what makes him smart, he has a good manner where he is in someone's place, he is a determined person to achieve his goal, he can be humorous sometimes where he tries to comfort a tense atmosphere, he is loyal to his friends and never betray them, sometimes he is pessimist when he is lonely, his feeling towards Rachel has changed where setting and conflict influence their relationship where at first they dislike each other but it has changed to Walker likes Rachel. Jason Walker's motivation in his world is to study in zoology major, but in unreal world his motivation is to find a way home and to survive. By using Kelly's *Personal Construct Theory* (PCT) to analyze Jason Walker's motivation to survive, it is found that four of six emotions of Kelly's theory that are anxiety on why he is stranded in unreal world, guilt of involving Lyrian's people and does not want to make his family and friends worried about him, threat from Maldor, and fear of getting caught by Maldor's army are what motivate Walker to survive.

REFERENCES

- Abidin, Zaenal. (2017). *An Analysis of a Main Character's Motivation in Nicholas Sparks' Novel Entitled "A Walk To Remember"*. Retrieved from <http://journal.stbatechnocrat.ac.id/?p=60>.
- Abrams, M. H. (1999). *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (7thed.). Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- Allport, G.W. (1937). *Personality: A Psychological Interpretation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Farner, G. (2014). *Literary Fiction: the Ways We Read Narrative Literature*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Kelly, G. A. (1955). *The Psychology of Personal Constructs: a Theory of Personality*. New York: Norton.
- Kirkus. (2018). *A World Without Heroes*. Retrieved from <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/brandon-mull/world-without-heroes-mull/>.
- Krippendorff, Klaus. (2004). *Content Analysis an Introduction to its Metodology*. London: Sage Publication.
- Monica, Helen. (2008). *The Main Character's Motivation in Saving Viscos as Seen in Paulo Coelho's The Devil and MisPrym*. Yogyakarta: SanathaDarma University.
- Morris, C.G.. (1990). *Psychology: An Introduction* (7thed.). Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Mull, Brandon. (2011). *Beyonders: A World Without Heroes*. Retrieved from <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EAclVGUE6Fxm-ezLCSVs9FTgDYNeGVj5/view>.
- Puspitasari, F.B. (2017). *The Motivation to Chase a Dream of MainCharacter in the Novel the Alchemist by Paulo Coelho (1988):Individual Psychology Analysis*. Surakarta: Surakarta Muhammadiyah University.
- Roberts, E., & Jacobs, H. (1989). *Literature, An Introduction to Reading and Writing*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliff.
- Stanton, R. (1965). *An Introduction to Fiction*. New York,: Holt.
- Wellek, R., & Warren, A. (1956). *Theory of Literature*. New York: Harcourt.