

TIMELESS VIEW OF PHILIP CAREY'S EMOTIONAL ISOLATION IN WILLIAM SOMERSET MAUGHAM'S *OF HUMAN BONDAGE*

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Abstract

*Emotional isolation originates from traumatic experiences in a person's past that are hidden from consciousness and may cause problems during adulthood in the form of obsessive or compulsive behaviors. These behaviors were portrayed in Philip Carey, the main character in William Somerset Maugham's novel *Of Human Bondage*. The research was qualitative, and the technique of collecting data was ethnographic. The approaches used were the psychological approach and sociological approach. This research used psychoanalysis theory: personal principles and defense mechanism by Sigmund Freud, which contains about the conscious and unconscious side of humans and the application in their behavioral life. Emotional isolation behaviors portrayed in Philip Carey were a self-conscious person, an introvert, an impulsive, and an attention seeker. Philip Carey's abnormal behaviors occurred for some reasons. First, he did not have parents taking care of him. Second, he had to live with his cruel and abusive uncle. He also became an object of bullying because of his clubfoot. These behaviors influenced Philip Carey's life. At first, he became self-conscious and delusional. Next, he failed to control his most burdensome bondage: passion. However, in the end, he finally sought freedom from every bondage.*

Keywords: *emotional isolation, personal principle, psychoanalysis*

1. INTRODUCTION

Isolation is the experience of being separated from others. The separation could be real or perceived. Cordeiro (2009) states *solitude is a chosen separation for refining your soul, isolation is what you crave when you neglect the first*. Being emotionally isolated is when someone's defense mechanism kicks in, and to protect themselves from emotional distress, they stop naturally communicating with people. Moreover, emotionally isolated people may have people who would choose to be close to them (and very likely even have people who love them) but because of the way they have mentally processed an incident or series of incidents in their past, they are not able to confide in people. Emotional isolation is triggered by social isolation, infidelity, abuse, fear of abandonment, and other trust issues in which emotional bonds have been broken. Being emotionally isolated creates self-centeredness, insensitivity, and anxiety.

Emotional isolation can be characterized by the subjective experience of a shortfall in one's social resources such as companionship and support. Feelings of loneliness and not

belonging, for example, indicate a perceived inadequacy of the intimacy or companionship of one's interpersonal relationships compared to the relationships that one would like to have (Van Baarsen et al., 2001)

Emotional isolation can be seen in one of William Somerset Maugham's novels entitled *Of Human Bondage*. William Somerset Maugham was an English playwright, novelist, and short-story writer. He was among the most popular writers of his era and reputedly the highest-paid author during the 1930s. His other works are *The Razor's Edge*, *The Moon Sixpence*, *The Pained Veil*, *Cakes and Ale*, and many more. There are some characters involved in *Of Human Bondage* such as Philip Carey, Mr. and Mrs. Carey, Mildred Rogers, and many more. Philip Carey, the major character in William Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*, is an ill-equipped boy to cope with passion. Philip Carey is described as a boy having been born with clubfoot, which becomes a source of ridicule among schoolboys and having lost both parents in childhood so he has to stay with his uncle who is cruel to him. Upon having experienced a catastrophe in his life, he becomes emotionally isolated and oblivious about the world. Maugham sees three forces that impinging Philip, shaping and influencing his life: passion, disillusionment, and the quest for purpose in life. Accordingly, the study of this research is conducted to investigate the timeless view of Philip Carey's emotional isolation in William Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*.

Some theories are used and applied to solve the problem of the study. The theories are psychoanalysis: personal principles (*id*, *ego*, and *superego*) and isolation (*defense mechanism*). These theories are chosen because of the correlation between the formulated problems and the expected solutions. Psychoanalysis is founded by Freud (1856-1939). Freud (In Huber's *The Anatomy of the Mental Personality*, 2011, p.99-100) believes that people can be cured by making conscious of their unconscious thoughts and motivations, thus gaining insight. He discriminates between the level of conscious and unconscious mental activity:

The oldest and best meaning of the word "unconscious" is the descriptive one; we call "unconscious" any mental process the existence of which we are obligated to assume – because, for instance, we infer it in some way from its effect –but of which we are not directly aware. . . . If we want to be more accurate, we should modify the statement by saying that we call a process "unconscious" when we have to assume that it was activated at a certain time, although at that time we knew nothing about it.

Freud further emphasizes the importance of the unconscious by pointing out that even the "most conscious process is conscious for only a short period; quite soon they become *latent*, though they can easily become conscious again" (p.100). Because of this, Freud defines two kinds of the unconscious:

one which is transformed into conscious material easily and under conditions which frequently arise, and another in the case of which such a transformation is difficult, can only come about with a considerable expenditure of energy, or may never occur at all. . . .

We call the only latent unconscious, and so can easily become conscious, the "preconscious", and keep the name "unconscious" for the other (p. 101).

According to Freud (in Guerin and Labor's *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*), three elements compose a human's mind: *id*, *ego*, and *superego*. Each of these three elements of personality emerges at different points in life. However, these aspects of personality are dynamic and always interacting with a person to influence an individual's overall personality and behavior. Freud (in McLeod's *Introduction to Counselling*, 1993, p. 85) assumes that the *id*, a

reservoir of primitive instincts and impulses that are the ultimate motives for our behavior. There are two core drives: life/love/Eros and death/hate/aggression/Thanatos. The id has no time dimension, so those memories are trapped there through repression can be as powerful as when the repressed event first happens. The id is governed by the 'pleasure principle', and is irrational. Furthermore, Guerin (2005, p. 156-157) assures:

The id is the reservoir of libido, the primary source of all psychic energy. It functions to fulfill the primordial life principle, which Freud considers to be the *pleasure principle*. Without consciousness or semblance of rational order, the id is characterized by a tremendous and amorphous vitality. . . . this "obscure inaccessible part of our personality" as "chaos, a cauldron of seething excitement [with] no organization and no unified will, only an impulsion to obtain satisfaction for the instinctual needs, following the pleasure principle. . . . Naturally, the id knows no values, no good and evil, no morality"

Freud states that the id is the source of all psychic energy, making it the primary component of personality. The id is driven by the pleasure principle, which strives for immediate gratification of all desires, wants, and needs. If these needs are not satisfied immediately, the result is a state of anxiety or tension. This sort of behavior would be both disruptive and socially unacceptable.

Meanwhile, the ego is the component of personality that is responsible for dealing with reality. Freud (in McLeod's *An Introduction to Counselling*, 1993, p.85) assumes that *the ego, the conscious, rational part of the mind, makes decisions and deals with external reality*. The ego develops from the id and ensures that the impulses of the id can be expressed in a manner acceptable in the real world. The ego functions in the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious mind. In *The Dissection of the Psychological Personality*, Freud points out *to adopt a popular mode of speaking, we might say that the ego stands for reason and good sense while the id stands for the untamed passion* (p.76). The ego operates based on the reality principle, which strives to satisfy the id's desires in realistic and socially appropriate ways. Guerin (2005, p.157) states that *the id is governed solely by the pleasure principle, while the ego is governed by the reality principle*. The reality principle weighs the costs and benefits of an action before deciding to act upon or abandon impulses. In many cases, the id's impulse can be satisfied through a process of delayed gratification, the ego will eventually allow the behavior, but only in the appropriate time and place. The ego also discharges tension created by unmet impulses through the use of secondary process thinking, in which the ego tries to find an object in the real world that matches the mental image created by the id's primary process.

The last component of personality to develop is the superego. The superego is the aspect of personality that holds all of one's internalized moral standards and ideals that are acquired from both parents and society, the sense of right and wrong. The superego provides guidelines for making judgments. Freud (In *The Anatomy of the Mental Personality*) says *the representative of all moral restrictions, the advocate of the impulse toward perfection, in short, it is as much as we have been able to apprehend psychologically of what people call the 'higher' things in human life* (p.95). According to Freud, the ego is often caught between the id and the super-ego, and also it has to compensate for the demands of reality. In *An Introduction to Counselling* written by McLeod (1993, p.85), Freud assumes that *the superego, the 'conscience', the store-house of rules and taboos about what you should do and should not do. The attitudes a person has in the superego are mainly an internalization of his or her parents' attitudes*. There are two parts of the superego: First, the ego ideal includes the rules and standards for behaviors that the ego aspires

to. Second, conscience includes information about things that are viewed as bad by parents and society. These behaviors are often forbidden and lead to bad consequences, punishments, or feelings of guilt and remorse.

Sigmund Freud (1894-1964) also proposed the first theory about *defense mechanisms*. He observed that effect could be dislocated or transposed from ideas (by the unconscious mechanisms that he would later call dissociation, repression, and isolation) and that effect could be reattached to other ideas (by the mechanism of displacement). This increasing attention to how the ego defends itself against emotionally threatening unconscious impulses and wishes represents an important step away from the original biologically oriented psychoanalytic ‘drive’ theory, in the direction of an ‘ego’ psychology that gave more emphasis to cognitive processes. As a defense against harmful thoughts, isolation prevents the self from allowing these cognitions to become recurrent and possibly damaging to the self-concept. The first step with any defense mechanism is therefore the drive push, an “id push” to the boundaries of consciousness. Concerning the normal conditions between the ego and the drive, Freud (1937, p. 52) gives the following evocative picture:

The individual drive excitations always penetrate out of the id into the ego; there they provide access to the movement apparatus with whose assistance they can implement their satisfaction. In the more fortunate cases, the ego has nothing to object to the intruder, yields it its powers, and is limited to perceiving it: the ego feels the urges of the drive movement, the rising tension with the accompanying unpleasurable feeling, and eventually the solution of the tension in the satisfying pleasure experience ... The id stirrings must on their way to satisfaction pass the terrain of the ego. They come into a foreign environment.

Valliant (1993) in *Ego Mechanisms of Defense and Personality Psychopathology*, states that:

Defense mechanisms refer to innate involuntary regulatory processes that allow individuals to reduce cognitive dissonance and minimize sudden changes in internal and external environments by altering how these events are perceived. Defense mechanisms can alter our perception of any or all of the following: subject (self), object (other), idea, or feeling.

Hence, these theories will be used in the analysis to solve the three problems in this study. The first problem is describing Philip Carey’s suffering from emotional isolation. The second problem is finding out the reasons behind those suffering. Both of the problems will be solved by using isolation and psychoanalysis theories. Last, analyzing the influences of Philip Carey’s principal on his journey of life using psychoanalysis, character, and characterization theories.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study was qualitative research. Punch (2000, p.58) states that the possibilities for data in qualitative studies include documents, diaries, and journals, other written materials. Wijaya (2018, p.1) states as follows:

Qualitative research is a research method based on the philosophy of postpositivism that emphasizes inductive thinking that produces descriptive data, not statistical procedures whose output is in the form of deep conclusions of meaning from a set of generalizations.

Qualitative research seeks primarily to increase the understanding of why things work the way they are in a social world and why people act the way they do. The data of the research were

taken from a novel entitled *Of Human Bondage* written by William Somerset Maugham. Qualitative research was an umbrella term. This research, therefore, included a descriptive method since the data were words not statistical numbers. Furthermore, this research only analyzed the specific aspect of particular cases. The cases were Philip Carey's behavior from suffering emotional isolation in William Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*, the reasons for the suffering, and its influence on his journey of life. The approaches used in this study were the psychological approach and sociological approach.

The form of the data of this study was linguistic units, namely words, phrases, and clauses; they were dialogs or narration in William Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* containing emotional isolation behavior suffered by Philip Carey, its causes, and its effects on his life. The source of data was a novel written by William Somerset Maugham entitled *Of Human Bondage* (Cardinal Edition), published by Pocket Books, Inc., New York, United States, in 1960 consisting of 373 pages.

The technique of collecting data in this research was document analysis. Bowen (2009) states that document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment topic. Therefore, in conducting the research, some steps were being used. The first step was reading the novel, *Of Human Bondage* by W.S. Maugham, several times to understand and got some information from the story. The second step was finding the topic to be analyzed which is why Philip Carey does suffer from emotional isolation and the influence of his pleasure principle towards the journey of life. The third step was looking for some appropriate theories. The fourth step was analyzing Philip Carey's suffers from emotional isolation using psychoanalysis theory and isolation theory. The fifth step was analyzing the influence of Philip Carey's principle on his journey of life using psychoanalysis theory, personal principle theory, isolation theory, and character and characterization.

The data analysis technique of this research was the ethnography technique proposed by Spradley (Garrido, 2017). The ethnographic data analysis technique is a qualitative research genre developed from anthropological methodology. According to Spradley (Garrido, 2017), there are four types of data analysis techniques, namely domain analysis, taxonomy analysis, componential analysis. Domain analysis aims to obtain a general or comprehensive picture of an object of research. From general questions, certain categories or domains will be found as a basis for further research. The result is a previously unknown overview. Domain analysis separates data from non-data. According to Garrido (2017, p.45), "domains are the category of cultural meanings. Domains have terms that have been included through semantic relationships". In this study, the lingual units are words, phrases, sentences, dialogue, or narration regarding the characteristics behavior of Philip Carey's emotional isolation. The following tables provide examples of each data according to the three problems to distinguish them from non-data.

Table 3.1

Domain: A self-centered person

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|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Semantic relationship: characteristic2. Form: X is characteristic of Y3. For example: viewing themselves better than others is characteristic of a self-centered person |
|--|

Terms being covered	Semantic relationship	Terms covering
having strong opinions, hiding their insecurities and vulnerabilities, prideful or abusing their friendships	is one of the characteristics of	a self-centered person.

Table 3.2
Domain: An introvert

1. Semantic relationship: characteristic 2. Form: X is characteristic of Y 3. For example: being silent is characteristic of an introvert		
Terms being covered	Semantic relationship	Terms covering
minimally stimulating environments, tend to feel drained after socializing or regaining their energy by spending time alone	is one of the characteristics of	an introvert.

Table 3.3
Domain: A self-conscious person

1. Semantic relationship: characteristic 2. Form: X is characteristic of Y 3. For example: being sensitive is characteristic of a self-conscious person		
Terms being covered	Semantic relationship	Terms covering
Being sensitive, feeling insecure, or having low self-esteem	is one of the characteristics of	a self-conscious.

Table 3.4
Domain: An attention seeker.

1. Semantic relationship: Characteristic 2. Form: X is characteristic of Y an attention seeker 3. Example: lack of self-esteem is characteristic of an attention seeker		
Terms being covered	Semantic relationship	Terms covering
Dealing with loneliness, being a narcissist, or becoming an attempt to deal with past trauma	is one of the attributive of	an attention seeker.

Moreover, Garrido (2017, p.45) states that “taxonomy is conceptual constructs obtained through semantic relationships.” In the taxonomy analysis, the collected data are then grouped or taxonomized according to the research problems and sub-research problems. Another step in the data analysis technique is componential analysis. Spradley (Garrido, 2017, p.45) says the following:

Componential analysis emerges from the establishment of domains and taxonomies and provides a frame to carry out the activity. The procedure is based on a reflective activity that allows us to understand the meaning of a term to the extent that differs from the other.

Furthermore, in a componential analysis, each sub-problem needs to be understood and expressed its characteristics which have similarities and differences from one another. Last, according to Garrido (2017, p.46), “the analysis of cultural themes includes the search for relationships between domains and how they are related to culture as a whole”. The findings of the research problems are related to the culture as a whole, namely by strengthening, opposing, or adding the existing theories and theories.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter consists of results and discussion. The results include the answers to problems in this research. Meanwhile, the discussion includes the essence of this research which will be elaborated by comparison of this research with previous research, strengthening the theory and suggestion for future researchers.

3.1. Results

This chapter describes Philip Carey’s behaviors, a major character on *Of Human Bondage* who suffers from emotional isolation, what triggers these behaviors, and how these behavior influence his journey of life, based on Freud's theory about personal principle.

3.1.1 Philip Carey’s behavior due to emotional isolation

Philip Carey is a major character in William Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*. He suffered from emotional isolation due to some reasons. Hence, this affected how he behaved to himself and the others. These behaviors shaped his personality. By analyzing Philip Carey's character from the novel and relating it to psychoanalytic theory, the following results were obtained:

3.1.1.1 A self-conscious person

Self-consciousness means how someone sees themselves and how they see others perceive them. It includes pride, jealousy, and embarrassment. Self-consciousness is synonymous with self-awareness and is sometimes used interchangeably. An unpleasant feeling of self-consciousness may occur when one realizes that one is being watched or observed, the feeling that "everyone is looking" at oneself. Some people are habitually more self-conscious than others. Unpleasant feelings of self-consciousness are sometimes associated with shyness or paranoia. This characteristic can be found in Philip Carey’s demeanor. It can be seen in the following:

But he had grown very self-conscious (p.24).

Philip passed from the innocence of childhood to bitter consciousness of himself . . . (p. 25).

His self-consciousness was the effect of his emotional isolation. It was due to the broken ties of trust between Philip and the people around him. This was related to the working principle of the defense mechanism where the 'id' is driven to the boundaries of consciousness. Crozier (2000) in his book entitled *Shyness: Development, Consolidation, and Change* state that *a person with a chronic tendency toward self-consciousness may be shy or introverted* (p.71). Philip became conscious about himself since he was born with club-foot. This deformity made him unable to join his classmates whenever they did a sport or so on. He felt shy when people look at his club-foot. Hence, he always stayed alone and would not mingle with his other friends.

3.1.1.2 An introvert

As mentioned before, Philip was embarrassed about his deformity, so he preferred to stay alone. At home, he was being abused by his uncle. While at school, he was bullied because of his foot. He was always alone and had no one to share his feelings with.

. . . But Philip was more comfortable in the kitchen than in the dining room, and, whenever he could, he took his toys and played there (p.15).

Philip was a friend with loneliness from such an early age since he was an only child. Therefore, when the bad things happened to him, he bottled up his emotion without sharing it with anyone close to him.

Philip felt inclined to cry, but he had an instinctive disinclination to letting other people see his tears, and he clenched his teeth to prevent the sobs from escaping (p.17).

This trait is included as one characteristic of an emotionally isolated person.

3.1.1.3 A delusional person

Not only becoming a self-conscious person but Philip Carey's life also full of illusion. This was a result of his habit as an emotionally isolated person. An introvert usually daydreaming or imagining things to work out their problem. This trait was supported by his hobby of reading.

His habit of reading isolated him; (p.42).

He found refuge from all his miseries in literature without knowing that:

He was creating for himself an unreal world that would make the real world of every day a source of bitter disappointment (p.51).

It happened. Philip was never satisfied with what he had, the present moment. He was imagining what the future will be like. However, when the future came, it only brought him disappointment. Philip denied the reality and so he went to fulfill what his desires wanted. Philip had to learn an important lesson before ending all his misery.

3.1.1.4 An impulsive

One of the traits that arouse as a result of emotional isolation is impulsivity. Seeing from the way Philip followed up on a case by only following the side of the desire for a moment without considering it rationally.

"I don't think I'm going up to Oxford," he said.

"Why not? I thought your idea was to be ordained."

"I've changed my mind." (p.45).

Philip felt suffocated doing the things that his uncle forced him to do, and that was why he wanted to escape from the reality by neglecting his scholarship to Oxford. His decision was made up in the heat of the moment:

“What are you going to be, Philip?” asked Mrs. Carey.
“I don’t know. I’ve not made up my mind . . .” (p.49).

Philip acted impulsively and thus according to the *id* or pleasure principle., without reconsidering the risk by the reality. His desire to escape his uncle's snares made him left his medical scholarship at Oxford and chose to travel to Germany without a clear destination.

4.1.1.5 An attention seeker

Attention-seeking behavior can include saying or doing something to get the attention of a person or a group of people. It can be driven by jealousy, low self-esteem, and loneliness. These behaviors are included as the result of emotional isolation too. For Philip who had been dealing with loneliness and self-consciousness, seeking attention might help him provide the feeling of reassurance that he was worthy.

Though crying, he keenly enjoyed the sensation he was causing; he would have been glad to stay a little longer to be made much of, but felt they expected him to go, . . . (p.5).

Philip even went far as being a masochist so he could feel needed by others. He chose to be in love with Mildred Roger, who had been using him for her need, rather than being in love with Norah, a woman who loved him wholeheartedly.

One evening he told Norah the whole story of his love. It was not one to give him much reason for self-esteem, and it was very pleasant to receive such charming sympathy (p.176).

Philip did not love her at all. He was extremely fond of her, glad to be with her, amused and interested by her conversation. . . . He was immensely flattered that she cared for him (p.178).

Philip was blinded by the desire to be loved by people, this led him to do stupid things like self-sacrificing. He became a puppet of masochistic love of someone where someone's satisfaction was more important even though he had to be willing to be hurt. As for Philip’s irrational understanding, being in the pain of self-sacrifice that he felt needed by others.

3.1.2 Philip Carey’s background as the causes of emotional isolation

Philip Carey’s abnormal behaviors above were the result of his suffering from emotional isolation. This was not a situation that occurred without a particular reason. Freud characterizes it as a mental process involving the creation of a gap between an unpleasant or threatening cognition, and other thoughts and feelings. His theory states that by inserting an interval the person is letting it be understood symbolically, he will not allow his thoughts about that impression or activity to come into associative contact with other thoughts. As a defense against harmful thoughts, isolation prevents the self from allowing these cognitions to become recurrent and possibly damaging to the self-concept. Having analyzed the novel with psychoanalysis theory by Freud, there were several reasons why Philip could develop emotional isolation.

3.1.2.1 Having no parents to take care of him

Philip Carey was an orphan. His father died even before he was born while his mother died not so long after he was born.

“Your mamma’s gone away. You won’t ever see her anymore.”

Philip did not know what she meant.

“Why not?”

“Your mamma’s in heaven.” (p.4).

Weiss (1973) states, “emotional isolation means the absence of an intimate figure or a close emotional attachment”. Philip’s misfortune came at such an early age. Even before his mother’s death, he felt a little lonely since he was an only child who has to play by himself. Then, that his dear mother was no longer with him, his loneliness went almost unbearable. He detached himself because he had no one supporting and caring for him like his mother used to do. Philip was deprived of the only love in the world that is quite unselfish, which was motherly love.

3.1.2.2 Living with an abusive uncle

After losing both of his parents at an early age, Philip was sent to his uncle who lived with his wife and having no child. Unfortunately, his uncle, Mr. William Carey, was cruel and abusive to him.

Mr. Carey had no great ease in expressing himself. When the news came that his sister-in-law was dying, he set off at once for London, but on the way thought of nothing but the disturbance in his life that would be caused if her death forced him to undertake the care of her son (p.6).

Mr. Carey, who should be able to become a substitute for parents for Philip, often threw harsh words at Philip.

His uncle was a weak and selfish man whose chief desire, was to be saved trouble (p.38).

This made Philip uncomfortable and closed himself from the closest people.

“You’re a very naughty boy,” he repeated. “Think of the grief you’re causing your poor mother in heaven.” (p.17)

As his uncle was the reverend of the village, Philip was obliged to suffer some of the strictness this kind of life implied; for example, attending Mass regularly, as well as saying his prayers every night.

He had been taught by his uncle that his prayers were more acceptable to God if he said them in his nightshirt than if he was dressed (p.39).

By these unlucky incidents in his life, Philip had no one he could share his feeling with. Hence, he became alone and enjoyed the loneliness. He detached from being with people to protect himself from being hurt. This trait was related to the work of defense mechanisms.

3.1.2.3 Becoming object bullying of his classmates due to his clubfoot

Philip’s wretchedness was even greater when he started going to school since his misfortunes were just mentioned for having a club-foot.

“I’ve got a club-foot,” he answered (p.23).

This prevented him from joining in the games the other boys played, and at the same time, because of it, he was bullied and made fun of.

“Let’s have a look.”

“No.”

“Don’t then.”

The little boy accompanied the words with a sharp kick on Philip’s shin, which Philip did not expect and thus could not guard against (p.23).

Philip grew while becoming more and more conscious of his deformity, and this caused him to secluded himself. He felt like an outsider which causes:

. . . but gradually he became silent. He began to think of the difference between himself and others (p.24).

As a defense against harmful thoughts, isolation prevented him from allowing these cognitions to become recurrent and possibly damaging to the self-concept. This isolation system involuntary regulatory processes allow individuals to reduce cognitive dissonance and minimize sudden changes in internal and external environments by altering how these events are perceived. Due to the trauma that Phillip experienced as a child from his uncle and friends, he was so mentally depressed that he had no other way but to isolate himself as a defense so as not to get hurt further.

3.1.3 The influences of Philip Carey's principles on his life

Considering Freud's (in McLeod's *Introduction to Counselling*, 1993) theory about personal principle, the basic structure of personality creates complex behavior and has a powerful influence on individuals. Philip Carey was one of the individuals who was analyzed for having complex behaviors due to his suffering from emotional isolation. These behaviors influenced Philip Carey on his journey of life, such as:

3.1.3.1 Becoming self-conscious and delusional

Having suffered from emotional isolation affects Philip's behavior. Since he only sought company from books, he was becoming unconscious about many things and being self-conscious. Consider the following quotation:

Philip passed from the innocence of childhood to bitter consciousness of himself by the ridicule which his club-foot had excited. . . . The many books he had read filled his mind with ideas which, because he only half understood them, gave more scope to his imagination (p. 25).

It showed that the *id* of Philip which was bound from his birth drove him into the primary process, which made him imagined things in his life for his pleasant experience. He denied the reality principle since he was suffering from emotional isolation. Reality principle means something that is forced to consider risks, requirements, and possible outcomes. It is based on Freud's theory which is quoted on *Ego, drives, and the dynamics of internal objects* by Boag (2014, p.3). Freud (in Boag's *Ego, drives, and the dynamics of internal objects*, 2014) states, "for the ego, perception plays the part which in the id falls to instinct. The ego represents what may be called reason and common senses, in contrast to the id, which contains the passions", means that ego is a component of personality that deals with the demand of reality. *The unconscious mind* also affected Philip's morality. He thought that if he was faithful enough to God, he could be released from his agony for having a club-foot.

But now Philip added other means of attaining his desire: he began to wish when he saw a new moon or a dappled horse, and he looked out for shooting stars; during exeat, they had a chicken at the vicarage, and he broke the lucky bone with Aunt Louisa and he wished again, each time that his foot might be made whole. . . . (p. 30-31).

Philip became delusional in his desire to have complete feet, the perfect one. Therefore, after his uncle said that he had to be more faithful to God, then He would be generous enough to grant wishes. Philip accepted the saying and became more greedy in praying. By this means, the first influence of Philip's suffering from emotional isolation, that was, he became imaginative and made no sense of how reality works since he only prioritized his desire.

3.1.3.2 Failing to control his most burdensome bondage: passion

Philip was described as a boy who had a big dream in his life. He was smart even though he was not perfect like any others. He had always been passionate about his life whether it was in

the context of pride or love. He was in such a hurry to leave school and started life without considering the future moment.

. . . It would be pleasant to end up his school days with glory and then go to Oxford . . . But he was ashamed; he would look such a fool in his own eyes if he gave in now; his uncle would chuckle at the success of the headmaster's ruse. . . . (p. 57).

If he had stayed he could have been given the scholarship to Oxford as a surgeon, just like his father was. He decided to go to Heidelberg because he was not satisfied with his present life and set off in search of something better.

. . . His school days were over, and he was free, but the wild exultation to which he had looked forward at that moment was not there. He walked around precincts slowly, and a profound depression seized him (p.57)

He felt completely out of place in the society he was living in and sets off to find himself, to fulfill himself. From Heidelberg, he went to London; from London to Paris, then went back to England more mature than he left but without having found what he was looking for.

He wished now that he had not been foolish. He did not want to go, but he knew he could never bring himself to go to the headmaster and tell him he would stay. That was a humiliation he could never put upon himself. . . . (p. 57-58).

There was a clash between his *id* and his *ego*, but Philip chose to neglect the *ego* and go on with his passion. Philip, who had been feeling oppressed by difficulties due to his disability and also the unsupportive social environment, felt he had to defend the only thing he had left, namely pride. He chose to follow his passion to protect his pride rather than accept the reality which lied in front of his eyes.

The second condition also went to his passion for love. Philip preferred loving others to being loved. He was pretty reckless, and even though he knew he would be in great pain, Philip still chose it because he thought it was the best for him. He chose to settle with Mildred Rogers, a barmaid who once abandoned him and having affairs with a man named Miller. Philip chose to have an affair with Mildred rather than stick with Norah, a woman who loved him. Although Mildred was not worthy at all because she was cunning and lacking in many areas, yet Philip could not stop his heart from yearning for her.

If he had any sense he would stick to Norah, she would make him much happier than he would ever be with Mildred: after all, she loved him, and Mildred was only grateful for his help. But when all was said the important thing was to love rather than to be loved; and he yearned for Mildred with his whole soul. . . . (p. 197).

Mildred was depicted as a realistic character and, unlike Philip who lived with an imaginary image of others, had a realistic perception of the world and people and sought only to work for her benefit. Philip knew for sure that Mildred was not worthy of him but he could not control his passion to stop loving her. He sacrificed himself to be in masochistic love to rescue his pride.

He did not care if she was heartless, vicious and vulgar, stupid and grasping, he loved her. He would rather have misery with one than happiness with the other (p.198).

Philip felt needed to be with Mildred even though he knew that Mildred took his feelings for granted. He was an attention seeker for masochistic love. He felt greedy for affection which he could not get from his childhood. This behavior followed the concept of *id* which neglecting the

consequences of an act, only focused on fulfilling the needs and desires. According to Dominick Barbara (in *Masochism in Love and Sex*, 1974) “masochism is also applied to self-induced psychological suffering such as shame, humiliation, and rejection, not necessarily connected with sexual intercourse” (p. 73). Thus, masochism was the best word that defines Philip. Philip’s masochism may arise from his humiliation in his childhood and his being rejected by other members of society. People with a masochistic disorder liked to be with those who humiliate them and this explained why Philip enjoyed being with Mildred. He hated himself because of his physical deformity and loved Mildred because she made him recognized the same contempt he had for himself. The desire to hurt himself was an integral aspect of his personality. Being with Mildred did not give him pleasure, but more pain than he felt and experienced in daily life.

3.1.3.3 Seeking freedom from every bondage

Philip’s life was full of misery. Started from the death of his mother when he was merely a child, had a club-foot, lived with his cruel uncle, was bullied by his schoolmates, was taken for granted by Mildred Rogers, and so on. Philip was wondering about the meaning of life and it led him to act impulsively. He had to learn an important lesson before ending all his misery. The truth was that his suffering was not always inflicted on him, it was something for which he, himself, masochistically searches; it was a kind of punishment for his pride. After having conflicted so much with himself and denying his condition, he regained composure. At last, he realized that he needed to surrender to the divine. He began to break free from every bondages he had.

All his plans were suddenly overthrown, and the existence, so elaborately pictured, was no more than a dream which would never be realized. He was free once more. Free! (p. 371).

To get this freedom, what he had to do was to free himself from all the bondages which suffocated him. The first thing to do was accepting his deformity, by this, he was breaking free from the bondage of perfection.

He realized that he had deceived himself; it was no self-sacrifice that had driven him to think of marrying, but the desire for a wife and a home and love;

The second condition, he needed to break free from his masochistic love. Love was not merely about giving and not taking. Life was about balance, therefore he realized that he had wasting time for Mildred.

Had he not seen also the simplest pattern, that in which a man was born, worked, married, had children, and died (p. 373).

Philip Carey lived in a world of illusions that were never fulfilled. In his unhappy state, he put too much faith in the future, and this attitude was, according to Freud (1972), typical of unsatisfied persons. He thought that being a masochist would save his pride but turned out he was suffering more than ever.

It might be that surrender to happiness was to accept defeat, but it was a defeat better than many victories. (p.373).

However, he did not realize that the solution to all his problems lied inside himself. Nobody could help him discover the meaning of life, because only he could do it. He acknowledged in the end that putting away his desire and surrendered to the divine was more important.

Suffering from emotional isolation led Philip to go through his journey of life and discovered things he did not realize before, the importance of the *reality principle*. By balancing the work of *pleasure principle* and *reality principle* he became a human. There was no need to

escape reality to fulfill endless desires. It is seen throughout the novel that the circumstances do not help Philip to find contentment in his life. It is the change of attitude that makes him the complete version of himself. This change of attitude is regenerate from the balance of *reality principle and pleasure principle*, for instance: acceptance.

3.2 Discussion

Summarizing, the causes of Philip's unhappy state were the miserable conditions of his life at the Vicarage, his wretchedness at school, and the burden of a strenuous relationship with Mildred. After regaining his composure and dealing with the reality thinking, he broke free from all bondages he had. There is a similarity in the findings in this study with Ettehadi and Sistani's research (2017) entitled *Psychoanalytic Reading of Love and Desire in Somerset Maugham's Of Human Bondage*. The similarity lies in the masochistic love Philip had for Mildred Roger. Philip is bond by his inner conflict that makes him loses his identity. He fails to actualize his real identity because he feels needed by her when in reality, Mildred is taken him for granted to fulfill her desire also. However, this research has a broader scope besides masochistic behavior. This research also includes the main reason for Philip's suffering which is emotional isolation and how it affects his thinking and behaviors. This research has a more complex analysis from the psychological point of view and not merely focused on the masochistic love that Philip Carey had for Mildred Roger.

According to Freud (1937), the unconscious mind was a storehouse for unacceptable repressed desires specific to the individual and that past experiences, particularly in childhood, have a great influence on adult lives, and shaping the personality. For example, emotional isolation is originating from traumatic experiences in a person's past that are hidden from consciousness and may cause problems during adulthood in the form of obsessive or compulsive behaviors. These behaviors are portrayed in Philip Carey who is the main character in William Somerset Maugham's novel *Of Human Bondage*. Thus, the writer justifies Freud's theory after analyzing the novel is related to the theory for correlating with the situations in the novel. As far as the first one is concerned, Philip's timeless view of life starts when he leaves school and the Vicarage and decides to go to Heidelberg. He is not satisfied with his present life and sets off in search of something better. He feels completely out of place in the society he is living in and sets off to find himself, to fulfill himself. Thus, in a way that can be said that he is sick; however, at this point, he does not know what is wrong with him; he does not imagine that his life is the problem. As for the second statement, that is the answer Philip is going to find for the riddle of life. His timeless view of life takes him from Heidelberg to London; from London to Paris, to go back to England more mature than he left but without having found what he was looking for. He certainly has not found what he wanted, but he starts wondering what is wrong with life; at least with his life. He is eager to live; he is tired of preparing for life, but he does not realize he is letting life escape through his fingers by thinking of the future. No matter if he is not happy in one place, he will move to a different one and try something else. However, when he is there, he is disappointed; things are not as he expected them to be. He lives in a world of illusions that are never fulfilled. In his unhappiness, he puts too much faith in the future, and this attitude is, according to Freud (in David Lodge's *Creative Writers and Daydreaming in Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*, 1972) typical of unsatisfied persons. Freud (1972) states that "a happy person never fantasizes, only an unsatisfied one. The motive forces of fantasies are unsatisfied wishes,

and every single fantasy is the fulfillment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality” (p.38). However, Philip does not realize that the solution to all his problems lies inside himself. Nobody can help him discover the meaning of life. It is worthless unless you discover it.

4. CONCLUSION

Emotional isolation is originating from traumatic experiences in a person’s past that are hidden from consciousness and may cause problems during adulthood in the form of obsessive or compulsive behaviors. These behaviors are portrayed in Philip Carey who is the main character in William Somerset Maugham’s novel *Of Human Bondage*. These behaviors shaped Philip’s personality. The first trait, Philip became a self-conscious person. He was being sensitive to what others perceive of him because of his deformity. The second trait, he became an introvert. Philip was a friend with loneliness from such an early age since he was an only child. Therefore, when the bad things happened to him, he bottled up his emotion without sharing it with anyone close to him. Not only that but he also became impulsive. He decided everything in the heat of the moment without thinking afterward after his abrupt decision. Last, he became an attention seeker. He even became a puppet of masochistic love to protect what he thinks left behind for him, pride.

Philip Carey’s abnormal behaviors above were the result of his suffering from emotional isolation and these happened for reasons. First, he had no parents to take care of him. His father died before he was born and his mother also died not so long after he was born. Philip’s misfortune came at such an early age. Even before his mother’s death, he felt a little lonely since he was an only child who had to play by himself. Then, that his dear mother was no longer with him, his loneliness went almost unbearable. He detached himself because he had no one supporting and caring for him like his mother used to do. Second, he had to live with his cruel and abusive uncle. He often received harsh and hurtful words which made him uncomfortable. He also became an object of bullying because of his clubfoot. Due to the trauma that Phillip experienced as a child from his uncle and friends, he was so mentally depressed that he had no other way but to isolate himself as a defense so as not to get hurt further. As a defense against harmful thoughts, isolation prevented him from allowing these cognitions to become recurrent and possibly damaging to the self-concept.

Considering Freud’s theory about personal principle, the basic structure of personality creates complex behavior and has a powerful influence on individuals. These behaviors influenced Philip Carey on his journey of life. At first, he became self-conscious and delusional. He became imaginative and makes no sense of how reality worked since he only prioritized his desire. Next, he failed to control his most burdensome bondage: passion. The passion was in the context of pride and love. Philip protected his pride with his life because he thought that was the only thing he had. He hid his deformity by revealing his pride in an egoistic way. He also became a puppet of masochistic love to feel inferior to Mildred Roger. However, in the end, he finally seeking freedom from every bondage. He realized the importance of the *reality principle*. By balancing the work of *pleasure principle* and *reality principle* he became more human. This was resulting in his change of attitude. Philip began to accept the reality, for instance: his deformity. He surrendered to accept that in life what he needed was love and support from others too. There was no need to escape reality to fulfill endless desires. Life is what you make of it. It means that you are responsible for your result in life. Think clearly and decide wisely.

According to Freud, the unconscious mind is a storehouse for unacceptable repressed desires specific to the individual and that past experiences, particularly in childhood, have a great influence on adult lives, and shaping the personality. Thus, it creates a complex behavior that will influence someone's life. These behaviors are portrayed in Philip Carey who is the main character in William Somerset Maugham's novel *Of Human Bondage*. By that means, the writer justifies the theory for correlating with the situations in the novel. Philip's timeless view of life started when he left school and the Vicarage and decided to go to Heidelberg. From Heidelberg to London; from London to Paris, to go back to England more mature than he left but without having found what he was looking for. He lived in a world of illusions that were never fulfilled. In his unhappiness, he put too much faith in the future, and this attitude is, according to Freud (1972) typical of unsatisfied persons. Philip did not realize that the solution to all his problems lied inside himself. Nobody can fix the circumstances, it is about changing the attitude. When someone changes their attitude, they develop their character and this will affect their circumstances.

However, this research has its limitations. Therefore, it is recommended for further researchers to investigate other characters in this novel based on psychoanalysis.

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