

## THE INFLUENCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT TO MAGGIE'S BEHAVIOR IN CRANE'S "MAGGIE: A GIRL OF THE STREET"

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**Abstract** : The purpose of this research is to reveal the influence of the environment to Maggie's behavior in Crane's "Maggie: A Girl of the Streets". In conducting this research in which the data are in the form of words rather than numbers. In analysing the data, the writer used objective and psychological approach. The data collected in this research from two sources, primary and secondary sources. Primary sources is Crane's "Maggie: A Girl of the Street" and secondary sources are the other books and data from internet that related to this research. The result of this research shows that Maggie has a miserable life that caused by her bad environment. Caused by her family condition, her job, her neighbourhood, her love relationship with Pete, and all the problems that she has to face in everyday of her life. But the conditions make her depressed. At the end of the story, Maggie chooses a wrong decision. She kills herself.

**Keywords:** *Influenced, environment, psychological approach, Maggie, crane*

### INTRODUCTION

Stephen Crane's "Maggie: A Girl of the Street" is life story that tells the reality of life of a girl who lives in a bad environment. "Stephen Crane is an American naturalist writer who wrote Maggie: A Girl of the Street. What he experienced shapes his view in seeing the reality in life. (Moonik, Moge & Sabudu, 2020) "As a naturalist, he wrote "Maggie: A Girl of the Street." (Bassan, 1967: 157) stated that,

"Naturalism is the condition that people were very much determined by environment. Naturalism was a literary movement taking place from 1880s to 1940s that used detailed realism to suggest that social condition, heredity and environment had inescapable force in shaping human character."

A best novel from Stephen Crane, "Maggie: A girl of the Streets", tells about human life that happen at the time. Crane presents the human life through Maggie's life especially her family who lives in poverty. And when people are talking about human condition, people are talking about the environment also. The environment influences our attitude. In "Maggie: A girl of the Street", people can see that Maggie's behaviour influenced by her bad environment, and her family condition also. Maggie's home life is also contributing to the environment around them that formed Maggie's character. Maggie's father's alcoholism also contributes to the atmosphere within the family.

She tries to do her best to get out from the house, and then she meets someone that she expects can release her from her house. But she doesn't get what she wants, because Pete only makes her heart become hurt. Pete betrays Maggie with another woman, and then makes her really disappointed for her life. She blames her own life for all that happens in her life, and then she becomes a prostitute girl. In the end of the novel, Maggie decides to kill herself.

The writer is interested in analyzing this novel because it shows us that the environment can influence someone. When people live in good environment, their attitudes become excellent, but when people live in bad environment, it can give them the bad impact. It shows us that how glorious someone, still need the equal environment to be a good man (Horby, A.S, 2000).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

To carry out this research, the writer applied the qualitative research since the data obtained are in the form of words. "Qualitative research is descriptive. The data

collected are in the form of words or picture rather than numbers. The written result of the research contains quotation from the data to illustrate the presentation." (Bodgan and Biklen, 1992).

Related to that explanation, the contents presentation of the study will be in descriptive form, it described about all information from the data provided into descriptive form (Griffith, K, 1986).

In doing this research, the sources here are classified into two categories they are primary sources and secondary sources. The primary source is the novel itself, which is the title "Maggie: A girl of the Street" by (Stephen Crane, 1979) and the secondary sources are some books, another literary works, dictionary, and internet data that related to do this research (Robert, L. and Jacob M. Literature, 1986).

In analysing this research, the writer uses two approaches; they are the Psychological approach and objective approach. Meyer stated that, "The nature of psychological approach is a strategy based heavily on the idea of the existence of a human unconscious- those impulses, desires, and feelings about which a person is unaware but which influence emotions and behavior (Pizer, D, 1994).

Maggie has a desire to get a better life, but the fact that she faces does not like her desire. She wants to run away from her miserable life but she can't. This approach deals with the influence of environment. Her desire influences her behavior. Maggie lives in poor family and poverty environment. The family's house is squalid and chaotic. Both parents are alcoholics, and the three children, Jimmy, Tommie, and Maggie are left to fend for themselves and hide from their tyrannical mother as best as they can.

According to (Abram, 1993), Objective Approach is: "The objective orientation, which on principle regards the works of arts in isolation from all the external point of references analysis it as a self-sufficient entity constituted by its part in their internal relations, and sets out to judge it's solely by criteria intrinsic to its own ode of being." (36). This objective approach directs the writer in making the research

which concerns of the novel itself by interrelating the internal parts of the novel (Hofiman, ML, 1994).

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

An environment or social environment has a big influence to form someone character or behavior. Social environment as a part of the setting, also influence Maggie's behavior. Maggie is a child living in the tenements of the Bowery, a slum area of New York City. Maggie grows into a beautiful girl, somehow untouched by the squalor around her. When her brother brings home his friend Pete, who shows her some attention, she falls in love with him. She fails to see him as the uncouth braggart that he is and succumbs to his charms. She goes to live with him, but Pete soon tires of her. She tries to return home, but is turned away. Both her mother and her brother condemn her as a fallen woman, despite the immoral behavior of both of them. Maggie, homeless and penniless, turns to prostitution to make a living. The environments on surroundings play a great role in determining the behavior of someone.

Maggie lives in a bad environment around her. She has a bad family; a drunkard mother and father and a pugnacity brother. There is no love in her family. She works in a bad working environment, a miserably factory. She has to work a whole day with a small fee. And her hope to get better life with Pete, does not like the reality that happen. Pete causes her to kills herself (Pickering, J. H. Fiction, 1993).

### **Social Environment in the Novel**

#### *The Influence of Maggie's Family on Maggie's Character*

Maggie is a young woman who has strong desire to get something in her life although her desire will get destruction to her. Her family background is broken. Maggie lives in a poor family. "They live in the slum area, the area that full of the immigrant that arrived with nothing in searching prosperity in America." Arriving

with nothing, they only can find the residences in these slums of the city. The area that full of gangster and prostitute.

Eventually, they entered into a dark region where, from a careening building, a dozen gruesome doorways gave up loads of babies to the street and the gutter. A wind of early autumn raised yellow dust from cobbles and swirled if against an hundred windows. Long streamers of garments fluttered from fire-escapes. In all unhandy places there were buckets, brooms, rags and bottles. In the street infants played or fought with other infants or sat stupidly in the way of vehicles. Formidable women, with uncombed hair and disordered dress, gossiped while leaning on railings, or screamed in frantic quarrels. Withered persons, in curious postures of submissions to something, sat smoking pipe in obscure comers. A thousand odors of cooking food came forth to the street. The building quivered and creaked from the weight of humanity stamping about in its bows. (6)

The quotation above shows the bad environment around Maggie's life such as a slum life, poverty, uneducated people and also an immoral people. A social condition that does not support someone to become a good person. Maggie lives in tenement areas, which were buildings that were carved up into small apartments that six or seven people lived together in one or two rooms. She has to survive in that condition, she tries to find a better ways to escape from her bad environment but she can't.

Maggie has a brutal brother; it is shown in first chapter of this novel. Maggie's elder brother, Jimmie Johnson is a young man who is cruel and likes to fight. He is a member of Rum Alley gang which usually fights against the Devil's Row. A boy who likes to fight and show his power and seem to search his self-identity and self-esteem and so does Jimmie. He cannot find a peaceful life in his family because his parents like to quarrel. In the opening scene, the boys are fighting over a form of power which neighborhood group of boys is better or stronger than the other.

A very little boy stood upon a heap of gravel for the honor of Rum Alley. He was throwing stones at howling urchins from Devil's Row who were circling madly about the heap and pelting at him. (3)

And furthermore, Maggie lives in a bad family condition. She has a drunkard mother and father. From the beginning and to the end of this novel, the use and abuse of alcohol is prevalent. Both the mother and father drink heavily to the point of passing out. The drinking habit of her father is shown in the second chapter when he is quarrelling with his wife. His intention wants to escape from this problem, because every time of this quarrel appears, his wife is always as a victor.

In the quarrel between husband and wife, the woman was victor. The man grabbed his hat and rushed from the room, apparently determined upon a vengeful drunk. She followed to the door and thundered at him as he made his way downstairs. (9) Her drunkard mother is shown in this quoted;

The mother sat blinking at them. She delivered reproaches, swallowed potatoes and drank from a yellow-brown bottle. After a time her mood changed and she wept as she carried little Tommie into another room and laid him to sleep with his fists doubled in an old quilt of faded red and green grandeur. Then she came and moaned by the stove. She rocked to and fro upon a chair, shedding tears and crooning miserably to the two children about their "poor mother" and "yer fader, damn 'is soul." (11)

Her mother drank whiskey all Friday morning. With lurid face and tossing hair she cursed and destroyed furniture all Friday afternoon. When Maggie came home at half-past six her mother lay asleep amidst the wreck of chairs and a table. Fragments of various household utensils were scattered about the floor. She had vented some phase of drunken fury upon the lambrequin. It lay in a bedraggled heap in the comer. (21)

She doesn't have a good family relationship. Her parents do not live in a harmony one to other. They don't care each other. Maggie's parents don't give a

good model to their children. The mother drinks every morning. She is supposed to take care her children, serves them a breakfast, but she is already drunk in the morning. Maggie's mother is usually drunk to escape the reality. Maggie's mother is trying to run away from her miserable life. She is a jobless woman, so that she can provide all their family's needs. So she tries to forget her frustrations by drinking. Maggie's family is a broken family. Maggie's parents are also uneducated, drunker and lack of education apparently become a factors that make her parents often tell indecent words to their children and also treat their children cruelly. The quotation below shows the mother's treatment to Maggie.

The mother in the corner upreared her head and shook her tangled locks. "Teh hell wid him and you," she said, glowering at her daughter in the gloom. Her eyes seemed to bum balefully. "Yeh've gone teh deh devil, Mag Johnson, yehs knows yehs have gone teh deh devil. Yer a disgrace teh yer people, damn yeh. An' now, git out an' go ahn wid dat doe-faced jude of yours. Go teh hell wid him, damn yeh, an' a good riddance. Go teh hell an' see how yeh likes it." Maggie gazed long at her mother. "Go teh hell now, an' see how yeh likes it. Git out. I won't have sech as yehs in me house! Get out, d'yeh hear! Damn yeh, git out!" (30)

People can know about Maggie's condition in her family condition. Her father died because of alcohol, as seen in the quotation, "His father died and his mother's years were divided up into periods of thirty days." (13) There is no love, a passion, and care among them. They just think about themselves. Maggie's parents don't care about them children, even their children has a brutal character and life.

### **The Influence of Working Environment on Maggie's Character**

Maggie: A girl of the Street is written to show the condition in America in 19th Century, in the industrialization era. "As people know that industrialization needs the person that has a skill or ability to operate the machines. Education is very

important at the time for the people to get the jobs." (Handlin, 1959:46) Also, the influences of industrialization that happen at the time were felt by Maggie's family.

"Development of industrial system created another revolution in family deteriorated under the impact of changing economic conditions. Because most production took place the outside the home, the economic base of the family weakened, causing younger members to leave home to find employment. Like the hunting and gathering economy, industrialization requires a high degree of mobility, forcing workers to move one place to another as some jobs close and other open."

According to (Handlin, 1959) "A large proportion of the Southern and Eastern European immigrants of the past twenty-five years have entered the manufacturing and mining industries of the eastern and Middle Western States, mostly in the capacity of unskilled laborers." (234). In this case, Maggie's family doesn't have it all. Maggie lives in a poor family and her parents have no good educational background, her family condition demands her to survive by any means don't care what kind of job that she will get as long as can give them a money. It becomes very difficult to fulfil all their needs, the food, the clothes, and the other in everyday their life. The economy condition of Maggie's family is not good; the economy becomes the biggest problem in her family and causes the other problem in her family. Whereas, as a parents Maggie's mother and father must provides their children support and protection but Maggie cannot get it. Finally, Maggie decides to work in the factory, as seen in the following quotation:

By a chance, she got a position in an establishment where they made collars and cuffs. She received a stool and a machine in a room where sat twenty girls of various shades of yellow discontent. She perched on the stool and treaded at her machine all day, turning out collars, the name of whose brand could be noted for its irrelevancy to anything in connection with collars. At night she returned home to her mother. (I 7)



The influence of the industrialization has a bad impact to her and her family also; because this era forced someone have to survive as well as in social environment. Maggie's family does not have a good background to be like that and also influence of Maggie's life. She does not get a good educational and good family background to fulfil the requirements of industrialization era. Maggie just only gets a very small fee, and has to working hard. She longs to escape her dreary job at the collar and cuff factory but does not have a confidence or the opportunity to succeed on her own.

### **The Influence of Pete on Maggie's Character**

People around her consider Maggie and her family as a brutal family. It because her drunkard mother and father and also her brother. Her brother Jimmie introduced Pete to her. Maggie become falls in love with Pete, she hopes that Pete can make Maggie come out of her bad environment, her brutal family and all the circumstances that make her frustration. When Pete appears, she becomes filled with hope that she will be succeeded and gets the better life. Pete becomes a figure that makes her wake up and wants to change her own life; Pete becomes an "Ideal Man" for her. But, the fact does not like her desire. Pete is a glamorous man, but Maggie is too dependent to him and, eventually leads her to destruction of her life. People can see in the following quotation:

He sat on a table in the Johnson home and dangled his checked legs with an enticing nonchalance. His hair was curled down over his forehead in an oiled bang. His rather pugged nose seemed to revolt from contact with a bristling moustache of short, wire-like hairs. His blue double-breasted coat, edged with black braid, buttoned close to a red puff tie, and his patent-leather shoes looked like murder-fitted weapons. His mannerisms stamped him as a man who had a correct sense of his personal superiority. There was valor and contempt for circumstances in the glance of his eye. He waved his hands like a man of the world, who dismisses

religion and philosophy, and says "Fudge." He had certainly seen everything and with each curl of his lip, he declared that it amounted to nothing. Maggie thought he must be a very elegant and graceful bartender. (17)

Maggie perceived that here was the beau ideal of a man. Her dim thoughts were often searching for faraway lands where, as God says, the little hills sing together in the morning. Under the trees of her dream- gardens there had always walked a lover. (19)

Pete catches her heart by his outward appearance. "Maggie watched him furtively, with half-closed eyes, lit with a vague interest." (18) She doesn't know about Pete's life. Pete is only interested on Maggie's physique. Maggie becomes enamored of Pete not because she sees him for what he is but she has never known anything better. Their first meet when Maggie is hearing him describe his power in fighting. Her attraction to Pete is not confined simply to her romantic notions but also her very real need for a protector. She considers him as a knight for her life. For Maggie, Pete is her way out from her miserable life. She thinks Pete can provide wealth and prosperity for her. She imagined a future, rose-tinted, because of its distance from all that she previously had experienced. As to the present she perceived only vague reasons to be miserable. Her life was Pete's and she considered him worthy of the charge. (39).

Maggie grows up to be a beautiful young girl that has romantic hopes for a better life. But her destruction of her life begins when she becomes enamored of Pete, who shows her the confidence and worldliness seems to promise wealth and culture. Maggie looks up to her higher social status because Pete's glamour life. Maggie is very happy and unbelievable when finally Pete asks her out. But Maggie still innocence, in the end of their date Pete asks her for a kiss, but she refuses. Her change in attitude and behavior caused by Pete.

"Say, Mag," said Pete, "give us a kiss for takin' yeh teh deh show, will yer?" Maggie laughed, as if startled, and drew away from him. "Naw, Pete," she said, "dat

wasn't in it." "Ah, what deh hell?" urged Pete. The girl retreated nervously. Ah, what deh hell?" repeated he.

Maggie darted into the hall, and up the stairs. She turned and smiled at him, then disappeared. (24-25)

In her second date with Pete, she lost her virginity. And then, Pete left her with another woman that he feels stronger than Maggie, her name is Nellie. Pete becomes not responsibility with Maggie and always buck passing from her. Pete feels Maggie is a brittle woman, he just want Maggie's physical condition and does not want to receive her just the way Maggie is.

The girl's eyes stared into his face. "Pete, don't yeh remem--" "Oh, hell," interrupted Pete, anticipating. The girl seemed to have a struggle with herself. She was apparently bewildered and could not find speech. Finally she asked in a low voice: "But where kin I go?" The question exasperated Pete beyond the powers of endurance. It was a direct attempt to give him some responsibility in a matter that did not concern him. In his indignation he volunteered information. "Oh, go teh hell," cried he. He slammed the door furiously and returned, with an air of relief, to his respectability. Maggie went away. She wandered aimlessly for several blocks. She stopped once and asked aloud a question of herself: "Who?" A man, who was passing near her shoulder, humorously took the questioning word as intended for him. "Eh? What? Who? Nobody! I didn't say anything," he laughingly said, and continued his way. Soon the girl discovered that if she walked with such apparent aimlessness, some men looked at her with calculating eyes. She quickened her step, frightened. As a protection, she adopted a demeanor of intentness as if going somewhere. (50)

Maggie becomes a poor less girl. She does not know where the other place that she can go. Her mother has departed her from her house and then the man that she expect to change her life and make her life better, make her heart being hurt and left her to another woman.

In her hopeless condition, she decided to be a prostitute. She thinks that it is the best way to find the happiness. She thinks that she can survive alone by herself after rejected by her parents, her boyfriend and also her environment. In this quoted show us that Maggie does not care anymore about her life, she think that she can survive with a dark way like prostitute, furthermore she has fall in a dark life.

A girl of the painted cohorts of the city went along the street. She threw changing glances at men who passed her, giving smiling invitations to men of rural or untaught pattern and usually seeming sedately unconscious of the men with a metropolitan seal upon their faces. Crossing glittering avenues, she went into the throng emerging from the places of forgetfulness. She hurried forward through the crowd as if intent upon reaching a distant home, bending forward in her handsome cloak, daintily lifting her skirts and picking for her well-shod feet the dryer spots upon the pavements. (52)

But she realizes that the life that she faces cannot make her life better instead added sadness and make her life more destroy. In the end of this story, she decides to end her life with a wrong way. She kills herself, she kills her future, and also she commits to suicide. When Pete appears in Maggie's life, she becomes filled with hope that she will succeed. Maggie looks up to his higher social status. With Pete's glamorous life, she thinks that she can escape from her miserable life. Her naivete and clouded vision of reality causes her to be too dependent on Pete, which eventually leads to her destruction. The environment around her is very hard for her. Her background family condition brings her into bad future. Maggie grows up with a brutal family and she does not get what she has to get as a child in her family. Her social relationship makes her destroyed; she is rejected in her social environment and destroyed by her boyfriend, Pete.

By this study people can learn that a good environment can make someone's behavior become an excellent behavior. Slum life, pain and suffering, alcoholism, and prostitution are the key and important elements in the plot of this novel. The

story describes life in the slum, in which alcoholism and prostitution are prevalent. If they could just make a good decision, their lives would be so much easier. However, the decisions they make constantly increase their pain and suffering.

### **The Moral Values of This Study**

As stated by (Hann and Smith, 1968): "Moral values are the standards of good and evil, which govern an individual's behavior and choices. Individual's morals may derive from society and government, religion, or self. When moral values derive from society and government they, of necessity, may change as the laws and morals of the society change." (234)

Based on Hann and Smith, we can see Maggie's moral changed by her society. Moral values of someone are developing by themselves which they take from their environment around them. Everything depends on them, it just talking about the choices that someone faces everyday in their life (Eiser Richard, 1980).

According to (Hoffinan, 1994) "Moral values also derive from within one's own self. This is clearly demonstrated in the behavior of older infants and young toddlers. If a child has been forbidden to touch or take a certain object early on, they know enough to slowly look over their shoulder to see if they are being observed before touching said object. There is no need for this behavior to be taught; it is instinctive. Once, however, any form of discipline is applied to modify the child's behavior, the child now gains the capacity within himself to distinguish his right behavior from his wrong behavior. Now, the child can make correct choices based on his own knowledge. The choices that are made by an individual from childhood to adulthood are between forbidden and acceptable, kind or cruel, generous or selfish. A person may, under any given set of circumstances, decide to do what is forbidden. If this individual possesses moral values, going against them usually produces guilt." (145)

It means that someone behavior depends from their knowledge that they get since a childhood. Parents have important roles to develop their children behavior. Maggie doesn't have it. Her parents don't show her good models for her to become a good person. She becomes an unstable girl; she doesn't know how to be different people in her environment.

Moral development of someone involves the process by which persons internalize and orient their behavior according to socially sanctioned rules. According to (Rest, 1986), "Morality refers to a set of values that have to do with how humans cooperate and coordinate their activities in the service of furthering human welfare, and how they adjudicate conflict among individual interests." (56)

People can get a many moral values in this study. People can learn the lesson life; the family has an important role to develop their children behavior (Hjelle,L.A and Ziegler, D.J, 1981). A good condition relationship between each other can make their children has a good behavior. Maggie's family doesn't like the other family in society. The matter is caused by her parents. Her parents is a drunker, especially her mother. Almost everyday, there is a fighting in her family. So, Maggie's and her brother's life is slighted. They look for their happiness outside of the house, especially Maggie. There is no caring all of them. Whereas, a family must satisfy a wide range of emotional needs as well as a physical needs for food and shelter.

## **Conclusion**

After analyzing this research, the writer concludes that Maggie's environment has an important role in her life. Maggie's behavior and character is influenced from her social condition or her environment around her. Start from her family, in Maggie's family, the function of family has no an important role. Maggie does not get the function of family in her family. It makes her bad character. Her family does not give her a good education, because they live in the slum and poor city. They live in an immigrant area that they do not have a skill and also a poverty area.

Maggie wants to change her life she tries to get a work. But the reality, she does not have a good education and life skill. She tends to be a low worker and just get the low fee in the factory. She cannot do anything to make her life better than before. At last because influence of Pete, she becomes miserable. Pete comes with his glamorous life, and Maggie thinks that Pete can brings and change her life although do not appropriate with her life.

All of Maggie's behaviors are influenced by her circumstances. The miserable in her behavior is according to her social condition around her, and then it impacts to her life. Social circumstances like poverty, a life time of brutality and a lack of realistic prospects inevitably push Maggie from a sweatshop to the life of prostitution. Maggie's behavior according to the demands of her environment and her actions are determined by what she learns from her surroundings. This novel connected to social problems around us (Rest, James R, 1986). We can see how the strong young woman in her life and she tries to reject the poverty and miserable that she faces in her life, but she cannot find out her life, she becomes a disreputable young woman and finally commits to suicide (Wellek, R. and Warran, A, 1955).

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