

WISDOM IN JOHN GRISHAM'S THE RAINMAKER

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Abstract : The purpose of this study is to reveal Wisdom in Rudy Baylor as the main character of the novel and how he uses it. In conducting this research, the writers use descriptive qualitative research. The writers take the novel *The Rainmaker* as the primary source and supported by other relevant sources such as books, documents, and internet browsing as the secondary source. The objective approach is applied. The writers employ an objective approach as the primary source because the data are taken from the work itself and to see the interrelationship between the elements of the novel. The result shows that Rudy shows the quality to be wise since he is a teenager which means Rudy has wisdom. Rudy uses his wisdom in a way of how he interacts with his Black Family which is the client of Rudy, how he needs to behave and build a relation and compassion with his client according to the situation, and how Rudy as a new-qualify and inexperienced lawyer makes plans, tactics, and movements to defeat the big insurance company Great Benefit's legendary attorney.

Keywords : *Wisdom, Power, Family, Attorney*

INTRODUCTION

In this living world, there is a human being that has an incredible way of thinking or as we know as 'wise being'. What this being has is called 'Wisdom'. In Old English, Wisdom is "knowledge, learning, experience," from wis which means "learn, sagacious, cunning; sane; prudent; discreet; experienced; having power of discerning and judging rightly," and from dom which is an abstract suffix of state and also from Old English "statute, judgement". In simple definition wisdom is the trait of utilizing knowledge and experience with common sense and insight.

The *Rainmaker* by John Grisham follows the usual style of Grisham's writing and the same topic, namely legal story. But 'The Rainmaker' did still more. It tells us a touching story, like the ones everyone could

live in his own life. The book, about 500 pages, speaks about a young lawyer Rudy Baylor, who is about to get a law degree, managed to find a job in the most influence legal office in Memphis. To get his first client, in fact, Rudy has to chase the injured persons who are transported at the hospital. It's just through this activity Rudy meets a couple, Dot and Buddy Black.

They have a son named Donny Ray who is suffered from leukemia. The mother of Donny decides, to undertake a hard and complicated lawsuit against the insurance company and to entrust the trial to Rudy. The trial turns out with no exclusion of strokes because Great Benefit is defended by smart and skilled lawyers headed by Leo F. Drummond. Rudy faces the trial as a real professional lawyer, by managed to find serious pieces of evidence against the

insurance company. In order to win, Rudy needs to use his wisdom that he gets not just because he is smart and clever but also from knowing his client and gets into his client's life, actually he involved himself in his client's life, that is the biggest impact for Rudy to get his wisdom. This story simply tells us about justice and how Rudy uses his wisdom to decide which one is a better move to take in order to win his client's right over The Great Benefit. Mister Gidion Maru quotes "The Success of performing the standardized roles and the characteristics following them define their status and membership to the society" (p.2).

As we know that wisdom is a trait of utilizing knowledge and experience with common sense and insight and wise itself means having or showing experience, knowledge, and good judgment so, basically we wisely use our wisdom to make a good judgment, obviously. Rudy and his companions and his client are doing hard work in order to win the battle against his client's enemy the giant insurance company The Great Benefit. In order to do that, Rudy and his team wisely build a plan to beat the enemy, and how Rudy slowly changes his ignorance into a true defender, into a hero, into the rainmaker for his client. The story will tell us about how a new-graduate lawyer got his wisdom from his experience and knowledge from his clients and his companions.

In research "Experimenting Jeremiadic Approach as an Alternative for TEFL in Meeting the Demand of the 2013 Curriculum" by Mister Gidion Maru, it says "a literary text provides learners with real world experiences, relationships between society and people where the target language is spoken, even if they are fictions" (p.4). Novel itself comes from the Italian, Novella,

which means the new staff that small. The novel develops in England and America. The novel was originally developed in the region from other forms of narrative non-fiction, such as letters, biographies, and history. But with a shift in society and development time, the novel is not only based on data non-fiction, author of novel can change according to the desired imagination. "Novel is a picture of real life and manners of the time in which it is written." (Wellek, René, and Austin Waren, 216). "Plot is one of the various aspects in fiction, which is important to be studied. The word plot is in fact a technical term to say about series of tied events in stories. Plot is defined as what happens in a narrative. Plot is a pattern of carefully selected, casually related events that contains conflict. Plot is a story that has a conflict" (Griffith, 43).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is classified as qualitative research according to Bogdan and Biklen, that qualitative research is descriptive, they both stated that: "Qualitative research is descriptive. The data collected are in the form of words or picture rather than numbers. The written result of the research contain quotation from the data to illustrate and substantiate" (Bogdan and Biklen, 28).

Based on the quotation above, qualitative research is descriptive, the data collected only form in words and not numbers. The result of the research contains quotations from the data to illustrate and substantiate the research. The sources of the data are from books and formed in words which is a quotation, statement, and definition.

According to Griffith: "two kinds of evidence are relevant for essays about literature; evidence from primary sources

and evidence from secondary sources. Primary sources are the novel itself and secondary sources consist of facts and opinions outside the work itself” (Griffith, 30). The writers have classified the sources of the data into two categories which are primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources are data that collected from the novel itself, “The Rainmaker” and the secondary sources is from related books, Internet browsing, dictionary that related to this research and information that supported the writers’ study.

The writers use an objective approach to analyze the data. Abrams stated that: “which on principles regards the works of art in isolation the external part of reference, analyze it as a self-sufficient entity constituted by its part in their internal relation and sets out to judge it solely by criteria intrinsic to its own made of being” (Abrams 26). Later on, it can be inferred that this study is focused on the work itself that is the novel *The Rainmaker* by John Grisham as the primary source of this analysis, with considering some intrinsic elements such as plot, character, theme, and setting. In this sense, the analysis is to see the interrelationship of the internal elements of the work itself and also the writers use secondary source is from related books, documents, Internet browsing, and dictionary that related to this research to support the writers’ study to get information Wisdom that happened in the society on that period.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Description of Wisdom

According to Grossmann, “Wisdom, sapience, or sagacity is the ability to think and act using knowledge, experience, understanding, common sense and insight. Wisdom is associated with attributes such as

unbiased judgement, compassion, experiential self-knowledge, self-transcendence and non-attachment, and virtues such as ethics and benevolence” (Grossmann, 21).

Based on the definition above, wisdom simply means a person who able to make a good judgment, and also able to use their experience, knowledge, insight and common sense optimally and positively for the sake of good and justice.

Wiesje Erna Sekeh, Donal M. Ratu, Ferry H. Mandang say on the research “Character Education Values in the *Little Prince* by Antoine De Saint-Exupéry” that character is a set of interrelated personal values and virtues that usually guide behavior” (p.69).

Rudy Shows Sign to be a Wise Person

In *The Rainmaker*, John Grisham created an immensely David vs. Goliath story. A law school graduate prosecutes a civil case against a giant insurance company and uncovers a massive insurance fraud scheme. And this story is not far from wisdom itself. Talk about wisdom in the novel *The Rainmaker* by John Grisham especially in the main character Rudy Baylor, then we definitely talk about a wise person which in this case was Rudy. To prove and show that Rudy is a wise person, the writers of this research looks for a few points which are Rudy’s good judgment and decision, Rudy’s ability to handle things and compassion, Rudy’s knowledge and last but not least, Rudy’s Consciousness as an identifying mark for a person whether Rudy was a wise person or not.

Rudy’s Good Judgment and Decision

Rudy has a tough and smart personality even in the early story of the novel. The plot of a novel begins with a teenager named Rudy that wants to be a lawyer. He has a

rough father who hated a lawyer, and it makes Rudy's goal to be a lawyer stronger. His father believes that a boy should be educated with a crack of a whip, it means that in order to educate a person to be more respectful and responsible, they should be ready to take punishment from parents if they did some mistakes, and Rudy actually an insubordinate boy, so his father send him to a military school. Beside it, Rudy never feels the love from his father.

Rudy develops an undisciplined behavior, but there is a side of him that still positives, a positive side of vision, which is a goal of Rudy to become a lawyer, and it is a noble goal considering a lawyer is to defend people from a crime and injustice. And it is a sign of wisdom because Rudy chooses to be a lawyer even under the depression from his rough kind of father, and he is still a teenager.

"Learning as guidance towards responsible behaviour towards environment must be planned and carried out in a conductive and enjoyable manner" (Delli Sabudu, p. 17).

While other teenagers don't have a noble goal like Rudy, they could be a gangster if they were Rudy. A normal teenager only cares about fun things such as playing around with friends, and if they are under depression just like Rudy, they perhaps will become an introvert or even a criminal, but Rudy has wisdom that makes him stronger and cleverer. And he knows what he is going for as it is shows in this quotation "My decision to become a lawyer was irrevocably sealed when I realized my father hated the legal profession (John Grisham, 1)"

Rudy has a unique character. His restraining skill and his judgment are too

good for a normal teenager because, he can control and manipulate his emotion, his anger for his father, and turn it into power, an inspiration for him to be a lawyer solid just based on quotation above. His decision to make his hatred for his father into energy for himself is already a sign of wisdom, to be able to control himself and make a good judgment or a decision over himself is obviously a wise person, and the fact that Rudy is a teenager in an early story able to do that makes clearer that Rudy is a wise person.

Rudy also has courage and confidence because of his toughness. Mr. Leo, Rudy's opponent gave him a lot of motion to dismiss in order to Rudy get tired and don't want to be in this case anymore and also for them to get more money considering they get paid a certain money per hour.

But instead of making Rudy under pressure with the motions, Rudy has succeeded in making his thought full of energy, same as when he is a teenager, he manipulates the situations, thoughts, and his feelings, convert them into positive energy for him. And it shows in the quotation below:

"I summon forth my immense dislike for Great benefit and what it's done to my client, and I roll up my sleeves. Mr. Leo Drummond may be countless minions at his beck and call, but I Rudy Baylor, have nothing else to do. I'm bright and I can work he wants to start a paper war with me, fine. I'll smother him" (John Grisham, 230).

Rudy knows that Leo wants to daunt him and scare him because Leo thought that Rudy is a new gradually lawyer and he doesn't know what to do and psychologically and physically or mentally tired and daunted. Want it or not, Rudy

needs to respond to Leo's papers, and he again manipulated his mind, because there is no one that can help Rudy that time to respond to those motions, Rudy, decides to create an immense dislike to Great Benefit, and turns it into a power and energy for him in order to fight against Great Benefit, and it also became preventive action to not become daunted before the real fight begin.

In terms of reading situations, Rudy is actually doing an amazing job because on his first court of law which is not even started yet when Mr. Leo send him motions for him in order to Rudy stop continuing the demand, Rudy can read the situation and take a right decision or a good judgment over the situation, which is not to give up and continuing the fight.

"This was a real cheap shot, but for some reason I couldn't resist. Shell Boykin was one of two students from our class privileged enough to be hired by Trent & Brent. We despised each other for three years, and we took the exam together last month. His name was not in the newspaper last Sunday. I'm sure the great firm is slightly embarrassed that one of its bright young recruits flunked the bar. Drummond's scowl intensifies, and I smile in return. In the few brief seconds that we stand and watch each other, I learn an enormously valuable lesson. He's just a man. He might be a legendary trial lawyer with lots of notches in his belt, but he's just another man. He's not about to step across the aisle and slap me, because I'd whip his ass. He can't hurt me, and neither can his little covey of minions. Courtrooms are level from one side to the other. My table is as large as his" (John Grisham, 253).

Rudy also knows how to find self-confidence, because he believes that what he is doing is right. Based on the quotation above, Rudy has the ability to manipulate himself to find a feeling that he needs in order to face the enemy. Rudy has a determination to face the future, Rudy knows the cause of his decisions is to make something or someone got better, he wisely makes a wise decision because he knows it will bring a positive result for him. Based on Rudy's Good Judgments and decisions, the plot and Rudy's character in the novel are shows Wisdom.

Rudy's Knowledge

Knowledge can be referred to "a theoretical or practical understanding of a subject. It can be implicit (as with practical skill or expertise) or explicit (as with theoretical understanding of a subject); it can be more or less formal or systematic". And based on that the writers have analyzed how Rudy understand the law and his profession and how Rudy practically and skillfully use his knowledge.

Knowledge is also a characteristic of wisdom. But the more he knows, the more he realizes how little he knows. Rudy has a goal to be a lawyer, but during law school, Rudy learns something about the life of a lawyer that whomever students graduate and be a lawyer will have bad ethics and morals, all they care were working in a big lawyer company or associations and money. And those bad values might possess Rudy's mind. "I don't feel stupid, just inadequate. After three years of studying the law, I'm very much aware of how little I know" (John Grisham, 16;17)

Rudy's awareness of what he knows about being a lawyer is not enough to beat Leo Drummond, but along the story, Rudy learns that there is something darker in

lawyer's live, which all they care about are fame and money. Rudy knows about the dark and bright side of being a lawyer, but because wisdom is always based on positive ethical value which actually made a distinguishes between a wise person and not, Rudy makes it just a note for him to not be a bad lawyer and makes him unwise, and it shows below:

"All students enter law school with a certain amount of idealism and desire to serve the public, but after three years of brutal competition, we care for nothing but the right job with the right firm where we can make partner in seven years and earn big bucks" (John Grisham, 5).

Based on quotations above, during the law school years, Rudy doesn't just learn about how to be a lawyer, which are, the law, a lawyer's ethic, the trials, but also learn about how hard life is how the fact that the students and the lawyers are lack of compassion, care, kindness, and all those stuffs. John Grisham makes the setting in the story, the plot, closer to real life.

But what makes Rudy different is, because he knows the noble and the bad thing about lawyer, and he chooses the noble side. It is because Rudy has compassion, good judgment and good decisions.

Rudy's Compassion

One of Rudy's character that John Grisham put in, that so strong is compassion. John Grisham makes Rudy's character is so noble considering his childhood life, his age, which is as a young man, Rudy's thought is so future-minded, so forward-thinking, more than a normal young man.

Rudy is a character that developed through sadness, distress, empathy and compassion to his client.

"Compassion itself is a synonym of empathic distress, which is characterized by the feeling of distress in connection with another person's suffering" (Goetz, Jennifer; Dacher Kelter; Emiliana Simon-Thomas, 353).

Based on the definition of compassion above, the writers have analyzed Rudy's compassion to his client Dot Black and her family throughout the story in order to prove that Rudy has wisdom.

Compassion is one of the characteristics of wisdom, if they don't have compassion then they don't have wisdom obviously. Rudy's compassion for his client is strong, as shows in quotation below:

"There's movement in the back of the house. There's no air conditioner to muffle sounds. Someone coughs. I start talking. 'Look, Dot, I'd like to handle this case for you. I know I'm just a rookie, a kid almost out of law school, but I've already spent hours on this, and I know it like no one else" (John Grisham, 96).

Rudy realizes that there is no one who can help his client, and Rudy realizes that he is the only person that his client trust, and he doesn't want to disappoint them and without being ignorance which means, he also realizes that he is just a rookie, but his compassion for his client, makes him want to help them and also the compassion that brings him energy to fight against Great Benefit for the sake of justice and it shows in quotation below:

"he's my client, and he's counting on me. I'll take him, warts and all." (John Grisham, 137).

John Grisham makes Rudy kind and wise, and full of compassion for his client, and what makes him different than other lawyers is, the other lawyer will tend to

suggest their client surrender, to give up, and if they are offering them money, they will suggest their client to take it and forget all of the demanded done to them. But Rudy chooses to fight and be as in the title of the novel “The Rainmaker”, which means a person who brings miracles or a person who did something impossible, Rudy believe that he can be “The Rainmaker” for his client. As mentions in the quotation above, Rudy get motivated to fight the impossible because of his compassion for his client as shows below:

“I am motivated by thoughts of my client and the screwing that he got. I’m the only lawyer Donny Ray has, and it will take much more than paper to slow me down” (John Grisham, 238).

Based on quotations above, Rudy has a strong compassion for his client, which means, one of Rudy’s character is proven contained compassion because that is what he shows to his client, and that means Rudy has one of Wisdom’s characteristic.

“The more one person knows about the human condition and associated experiences, the more vivid the route to identification with suffering becomes” (Cassell, Eric, 2009).

He doesn’t just a lawyer to Black family but, Rudy develops and experiences with that family, based on that Rudy knows about what his client felt. And with that, the writers conclude that Rudy has one characteristic of Wisdom which is compassion. Delli Sabudu stated in Reflection of Loyalty in Ernest Hemmingway’s Old Man and the Sea that “Loyalty is a good moral attitude relate to the personal relationship or social relationship. Being loyal to be a good friend, being loyal to be a good student are kinds of

relationships which is existed in human life” (p. 25).

Rudy’s Awareness

Awareness is the ability to directly know and perceive, to feel, or to be cognizant of events. More broadly, it is the state of being conscious of something. Another definition describes it as a state wherein a subject is aware of some information when that information is directly available to bring to bear in the direction of a wide range of behavior actions (Chalmers, 25).

Based on the definitions above, the writers have analyzed Rudy’s awareness as one the of characteristics of wisdom. The plot drives us to how Rudy is successfully defeated the big insurance company, how David defeated Goliath. And it needs a lot of effort to defeat Goliath. “Some people have more guts than brains” (John Grisham, 234).

Rudy’s ability to realizes something is the one that makes him wise person clearer. He realizes how full of weaknesses he is, there are a lot of things that he doesn’t know, and his consciousness over his life based on the plot, character and setting in the novel is clearly showed that Rudy is a wise person.

Sometimes as human beings, we make a mistake to other people and other people hurt us. But instead of creating hatred over that person, we can think like Rudy when his ex-girlfriend betrayed him. Rudy knew, it was useless to fall for it for too long, it was useless to despise such a person because Rudy knew that he has more important things to do. This was such a wise decision from Rudy himself and it shown in quotation next: “Life is too short to despise people who simply can’t help what they’ve done.” (John Grisham, 406)

Rudy is so determined about what he is going to do, he knows what he is done. He

realizes that even he is just a new-graduate lawyer, he just needs one big case to earn financial freedom, which means he could retire of being a lawyer if he gets a big case, because he will get a lot of money. Such a simple principle but very few people have determined to make it a goal.

“It takes just one, he says over and over. You hear that all the time in this business. One big case, and you can retire. That’s one reason lawyers do so many sleazy things, like full-color ads in the yellow pages, and billboards, and placards on city buses, and telephone solicitation. You hold your nose, ignore the stench of what you’re doing, ignore the snubs and snobbery of big-firm lawyers, because it takes only one” (John Grisham, 300).

Rudy even realizes the thought and behavior of an old person. One of his clients is an old woman named Miss Birdie, and she is living alone in an old house until Rudy rent there. Miss Birdie’s children don’t care about her except for her money. An old woman can live alone, and Rudy learn a lesson from her. As shows on quotation below:

“I suppose old people grow accustomed to loneliness, though no one expects to spend his or her last years in solitude, absent from loved ones.” (John Grisham, 182).

Based on the quotation above, the writers conclude that Rudy has awareness through his experiences in the story of the novel “The Rainmaker” by John Grisham and it’s getting closer to be proven that Rudy has wisdom.

Rudy’s Self-Control

Based on the points above, Rudy has proven that he has compassion, knowledge, and awareness that a ‘must-have’ characteristic to be said a wise person. And

the last but not least, Rudy shows the ability of self-controlling. It’s important to have this ability because as human beings, we have many types of emotions, and if we have positive emotions, then we also must have negative emotions. If we can’t control our selves it can cause a negative impact and makes the person’s wisdom is in vain or meaningless.

So, the writers decide to analysed Rudy’s self-control throughout the story in the novel “The Rainmaker” by John Grisham. Self-control, “an aspect of inhibitory control which also known as response inhibition, is the ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behavior in the face of temptations and impulses” (Diamond A, 138)

Based on the definition above, the writers have analyzed Rudy’s self-control throughout the story. Rudy’s awareness throughout the story during the battle against the Great Benefit makes him realized the situation sharper, Rudy realizes that the person he is dealing with is a great legendary lawyer and he scared of it but, he actually aware of that and tried to control his fear. Rudy’s awareness to the situation actually shows that he is a wise person. Although he tried his best to win against Mr. Leo Drummond which was the Great Benefit’s legendary lawyer, he realizes that the juror decision can make Rudy and his client won or lost and it shown in the quotation below:

“He reminds me repeatedly that the case can still be won or lost tomorrow morning. Most of the time, however, I’m simply scared. The fear is controllable, but it never leaves. It motivates me and inspires me to keep forging ahead, but I’ll be very happy once it’s gone” (John Grisham, 508).

Based on the quotation above, Rudy successfully manage his emotions, in this case, his fear towards Leo F. Drummond and his colleagues, although he said that fear never leaves Rudy still able to control his fear, and not just able to control his fear, he can turn his fear into inspiration and motivation for him to forging ahead. It means, Rudy a wise person because he knows that the fear doesn't help him beat Leo and his colleagues, so he finds a way to turn his weakness into his power.

The writers conclude that Rudy obviously has wisdom and it made Rudy wise person. Based on the character, setting, and the plot of the novel "The Rainmaker" by John Grisham, the writers are able to collect the data to prove that Rudy as main the character was a wise person by showing quotations which based on the definitions of the wisdom itself and deeper to the characteristics of wisdom.

CONCLUSION

After finish reading the novel and analyzing the novel *The Rainmaker* by John Grisham, the writers conclude that wisdom is a special thing that lives inside of every single person. But not every person can use their wisdom, and that is why wisdom is so special. As a human, we all obviously have a goal or a purpose for or to do something and to achieve that, wisdom is necessary and needful.

Rudy Baylor surely is a wise person. It shows even in the first stage of his life in the story, when he is teenager he has a rough father but it doesn't make him like his father, instead he has head-forward thinking, he can use his hatred on his father and turned it into a motivation to motivate himself to be a lawyer because his father hated lawyer. Not just that, after Rudy graduated, he must face a great lawyer Leo

F. Drummond which is a very experienced lawyer. But Rudy's wise decisions, movements and tactics have brought him to win. It required such wisdom to do that and Rudy has it. Wisdom should be a should-have criterion for us especially for youth to increase the quality of life, the quality to think, and the quality to behave. This research can be suggested to anybody who wants to research literature, novel, and wisdom.

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