

Child Abuse Suffered by Saul in Richard Wagamese's *Indian Horse*

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the child abuse suffered by the protagonist, Saul, in Richard Wagamese's novel "Indian Horse." The study explores the different forms of abuse Saul faced and examines how these experiences influenced his life, as portrayed in the novel. This study adopts literary criticism and employs a psychological approach and McCabe and Murphy's theory of child abuse. The data used in this study consists of words, phrases, and sentences extracted from Richard Wagamese's novel "Indian Horse," published by Douglas & McIntyre in 2012. The findings reveal that while residing in St. Jerome, Saul suffered abuse from both his teacher and caregiver. The forms of abuse encompass physical, emotional, sexual, and neglectful mistreatment. Physical abuse involved the act of rough objects being scratched against Saul's body. Emotional abuse included instances of rejection, terrorization, and isolation. Additionally, Saul endured sexual abuse from his teacher. Neglect also played a part, encompassing physical, educational, and emotional neglect. The significant impact of these childhood traumas on Saul's adult life is evident in the results. Saul's coping mechanisms led to alcoholism and aggressive behavior. He withdrew from his surroundings, experiencing profound trauma, depression, and low self-esteem due to the abuse he suffered during his formative years.

Keywords: abuse, children, child abuse, neglect

INTRODUCTION

Children are a gift from God that must be loved and protected. Parents or people responsible for children must be responsible for nurturing and supervising their children. Children are the successors of the nation who will maintain and fight for the country. So, the child's condition must be physically and mentally healthy so that their character guarantees their growth. Therefore, children have the correct form of protection from any acts of violence that threaten their lives (McCabe & Murphy, 2017). A child is a person who is under the age of 18 years. Individuals from birth to age 17 are children, so people aged

18 and over are not children. The maximum age limit for a human being said to be a child can also be faster or younger, following the laws in the country (Bäckström, 1989). Everyone can be a child abuser. It can be people closest to the child, such as parents, siblings, caregivers, teachers, or foreigners.

Some people think that childhood is the happiest time in life. This statement can be true because people think children's lives are filled with happiness and freedom from many responsibilities. In reality, not all children have the luck of living a happy life. They had good and bad experiences in their childhood. Many children go through childhood suffering because of their unfulfilled rights. They experienced abusive parenting, maltreatment, and traumatic experiences. Abuse is one of the most traumatic experiences a child can have. According to WHO (2008), child abuse is the abuse or mistreatment of children in physical, emotional, sexual, neglect of care, and exploitation for real commercial interests. In addition, Finkelhor and Korbin (1988), in the journal *Child Abuse as An International Issue*, underlined that all forms of harm to children are not always child abuse. They defined child abuse as a human act that is prohibited, intentional, preventable, and proximate to a child and causes harm to children.

Abuse against children is divided into four types: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Physical abuse is violence carried out by others intentionally against the child's body to make them feel uncomfortable, sick, injured, or afraid. Emotional abuse is an act done by someone through words so that children feel inferior, hurt, and low in self-esteem, and it can even lead to revenge. Then, sexual abuse is any sexual involvement by adults against children, such as intercourse, touching, or kissing the child's private body. The last is neglect. It refers to abuse committed by parents, caregivers, or people responsible for children. Children do not get love, protection, or rights as children (Tracy, 2012).

Parents or caregivers have many ways to apply obedience and discipline in parenting. Some prioritize love and good communication; they even use violence to actualize it. Parents or caregivers who educated children using psychological or physical violence expected children to behave according to what parents expected (Hemenway et al., 1994). A parent or person responsible for children should provide good parenting by respecting and supporting good choices, not by blaming. They should be loving, not only verbally but also in their behavior. Provide positive support and do not undermine children's dreams (Epstein, 2010). They must manage their emotions well by not venting them and causing anxiety and fear in children. They also must appreciate every independent effort and set an example of good behavior toward children (Mahapatra, 2016).

Abuse against children often occurs, which some people consider trivial. Many consider abuse against children unimportant, so it did not need to be considered. In addition, children who are abuse victims feel ashamed to express their experiences. So that many acts of abuse involving children were not revealed (De Beer et al., 2017). The experience of abuse against children will always be recorded until they are adults. Unhappy memories were not the only effect on victims as adults; child abuse also affected adult victims in mental and physical health. Fitton and Fazel (2020) found that exposing children to child abuse was associated with increased mental health problems, including depression and anxiety, in adolescence and adulthood. Another study by Felitti et al. (1998) identified

a strong link between adverse childhood experiences and negative health outcomes later in life, including chronic diseases and early death.

Child abuse is one of the social problems that never stops being discussed. It motivated literary writers to express their ideas as social criticism in literary works. In literary works, the issue of child abuse is easy to find. One poem that tells the story of child abuse is entitled *Child Abuse* by Damian Robin. This poem is about a child who experienced childhood physical and emotional abuse by his father. His father always blamed him and did not understand the innocence of children. Then, in another poem by Damian Robin entitled *Release*, he told of a girl raped by her older brother in front of her father, but her father allowed it and did not stop him.

Apart from being found in poems, the topic of child abuse can also be found in novels. One is Tiffany D. Jackson's *Monday is Not Coming*, which tells of a child who died because her mother killed her. At the same time, the institutions, such as the police and teachers, do not try to find her. Another novel that uses the topic of child abuse is Robin Roe's *A List of Cages*, which tells of a child who lives with his uncle and experiences physical and emotional abuse daily by his uncle. The cruel treatment of his uncle made him depressed and traumatized. In addition, a novel that uses the topic of child abuse in its story is Dave Pelzer's *A Child Called It*. This novel tells the story of a child who has been physically and emotionally abused for eight years by his mother. He was whipped with chains, beaten, and forced to eat animal dung. The mother also instilled in the child that he was a naughty child who deserved punishment.

Regarding child abuse, the researcher found the novel *Indian Horse* by Richard Wagamese, which tells a lot about child abuse. *Indian Horse* told about the main character, Saul, a native Canadian boy who lived in 1960. In that year, he was kidnapped by the government and separated from his family to enter St. Jerome's Indian Residential School—a particular school for Canadian natives. While in St. Jerome, Saul found the rules cruel. He was forbidden to use his mother tongue and threatened with brutal physical violence if violated. Saul could not live freely in general, like other children. Every day, he witnessed his friends being beaten, dying from punishment, and even committing suicide due to frustration with the regulations in St. Jerome. Threats of beatings for children who were violated and threats of sexual abuse every night made Saul continue to experience fear. Saul isolated himself and chose to remain silent to avoid punishment. After five years living in St. Jerome, he changed Saul's behavior. He became more irritable and aggressive until he was expelled from the Hockey team, a game he had dreamed of for years. Saul is finding it increasingly difficult to cope with his emotions due to his abuse experience. He switched to aggression, self-isolation, and alcoholism.

This study aims to explain the forms of child abuse suffered by Saul and to elucidate the effects of child abuse suffered by Saul in Richard Wagamese's *Indian Horse*. In addition, this study focuses on the issue of child abuse. There is physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Besides that, this study also focuses on the effects of child abuse contained in the novel. Thus, the data collected is not from all pages of the novel but only the relevant chapters. Furthermore, this study limits its attention to the abuse suffered by the main character, Saul.

There have been several researchers have conducted studies on Richard Wagamese's *Indian Horse*. Among of them are McKegney (2018) who conducted research on "Decolonizing the Hockey Novel: Ambivalence and Apotheosis in Richard Wagamese's

Indian Horse." Another study was done by Robinson (2013). He examined the restorying the Colonial Landscape: Richard Wagamese's *Indian Horse*. The other study was conducted by Miroux (2019). The study researched on stolen memories and recovered histories in Richard Wagamese's *Indian Horse*. Besides, the study on child abuse was also done by many researchers. Several of them are: The study on the form, effect, and causes of child abuse in the novel *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini (Nisa, 2014). Another previous study is Hastuti (2019). The researcher discussed the indicators of child abuse, the forms of child abuse, and why the author raised the issue of child abuse in the novel *The Enders' Game* by Orson Scott Card.

Moreover, there is also a study by Lubis (2017). The study focused on the effects of child abuse and neglect in the novel *The Step Child* by Donna Ford. The last previous study was Anggraini (2005). The study aimed to discuss the kind of sexual abuse and its effects in the novel *Perfect Match* by Jodi Picoult. Based on the previous study mentioned above, this study might be filling the gap because the researcher focused on the novel *Indian Horse* by Richard Wagamese, highlighting the form and effect of child abuse.

This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the psychological approach to give a new perspective on how the issue of child abuse and its effects are raised in Richard Wagamese's *Indian Horse*, mainly through McCabe's and Murphy's theories of child abuse. Meanwhile, this study can be a reference for further research on this issue. Furthermore, this study can add information about child abuse and how this topic is discussed in the literature.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was a literary criticism that employed a psychological approach. By employing this method, this study described the data from Richard Wagamese's *Indian Horse* on a particular issue of child abuse. The psychology of literature considered that literary work was related to motivation, expression, behavior, and human thought (Wellek & Warren, 1963). This approach was more concerned with behavioral psychology, which observed the main character's behavior arising from his interaction with the environment, where he learned and observed continuously. To construct this study, the researcher applied the child abuse theory by Kimberly A. McCabe and Daniel G. Murphy. This research focused on the description of child abuse and its effects on the main character, Saul, that occurred in the novel. The data were taken from Richard Wagamese's *Indian Horse*. The data for this study are words, phrases, and sentences presented by Saul, the main character of the novel *Indian Horse*. The researcher collected the data from the novel *Indian Horse* by Richard Wagamese, published by Douglas & McIntyre in 2012. The novel has 224 pages and 56 chapters.

In the process of collecting data, the researcher took some steps. The first step was reading the whole chapter of *the Indian Horse* Novel three times. The second was identifying the character, setting, conflict, and plot inside the story. The third was highlighting the words, phrases, and sentences for the evidence. The fourth was classifying the data on child abuse based on four forms. There is physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. The last was classifying the data on the effects of child abuse experienced by Saul in the novel.

After collecting the data, the researcher described a collection of relevant quotes classified into four types of child abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and

neglect. After that, the researcher elaborated on the data with the theory of child abuse by McCabe and Murphy (2017) to explain the types of child abuse and elucidate the effect of child abuse suffered by Saul in the novel. After elaborating on all the data, the researcher did the last step by concluding to summarize the analysis results.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The Form of Child Abuse Suffered by Saul

According to McCabe & Murphy (2017), there were four forms of child abuse. There were; physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect. Children who suffered abuse in their childhood would hurt their behavior. The following analysis showed the forms and effects of child abuse described in Richard Wagamese's novel *Indian Horse*.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse was any intentional action that could cause pain in the child's body. Physical contact was done to cause pain to the victim. Abusers could use their feet, hands, or objects to injure the body. The injury could be caused by punching, hitting, kicking, slapping, throwing, choking children, or even burning (McCabe & Murphy, 2017). The following data showed that Saul suffered physical abuse in the study when he was first brought to St. Jerome.

Datum 1

Then a pair of nuns scrubbed us with stiff-bristled brushes. The soap was harsh. They rubbed us nearly raw. It felt like they were trying to remove more than grime or odor. It felt as though they were trying to remove our skin (p. 26).

The data above showed the form of physical abuse done by the nuns. The nun's position at St. Jerome was a caregiver because they were the ones who were responsible for the children's lives. They bathed Saul and his friends using a complex object that could scratch their skin. The nuns did not hurt Saul by using punches, fists, or bites. However, the nuns brushed Saul's body roughly, causing pain in Saul's body. How the nuns roughly brushed Saul's children's skin was like trying to remove the skin. It followed McCabe and Murphy's opinion that physical abuse was a deliberate act that caused a child's body pain.

Emotional Abuse

This novel's forms of emotional abuse included isolation, terrorizing, and rejection. These data showed that emotional child abuse was not only in the form of bad words but all actions that could damage children's mentality and make children afraid that it was done intentionally (McCabe & Murphy, 2017). In this study, Saul and his friends experienced emotional abuse after Saul also suffered emotional child abuse during his stay at St. Jerome. They were bathed roughly when they first came to St. Jerome, as in the data below.

Datum 2

*Sister Ignacia strode from behind the desk to stand directly before Lonnie, who looked down at the floor. "Your father is the Heavenly Father. You will learn that here. Your human father has nothing to offer you anymore."
"He is a trapper."
"He's a heathen."*

"He's Ojibway."

"He is unbaptized and impure of spirit. When you use the word father at this school, it is your Heavenly Father you make reference to."

"I don't want no other father."

"You have no choice" (p. 27).

In this evidence, the form of emotional child abuse verbally expressed by the nun is rejection (McCabe & Murphy, 2017). When the nun says that Rabbit's father is Ojibway, it also alludes to Saul's character: Ojibway is a part of him. Other words such as trapper, heathen, unbaptized, and non-pure spirit interpret that the Ojibway group belongs to this group. The dialogue showed that the Christian nun rejected Canadian natives by demeaning, belittling, making fun of, and publicly humiliating Saul through Rabbit's father, who was Ojibway. It was McCabe and Murphy's opinion that rejection was a refusal of acceptance. Here, Saul experienced rejection from the nun because he belonged to the Ojibway.

Datum 3

"Industry, boys," Father Quinney said.

"Good, honest work and intense study. That is what you'll do here. That is what will prepare you for the world." Sister Ignacia took us each by a hand and, with a firm nod to the priest, led us from the office and out into the school. Her hands were like dried birch bark. Her face was composed, the slight press of a grin at the edges of her mouth. Beatific. That is another word I learned much later. As the Sister walked us through the school that first day, she had that saintly look. The whistle of the leather still hung in the air. She was tall and large, and I had never known such terror. In what seemed like an instant, the world I had known was replaced by an ominous black cloud (p. 27).

The evidence above showed that emotional child abuse took the form of terrorizing. Saul could have gotten a better reception when he first entered St. Jerome. Saul got the picture from the priest's dialogue that he would pass the time by working in St. Jerome. According to Saul, St. Jerome was a place of education, not a factory or company that required its residents to work around the clock. Thus, Saul's image of an educational institution with all its learning activities with his friends was shattered. At the same time, he accepted that St. Jerome was a subsidiary company that required him to spend time working. At the end of the script, he describes how his world seemed to have turned dark. It gave information that Saul was experiencing worries and fears about what would happen to his next life at St. Jerome.

In St. Jerome, Saul suffered emotional abuse from school rules. As shown in the following data, he is threatened with punishment by the nuns if he communicates using his mother tongue.

Datum 4

Speaking a word in that language could get you beaten or banished to the box in the basement the older ones had come to call the Iron Sister (p. 29).

The evidence above threatened indigenous children when speaking in the Ojibway language. School rules required Saul to speak English and threatened severe punishment for using his mother tongue—the form of emotional child abuse suffered by Saul here through terrorizing and isolation. Saul at St. Jerome received threats of being hit or banned from the box in the basement, categorized as terrorizing, namely a form of extreme

punishment for behavior that made Saul feel threatened, put him in danger, and created fear (McCabe & Murphy, 2017). In addition, the prohibition against speaking in his mother tongue indicated that the regulations had isolated his language, which missed Saul's opportunity to communicate with his friends who could not speak English. This regulation followed the opinion (McCabe & Murphy, 2017) regarding the form of emotional child abuse that prohibited and prevented children from social interaction.

Sexual Abuse

Saul Indian Horse suffered sexual child abuse. The sexual abuser was from Extrafamilial, a Hockey game coach, as shown in the following data.

Datum 5

Then he stood up and pulled me toward him. He pressed my face into his body as he rocked back and forth on the balls of his feet. I could feel the broad warmth of his hand on the back of my head, smell his soap, feel the scratch of fabric on my skin, and the buckle of his belt against my chin. "My angel," I heard him say. I felt no shame or fear when he knelt down and cradled me in his arms. I only felt love. I wanted so much to be held and stroked. I closed my eyes as he gathered my face in his hands and kissed me. I thought of my grandmother. The warmth of her arms holding me. I missed that so much. "You are a glory, Saul." That is what he always told me. In the dim light of his quarters, he whispered what he said to me those nights he snuck into the dormitory and put his head beneath the covers. The words he used in the back of the barn when he slipped my trousers down. That phrase began the groping, tugging, pulling, and sucking; those were always the last words he said to me as he left, arranging his priestly clothes. "You are a glory, Saul." He used those words instead of love and gave me the job of cleaning the ice to buy my silence and guard his secret. He had told me I could play when I was big enough. I loved the idea so much that I kept quiet. I loved the idea of being loved so much that I did what he asked. When I liked it, I felt dirty, repulsive, and sick (p. 110).

The evidence above showed that sexual abuse occurred when Father Leboutilier made Saul an object of sexual need. This sexual abuse was demonstrated by making bodily contact through rape and obscenity. This rape could be seen in the perpetrator removing Saul's clothes, hugging the body, touching, groping, pulling, sucking, and kissing Saul's private body. He was touching Saul's body sexually, having sexual intercourse, and physically contacting Saul's genitals. Saul obeyed what was ordered by Father Leboutilier because he was still a child and did not understand what had happened to him. Father Leboutilier manipulated Saul by fulfilling his need for love and becoming his parental figure. The suspect always used sweet sentences such as "My angel" and "You are a glory, Saul." In carrying out his actions, he promised Saul an excellent future to ensure that Saul kept his mouth shut and did not tell what happened to him. It followed WHO's opinion (McCabe & Murphy, 2017) that sexual abuse involves children in sexual activities that they do not understand.

Neglect

The researcher revealed the child neglect that Saul suffered at St. Jerome. In the first data that the researchers found, Saul did not get an optimal facility in the form of a sanitation house in St. Jerome, as the following data showed.

Datum 6

After the priests had walked through the dorms ringing cowbells to scare us awake in the mornings, we were marched to the latrines. We stood in lines waiting our turn at the toilets—a dozen of them for a hundred and twenty boys. Some of us soiled our pants during the wait because we were strapped if we left our beds at night (p. 46).

The evidence above showed the caregiver's failure to meet children's basic needs by providing a sanitation house and giving children the right to a toilet every night. The story showed that the school only had twelve toilets for one hundred and twenty children. They even soiled their pants while waiting in line because they could not go to the toilet at night. On the other hand, the needs of children in the toilet should also be met. The fundamental rights Saul should have received while in St. Jerome were utterly unfulfilled. Saul did not get a proper sanitary house, so the health and cleanliness of Saul's residence were feeble. It was evidence that caregivers failed to meet the basic needs of children. It was included in the category of physical neglect, where a person failed to meet basic needs and prevent possible physical injuries to children.

Furthermore, neglect was reflected in Saul's education, as shown in the following data.

Datum 7

They called it a school, but it was never that. Most of our days were spent in labor. Even the youngest of us had to work. The girls were kept busy in the kitchen, where they baked bread to be sold in town, or in the sewing rooms, where they made our clothing out of the heavy, scratchy material the school got from the army. The boys mucked out the stalls of the cows and horses, hoed the fields, harvested the vegetables, or worked in the carpentry shop, where they built the furniture the priests sold to the people of White River. r. We spent an hour in the classroom each day to learn the rudimentary arithmetic and English that would enable us to secure manual labor when we "graduated" from school (p. 46).

The evidence showed that Saul spent his time working rather than studying. St. Jerome was a school, but Saul did not get an optimal education. Saul did not have the opportunity to develop his potential actively; no guidance or teaching was exercised to help Saul bring his creativity to life. Instead, time ran out for work, and Saul only had 1 hour to learn basic arithmetic and English. The teacher's limitation to only two lessons during Saul's school year reflected the failure of the school's function. The teacher limited the abilities of children that could be developed. This case followed McCabe and Murphy's opinion that children were victims of educational neglect because the caregiver failed to seek optimal education. Furthermore, the researcher found cases of emotional neglect in the following data.

Datum 8

Anybody who shirked or complained was beaten in front of everyone. That was perhaps the most significant crime: making us complicit through our mute and helpless witness (p. 46).

The data above showed that children who complained would be beaten in front of everyone. It showed that Saul quickly witnessed the violence in St. Jerome. This case was included in the category of emotional neglect, where children were left by their caregivers to see violence (McCabe & Murphy, 2017). It was included in neglect because children who continued to see acts of violence would affect their emotions. At the same time, adults who

allowed children to witness violence were the same as allowing children to damage their psychology.

The Effects of Child Abuse Suffered by Saul

The researcher examined the effects of child abuse on Saul *Indian Horse*, the main character in this novel. The results showed the effects of child abuse when Saul became an alcoholic, behaved aggressively, isolated himself from the environment, was traumatized, depressed, and had low self-esteem.

Substance Use

The first data showed that Saul consumed alcohol to deal with stress.

Datum 9

The bleakness and I were old companions by then, and the only thing I knew how to do about it was to drink (p. 46).

In the evidence above, Saul described how he spent his 20s getting into fights, drinking, working modest jobs, and earning low wages. His life became alcoholic as a reaction to all his dreams being shattered by his childhood suffering. Saul used alcohol to kill the sick feeling. All his life had been fulfilled, so he was unhappy. It followed the opinion of McCabe and Murphy (2017) that alcohol was a stress mechanism for children who were victims of child abuse. They thought that alcohol calmed them down, but the fact was that alcoholism increased stress in them.

Aggressive

According to McCabe & Murphy (2007), children who suffered child abuse grew more aggressive. This aggressive behavior arose because of the growing negative feelings resulting from the dire events children suffered in childhood. The data below is evidence that Saul grew to be more aggressive.

Datum 10

... I punched him in the head with everything I had, and he crumpled onto the floorboards. I turned to face the rest of them. I was frigid blackness inside, like water under a berg. I wanted another one to stand, wanted another one to swing at me, invite me to erupt. However, they stayed seated, and nobody spoke as I strolled over to the table and picked up Jorgenson's discarded hand of cards. I studied the cards, smirked, and tossed the hand back on the table. "Game over," I said. They never bothered me again (p. 96).

The evidence above showed that the child abuse Saul suffered had changed his behavior to be more aggressive. Saul's co-worker Jorgenson tried to punch Saul while drunk. Saul grabbed Jorgenson by the throat, attacked Jorgenson, and brutally hit Jorgenson in the head. The data above showed that Saul became aggressive by attacking Jorgenson to hurt him.

Isolation

The data showed self-isolation below.

Datum 11

I preferred being alone to be interested in the company. I became a carpenter, roofer, miner, lumberjack, highway paver, railroad laborer, dishwasher, hide scraper, ranch hand, tree planter, demolition worker, steel foundry yardman, and dock worker. I did not offer to be a buddy to my fellow workers. I did not become chatty (p. 99).

The evidence above showed that Saul committed self-isolation on himself. Saul was more comfortable being alone, did not like to chat, and did not offer to be friends with his co-workers, proving that Saul was withdrawing from society. Based on Saul's memory, which was full of violence, humiliation, and harassment that he endured for years, he found interacting with others challenging. This difficulty in interacting was gradually carried away wherever he was active. The suffering of child abuse made it difficult for Saul to communicate or open a conversation. Even the desire to interact with other people was getting lost. Saul began to enjoy solitude, just doing his job well and alone without involving other people. Saul's self-isolation was seen as not talking much, avoiding interacting with others. Not offering to be friends with his co-workers was a self-centered attitude that made Saul lose the opportunity to share his feelings and thoughts. He preferred to be alone, losing his ability to relate to others.

Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms

The data showed that the effects of child abuse experienced by Saul caused him to experience flashbacks. Flashbacks were one of the symptoms of trauma. The data about the flashback suffered by Saul is below.

Datum 12

The land felt good around me, but there was a hollow ache in my belly now. Thought of the school filled my head, and I could feel a moan building in my gut. As it escaped me, it frightened me with its ancient sound. I wrapped a blanket around myself, curled into a ball, and pressed my eyes tight. You are free. That is what Father Leboutilier had told me the last time I saw him. Free to go where the game could take me. I shook with anger as I recalled it. I was never free. He was my captor, the warder of my innocence. He had used me. I felt hate, acrid and hot. "You are a glory, Saul," I repeated those words until the pressure inside forced me to my feet. I kicked at roots, stones, and the jut of logs as I howled, ragged, rough, and sore. When I could no longer scream, I picked up the small hatchet I had bought and whacked at a stump. I hit it with everything I had until my arms and shoulders burned, and every ounce of fluid in me drained out through my sweat and tears (p. 111).

In the evidence above, Saul had a flashback by repeatedly remembering the words, "You are a glory, Saul." Said Father Leboutilier, who had sexually abused him. The words that became increasingly clear in his mind made Saul's emotions return to the abuse incident he had experienced. Feelings of anger and sadness spilled out. Saul went berserk and vented his emotions by hitting the stump with an ax. "Like the liquid inside me has been drained, he described his exploding emotions. Flashback memories of the time he was sexually abused have left a bad memory for Saul.

Depression

According to McCabe and Murphy (2007), the effect of child abuse was depression. The following data showed that the main character, Saul, experienced depression in adulthood.

Datum 13

"I cried in great heaving gasps. I let myself mourn. Allowed every ounce of sorrow, desperation, loneliness, and regret to eke out of me. I cried until I could not cry anymore" (p. 112).

The evidence above showed that Saul was sorrowful. Great heaving gasps and the inability to cry anymore indicated that Saul was crying because he had been sad for a long time, and the sadness that Saul experienced was profound. Saul's grief over the experience of abuse made him hurt and experience despair. Saul's loneliness and remorse indicate an empty feeling in life and a feeling of guilt in Saul. The data shows that feelings of sadness, hopelessness, loneliness, and regret show that Saul was depressed. The evidence above followed McCabe & Murphy (2017), who argued that the effect of child abuse is depression, namely experiencing extreme sadness.

Low Self-Esteem

The other effects of child abuse suffered by Saul is low self-esteem. The following data show how he feels irrelevant in his life.

Datum 14

When I liked it, I felt dirty, repulsive, and sick (p. 110).

The evidence above shows a feeling of worthlessness in Saul after he remembered the sexual abuse he suffered. Feeling dirty and repulsive was a negative feeling that arose due to low self-esteem in Saul.

CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

In conclusion, this study delved into the various forms of child abuse experienced by Saul and the subsequent effects he suffered as an adult. The results indicated that Saul endured four types of child abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Physical abuse manifested when nuns roughly bathed him, causing skin damage. Emotional abuse included rejection, terror, and isolation, as the nun labeled his race negatively, refused his religious choices, and subjected him to fear-inducing advice from the priest. Saul faced sexual abuse from a hockey coach, and neglect in terms of physical conditions, education, and emotional support at St. Jerome.

As an adult, Saul coped with the trauma through alcohol addiction, leading to aggression and social isolation. He also exhibited post-traumatic stress symptoms, experiencing flashbacks of past abuse, along with depression, feelings of sorrow, loneliness, and self-revulsion. Low self-esteem plagued Saul, leaving him with a sense of being dirty and undesirable.

While the research had some limitations, it presents an opportunity for further exploration. Future researchers are encouraged to approach the study from different perspectives, particularly examining elements of racism as evident in the Indian Horse

novel, which contains valuable data on the root causes of child abuse. This study could serve as a reference for future research and contribute to raising awareness about child abuse and its lasting effects.

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