

POVERTY IN ANDREA HIRATA'S NOVEL *ORANG ORANG BIASA*

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Abstract

This study aims to reveal poverty which is one of the social problems reflected in Andrea Hirata's novel *Orang Orang Biasa*. This research is considered important and feasible to do because it is an effort to convey social criticism to the government and related parties on poverty which is the most common social problem often faced by society. This research is a descriptive qualitative research and applies the sociological theory of literature put forward by Laurenceon and Swingewood (1972) to understand and evaluate literary works by considering social aspects. The finding of this study indicates various types of social problems in the novel stem from one problem, namely poverty, both material and moral poverty.

Keywords: *briber; corruption; crimes; education inequality; money laundering; poverty; robber; social media; theft*

1. Introduction

Literature was born from the author's anxiety to see the various social problems that occur among the people in their environment. Literary works, which are social portraits, can reflect various aspects of life in society, describe the psychological state of society, and provide input for solving various problems that occur; all of this is certainly a source of thought, inspiration, and community readiness in dealing with social conditions that occur in society. In addition, literary works also act as entertainment media (Derrida, 2015; Eagleton, 2017; Attridge, (2017). Literary work, which is a reflection of cultural values, cannot be separated from social culture and the lives of the people it describes because it presents a picture of life, and life itself is largely composed of social reality. In this sense, life includes the relationships between people in a society. Thus, viewing literary works as depictions of the world and human life, the main criterion imposed on literary works is the truth of the depiction or what is intended to be described. Literature as a mirror of society examines the extent to which literature is considered a reflection of the state of society. In this case, the social function of literature is examined to determine to what extent literary values are related to social values and to what extent literature can function as a means of entertainment and, at the same time, as community education for readers.

Social problems are problems in society that make it difficult for people to reach their full potential, and social problems usually tend to develop when people become negligent and fail to take matters seriously. Social problems and social critics are two things that are interrelated because social criticism usually arises due to social problems

that occur in society and have not been resolved; while social problems are certain things that always occur in all societies. Kristen, et al. (2017) argue that social problems arise owing to the inconsistency of relations between individuals and groups and, if not resolved, can have a negative impact on social life, such as hampering the peace and comfort of the community in all forms of social interaction. Social problems that occur in society generally occur due to social inequality, which is usually the result of uneven levels of education in society where not all scientific developments can be enjoyed equally by all levels of society. This is in line with the opinion proposed by Mooney, et. al., (2021), who argue that social problems can be caused by changes in individual or group attitudes due to the development of science and technology, social systems, cultural shock, and cultural and social gaps. Zaitov & Teshayev (2022) claim that poverty, crime, gender discrimination, family disorganization, environment, population, belief system, and bureaucracy are problems that are always visible in society.

As a creative work in the form of fiction, which is the mirror of social life and whose reality or facts are made up in such a way by the author, literary works not only display beauty and contain moral messages and normative advice, but literature can also be used as a powerful weapon for social criticism. Therefore, if literary works are used as a medium to convey criticism of social reality, then literary works actually fulfill their social function. It functions as a social criticism of the social problems that exist in society. The social function of this literary work is expected to be able to make humans aware of actions that are beneficial to their interests. In line with this view, Endraswara (2013) states that social criticism will show readers that every literary work is a mirror of social and cultural life.

Apart from the press and physical movements in the form of demonstrations, literary works are an effective means of conveying social criticism, and one of the literary works that is often used by writers as a medium for social criticism is the novel. A novel, which is a reflection or mirror of social life, usually contains educational, social, cultural, economic, and political aspects of social life; therefore, at the same time, a novel is always used to criticize those aspects. Hasibuan, Efendi, & Margana (2021) state that social criticism is the author's response to the phenomenon of the problems that exist around him. In line with this statement, Wibowo (2018) claims that social criticism that exists in literary works can be in the form of criticism of social life that exists in real life, namely in the form of social inequality, which often causes social problems.

Farida & Andalas (2019) argue that in human life, there are many social phenomena, especially poverty and crime, that characterize the journey of human life. Social criticism occurs because of an imbalance in social conditions in the reality of life. The problem of social criticism often occurs in income distribution and development differences in people's lives (Farida & Andalas, 2019: 75). Wibowo (2018) further argues that the discrepancy between reality and expectations tends to lead to dissatisfaction, and this feeling of dissatisfaction gives rise to social criticism expressed through various media. Literature is one of the media for conveying social criticism. If literary works are used as a medium to convey criticism of social reality that is not in favor of the interests of society, then literary works are actually carrying out their role as social control. Social criticism is a form of communication in society that functions as control over the course of a social system or social process. Social criticism in literature is a form of communication in society that aims to control the course of a social system or social process. Literature is seen as the most effective in carrying out social criticism

of power and an order that deviates from the norm. Therefore, literary works as social criticism are an important thing that is useful for maintaining the existing social system.

According to Soetomo (2013: 308), the condition of poverty, with its various dimensions and implications, is a form of social problem that describes conditions of low welfare. Therefore, socio-economic criticism arises because of the existence of economic disparities in society. One of the Indonesian novels that presents interesting social criticism of poverty is *Orang Orang Biasa*, written by Andrea Hirata. This novel talks about the social problems of marginalized, small, and middle-class people who are able to do something extraordinary. They are ten characters who befriend well, namely Debut, Salud, Tohirin, Rusip, Handai, Sobri, Honorun, Nihe, Dinah, and Junilah. They are going through a difficult life, and are experiencing acts of social discrimination in the form of persecution because they come from different family backgrounds with a lacking economy and also do not have good academic ability.

The poverty reflected in the novel *Orang Orang Biasa* by Andrea Hirata is very often encountered in real-life society. It is also the reason for the researchers to choose this topic as their research topic because they are very sure that this research can be an afterthought for the government or parties that have the capacity to make policy changes, especially related to opportunities for ordinary people to have equal opportunity to study at any faculties in universities. The description of social problems in this novel is fitting and relevant to the most common social problems in real life. The poverty found in this novel would be studied further using the sociology of literature.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Sociology of Literature

At the most basic level of content, sociology and literature share a similar perspective. Sociology is essentially the scientific, objective study of man in society, the study of social institutions, and the study of social processes; it seeks to answer the question of how society is possible, how it works, and why it persists (Laurenson and Swingewood, 1972: 11). The social institutions, also known as social structures, cover religion, politics, marriage, economics, education, social changes, etc., in which human beings adapt to and are conditioned by the mechanisms of socialization. Wiyatmi (2013) states that sociology of literature is an approach in literary studies that understands and evaluates literary works by considering social or societal aspects. Based on the definition, it can be said that the sociology of literature is an attempt to understand literary works through a combination of literature and sociology. In this discourse, literature stands as a societal phenomenon that is studied through the eyes of literature in relation to sociology. The sociology of literature, which understands literary phenomena in relation to social aspects, is an interdisciplinary approach or way of reading and understanding literature that involves sociology.

Sociological studies of literature and literary practice seem to have bloomed during the 1970s and crested in the 1980s, with the publication of a collection of essays on the subject (Desan, Ferguson, & Griswold, 1989). Laurenson and Swingewood (1972) further argue that, as with sociology, literature too is preeminently concerned with man's social world, his adaptation to it, and his desire to change it. In this respect, the novel, which is the major genre of literature in industrial society, plays important roles as a means of faithful attempt to re-create the social world of man's relations with his family, with friends, with politics, with economics, with religions, with the state, etc. It also outlines its roles in other social structures, such as the conflicts and tensions

between groups, parties, or social classes. In this case, literary works, like sociology, are closely related to social, political, economic, and religious aspects of society. If sociology analyzes these aspects of life scientifically and objectively, literature conducts a more in-depth analysis to penetrate the deepest recesses of social life and reveal various human experiences with various social problems in social life by using feelings.

Amase, et.al (2013) claims that literature must serve society by steeping itself in politics and by intervening, and writers must not merely write to amuse or to take a bemused, critical look at society. They must play an interventionist role. Literature helps us make sense of social problems and understand everyday events. In addition, literature has an important role in describing social, political, and religious lives. It is more than just a creative ornament. It provides the necessary critical perspective on everyday experiences, educates us about the meaning of our actions, and offers us greater control over our social and personal lives.

Therefore, the study of the novel from a sociological point of view is relevant since the sociology of the novel has been observed to show a deep and important concern for society. There is a rigorous homology between the literary form of the novel and the everyday relation between man and commodities in general, and by extension between men and other men, in a market society. In other words, the novel form can be a literary representation of the everyday life of any given society.

From the above description, it can be summed up that the sociology of literature is a method for analyzing literary works based on a sociological perspective to understand social aspects and phenomena in the society in which the work is written. In this research, the social problems revealed in Andrea Hirata's *Orang Orang Biasa* will be analyzed from a sociological perspective.

2.2 Sociological Approaches of Literature

Laurenson and Swingewood (1972) brought up the theory of the sociology of literature, and stated that there are three approaches to dealing with the sociology of literature: literary works as a mirror of the times, literary works as the author's social situation, and literary works as a specific historical moment.

1. Literary works as a mirror of the times

This approach relates to the time when literary works were created and defined. In this approach, it is stated that "literature is a mirror of the times". This shows that readers can discuss social phenomena that occur in society at a certain time and place through literary works. This means that literary works reflect the situation and conditions of social life in society at the time they were written.

2. Literary works as the author's social situation

In this approach, the writer is influenced by the situations and conditions under which the literature is written because the author is also a member of society. This approach is related to the social background of the author and how the author himself reacts and responds to the system that has been built by the community in which he lives. In the literary works produced, the author is always inspired by events that occur in his community. So the writer must be more sensitive to the social phenomena that surround him. This second approach moves from an emphasis on the literary work itself to the production side and especially on the social situation of the author.

3. Literary work as a specific historical moment

This approach relates to the condition of society at a certain time in accepting and understanding a literary work. It reflects the essence and summary of all history. The sociology of the reader tries to explore the ways in which a literary work is actually accepted by certain people at certain historical moments. The work has special issues in history that make it interesting.

In line with Laurenceon and Swingewood's approaches to literature sociology, Ratna (2004: 60) states that the philosophical basis of the sociological approach is the intrinsic relationship between literature and society. Relationships are caused by: a) literary works are produced by authors; b) the author himself is a member of society; c) the authors use the wealth that exists in society; and d) the results of the literary work are used again by society. Wellek and Warren (1990: 110) state that the sociology of literature, namely linking literature with certain situations or with certain political, economic, and social systems, is divided into three qualifications, namely: (1) Sociology of the Author: It covers the profession of the author and literary intuition. The issues related here are the economic basis of literary production and the background of the author's social status. The author is a citizen, so he can be studied as a social being. (2) The sociology of work; in this case, it is concerned with the literary work itself and in relation to social issues, which are the subject of its study, or what is implied in the literary work and what the goal is. The common approach taken by sociology is to study literature as a social document. (3) Sociology of readers and the social impact of literary works; in this point, authors influence society as well as are influenced by society; art not only imitates life but also shapes it.

Based on the description above, the researchers decide to apply Laurenceon and Swingewood's (1972) first and second sociological approaches to literature as the focus of this research, which constitutes the representation or mirror of the social problems in a society. Besides, Hirata's background as a member of the community inspired him to write the novel *Orang Orang Biasa* because he was influenced by the situations and conditions taking place in his living area. Moreover, it is also due to Hirata's social background, in which he reacts and responds to the system that has happened in the society where he lives. It was the event that occurred in his environment that inspired Hirata, who is sensitive to what is happening around him, to write the novel *Orang Orang Biasa*.

2.3 Social Problem

A social problem is a dysfunction in the social institution that needs urgent intervention from the appropriate agents in society (Kallen, Miller & Daniels, 1989). Social problems usually occur when certain social phenomena or conditions disturb the social order. In the early stages, such conditions usually do not become a serious concern for those dealing with or related to the problem because they usually do not cause or have not caused serious adverse effects on the social system. But gradually, they accumulate and begin to affect normal social life. Such conditions will only be recognized as a social problem. As soon as social problems take root and develop beyond the limits of tolerance, hatred arises against them, and there are demands for improvement in the interest of social harmony.

Social problems are crucial to sociological study; hence, they cannot be underestimated in substantiating the knowledge of students of the world around them. This is due to the fact that problems exist in all societies, from the dawn of time until

today, with different gravity, causes, and implications for the sustenance of the society. A social problem can either be seen at the individual or societal levels. A problem is social if and only if the issue(s) affect a larger percentage of people. However, an issue that affects an individual or a group of people without any worthy implication on the social system is rather described as an individual issue, as conceptualized by Wright Mills in the promise of sociological imagination (Mills, 1959).

By compilation of what is categorized as a social problem without any focus on the area's affected, the long list includes but is not limited to: terrorism, unemployment, gun violence, poverty, employee theft, kidnapping, robbery, rape, armed robbery, mortality, gangsterism, cultism, human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), war, inflation, immorality, corruption, and so on (Aborisade, 2017; Lufkin, 2017; Aborisade, 2014). Obileye & Aborisade (2020) state that all the aforementioned social problems have a bearing on all the pillars of society: family, economy, politics, education, and religion. However, the developmental silhouette among nations is a result of the capabilities of human and material resources available to manage the public issue. Over time, diverse factors have been attributed to engineering the nature of the social problem in a particular society. Some factors are governmentally related (at any level), some are globally engineered (based on international relations), and some are individually planned.

Social problems are abnormal symptoms that are unwanted in the concerned society. Because elements of society cannot function as expected by society, they cause disappointment and suffering among the people (Soekanto, 1999: 395). Social problems that arise from deficiencies in humans or social groups stem from economic factors (poverty, unemployment, prostitution, and crime), biological factors (physical illness and disability), psychological factors (mental illness, poor memory, difficulty adjusting, and suicide), and cultural factors (divorce, child delinquency, differences in religion, ethnicity, and race).

The focus of the social problem discussed in this study is only poverty, which constitutes the most common social problem encountered by society and usually disrupts the balance in people's lives.

2.3.1 Poverty

Parrillo (2008: 697–698) states that poverty is one of the world's most costly and serious social problems. It represents the vast unused and underused potential of millions of people; it costs societies in lost revenues, in lost productivity, in ill health, social dysfunction, and environmental degradation, and in vast sums that must be spent either to alleviate poverty's worst symptoms through social welfare programs or to police or control its unruly victims. Social scientists generally define poverty in two ways. Absolute poverty is the condition in which people are unable to achieve the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, and shelter. Relative poverty refers to some socially constructed norm of well-being in comparison to some proportion of a society thought to be lacking. The "poor" in the rich industrialized countries are not, for the most part, materially deprived in the absolute sense. With the help of government transfer programs, such as income support and food and housing subsidies, they may have an apartment to live in, enough food to eat, clothing, and even some amenities like television and cars. Yet in relation to the rest of society, they are "poor." Their housing is substandard, their neighborhoods are rundown and high in crime, their stores lack the variety and quality of more affluent sectors, their clothing is limited to cheap clothing

chains or thrift store hand-me-downs, and their potential is limited by poor schooling and health care.

Poverty as both absolute and relative deprivation has been part of the human condition for thousands of years, but it was only during the 20th century that poverty came to be recognized as a social problem for which there could be public remedies. Traditional societies met people's needs through a combination of the individual's own labor and the obligation of the kinship group to care for its own. In such societies, the poor were those who remained outside this sphere of care, set adrift through war, famine, or the loss of family. Further, Parrillo (2008: 701) argues that poverty is a sustained low standard of living and a lack of resources. In real terms, poverty is hunger, lack of shelter, no access to medical care, no access to education, no job, powerlessness, and a lack of representation and freedom.

3. Research Method

This research is designed to obtain answers to social problems in Andrea Hirata's novel, *Orang Orang Biasa*. Concerning the statement above, the method used in this study is structural analysis, which starts with reviewing literary research to provide research data. The data are carefully examined and analyzed to reach the objectives of this research. This research is conducted using descriptive qualitative research with a text analysis design. Frankel and Wallen (1993: 23) define the descriptive method as "a method used to explain, analyze, and classify something through various techniques, such as surveys, interviews, questionnaires, observation, and tests." Moreover, Fraenkel and Wallen (1993: 380) define qualitative research as "a research study that investigates the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials." The qualitative method uses descriptions and categories (words), for example, open ended interviews, naturalistic observation, and document analysis.

Regarding the subject of the research, the writer believes that this research has potential material to be analyzed by a descriptive qualitative method since this research is going to analyze and describe social problems that commonly happen in a society reflected in a novel, which is a mirror of actual life.

Besides, in this research, library research is used to collect all the data needed that has a correlation to the research project. Therefore, in this research, words, phrases, or sentences related to the text of the topic analyzed in Andrea Hirata's novel entitled *Orang Orang Biasa* are used as sources of data. The primary source is Andrea Hirata's novel *Orang Orang Biasa*, published in 2010 in Bloom's *Modern Critical Interpretations*, edited with an introduction by Harold Bloom. The secondary sources are books, theses, articles from journals, and proceedings.

The analysis technique used in this research is content analysis. Content analysis is a research technique for making imitative inferences and validating data by paying attention to the context (text). Basically, content analysis in the field of literature is an effort to understand literary works from an extrinsic perspective. The aspects that cover the contents of the literary structure are discussed, lived, and discussed in depth. The extrinsic elements of literature that attract quite a lot of attention from content analysis include: (a) moral and ethical messages, (b) educational values (didactic), (c) philosophical values, (d) religious values, (e) welfare values, etc. In other words, researchers only use content analysis if they want to reveal the content of certain values in literary works. Content analysis is used to reveal, understand, and capture the message of literary works. Meaning in content analysis is usually symbolic. The task of

content analysis is none other than to reveal the hidden symbolic meanings in literary works (Endraswara, 2008: 160). Content analysis is appropriately used to reveal the value of the content that exists in literary works.

After the data are collected, the researchers analyze them using the descriptive method. To analyze the data in this study, the researcher used content analysis, which is a scientific analysis of the message of a communication. Content analysis is a research technique for making imitated and valid inferences from the data by paying attention to the context. It means that this analysis deals with communication or communication content in the novel, as proposed by Bungin (2012). Thus, this research focuses only on the text in the novel *Orang Orang Biasa* by Andrea Hirata by applying the theory of sociology of literature proposed by Laurenceon and Swingewood (1972).

4. Analysis

This research focuses on the poverty of the marginalized in the novel *Orang Orang Biasa* by Andrea Hirata.

Poverty is the inability to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, education, and health. Poverty can be caused by a scarcity of means of meeting basic needs or by difficulty accessing education and employment.

In the novel *Orang Orang Biasa*, Hirata describes the educational poverty experienced by the main characters. The educational poverty experienced by the characters in this novel is the starting point for the various problems in the novel.

Terkumpul secara ilmiah berdasarkan kecenderungan bodoh, aneh, dan gagal, sembilan anak berderet-deret di bangku paling belakang itu: Handai, Tohirin, Honorun, Sobri, Rusip, Salud, dan tiga anak perempuan: Nihe, Dinah, dan Junilah. (Hirata, 2020: 7)

Gathered scientifically based on stupid, strange, and failed tendencies, nine children lined up at the very back: Handai, Tohirin, Honorun, Sobri, Rusip, Salud, and three girls: Nihe, Dinah, and Junilah.

The quotation above reflects the situation in a class where the students are classified by their teachers as students who are not smart or have less intelligence than their friends in class. It is on the basis of this consideration that they are placed in one place, that is, in the back seat. Their inability to understand lessons in class like other students makes the students feel grouped or isolated by their teachers and friends; however, this condition eventually makes them close friends.

Furthermore, the number of students who are grouped at the very back of the class increased by one more student, namely Debut Awaludin. Debut on his own awareness and not because of being grouped by the teachers or his friends begging the homeroom teacher to move his seat to the back. Debut does it since he is an idealistic student and feels hatred for the discriminatory treatment carried out by the school, as well as his dislike of the Trio Bastardin and Duo Boron, who always act arbitrarily and often bully the nine students. Debut does not accept the ruthless treatment of Bastardin and Boron, who like to bully Salud. Debut takes the initiative to defend the nine students, especially Salud, who is always bullied.

Tak ada ombak tak ada angin, Debut Awaluddin menghadap wali kelas dan minta dipindahkan tempat duduknya ke belakang. Alasannya: dia benci akan perlakuan sekolah, Trio Bastardin, dan

Duo Boron pada Sembilan anak pecundang itu, terutama pada kebrutalan Bastardin dan Boron yang suka menindas Salud.
(Hirata, 2020: 15)

No waves or wind, Debut Awaluddin faced the homeroom teacher and asked to move his seat back. The reason: he hates the way the school, the Trio Bastardin, and Duo Boron treat those nine loser children, especially the brutality of Bastardin and Boron who like to bully Salud.

The quotation above clearly shows that Debut is an idealist who cannot accept the injustice that is happening at his school. Debut convinces Salud that from now on Bastardin and Boron will no longer dare to bully him because Debut promises to defend Salud to the end, and since Debut's presence, the students who sit in the back seats have turned into a kind of ten close friends. Without any command, the ten students put their hands in the middle, piled their hands on top of each other, and threw their hands away while shouting to show that they were committing to becoming a unified group and ready to face the Bastardin and Boron groups.

Dinah, who is a group member of the ten students, a group of students formed when they were still in high school, a group of very ordinary people who do not have any achievements, must withdraw from high school. Dinah withdraws from high school for only one reason: economic pressure. After dropping out of high school, Dinah helps her father sell children's toys on the street.

Diantara sepuluh penghuni bangku belakang dulu, Dinahlah yang pertama mohon diri dari SMA. Alasannya bukan karena dia terlalu murah senyum, atau terlalu banyak angka merah di rapor, atau terlalu sering dihukum berdiri di sudut kelas oleh Ibu Desi Mal karena tak becus matematika, tapi dia berhenti dengan hormat, atas permintaan sendiri, tanpa tekanan dari pihak mana pun, kecuali tekanan ekonomi.

Karena tidak ada harapan di sekolah, Dinah bekerja membantu usaha ayahnya berdagang mainan anak-anak di kaki lima.
(Hirata, 2020: 28)

Among the ten former occupants of the backseat, Dinah was the first to excuse herself from high school. The reason wasn't that she smiled too much, or too many red marks on the report card, or that Mrs. Desi Mal punished her to stand in the corner too often for not being good at math, but that she stopped respectfully, at her own request, without pressure from any party, except economic pressure.

Because there was no hope at school, Dinah worked to help her father's business selling children's toys on street vendors.

The lines above show clearly that Dinah withdraws from school at her own request due to the economic inability of her family to pay as well as support for Dinah's school. Economic pressure is the only reason why Dinah withdraws from school, and this is the beginning of Dinah's poor education, which has affected her economy for generations.

Dinah withdraws from school because she feels there is no hope at school, and she also realizes that her father is just a street vendor of children's toys. Dinah finally decides to help her father's business selling children's toys to street vendors. The story about Dinah's poverty is further described by Hirata, in which Dinah finally got married

to a street vendor as well, and they have four children from their marriage. Their poverty is further illustrated by Hirata, where Dinah's husband falls ill and Dinah has to provide for her four children and her husband alone.

Dinah dan 4 anaknya itu tinggal di rumah petak di belakang Pasar Inpres, tipikal hunian para pedagang kecil. Setiap malam putri putri kecilnya harus menyingkirkan barang dagangan sekedar untuk menemukan sedikit tempat untuk belajar atau untuk tidur. Hidup mereka yang sudah susah megap megap semakin morat marit setelah suaminya tidak bekerja. (Hirata, 2020: 28-29)

Dinah and her 4 children live in a row house behind the Inpres Market, a typical dwelling for small traders. Every night her little girls have to put away merchandise just to find a little place to study or to sleep. Their life, which is already hard to gasp for gasp, becomes more and more chaotic after her husband is unable to work.

The excerpt above clearly illustrates the poverty of Dinah's family. Although it is described that Dinah, her husband, and her children have a place to live, the house is just a small row house with no rooms. This can be seen from the description that Dinah's daughters have to get rid of their merchandise just to sleep. What Dinah's children do shows that their row house must have been small and also lacked rooms. Apart from that, it is also clear that their lives are unfortunate as well as difficult, and now they are, of course, even more difficult because Dinah's husband is no longer able to work due to illness.

The data above also shows us clearly that it is poverty that forces Dinah to leave school. It cannot be denied that economic poverty is one of the main social problems facing the Indonesian nation. Sharp economic disparities are still found in various regions of Indonesia. Equality and economic prosperity have not touched all children in the nation. On the one hand, there are people who have extraordinary wealth in this country who are commonly called conglomerates, and on the other hand, there are people who live below the poverty line who are usually called the marginalized. These marginalized people have a very difficult time just meeting their living expenses. In this country, there are still poor people who cannot even afford to pay for school up to high school level.

Dinah's experience at school, in which she felt hopeless about carrying out her schoolwork, is now experienced by her children. Dinah's children feel the same as Dinah did when schooling, in that Dinah's children do not have any objectives for their future lives either because studying is difficult for them. Their school supplies are also always incomplete, and every day they have nothing else to think about except struggling to make a living.

Maka, anak-anak itu tak pernah punya cita-cita sebab mau belajar saja susah. Perlengkapan sekolah selalu tak lengkap dan saban hari tak ada hal lain selain soal berjuang menyambung hidup. (Hirata, 2020: 29)

So, those children never had ideals because it was difficult for them to study. School supplies were always incomplete and every day there was nothing other than struggling to make a living.

It is explained in the lines above that the mediocrity of Dinah's is typical of the poor. As a dominant example of the life of the grassroots, Dinah is resigned to

education and prefers to make a living rather than go to school. Later, because Dinah has no other job skills, selling toys is the main source of income she can make.

In this novel, Hirata also describes that the level of education for the poor tends to decrease. For reasons that are quite cliché, it seems as if the fate of children is determined by following in the footsteps of their parents. Therefore, the younger generations that are influenced by this mindset, have no creative thinking, or even dare not to think about their brighter future; even they tend to surrender to their poor lives and do not have aspirations to live a better life by improving their education.

Influenced by her mother's pessimistic character, Aini, Dinah's eldest daughter, also feels pessimistic about her schooling. Aini also does not have good achievements at school and is also far from things related to rankings or class champions. Aini is included in the category of students who have the most potential not to go to a higher class.

Terimbas hawa pesimis Ibunya akan sekolahnya, si sulung Aini malah lebih pesimis lagi. Dia jauh dari hal-hal berbunyi ranking. Umpama kategori murid terbaik dilebarkan sampai 300pun, Aini tetap tak masuk. Sebaliknya umpama ada kategori 20 murid yang paling potensial tak naik kelas, nama Aini nomor satu. (Hirata, 2020: 31)

Affected by her mother's pessimism about her schooling, the eldest Aini is even more pessimistic. He is far from things related to rankings. If the best students category were widened to 300, Aini would still not be included. On the other hand, if there is a category of 20 students who have the most potential to fail a grade, Aini's name is number one.

The excerpt above explains that the mindset of parents can actually have an immense influence on their children. Dina's mindset about the hopelessness of school turns out to have a negative impact on her eldest daughter's mindset. Aini makes her mother an idol, so her mother's poor education mindset and the thought that education could not give her hope make Aini also lack the enthusiasm to study and improve her family's economy.

Aini menyediakan diri untuk berhenti sekolah dulu demi merawat ayah yang sangat disayangnya. (Hirata, 2020: 32)

Aini volunteered to quit school first to care for her father, whom she loves so much.

Just like her mother, who makes school not something important, so does Aini. When her father falls ill and is unable to carry out routine activities and needs treatment, Aini decides to temporarily quit school so she can take care of him. This excerpt also shows that this family is so economically poor that they cannot take the father to the hospital to get doctor's care. The very reason why Aini's father is not taken to the hospital to have proper treatment from doctors is due to economic problems. They are so poor that they cannot afford to pay for medical treatment at the doctor, and the father is only treated at home. Aini temporarily sacrifices her education so she can take care of her father.

Moreover, for Aini, ideals are very expensive objects that are unaffordable for her to own or buy. Therefore, when her teacher at school asks her about her goals, in contrast to her classmates, who on average scramble to raise their hands to answer the teacher's questions, Aini just looks down silently and does not dare to answer anything.

Jika guru bertanya soal cita-cita, murid-murid lain berebut menunjuk, Aini sendiri yang menunduk. Karena dia sudah pasrah dikader ibunya untuk menjadi pedagang kaki lima mainan anak-anak, melanjutkan usaha keluarga. (Hirata, 2020: 30)

If the teacher asked about ideals, the other students scramble to point, Aini herself looks down. Because he had resigned herself to her mother's cadre to become a street vendor of children's toys, continuing the family business.

The excerpt above clearly describes the reasons why Aini has no objectives in her life. Aini's main reason is because she has resigned herself to continuing her mother's business that has been hereditary, namely being a street vendor of children's toys. In addition, the lines above also explain that the mentality of parents and the household environment have a strong influence on the psychology of their children. Dinah's view that formal education at school is not very important makes Aini's mindset also patterned after that of her mother.

In addition, small traders, or cart traders, commonly do not have a higher education. They only have the highest degree at the junior high school level. They only sell on the side of the road, from street vendors, or from store awnings every day. Their lives also seem to have been patterned for a long time and have become like a hereditary profession. It is as if they were satisfied with their work in such a way that it is very difficult for them to get out of poverty.

Mereka adalah keluarga pedagang kecil atau pedagang bergerobak, yang rata-rata hanyalah berijazah paling tinggi SMP atau MTs. Mereka berjualan di pinggir jalan, kaki lima, emper-emper toko. (Hirata, 2020: 30)

They are a family of small traders or wheelbarrow traders, most of whom only have a junior high school or MTs certificate at the most. They sell on the side of the road, sidewalks, store awnings.

This excerpt tells about the marginalized, with their low education level, whose professions are small traders living in hardship, economic poverty, and educational poverty. Education has always been the thing that is not prioritized, so the problem of educational poverty always becomes an unresolved problem. This is also what keeps them from getting out of the cycle of poverty that has been previously passed down by their families. The notion that working is better than schooling is also still a thorny problem that makes the level of economic poverty unresolved.

5. Conclusion

The friendship, which consists of 10 persons named Debut, Handai, Tohirin, Honorun, Sobri, Rusip, Salud, Nihe, Dinah, and Junilah, began when they were in high school, where they were students who were classified as not very smart, so they had to be placed at the very back; in fact, some of them did not even graduate from high school. When they are adults, they are still united in maintaining their friendship, even though their fates are different. They are still the same in their simplicity. During high school, they often got bullied by the trio Bastardin and the duo Baron.

The poverty reflected in Andrea Hirata's *Orang Orang Biasa* is mainly a manifestation of the poor education experienced by marginalized people. Hirata in the novel describes the unfair treatment of the nine stupid people in their class. There is also

the problem of bullying between people who are weak and alienated from people who are stronger and more powerful in the educational environment. This behavior has a lasting impact and mentally disrupts the victims of the bullying. People who are stupid and have weak academic abilities so that they cannot compete in the field of education are ignored by teachers and classmates who have abilities above these stupid students. This has an impact on their mentality, which becomes increasingly lazy to study and makes them feel inferior to having worthy goals.

The difference in status between the poor and the rich in this novel can also be seen in the novel, in which a girl from a poor family named Aini tries hard to study because she wants to be smart so she can be accepted as a student at the Faculty of Medicine. However, when she has been accepted at the Faculty of Medicine, her mother finds it difficult to find funds to pay Aini's down payment and tuition fees, which are very expensive and impossible for poor people like her to pay. This becomes a manifestation of the problems of economic poverty and the world of education in Andrea Hirata's novel *Orang Orang Biasa*. The conflicts contained in the novel *Orang-Orang Biasa* by Andrea Hirata are, of course, interrelated between poor education, poor wealth, and poor morals. The crimes described in this novel are related to poverty and the minimum level of education, so it is difficult to get a decent job to make ends meet, which forces some people to commit crimes.

Social status and educational poverty experienced by the ten friends and Aini prove that these problems stem from poverty.

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