

# PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS IN JOJO MOYES' NOVEL *ME BEFORE YOU*

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Received: 2023-04-03

Accepted: 2023-05-20

Published: 2023-05-29

## Abstract

This research is aimed at protagonist's physiological needs in the novel *Me Before You* written by Jojo Moyes based on Maslow's theory. There are five basic needs based on Maslow's theory. This study only focuses on physiological needs in the protagonist's life. Physiological needs, the most important basic needs, is the elements needed by human being in maintaining life and health. This study used qualitative method to describe the obtained data. The result shows that there are four important points of physiological needs found in the protagonist's life. Those are food, water, clothing and rest. It is found that the protagonist in the novel puts first her basic needs. She fulfills her needs for food, water, cloth, and rest. The basic needs must be fulfilled first before other needs. Therefore, the protagonist in the novel can live healthily and continues her life safely.

**Keywords:** *basic needs; clothing; maintaining life; needs; physiological needs*

## 1. Introduction

Literature is an expression of human life in the form of written or oral works based on thoughts, opinions, experiences, feelings in imaginative forms, reflections of reality or original data wrapped in aesthetic packaging through language media. Literature is a creative activity that becomes a tool for appreciation and implement human feelings and messages (Sehandi, 2016). The message conveyed through literature can be effectively absorbed by the community owing to the entertainment factor (Manugeran et al, 2020).

Novel is an imaginative work that tells the whole side of the problematic life of a person or several characters. Novel can reveal all the episodes of the characters' life journey in story (Sehandi, 2016). Novel is one example of a written literature work that can describe or tell about the human life. It can be concluded that the nature of the novel is a story about imaginative human life with a fairly long plot starting from the emergence of problems to solve problems used as a tool to express and convey the message.

In time, literature then experienced a fairly rapid development. It is not only the intrinsic elements of a literary work that can be studied, but also extrinsic factors that we can study and analyze. Extrinsic factors of literature, for example, sociology of literature, psychology of literature, and literary anthropology (Sehandi, 2016). Psychology as a science will always evolve. Development thoughts and empirical studies among experts on personality humans have given birth to various theories that

vary according to perspectives and personal experiences of constructive experts the theory. One of the literary theories used to dissect literary works is Abraham's theory of humanistic psychology Maslow.

Maslow argues that human motivation is organized into a hierarchy of needs, namely a systematic arrangement of needs. One basic need must be met before other basic needs arise. This need is instinctive activate or direct human behavior. Although these needs are instinctive, the behavior used to satisfy these needs is learned, resulting in variations in the behavior of each person in how to satisfy them. Psychology of Humanistic has the advantage of being more focused on studying hierarchy of human needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs concept assumes that lower level needs must be satisfied before higher level needs before motivator and it must be satisfied. The five hierarchy needs levels are: physiological needs, safety needs, love and belongingness, self-esteem needs, self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). Basic needs as a physiological needs are the most important needs in human life before other need. If basic needs are not fulfilled, humans will not be able to live and doing activities.

*Me Before You* (Moyes, 2012), a novel written by Pauline Sarah-Jo Moyes was inspired based on true story of author. She was inspired to write the novel during second pregnancy and was inspired by some of her own family who needed round-the-clock care. She was also inspired by a news radio story about a young athlete who was paralyzed and decided to commit suicide in Switzerland, and then she did these two things of hers as the main idea for *Me Before You*. She says she wants to write a story about how a man who does not compromise and makes decisions that are not approved by those around him wants to change his decisions, and people around a man who wants to change his life. *Me Before You* by Jojo Moyes is one of interesting books that describes the struggles to fulfill the human hierarchy of needs. This book discusses love, suffering, and dreams. The plot of Jojo Moyes' *Me Before You* started when Louisa Clark decided to take a job as a caretaker for the Traynor family. Will Traynor, who suffered an injury that made him unable of working and gave him quadriplegia, employed Louisa. Louisa is a brilliant girl who fights a lot and works really hard. Based on this case, the author is interested in using Abraham H. Maslow's theory to do research on the basic of needs for Louisa Clark in Jojo Moyes' novel *Me Before You*.

Louisa, the protagonist is the main character in a story. A protagonist is the key decision maker that influences the plot of a story. The protagonist plays a major role in the storyline, often portrayed as the character who faces the most conflicts and obstacles. In a complex story that contains subplots, each subplot can have its own protagonist.

It was decided to analyze this topic because this study explores the protagonist, Louisa Clark who searches for her wants and the way how she gets them. The study focuses on Louisa's physiological needs. It applies based on the hierarchy of human needs theory by Abraham H. Maslow.

## 2. Literature Review

Psychology is one of the fields of science and applied science that studies behavior, mental functions, and human mental processes through scientific procedures. A person who practices psychology is called a psychologist. Psychologists try to improve a person's quality of life through certain interventions both on mental function, individual and group behavior, which are based on physiological, neurological, and psychosocial processes. Need means something that is needed. Thus, human needs can

be interpreted as something that is needed by humans, or human desires that must be fulfilled, in order to achieve spiritual and physical satisfaction for their survival. These needs can be in the form of goods or services.

From the understanding above both are closely related. Psychology of needs is the study of all human needs, starting from basic needs and followed by other needs. as humans, we really need something to meet all the needs in our bodies called desires. One expert in the psychology of human needs is Abraham Maslow who is called Maslow's theory.

Basic needs are described like a pyramid hierarchy. A human being will prioritize the most basic needs first, then increase to the next needs in sequence.

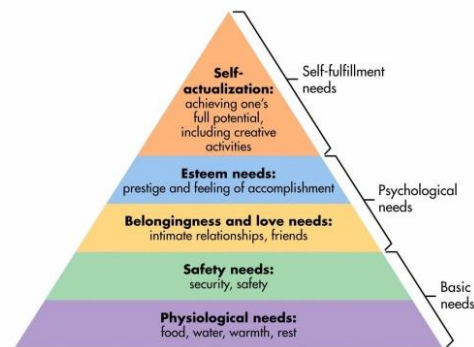


Figure 1 Maslow's basic need pyramid

Maslow, an expert in psychology, who came up with this theory. The American psychologist who is also famous for his theory of self-actualization psychology has arranged a hierarchy (level) of needs into five levels. The levels are arranged in a pyramid-shaped scheme. From the bottom of the hierarchy upwards, the needs are: physiological, safety, love and belonging needs, esteem and self-actualization. Basic needs is the elements needed by human being in maintaining psychological balance, which aims to maintain life and health. Needs is every human five basic needs, namely: psychological needs, safety, self-esteem, love, and self-actualization (McCloud, 2018). The basic needs of human are the same, although there are certain needs that are different for each individual. Basic needs is primary needs in human life, such as; clothing, food, water, and shelter or can be called a physiological needs. Clothing, food, water, and shelter are considered as a concept of human life in fulfilling their needs.

There are five levels of basic needs according to Abraham Maslow. The most basic level in Maslow's hierarchy is physiological needs. This basic need is the lowest or very first need in Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory concept. That is, this need includes biological and physical needs (Oktapiana & Skolastika, 2022).

Physiological needs have the highest priority in Maslow's hierarchy. An individual who has several unmet needs generally seeks the fulfillment of physiological needs first. Physiological needs are basic needs that absolutely must be fulfill because these needs are very basic needs. Without the fulfillment of these needs, humans will not be able to carry out life activities easily. Humans have eight kinds of physiological needs, namely oxygen, fluid or water, nutrition or food, temperature, elimination, shelter, rest, and sex. (Potter & Perry, 2005)

Safety needs is also part of basic human needs. A person needs a sense of security so that he can carry out activities that support him to meet other needs. Examples of the need for security include protection, freedom from fear, away from

threats, stability, and security from disturbance. In this case, the existence of traffic regulations, work safety regulations, health protocols, social norms, religious norms, and customary norms exist to fulfill a sense of security in living life. Thus, the danger posed by accidents, war, crime, epidemics, riots, and others can be minimized. The need for safety and security is divided into physical security (protection against threats to the body or life, disease, accidents, dangers from the environment, and so on) and psychological safety (protection from threats from new and unfamiliar experiences, such as the fear of someone going to school for the first time because they have to adapt). Like physiological needs, safety needs cannot be fully satisfied. People will constantly feel themselves as being in danger since neither they nor nature can ever fully shield them from danger. (Feist & Feist, 2006).

Following the psychological needs and safety needs, love and belonging needs are on the third level. People are social beings. Humans want a sense of connection, affection, and social contact once their need for security has been satisfied. This desire arises naturally. The need to interact with others is a part of this need. This means that since humans are social creatures, they cannot survive alone. When people are interacting socially, someone wants to be appreciated. When this need is not fulfilled, someone may feel incredibly lonely from friends, a partner, a sweetheart, or children (Maslow, 1943). This is necessary for show only because good relationships with one's family and environment are essential for people to successfully live their lives.

Advanced needs include those for self-esteem. Humans require self-esteem needs if their social needs have been satisfied. This need for self-esteem calls for strength, confidence, self-fulfillment, and self-respect. There are two categories of needs for self-esteem: the desire for success, the capacity to grant self-assurance, autonomy, freedom, and life; and, the requirement for respect, admiration, position, and excellent reputation.

The highest level of need is the need for self-actualization. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the fourth level of demands must be satisfied before the fifth level may be satisfied. This drive for self-actualization motivates a person to express his full potential in his works. How to realize their potential by pursuing their interests in what they enjoy. Those who have attained this level are fully human. People who are self-actualizing are independent and able to maintain their sense of self-worth despite being scorned, rejected, and dismissed by others. They are not focused on having their demands for affection or admiration met (Feist & Feist, 2006).

In this research, the writer only focus in physiological needs which is the most important basic needs. The author wants to analyze and find out the protagonist's physiological needs, Louisa Clark in *Me Before You* based on Maslow's theory. As the protagonist, Louisa Clark frequently shows good manners and behavior. His or her appeals to the sympathies of readers or viewers.

### **3. Research Method**

This study uses qualitative method in describing the data since the data are words. Moleong in Siregar, Nasution & Pardi (2022) states that qualitative method is a research strategy to produce descriptive data and the research results are in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behavior. Data were collected by taking note method proposed by Sugiyono (2009) and quoting method by Sutopo (2005). These techniques are used to select the relevant data to the research problem by selecting information without depending on the amount of information (Pardi &

Ardescy, 2022). Data were analyzed using the techniques proposed by Creswell (2013). Data reduction is conducted after all data collection process to make the data organized based on the kinds of struggle. After categorizing the data, data interpretation were conducted to answer the research problem. Data were analyzed by reducing data, displaying data, and drawing conclusion or verification based on Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2014).

## 4. Discussion

Louisa Clark is the protagonist in *Me Before You* written by Jojo Moyes. The analysis focuses on her physiological needs based on Maslow's theory. In Maslow's theory, physiological needs that must be fulfill before other needs.

### 4.1 Physiological Needs in Louisa Clark's Life

Physiological needs are the most basic needs of Maslow's hierarchy. These needs are also known as primary needs, such as food, water, clothing, and rest.

#### Food

Food is a part of physiological needs. Food is a basic human needs that is needed by the body. Food is needed by human to fulfill the human needs to carry out activities in life. Louisa as a protagonist in the novel must fulfill her physiological needs with food so that she can do her activities or continue her life.

"I sat there, as my parents discussed what other jobs my limited qualifications might entitle me to. Factory work, machinist, roll butter. For the first time that afternoon I wanted to cry. Thomas watched me with big, round eyes, and silently handed me half a soggy biscuit. ... Thanks, Tommo," I mouthed silently, and ate it." (Moyes, 2012: 16)

The quotation above shows that biscuit is a name of food product. Biscuits show potential as improved food (Nogueira & Steel, 2018) to meet nutritional needs or prevent diet-related illnesses. Biscuits offer several possibilities for the management of human nutrition-related disorders. They are widely consumed as snacks or as complement to other foods. They present varied forms and pleasant flavors, have long shelf lives, and provide convenience (Agama-Acevedo et al. 2012; Manley 2011). Half a soggy biscuit stated in the quotation above indicates the physiological needs. Louisa took the soggy biscuit and say thanks to Tommo then ate it silently. It proves that Louisa needs food to be not hungry.

In life people need food to continue their life and doing many activities. To get a job that her parents talked about, Louisa, who is also the breadwinner of her family, needs food to meet her needs in order to be able to do well and continue her life. Food can also function to increase Louisa's immune system so that her health can be more stable and she can work properly. Good food is needed by Louisa's body to start an activity, if her body does not get food then her body will not have an energy and all digestive systems and thoughts will be disrupted, and if Louisa's body has met her needs then she can carry out activities very well. Louisa does not only need staple foods, but she also needs additional foods such as snacks, fruit, and more. Louisa needs food every day. In general, human body requires food three times a day so that the body's intake can be fulfilled properly.

“At lunch time I left the library and went for a brief walk around town to clear my head. I treated myself to a prawn sandwich and sat on the wall watching the swans in the lake below the castle. It was warm enough for me to take off my jacket, and I let my face tilt towards the sun. There was something curiously restful about watching the rest of the world getting on with its business. After spending all morning stuck in the world of the confined, just being able to walk out and eat my lunch in the confined, just being able to walk out and eat my lunch in the sun felt like a freedom.” (Moyes, 2012: 199)

The quotation above indicates that Louisa literally needs food to fulfill her physiological needs. She sits on the wall watched the swans in the lake below the castle and enjoyed the sun with her lunch. Louisa bought a prawn sandwich as her lunch. Everyday she needs food to eat for her lunch to get energy and her strength to do what she wants in her life.

Louisa needs her lunch so she can continue her work after getting her energy back. If she only needs food once a day then her body will become weak and her health will be compromised. Louisa as the breadwinner in her family must maintain a healthy body so that she can continue her life.

### **Water**

Water is also one of physiological needs. Water is the most important source of life needed after food. Water and water resources is very important for maintaining an adequate food supply and a productive environment for all living organisms. Water is essential to life because it heavily influences public health and living standard (Kilic, 2020). If we feel hungry, we can still stand it, whereas if we feel thirsty we will become dehydrated and can even cause death. As well as Louisa for her daily activities she also needs water so she does not get dehydrated and feels fresh every day.

“My mother walked into the room, bearing a huge basket of neatly folded laundry. ... Are those yours?” She brandished a pair of socks.

... Treena's, I think.”

... I thought so. Odd color. I think they must have got in with Daddy's plum pajamas.

You're back early. Are you going somewhere? “

... No.” I filled a glass with tap water and drank it.” (Moyes, 2012: 12)

The quotation above shows a dialogue takes place between Louisa's mother who is in the kitchen. Louisa came home early from work and her mother asked where she was going after that, but Louisa did not go anywhere, she just felt thirsty and needed water then she filled her glass with tap water and drank it. The dialogue shows that Louisa needs water for her physiological needs. Louisa needs water every day for her needs, without water she will feel dry and thirsty so she can not carry out her activities properly. Water is very good for Louisa's body and health. If Louisa's body lacks of water, her health will be disrupted, and she will not be able to carry out her usual activities.

## **Clothing**

Clothing is including physiological needs. Sahoo (2008) states that as the civilization grows with time humans have tried to make clothes from various raw materials such as vegetation and animal skins. No data is available for the exact period from which humans started wearing clothes but anthropologists and archaeologists believe in the fact that early humans must adapted clothes covering their body to protect from cold, heat, rain and climate variation etc. Clothing and textiles have been an important feature in the human history and also it implies the kind of material available to a civilization and the technology they were used to make clothes. It is also believed that clothes indicated the social status of the various members of the society.

Clothing is also a basic need that is very important for daily activities. Without clothes human will feel ashamed and do not feel safe. Every human being must fulfill this need as soon as possible. If these needs are not fulfill, humans will find it difficult to carry out daily activities. As in the quote in the novel, Louisa really needs clothes as a basic need to carry out her activities.

“You must wear a suit to an interview,” Mum had instead. “Everyone’s fartoo casual these days. “Because wearing pin stripes will be vital if I’m spoon feeding a geriatric.” “Do not be smart.”

“I can’t afford to buy a suit. What if I don’t get the job?” “You can wear mine, and I’ll iron you a nice blouse, and just for oncedo not wear your hair up in those...” She gestured to my hair, which was normally twisted into two dark knots on each side of my head.”

“...Princess Leia things. Just try to look like a normal person.” I knew better than to argue with my mother. And I could tell Dad had been instructed not to comment on my outfit as I walked out of the house, mygait awkward in the too-tight skirt.” (Moyes, 2012: 23)

It can be seen from the quotation above that Louisa has to wear a suit for a job interview, but she can not afford to buy a suit. Then her mother offered to put on her suit. Her mother ironed a nice blouse for Louisa to be comfortable to wear even though she was a little awkward wearing her mother's too tight skirt but she wore comfortable clothes for her. Louisa must wear neat clothes to start her work, without neat and comfortable clothes Louisa will not be able to start an activity. Dressing neatly and comfortably makes Louisa more confident too. From this explanation, a suit is a basic need that must be fulfill to carry out daily activities.

## **Rest**

Rest is a basic need that must be met for a person's physiological needs. Bernhofer (2016) stated that rest is a physical, mental and spiritual human need, common to all humanity, and is frequently prescribed around the world as a treatment for many maladies. Yet the concept of rest remains subjective, is vaguely defined and is often confused with sleep, limiting its utility for research and practice. Without a clear definition and understanding of rest and its parameters, its restorative benefits may not be realized and the advice to rest, based on little evidence, has limited usefulness and unknown risks.

Rest makes our tired bodies feel better after doing many daily activities. Margareta (2015) states that The essence of rest is being in harmony in motivation, feeling, and action. If this need is not met then our body's fitness is reduced and it will be difficult to carry out our daily activities, therefore rest is a basic need that must be met. In the novel, Louisa, who also serves as a breadwinner for her family, needs enough rest to fulfill her physiological needs.

“I was lying sideways on my bed with my legs stretched up the wall, like I did when I was a teenager. I had been up here since supper, which was unusual for me. Since Thomas was born, he and Treena had moved into the bigger room, and I was in the box room, which was small enough to make you feel claustrophobic should you sit in it for more than half an hour at a time.” (Moyes, 2012: 43)

In quotation above, Louisa was lying sideways on her bed with her feet stretched against the wall In her small room, as she did when she was a teenager. In this quotation says that lying down is rest. Louisa needs rest by lying down in her box room to make her body feel better after doing many activities such as work. Every human body must feel tired after doing a lot of activities all day. Louisa as the breadwinner in her family needs adequate rest to fulfill her basic body needs, without enough rest, Louisa's body will feel very tired and she will get sick, and with enough rest, Louisa can carry out her daily activities well and be active in earning a living.

After physiological needs are fulfill and satisfied, other basic needs also need to be met, such as safety needs to be able to support human basic needs in carrying out all activities and continuing their life properly.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, physiological needs such as food, water, clothing and rest found in the novel are the most important basic needs in the protagonist's life. Basic needs are very important to be met for human needs. Louisa is the protagonist in the novel who pays attention to all her needs. Louisa is the breadwinner in the family who works for the William's family as a caretaker, in caring for a William who is sick. Every day Louisa fulfills her most basic needs, namely her physiological needs so that she can carry out her activities and continues her life.

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