Teenage Anxiety in Response to Parental Expectations in Dead

Poets Society (1989) and Negeri 5 Menara (2012)

A GRADUATING PAPER

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Gaining

the Bachelor Degree In English Literature



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Atas perhatiannya, kami mengucapkan terima kasih.

Wassalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb

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MOTTO

There is no life without obstacles and no journey without difficulties.

-My mother-

For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease

(QS. Al Insyirah, 94:5)

Carpe Diem, seize the day. Make your lives extraordinary.

-Dead Poets Society-

Ocean waves always ebb and flow, so does the pace of life. So, anything while it can be done, there will be no gulf that can prevent it."

-Rahmad Andriansyah-



DEDICATION

I dedicate the graduating paper to my dear parents, my extended family, and my best lecturers, English Literature of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.



VALIDATION



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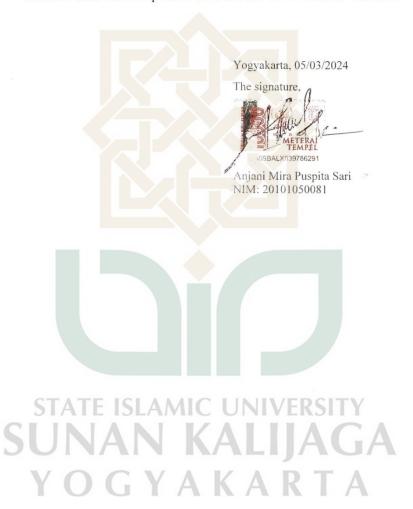
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A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this graduate paper is definitely my own work. I am completely responsible for the content of this graduating paper. Other researcher's opinion or finding included in this research is quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.



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ABSTRACT

This research explores the complex interactions of parent-teen relationships, as depicted in two influential Western and Indonesian movies: Dead Poets Society (1989) and Negeri 5 Menara (2012). Both have different social and cultural norms in terms of different aspects of family values in dealing with and resolving the same issues. It specifically scrutinizes the psychological repercussions of repressive and authoritarian parenting styles on the central characters, Neil and Alif, respectively. The research employs Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory as a lens to dissect the psychological underpinnings that trigger anxiety, a consequence of the suppression inherent in these relationships. The methodology adopted is a descriptive qualitative analysis supplemented by an extensive review of relevant literature, documents, and film documentation. The study reveals that while both characters grapple with anxiety, the manifestations differ. Neil's anxiety is characterized by fear, while Alif's manifests as depression. The research further underscores the critical role of unconscious defense mechanisms in coping with these anxiety conditions. By juxtaposing the experiences of Neil and Alif, this study illuminates the universal impact of authoritarian parenting on adolescent mental health while also highlighting the unique ways in which individuals respond to and cope with such stressors. The results suggest that Alif has a balance between id, ego, and superego which makes him able to control himself and be more oriented in morality by considering the moral consequences of actions and the common good. Meanwhile, Neil has an id that tends to control him, thus making Neil act without taking into account all the consequences of committing suicide. In the aspect of self-defense mechanisms, Alif's sublimation strategy is considered more effective in responding to the anxiety situation he faces. Meanwhile, the repression self-defense strategy that occurs in Neil is considered inefficient. The repression process gives emotional tension that ends with suicide decision making in order to eliminate unwanted things from consciousness.

Keywords: Psychoanalysis Theory; Comparative Analysis; Anxiety; Fear; Depression; Self Defense Mechanism

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi interaksi yang kompleks dari hubungan orang tua dan anak, seperti yang digambarkan dalam dua film Barat dan Indonesia yang berpengaruh: Dead Poets Society (1989) dan Negeri 5 Menara (2012). Keduanya memiliki norma-norma sosial dan budaya yang berbeda dalam hal aspek-aspek yang berbeda dari nilai-nilai keluarga dalam menghadapi dan menyelesaikan masalah yang sama. Penelitian ini secara khusus meneliti dampak psikologis dari gaya pengasuhan orang tua yang represif dan otoriter terhadap karakter utama, Neil dan Alif. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori psikoanalisis Sigmund Freud sebagai lensa untuk membedah dasar-dasar psikologis yang memicu kecemasan, sebuah konsekuensi dari penindasan yang melekat pada hubungan ini. Metodologi yang digunakan adalah analisis kualitatif deskriptif, dilengkapi dengan tinjauan ekstensif terhadap literatur, dokumen, dan dokumentasi film yang relevan. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa meskipun kedua karakter bergulat dengan kecemasan, manifestasinya berbeda. Kecemasan Neil ditandai dengan rasa takut, sementara kecemasan Alif bermanifestasi sebagai depresi. Penelitian ini lebih lanjut menggarisbawahi peran penting mekanisme pertahanan bawah sadar dalam mengatasi kondisi kecemasan ini. Dengan menyandingkan pengalaman Neil dan Alif, penelitian ini menyoroti dampak universal dari pola asuh otoriter terhadap kesehatan mental remaja, sekaligus menyoroti cara-cara unik yang digunakan individu untuk merespons dan mengatasi stresor tersebut. Hasil penelitian mengemukakan bahwasanya Alif memiliki keseimbangan antara id, ego, dan superego yang membuat ia mampu mengendalikan diri dan lebih berorientasi dalam moralitas dengan mempertimbangkan konsekuensi moral atas tindakan-tindakan dan kebaikan bersama. Sementara itu, Neil memiliki id yang cenderung mengontrol dirinya, sehingga membuat Neil bertindak tanpa memperhitungkan segala konsekuensinya dengan bunuh diri. Pada aspek mekanisme pertahanan diri, strategi sublimasi Alif dinilai lebih efektif dalam merespon situasi kecemasan yang dihadapinya. Sementara itu, strategi pertahanan diri represi yang terjadi pada Neil dianggap tidak efisien. Proses represi memberi ketegangan emosional yang berakhir dengan pengambilan keputusan bunuh diri guna untuk menghilangkan halhal yang tidak diinginkan dari kesadaran.

Kata kunci : Teori Psikoanalisis; Analisis Komparatif; Kecemasan; Ketakutan; Depresi; Mekanisme Pertahanan Diri

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Psychology can be defined as the science of investigating the positive aspects of mental processes and behaviors such as abnormal and subnormal behavior. Then, One form of abnormal behavior in psychology is excessive anxiety (Pear, 1926, p. 86). Abnormal anxiety can be characterized based on its clinical features. For example, anxiety frequently coexists with depression or is triggered by feared things or events; otherwise, anxiety manifests as emotions of fear, loss of control, going insane, or fainting (House & Stark, 2002, p. 207).

On the other hand, conscious or unconscious self-defense mechanisms will come into play when feelings of anxiety arise. Self defense mechanisms include behaviors used to manage stressful situations (Latack & Havlovic, 1992, p. 481). When it comes to anxiety, these days it is a common thing for teenagers to experience. The pressure can come from high expectations of parents, school environment, or friendship issues. From this description, the same case is depicted through the story of a teenager in both films entitled *Dead Poets Society* and *Negeri 5 Menara*.

The familiar film known as *Dead Poets Society* by Peter Weir comes from the United States and tells the story of a teenage character named Neil who ends up committing suicide after experiencing the events of a life journey shrouded in fear,

disappointment, and distress caused by selfishness and repressive actions such as curbing from his parents, Mr. Perry. Meanwhile, it is different with Alif who has a happy ending because he succeeded in becoming a famous reporter in the Indonesian film *Negeri 5 Menara* released by Ahmad Fuadi, where Alif's character progresses after going through the ups and downs of life's journey in achieving his goals. Each of the two characters has a different cultural background but has significant similarities in problems stemming from Neil's desire *Dead Poets Society* to become an actor. At the same time, his father Mr. Perry, forces and regulates his future as a doctor. Meanwhile, Alif *Negeri 5 Menara* wants to be like BJ Habibie, but his mother wants Alif to be like Buya Hamka, who refers to a religious figure. It cannot be denied that psychological dynamics coming from authoritarian parental figures, such as not giving freedom to their children, may be the cause of the two characters' anxiety. However, both characters seem to have different self-defense mechanisms in responding to this anxiety.

Anxiety is often thought of as an unpleasant tone of expectation. A relatively substantial quantity of adrenaline is released into the circulation, which activates the "fight or flight" mechanism, which is how it manifests physiologically. Pulse quickens, respirations grow shallower and faster, and the hue of the skin typically shifts to a paler shade with occasional flushing (Neylan, 1962, p. 110).

Because it limits an individual's capacity for adaptive behavior, anxiety is occasionally described as crippling or debilitating. When facing a threat, whether real or imagined, a person may exhibit "obvious" anxiety by shaking, perspiring, or going pale. When anxiety appears to be aimed towards a single item, it is sometimes

referred to as fear (Sidman, 1964, p. 478). In reality, Internal tensions, which render a person's inner self more vulnerable, make it challenging to control even moderately elevated levels of anxiety.

The person feels threatened, but it is as though by a ghost; he does not know where the enemy is or how to fight it or flee from it. The fear of a past threat, unpreparedly confronted and subsequently repressed by the individual, intensifies the fear of the current threat. More internal conflict is now the anxiety caused by the problem that was suppressed (Ritter, 1990, p. 53). In this case, it can be seen that anxiety is one of the internal conflicts that can arise as a result of getting that suppresses the self, which is characterized by uncomfortable feelings to changes in body conditions such as pallor and trembling. On the other hand, anxiety conditions have various types, such as in the form of depression, fear, and so on.

Theories of "psychological defense" suggest that people are driven to defend themselves from a variety of anxiety, such as the consciousness of mortality, uncertainty, and other situations that are intrinsically threatening to cause anxiety. Developing meaningful worldviews and retaining self-worth, accomplishment, and agency are some examples of protective mechanisms (Hart, 2014, p. 19). In this position, it can be seen that Self-defense mechanisms become unconscious responses that attempt to protect themselves from feelings of anxiety or threatening things.

In essence, the impact of mental disorders that occur in teenagers who are considered to be still in an unstable period will result in unstable behavior ranging from drug use to encouraging self-harm or suicide. From the situation experienced by Neil in *Dead Poets Society* and Alif in *Negeri 5 Menara*, It can be seen that the great emphasis comes from the unfulfilled id and the instability between ego and super ego that creates anxiety conditions, as well as how different self-defense mechanisms work in response to anxiety experienced by Neil in *Dead Poets Society* and Alif in *Negeri 5 Menara* characters.

In this research, the researcher examines the psychological aspects of Neil in *Dead Poets Society* and Alif in *Negeri 5 Menara* by using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory. The researcher compares the anxiety responses of the characters Neil and Alif throughout their lives, as well as investigates the strategy of self-defense mechanisms caused by anxiety.

1.2 Research Question

From this issue, some significant questions can be drawn regarding:

- 1. What type of anxiety do the two characters, Neil (*Dead Poets Society*) and Alif (*Negeri 5 Menara*), experience towards repressive parental wishes?
- 2. How do self-defense mechanisms work between the characters of Neil (*Dead Poets Society*) and Alif (*Negeri 5 Menara*) in facing the challenges of social pressure and parental expectations?

1.3 Objective and Significance of the Study

Based on the research question above, the aim of the study is to describe and Analyze Neil's *Dead Poets Society* and Alif's *Negeri 5 Menara* anxieties and defense mechanisms. The significance of this study is to enhance readers'

understanding of psychological issues faced by characters in responding to anxiety through self-defense mechanisms. It aims to determine the impact of parental repression on the psychological anxiety of two characters, Neil from *Dead Poets Society* and Alif from *Negeri 5 Menara*, by comparing the types of parental pressure influencing adolescent anxiety onset.

1.4 Literature Review

Jansen, Manus, and Rafika Djikoan's thesis journal, which proposes research entitled "Principles of Politeness in the film Dead Poets Society using the theory of Pragmatic Analysis" which focuses on maxims related to politeness principles. This study aims to identify, classify, and analyze the principles of politeness and their functions. The findings show that six maxims of politeness and their functions are used by the characters in their dialogues: tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy (Djikoan et al., 2019).

Ajeng Eka Noviyanty's journal entitled "The Representation of Literacy as Salvation in Peter Weir's Dead Poets Society" uses Street's New Literacy Theory, which suggests the research results that Literacy can be a savior for Neil Perry (Noviyanty, 2021). Research with the same object is also found in Wira Fitria Atnur's journal entitled "Psychological Analysis of the Main Character of the Novel Negeri 5 Menara Karya A. Fuadi" which suggests the discovery of data that the main character shows more ego aspects than are studied using Sigmund Freud's id, ego, and super ego theory (Atnur, 2019).

A thesis by Muhammad Yanuar Arifin entitled "The Character of Neil Perry in the Novel Dead Poets Society as Viewed from Abraham H. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory" suggests the finding that Neil's character actually skips three needs below the need for self-actualization which is at the top of the pyramid. First, the need is the need for security, second is the need for belonging and the last is the need for self-esteem (Arifin, 2008). Meanwhile, there is Kaja's article entitled "Two Cinematic Portrayals of Teachers: John Keating in Dead Poets Society and Terence Fletcher in Whiplash" by using this study aims to compare two figures of teachers, namely Mr. Keating in the film Dead Poets Society and Fletcher in Whiplash, which are analyzed according to the variables of teaching methods, influential beliefs in their work, and their impact on students (Zabłocka, 2016).

There are several differences between previous research and this research. This research is a comparative study of the psychological responses of each main character in the category of anxiety in two literary films, *Dead Poets Society* and *Negeri 5 Menara*, which have not been studied before. The object used by the researcher is a movie object which is completed by data in the form of scenes, dialogues, images, and so on. Meanwhile, most previous researchers used the object in the form of a novel, one of which was research conducted by Wira Fitria Atnur's article in 2019 with the title "*Psychological Analysis of the Main Character of the Novel Negeri 5 Menara Karya Ahmad Fuadi*". Previous studies used pragmatic, social psychology, critical discourse analysis, and representation as their research theories. Previous studies highlighted illocutionary behaviour, code switch and code mix, speech acts, and teaching style. In the meantime, this research uses

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which focuses on comparing the main characters' responses to social pressure and parental expectations and their struggle to overcome them through self-defense mechanisms.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

In this study, the researcher uses Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic theory as the primary theory and uses film theory to evaluate the problem.

1.5.1 Theory of Psychoanalysis

The theory used is Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis Theory, which focuses on the structure of id, ego, and super ego, where humans are divided into conscious and unconscious in fulfilling mental images and forms of self-defense mechanisms that play a role in anxiety responses. Freud asserts that the super ego is aggressive, sadistic, and cruel, but he never goes into detail about how it is cruel. He claims that the super ego watches the ego, commands it, evaluates it, and threatens it with punishment. At one point, he claims that the super ego "torments the sinful ego with the same feeling of anxiety and is on the lookout for opportunities to have it punished by the external world" (Velleman, 1999, p. 534).

Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis serves as a significant foundation for studying human psychology, particularly in the context of fictional characters. We can explore characters' internal conflicts, anxieties, and defense mechanisms using Freud's theory, which emphasizes the human psyche's tripartite structure, the id, ego, and super ego (Nunberg, 1942, p.

25). According to Freud, The work of psychoanalysis may be that the revealed unconscious impulses can now arrive at those useful applications which, in the case of undisturbed development, they would have found earlier. The destruction of the infantile wishes is not at all the ideal aim of development. The neurotic has lost, by his repressions, many sources of mental energy whose contingents would have been very valuable for his character building and his life activities (Freud, 1910, p. 217).

1.5.2 Anxiety and Defense Mechanism

According to Horwitz, the dominant ideas focused on how a range of psychosocial stressors, particularly those relating to family and job, led to "stress," "nerves," and "tension," which were all symptoms of anxiety. In fact, anxiety's pervasiveness made it a metaphor for both psychiatry and American culture in the decades following World War II (Horwitz, 2010, p. 113).

Fear is a reaction to interactions, both successful ones and the agony of unsuccessful ones. Fear is a product of power and resistance relationships. The link between a psychological state or experience and "being in the world" or functioning as social beings seems to be the emotion. Because of this, historians neglect the idea of the frightened at their risk (Bourke, 2003, p. 129).

A bad day or "feeling blue" is not indicative of depression. typical features of depression include excessive anxiety and worry, emotional

instability, and frustration. We arrive at the same conclusion, whether the reasons are environmental or genetic: The human body, mind, and soul are all significantly impacted by depression. There are seven signs that clinical depression is present (Lukasik, 2009, p. 11). For a clinical diagnosis, just four of these symptoms must be present for at least two weeks:

- Gaining or losing weight
- Having difficulty sleeping, either too much or not enough
- Slowness, heaviness, or agitation in your bodily motions
- Tiredness or a lack of energy negative self-worth or excessive guilt
- Reduced capacity for thought, concentration, or decisionmaking
- Frequently suicidal thoughts, suicidal ideation, or suicidal ideas or attempts.

Defense mechanisms are the unconscious psychological processes that allow us to block off painful emotions and reality during stressful situations. Defense mechanisms exist on a spectrum that ranges from healthy, adaptive responses to stress to low, moderate, and high degrees of distortion that lead to psychosis and necessitate inpatient treatment for mental illness. All of us may preserve our physical and mental health by facing the truth and being in touch with our emotions (Zook, 1998, p. 16 B).

According to Freud, the psychological process elicited by mental illness is known as "defensive behavior," and it consists of unconscious defense mechanisms as well as mostly conscious "coping behavior." This phrase means "an attempt to master the situation" (Heim et al., 1978, p. 2).

Defense mechanisms, seen from a psychoanalytical viewpoint, act as a connection between a person's needs, wants, and emotions, on the one hand, and both internalized relationships between objects and external reality, on the other (Northoff et al., 2007a, p. 142). There are several types of defense mechanisms; denial, repression, displacement, isolation, reaction formation, projection, rationalization, sublimation, and regression.

- Denial is a strategy for coping with emotional pressures that involve ignoring the obvious implications or effects of an idea, behaviour, or circumstance.
- Rationalization is the process of creating a logical or socially acceptable
 justification for an already-taken unconscious emotional action in order
 to cope with emotional pressures.
- 3. Repression is shifting ideas that the ego finds objectionable into the unconscious, where they are more difficult to access.
- 4. Displacement is channelling emotion away from a "dangerous" thing and toward a "safe" object in order to deal with emotional pressures.
- 5. Isolation is the process of separating the emotional components of challenging thinking from it in order to deal with emotional pressures.

People with obsessive-compulsive tendencies frequently abuse the technique of solitude.

- 6. Reaction formation is the process of transforming a painful sensation into its opposite to deal with emotional pressures.
- 7. Projection is the opposite of introjection, putting one's feelings or desires into the context of an outside thing or person.
- 8. Sublimation allows sexual strivings to be met in a desexualized way by changing the objective or object of an impulse without suppressing it.

 This assumes that the inner desires are not suppressed to the point that they result in pathological symptoms.
- 9. Regression is the process of coping with annoyance by going back to a time in the past when fulfilment was experienced. Fixation determines the duration. Because a child's development is prone to fixation when an impulse is either too little or too much satisfied. (Peters, 1956, p. 7)

1.5.3 Film Theory

In addition to the psychoanalysis theory, the researcher employs film theory as a supporting theory for examining the film scene. The researcher collects data through the use of mise en scene and cinematography techniques.

A systematic mise-en-scene analysis of any given shot includes the following fifteen elements such as: dominant, lighting key, shot and camera proxemics, angle, colour values, lens/filter/stock, subsidiary contrasts,

density, composition, form, framing, depth, character placement, staging positions, and character proxemics (Welsch, 1997, p. 103).

In terms of cinematic styles, The shot scale is divided into five categories:

- 1. Extreme close-up shot: It only reveals a tiny portion of the subject, such as an eye or the subject's lips.
- 2. Close-up image focuses on a very tiny portion of a subject, such as a person's face or hand;
- 3. Medium shot shows only a portion of the subject, such as a figure's knees or waist;
- 4. Full shot: It shows the entire object;
- 5. Long shot: The picture is taken at a great distance, and the subject is hardly visible in the picture (Huang et al., 2020).

1.6 Research Method

In this section, the researcher will describe the type of research, data sources, data collection technique, and data analysis technique.

1.6.1 Type of Research

In conducting a deeper analysis, researchers use qualitative descriptive research methods to analyze problems, assisted by data from films, books, websites, journals, news, and other related documents. The methodological strategy for gathering information was a qualitative descriptive approach, with data collection and data analysis being the most appropriate in this

situation. (Seixas et al., 2017, pp. 778). The use of qualitative descriptive methods in this research is because the researcher wants to understand the context of phenomena that occur deeper with a comprehensive picture, and this method also provides flexibility in the data collection process.

1.6.2 Data Sources

Dead Poets Society and Negeri 5 Menara film are the primary sources of data in this study. Film elements such as scenes, events, stories, and dialogue. Secondary sources include information from some articles, books, websites, and journals that are relevant to the topic.

1.6.3 Data Collection Technique

In this research, researchers collected data through a documentation process by creating a database based on several records in the form of events, time, scenes, dialogue, symbols, practices, and discourse in both films, *Dead Poets Society* and *Negeri 5 Menara*. Observation is done directly by watching the movie repeatedly and collecting data according to variables from psychoanalytic theory in the form of symptoms of anxiety, parenting style, and power/knowledge. In the data collection process, the researcher also took some relevant references to be used in the research.

1.6.4 Data Analysis Technique

After going through the data collection process, the researcher continued to analyze the data using descriptive methods to explain the overall meaning of the research data. There are several sequences in the research process.

First, we started by observing the two films. Through film theory, researchers put forward mise en scene and cinematography data. The second step is to analyze the data by the research problem, which focuses on the main character in each film based on psychoanalytic theory in the form of anxiety condition and the role of self-defense mechanism, as well as internal and external influences on adolescent anxiety.

1.7 Paper Organization

There are four chapters in this research analysis. The first chapter is the introduction, which covers general research information such as the background of the study, the research question, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the literature review, the theoretical approach, the method of research, and the paper organization. The second chapter consists of the intrinsic elements of Neil in *Dead Poets Society* and Alif in *Negeri 5 Menara* film. The third chapter discusses the research, and the last chapter is the conclusion of the research

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CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The conclusions of the analysis are presented in this chapter. The answers to the study questions that the researcher presented in the first chapter are referred to in these conclusions. Additionally, the researcher offers some suggestions to future researchers who use the *Dead Poets Society* and *Negeri 5 Menara* as their primary source of data.

4.1. Conclusion

The researchers have found that both characters experience the same psychological condition in the form of anxiety with different self-defense mechanisms. In the case of the film *Dead Poets Society*, Neil experiences a series of anxiety dynamics in the form of fear, stress, and the application of the rationalization shield, and it ends in a repression response, namely death by suicide. while in the film *Negeri 5 Menara*, Alif experiences a form of minor depression that can be overcome by the application of sublimation so that it ends happily. Broadly speaking, both characters cannot be separated from the influence of internal and external environments such as parents, friendships, teachers, and so on.

Viewed through cultural background, Neil in *Dead Poets Society* enters the Welton Academy environment, known as a stressful place that contains old (orthodox) thoughts describing formal education and strict rules with four pillars in the form of honor, discipline, achievement, and tradition, which have indirectly become the cause of psychological pressure and a prison for Neil. Apart from the

wrong upbringing and Mr. Perry's dictatorial actions as a parent, the trigger for Neil's suicide was also seen from the imbalance of the *Dead Poets Society* group, where one of Neil's friends named Steven Meeks, betrayed the hidden group agreement.

Meanwhile, the Pesantren Madani in the movie *Negeri 5 Menara*, has religious norms and values, forms of discipline, and the unrestrictive life of the Pesantren, togetherness, and simplicity as a path that makes it easier to achieve dreams. Alif managed to change the repressive nature of his parents even by urging and being selfish. However, the improvement of the relationship between Alif and his parents was able to make Alif consciously change his decisions and life path. Environmental supportives such as Baso, Dulmajid, Radja, Said, and Atang can become a support system and show many ways to achieve dreams.

4.2. Suggestion

After completing research on the films *Dead Poets Society* and *Negeri 5 Menara*, the researcher suggests to future researchers that this study should be developed with issues related to anxiety, such as using new variables that link psychoanalytic theory such as sexual desires and parenting style variables that focus on the character of parents in each object in a comparative context. This research only focuses on anxiety and self-defense mechanisms in both objects. The researcher realizes that this research is far from perfect, if in the future there are researchers who will provide additions and criticisms, the researcher will gladly accept it.

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