

Socio - Cultural Impact and Behavioural Change of Children In Shane Dunphy's Novel *The Boy in The Cup Board*

AGALYA C. R

*M.Phil Scholar, PG and Research, Department of English
Nehru Arts and Science College (Autonomous), Coimbatore*

Dr. K. RAJKUMAR

*Assistant Professor, PG and Research, Department of English
Nehru Arts and Science College (Autonomous), Coimbatore*

Abstract

Shane Dunphy is a Child protector, journalist, professor, and social worker who worked for child development in Ireland. The identity of Ireland is built with miscellaneous histories, cultures, languages and people. Though English was the predominant identity of Irish literature, Gaelic literature builds its parts. The Boy in the Cupboard manifests the helpless action of the inherent agony of children in the creche. This story explicit communication about the past and present condition of Litovoi and Edgar to Shane Dunphy. This paper attempts the reason of silence and resilience of victim children, under the caretaker centers, and made an analysis on behavioural activity of creche child Craig and Edgar among their peer group, caretakers, and Shane Dunphy. The theory of behaviorism was explained in detail perspective connection of environment, and behaviour. The impact of Socio-culture, language, and failure in child-rearing and neglect leads to the occupation of passive and lonely nature in them. The solution is to bring back the children by understanding and fulfilling their need in a constant support.

Keywords: children, society, behaviour, wilderness, parenting

Introduction

Children's Literature is the most concerning literary genre in the 21st century. Every country has distinctive style on children's literature based on their Geography, Culture, Politics, Economic condition in the phase of Globalization. The texts were segregated based on historical and contemporary context. The article concentrated on Irish Children's Literature and its history. The emergency of Irish Children's literature is beginning at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Before that the production was in the hand of The United Kingdom. The writers like Lady Augusta Gregory, Maria Edgeworth, Oscar Wilde are notable contributors to the country, struggled in political turmoil and cultural neglect. The Mythological Cycle, The Ulster Cycle, the Fenian Cycle, and the Historical Cycle are the four mythological cycles in Irish children's literature. The oldest surviving manuscripts were *The Book of the Dun Cow* in 1100, *The Cattle Raid of Cooley* is a collection of histories and religious works, and Michael O' Clery

became the chief author of the history *Annals of the Four Masters* (1636). The first anthologized Irish Children's story in the 9th-century poem *White Pangur*, a rhyming tale of *Monk's cat*, and *The History of Goody Two Shoe* (1756) by Oliver Goldsmith. The beginning stage of the Irish novels primarily focused on adults than children. Initially, children's text *The Gulliver's Travels* (1726) by Jonathan Swift was a primary source for children's literature, but later observance revealed the content dealt with adults. The next significant writer is Maria Edgeworth, her *Castle Rackrent* (1800) is considered as the first historical representation and followed by her moral tales for society are *The Parent's Assistant*, *Stories for Children* (1796), and *Early Lessons* (1801) are best known for Children's work. During the Golden Age of English Literature, Ireland unable to compete with them, imported children's works from England. Oscar Wilde introduced creative fairy tales influenced by Irish religious and traditional customs during

the nineteenth century, the best stories among them are *The Selfish Giant*, *The Nightingale*, and *The Rose*.

About the Author

Shane Dunphy was born on 18 January 1973 in Wexford, Ireland. He is a familiar, famous child protection expert, author, professor, Journalist, musician, broadcaster and tirelessly worked for the Irish Independence. He completes his Master's degree in Sociology at National University of Ireland, Research in Applied Social Psychology, and performed as a child and social care worker for fifteen years, and became The Head of the Social Care Department at Waterford College of Further Education. He is mostly acclaimed for his series of books with dealt details about the cases in which he was involved and shared his experience, investigation, and opinion on child care in the Sun newspaper in a Sunday Tribune and Sunday World columns. From 2009 to 2010 he worked as a child protection radio voice in South East Radio and made many documentaries for RTE television and Radio such as *My Mother's Dying Secret*, *Yola: Lost for Words* and his *Tusk Hunting* for Ireland is nominated for a New York Radio Award. His major children stories about child trafficking, child prostitution, elder abuse, and also the rights of people with disabilities.

Dunphy has written both fiction and non-fiction books in autobiographical detail with root discussion of casework, and its complexities, challenges, and day-to-day actions too. His first book was *I Hate Mustard* (1984) published when he was eleven, it became the first story in the collection *Late Late Toy Show* on the Christmas of 1984 by Gay Byrne. His other writings on children are *The Wednesday's Child Series* (2006), *Will Mummy Be Coming Back for Me* (2009), *Little Boy Lost* (2010), *The Girl from Yesterday* (2014). Some of his other works are *Bleak Alley* (2019), *Running from the Shadow* (2019), *After She Vanished* (2017), *When She Was Gone* (2018), *If She Returned* (2019).

Behaviourism Theory

According to John Watson (1878-1958), behaviourism focuses on the behaviour learned through events or conditioned or situation within the environment that is observed in the stimulus-response (S-R) factors. Behaviour of any person is formed and moulded by what

they learn in their surroundings, and psychology is regarded as a science. It is mainly considered on the behaviour that is observed in the environment rather than internal thinking and emotion, and the result of human behaviour depends on stimulus-response factors.

Craig is a three-year-old boy in the Pre-School creche who isolates himself from his peers, even though others want to play with him. He does not connect with the caretakers and has a habit of hiding chocolate chips in various places, some in the U-bend of toilets, garden, and clock room. Though it was given by the creche to students as a snack, he considered it as food so, he licks, eats some and keeps remaining safer. It seems quite strange from others' perspectives. This behaviour is unusual among his age children, but it is caused by the environmental impact on himself. The effect of poor economic conditions, fearful situation of non-natives, and the experience of starvation travel around the European countries. This tendency alters him to save the meal for next time. So, he starts stockpiling the food.

Social Impact on Children Identity

In a short period, frequent mobility to various parts of the European countries makes inadequate proficiency in his communication. Due to a lack of practice and experience, he could not interlace with others. He tries to do but it won't agile this failure creates anger, and the expression of anger is violent behaviour. Despite his actions, peers start to avoid him; this neglect moves him to isolation. Although he is in isolation, he always made keen observance of others. The next problem of the child is a lack of understanding of the English language, he knows only his mother tongue, and the primary language of the family communication is the Romanian language. He is not proficient English before, and none could teach it, So, it produces a sense of insecurity and fear in the second language. To express his insecurity and fear he used to cry louder to avoid anyone getting close to him. The caretakers also communicate in English so, he avoids default them. All of them addressed him by his documented name given by her mother Elvira. Unknowing, everyone called him by his temporary and fake name Craig. His name was registered firmly as Litovoi, and it became his identity. The pressure of sudden identical

changes let him to disappointment and build a sense of alienation towards himself and other. An adult can easily accept the changes according to the prevailing circumstances, but in children's perspective it is a kind of detachment. So, when being called the alienated name, he stops responding to others. These made him act violently by hitting and biting his companion.

There are no such circumstances to convey or communicate anything to anyone in the Romanian language. When Dunphy starts to converse in the Romanian language, he opens to share his thoughts and responding to others. At that time, he tries to confound that he is Litovoi, not Craig. The detachment of Litovoi is not only the language barrier also the issues on his identity.

One day Irma placed paint and colour, for Litovoi but, he splits it when Dunphy approached Litovoi by colour and chart even likes to play with crayons but, he entrenches with his remoteness. Dunphy starts by drawing blue and black matchstick pictures that does not create attention. Later, a boy with chocolate-chip cookies picture makes a notion on him because it replicates him. The reason is that he had forgotten how to draw and paint. By observing pictures, he starts to draw on his own that contains five houses and flats that he spends in the last twelve months. As usual when he got cookies from Dunphy, he moved it to his packet after a bit but, shows of another one from his bag, Litovoi swallowed the remaining very fast. Their best way of communicate is by using pidgin, a mixture of both languages, was not familiar to each other. Litovoi seems to be safer while made communication in English with Romanian touch. At last, Litovoi starts to make a friendly move to others.

Absence of Motherhood in Children Life

Edgar is a single-parent-child raised by his mother Collette, who is inapt to raise a kid well. She always gives importance to her desire by making her boyfriend a companion and left Edgar alone. She abuses Edgar from his young days, pushed him into many behavioural and attitude problems and inattention on his Autism Spectrum disorder. From the age of six, he becomes a problem maker. The first incident when Edgar was left alone by Collette for a week in a locked house with bags of food. After it ran out, he searched for it on the next floor to Mrs.

Smith house so, he travels through drain pipelines. He leisurely had all the food and mess up the house with dirt and faeces and nicely slept in the cupboard. Mrs. Smith tries to teach a lesson but, Edgar suddenly cuffs her on the chest forcibly which takes her to hospitalization for a week. After that, Collette put him in a Residential childcare unit in the city, he was skinny, frightened for little things when he enters the residential childcare, almost non-verbal, and never allowed to touch anyone initially. If anybody at any cause tries to make a close move, he hides and sleeps underneath the bed. These actions indicate the physical abuse impression on him. Meanwhile the child is taken to a new place which he had never experienced before. The presence of lots of kids and his experiences, makes him frightened and feel isolated. Edgar has never forthcoming about his home life to anyone.

'Well, I'll tell you, then. Getting put in a new house with a load of kids who looked at me I like was an alien, was frightening. Having social workers ask me questions I couldn't understand. Being told I could never go home. Having a queer like Hugh inform me that I was a poor, Unfortunate, abused child.' (195)

The Abnormal Behaviours of Children

Edgar was Eleven, too fond of food but, he never trained for proper personal toilet care at a young age, so he constantly wet and soiled his dresses. This action shows him as a fun figure for others that leads him to be silent, strange, and produce the thought of an inability person among others. Everybody in the residence treats him as a bad child and promotes him all-time in such a way, so, became an unhappy person. The word- bad forges the child into a sufferer and creates a negative impact on him, no one in the right place to guide him to get away from his problem, so he started to hatred all residents. He turns to be a rough kid in the residence and drastically changes his attitude to a negative note that he never cares about anybody and anything. Then he becomes a good planner and well executor which makes others suffer. And he starts to disrupt the lives of seven other children and stands as a deep antagonist to all staff members. But the shocking thing, he never became worse or better in his behavioural condition when his mother left him alone for a year. The behaviour of the child became more progressive and

challenging too. The suspension is setting fire to the school, and he proclaims that it was his turn to be done. So, from this, he replicates the action which already had been done by others. He places it for his desire on fire and to become happier on the scary faces of his residence.

By introducing Dunphy to Edgar, shaking hands formally, Edgar stroked the palm with his index finger. Here, he started to play with another worker like Melanicand be well aware of how to act and react to him in the presence and absence of others. He even does not give a smile for photos and act as a rule's violator. While on first meeting, they played a game for asking questions on each other in an equal condition in meeting the speech and vocal of Edgar are clear and enunciated perfectly. The boy teased Dunphy by asking the question, Is he gay? This arises of he noticed that Hugh is a queer and responds to what the other man in the school itself said to Dunphy. After the conversation, he enquires about his next visit of Dunphy in a concerned manner but, this happens after the execution of his plan, he had let the air out of the car, because he knows the plus and action of talkers and social workers, so fearlessly executed his violent plan on him. This because it would be happy by making a temper on Dunphy and out from his project, and scratches his name on the bike of rough bikers, voluntarily put Dunphy into trouble in the next meeting. Dunphy is conscious and safeguards his belongings after the car incident while he approaches Edgar for his upcoming sessions. He reveals the original condition when he interacts more with Dunphy and comes out on the harassment and harshness by his mother and her boyfriends. Edgar expresses it by playing a snake and pairs game on Dunphy's phone with the condition of not damaging it. He never damaged it, at last, changed all language settings. After that, they moved to a restaurant, where he exposes more about his Physical abuse from his mom slowly, clearly, and a little louder without considering any public or social concern. This incident proved that the boy is still ill with ASD.

Books are the Good Medicine

The best part of Edgar is his negative response to books. Edgar's shelves are fully filled with many books, and he loves to go to the library. Edgar, much interested in historical facts, and addresses them in a good manner. By

introducing the historical figure Oliver Plunkett to him, he created an imaginary friend and started to share his feeling and emotion with Oliver's poster particularly a good notion on his new born sister. This because the sculptures were kept in a separate glass, he matched with him how he alone in the residential caretaker flat. The approach of Edgar to his sister is a too polite, calm, and friendly notion by in the carrying hand. The arrival of new relation makes changes in his perspective and attitudes. At last, he is changes where been by his friend and sister.

Conclusion

Education is not the only point of Children's growth, also necessary to take care of their behaviour and attitudes. That cannot attain through only by school education. It is a vital responsibility for the parents should care for their childhood. Parents are the priorities in the role of child development and it moulded by teachers, society, and mass media. On the other hand, it is everyone's responsibility to develop the future of children. But, the primary reason for the child suffering in this case is the action of the parents. Parents continuously put their children in suffering and pain by their impotent child-rearing. So, children faced many crises mentally and physically from their family and society directly and indirectly. The sustained and prolonged pain and agony damage them completely. The damaged mind can do anything. This kind of attitude paves the way for an imbalanced social structure in society and in the family system. The unbalanced next-generation produce a fickle and sick people like a psycho, criminals, psychologically affected person, etc... For avoiding those conditions there must be a good space between the relationship of parent and child and must practice a strong punishable action against those who were unprincipled to children. The law and amendments should be too strong in the course of taking action against crime on children. For the concern of a better future for children, we should be in good notion to create a good social communal living atmosphere.

References

1. Dunphy, Shane. *The Boy in the Cupboard*. London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2008. Print.
2. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/children/academic-and-educational-journals/irish-childrens-literatu>

3. <https://www.firstdiscoverers.co.uk/child-development-theories-john-watson/>
4. Hobson, R. P. *Autism and the Development of Mind*, Hove, Lawrence Erlbaum, 1993.
5. Vygotsky, L. S. *Thought and Language*. Cambridge: MA, MIT Press. 1962. Print.
6. https://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/66092_Wong_Chapter_2.pdf