



# *There is No Such Thing as A Free Lunch*

## Capitalist Deception in N.H DINI's Short Story *Warung Bu Sally*

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**Abstract.** N.H Dini's *Warung Bu Sally* was a short story that depicted how capitalist taking advantages from lower-class community in order to enlarge their business. This study also discussed about how the strategy of Capitalist affected the life of lower-class people. The purpose of the study was to show the Capitalist's strategies on taking advantages of uneducated suburban community to get more profit. This study also aims to describe the effects of the Capitalist's business to lower-class community. This study is qualitative research. The analysis was done through interpretation of text and context. The data such as setting, dialogue, and others was taken from the short story entitled *Warung Bu Sally*. These data then were analysed by using the approach of Sociology of Literature. Based on the analysis, it was found that the Capitalists did some cover trick to deceive the uneducated and lower-class people in order to enlarge their profitable business. As a result, the poor become more suffering in the future because of their unawareness to accept the of Capitalist's offers. In summary, *Warung Bu Sally* contains social critics to the lower-class as well as to the Capitalists.

**Keywords:** capitalist · lower-class community · Warung Bu Sally

## 1 Introduction

Everything in human world cannot be separated from the most essential system — economy. All country in the world is competing to be super-power country such as Unites States. They do various research to find and create the most suitable economic system to achieve this goal. As the result, we are introduced to various types of world's economic system, both conventional and modern ones.

Capitalism is one of these modern economic systems. It is well-known as the most successful system of economy in the world. Its founder country, United States, is well-known as the most super-power country since it become the benchmark of economy in the world. The status of being the superpower country bring the advantages to the United States. For example, its people are having a better life than the people of other countries. It encourages many other countries, including developed countries like Indonesia, to follow the system of capitalism.

As the developed country, Indonesia must be well-adapted to the fast changes of world's economy situation. This causes our government to be aggressively promoting Indonesia as a suitable place for capitalists to invest their precious money. This brings

a massive impact to the economy situation in the country. Through a great number of investments, Indonesian are promised to some tempted advantages. For example, we are promised to get a better chance for getting a proper job and better salary.

However, always there is a hidden agenda behind these sweet promises of opportunities. Investors who are risking their great amount of money, will never want to be loss. Their goal is always about more profit – more money. In others words, capitalists are money-oriented. This encourages them to do anything only to make them richer. As the owners of great amount of money and the powerful ones, they do not care if they have to risk other people's needs and life to reach their goals. This causes the lower-class people become the susceptible victims in the capitalist system.

Furthermore, this issue is not only found in the reality. It is also can be found in literary works such as short story. One of these short stories is entitled *Warung Bu Sally* written by N.H. Dini – a famous Indonesian woman writer. N.H. Dini was born in 1936 and died in 2018 because of a traffic accident. During her career as a writer, she had been famous for her works. She wrote many notable short stories and novels. She often depicted the life of Indonesian women as well as the social life in Indonesia. One of her notable works is a collection of short stories entitled *Dua Dunia*.

*Dua Dunia* is an anthology than contains ten short stories. One of the stories is entitled *Warung Bu Sally*. *Warung Bu Sally* depicted how capitalism brings a massive effect that can change the life of lower-class community. It showed the Capitalist's subtle strategies in taking advantage from the uneducated and unaware rural people to get more money. Capitalist used their sweet promising words to gain trust from lower-class people. Capitalist intention is to encourage the rural people to accept their offers. They used their money to lure poor people to sell their land which is the only source for their livelihood.

Unfortunately, there is nothing free in this world, every choice comes with the consequences. The poor must be suffering because of their reckless choice. The story was written in the year of 1983; however, the depiction shows in this short story is still similar to the life of our society in this era. Therefore, *Warung Bu Sally* was used as the object of the research due to its relevance to the reality. In other words, it is interesting to be discussed.

Furthermore, the research that focused on capitalist deception in *Warung Bu Sally* has not been found yet. However, the researcher found some related topics that were also analyzed with theory of sociology of literature. First, the research that was done by Baihaqi [1]. He focused on the resistances of capitalism hegemonies found in short story *Pengunyah Sirih*. He found that the powerless did some resistances towards hegemony that spread by the people who have power. Then, the research conducted by Nabor and Danu [2]. They focused on the social classes' portrait found in Armin Bell's anthology entitled *Perjalanan Mencari Ayam*. They argue that there were three types of social classes found in the stories: the upper class, the lower class, and middle class. The last research was conducted by Widyaningsih and Miatin [3]. They used Tere Liye's *Si Anak Badai* as object of the research. They focused on revealing the class struggle and its process depicted in the story. Based on the previous studies, the purpose of this research is to fill the gap as well as to brings the novelty in the related issue.

## 2 Methodology of the Research

In this study, object of research was analysed through interpretation of text and context. First, fictional devices such as setting, character, dialogues, plot, conflict, and others are analysed to show the text's meaning. Furthermore, all of these elements then been analysed using the concept of sociology of literature. Sociology of literature defines as an approach in literature studies that focused on studying the relation between literary work to the aspects of social [4]. In other words, literary work is linked to the external aspects or social elements. In conclusion, works of literature can be seen as a mirror that reflect the life of certain society.

## 3 Findings and Results

In this section, it is found that the rich (capitalists) intentionally took advantage from the poor community. They do it in order to get more money. On another side, the poor (lower-class) must face complex situation as the consequences of their careless choice to deal with capitalist's offers. These analyses are discussed below.

### The Analysis of Short Story *Warung Bu Sally*

Money is one of the most essential things in human life. We must earn some money to fulfill our needs such as food, clothes and to pay our bills and tuition for school. In other words, every single thing in our life needs money. Money becomes the thing we need to get a good life. As a result, the needs of great amount of money encourage people to always earn more in every way. Sadly, this situation often blinds our mind to think wisely. This leads them to rash decisions. They even do not think twice about the decision. Moreover, this wants to get money in instant way has been used by the capitalists. They took advantage this situation to enlarge their business. This is depicted in the quotation below.

*Kerugian yang tidak diramalkan itu membawa mereka menunggak kredit Bimas. Dan untuk kesekian kalinya alasan eksodus ke kota bertambah. Samijo termasuk golongan orang yang tidak sabar, ingin segera hidup menurut zaman bersama kemewahan dan perubahannya. Tanah keluarga biarlah kakaknya yang mengerjakan, dibantu oleh adik-adik yang berjumlah tujuh orang. (74–75)*

The quotation above shows how the capitalists ran their capitalism system in human's life. This shows that there is inseparable link between human needs, money, and happiness. It must be pointed that this relation is constructed. It is constructed based on the value created by the capitalism system.

Modern innovation, for example television, electricity, and electric pump, shows how the capitalists successfully produce such things that causes great effect to our life. By using this modern innovation, people are able to live an easier and instant life. This instant life encourages people to spend a great amount of their money to get these things. Sadly, it can bring a bad consequence when people are not able to differentiate between their wants and needs. As a result, people tend to show off what they have in life. In other words, it shows the changes product's value in people's life, from mere things to

a sign to show our social status. People's ego to get validation from others increases their desire to buy unessential things. This kind of thoughtful-less mind was used by the capitalist. They intentionally do some tricks to cheat the poor such as making an offer of a great amount of money to be exchanged with their precious land. The offer seemed worth it, even a big luck, for the poor to be taken. It offers them a chance for a better life. Sadly, their lack of knowledge about financial management and planning to use money in proper way brings them to a worse situation.

Unlike the poor, as the one who owns greatest amount of money, the capitalist got many benefits. By using their money, capitalist always develop they business to be more success and larger. They take the advantage of the failure of farmer's crop as the ideal time to convince the poor villagers to let go of their only land by selling it to the rich. Capitalist used promising words on convincing the poor to agree to sell their land to cover their loss of crop failure. Sadly, due to insistence of needs and their lack of knowledge, the poor saw the capitalist's offer as a good solution to solve their problems. They think that getting money in instant way was the best solution. They were not able to see that their rash choice can lead to another bigger problem. It is depicted in this quotation below.

*Kini dia menjadi kuli di tanah yang telah dijualnya. Desa Peron merupakan contoh malapetaka yang tidak akan berhenti mengganas menelan jenis manusia yang dinamakan petani. Tanah garapan yang dibagikan dahulu sudah banyak yang diperjualbelikan kepada pengusaha bersama surat-suratnya. Saliyem mendengar suaminya menyebut kata sertifikat. Dia teringat kebodohan bapaknya karena ladang dan tegalan tempat bermainnya dulu sekarang sudah dibatasi dengan pagar-pagar. (76)*

The quotation shows the system of capitalist business and how it effects to the life of poorer. The main purpose of the capitalists was to persuade and to convince the owners of the land to sell their land to them. The rural area was intentionally chosen by capitalist as the target to expand their business. In other words, it was their business strategy. The capitalists took advantage of the uneducated poor people. They know that these poor people did not understand about business and how it works. These poor were unaware about the consequences that might be experienced by them after dealing with the capitalist's offer. These poor people only know that this offer will serve them money from selling their only precious land. This causes problem in the future. The only source of livelihood for the poor was their land. They were the farmer of their own land. It means that selling there is losing their livelihood.

Different to the rich (capitalist), the poor were unilliterate and know nothing about how to manage a great amount of money in a good way. They did not have plans to invest their money in a good way. The poor tended to carelessly spend the money to buy useless things. This pushed them to choose shorter way to earn more money. It causes them to not think twice before making a choice in life. As a result, they sold their land to get more money. It is depicted in this quotation below.

*Ketika mereka pindah, Samijo hanya mengganti pintu. Gemboknya juga baru. Kemudian, sedikit-sedikit, bagian samping berubah menjadi beranda karena*

*papan dindingnya dipotong setengah badan. Akhirnya, Saliyem membuka warung pecel, kolak, dan bubur. Ternyata laris, melayani anak-anak sekolah di belakang pondok mereka. Dengan alasan karena Samijo turut menggali sumur sekolah, keperluan air bagi rumah tangga diteruskan mengambil dari sana. Penjaga tidak bisa berbuat lain daripada membiarkannya. Dan mapanlah keluarga itu dengan syarat-syarat kehidupan rakyat yang cukup sandang dan pangan asal tidak telanjang. Lima anak kelihatan sehat meskipun yang kecil-kecil tampak ingusan.* (74)

Instead of investing their money to do a profitable business, the poor tended to spend their money in careless way. They spend their money for such useless things. As a result, they don't have any guarantee for their future. They poor villagers did not have any plans in spending their money. After getting money, the move to the city hoping for a better life. However, they do not any skill to support their life in the city. This causes them unable to get a proper job to earn money. They were unemployed. In case they got a job, it was only for a low-paid labor. This causes them to suffer more than before. This effect might be avoided if they thought twice before deciding to sell their land to capitalist.

Another similar strategy used by Capitalist to take advantage from lower-class people is represented through the experience of the main character, Bu Sally. Bu Sally was offered by capitalists to put their billboard ads in front of her stall. It is depicted in the quotation below.

*Pegawai di kantor-kantor pemerintah akan minta uang jasa lebih besar lagi. Jadi, pengeluaran yang bukan untuk makan, pakaian Lebaran, dan kesehatan harus dihindari.*

*“Bisa diatur, itu bisa diatur,” kata lelaki itu.*

*“Apanya yang bisa diatur?” hatinya berkata seorang diri.*

*Saliyem tidak mengerti, diam saja. Memang macam-macam bahasa orang kota. Tidak hentinya dia belajar setiap hari!*

*“Saya bikinkan nanti!” (79)*

The quotation shows that the main reason behind the capitalist's offer of giving a free-charge billboard ads for Bu Sally's stall was to increase their own products. The capitalist only care about the strategy to larger their market. It is stated in the lines *“Ini! Gambar odol, namanya Pepsoden. Nanti saya bikinkan papan nama warung. Di sampingnya dipasang gambar seperti ini.” (78)*. They saw Bu Sally's stall as the best area to promote their product by putting the ads. Bu Sally's small shop was located near to a crowded school. It means many people would be walking pass in this area. In another words, it means that there many people would buy things in Bu Sally's stall and their ads would be seen by these people. It can be seen that this is the strategy of capitalists to do a minimum budgeted promotion on selling their toothpaste products. The capitalists never really care about helping Bu Sally's small business.

Unfortunately, in Bu Sally's perspective, the offer of the capitalists seemed to be a good idea. She thought that it was a lucky chance to get the offer to put the ads on her small shop. In addition, the offer was free. It means she did not need to spend her own

money for it. She thought that nameplate would help bring more people to do shopping in her small stall. She did not know that there is hidden intention that the rich were trying to take advantage from her small business. This is depicted in the quotation follow.

*“Saya bayar berapa?” tanya Saliyem khawatir.*

*“Tidak bayar apa-apa.”*

*Agak curiga Saliyem semakin menatap laki-laki itu.*

*“Mengapa saya tidak bayar apa-apa?” (78)*

The lines above show that capitalist did a similar strategy to convince Bu Sally's in order to increase their business's profit. They choose uneducated people to be cheated with their promising offers. Capitalists know that these poor people were easier to be convinced by offering some money and advantage. They convinced the poor (Bu Sally) that their intention was to help her small business. However, the only their intention was to get a low-budget promotion campaign by using Bu Sally's stall. They were targeting the people who passed Bu Sally's small shop to see the toothpaste products. It shows that putting the billboards on Bu Sally's small shop would be an innovative way to promote the products.

Furthermore, the important key of capitalism is modernity. Fascinating innovation serves by modernity indulges people to an instant and easier way of life. This causes us to feel that everything contains modernity are essential in our life. It makes us obsess to make all things sound, feel, and seem as modern as it could be. It is depicted in quotation below.

*“El-nya dua, i di belakang seperti bahasa Inggris. Sally!”*

*“Itu menjadi nama Belanda Inggris?”*

*“Inggris, Yu! Bukan Belanda Inggris. Kalau Belanda, ya, Belanda saja!” (80)*

The name Saliyem was intentionally changed into Sally to make it sounds more modern. This change shows that modernity is very important in capitalism's business. The name Saliyem did not sound modern, too traditional, and uneducated. Unlike, Saliyem, Sally sounds to be more modern and acceptable for business. It is stated in lines *“Ditulis secara modern ya, Yu! Biar lebih hebat.” (80)*. Sally sound like a Western name that was attractive and impressive to be remembered than Saliyem. Sally was also more suitable to be put together with the capitalist's toothpaste product—Pepsodent. This shows that the Western style became the accepted standard in people life.

Based on these arguments, it can be seen that the capitalists intentionally took advantages from lower-class people. They did evil trick to these poor people in order to earn more money and enlarge their profitable. They acted as if they were the savior angel who offer the best solution for the poor's problem. However, they never really cared about the risk that might be faced by the poor. It shows that *Warung Bu Sally* delivers a critic through the story. It criticizes both the capitalist and the lower-class. First, it criticizes the way capitalist deceived poor people only to get more money. Second, it criticizes the lower-class to be more aware about their choice and the risk on their future. These poor people must think twice before making an important decision. They must understand

that every single choice they made would bring impact to their life in the future. In conclusion, through a fictional depiction, *Warung Bu Sally* voices social critics about socio-economic problems that happens in our society.

## 4 Conclusion

It is a certainty that the modern world will always full of fast-paced advancement. As a result, we must be always ready and well-adapted to the changes. We are expected to find the most suitable ways in order to be fitted into the advancement. We will be left far away behind, if we cannot adjust to it. However, there is also one important thing to be remembered that we have to think twice before taking a step. As human being, people often think about themselves only. They put themselves on the top without regarding the other human being. We have to understand the various possible of consequences within the choices offered to us. We have to think about further effect of the choices we took. We need to think carefully before making a certain choice since it can cause a massive change to our future.

In summary, the short story entitled *Warung Bu Sally* by N.H Dini depicts the relevant issue that still happens in our social life. In this story, it reveals that the poor are cheated by capitalist. They instantly agree with the offers serve by the capitalist without carefully thinking about the consequences behind it. This seems similar to the today society that get so easily tempted by the lure of instant way to be rich, regardless the consequences behind it. In summary, through this story, N.H Dini tries to educate the us as the readers that we need to build awareness and to think carefully before doing something.

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