

# The Native American Father's Parenting Style in John Ernst Steinbeck's *The Pearl*

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**Abstract**—This study aims to analyze the parenting style of a Native American father named Kino in John Ernest Steinbeck's *The Pearl*. Through Kino, all the emotions common to humanity such as family satisfaction, the joy and excitement of finding a great treasure, the fear when family life is threatened, the anxiety of being hunted down, and the tragedy of losing a loved one are revealed. This research applied a qualitative descriptive method with a sociological approach to literature to reveal the relationship between the Native American father and the role of fathers. This research data is collected from the actions and words of the characters in the story. The research results indicate the important role of the Native American fathers played by Kino through the role of father thinking and behavior. Five paternal roles involving Kino's actions as a Native American father such as Kino as a provider, protector, decision-maker, educator, and foster mother are vividly reflected in this research.

**Index Terms**—native American father, roles of father, character, *The Pearl*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Literary work is a dependent and therefore actually inseparable element of the literary environment (Perry & Morris, 2005). The relationships between literary work and social life, for example, how the author employs their social background in their literary work, such as a novel, and how they occasionally tell about the phenomena around them. The work of fiction imitates a world that exists before the text, and critics should attempt to recreate that world mostly through formal examination of the text, while knowledge of the historical background and author is frequently helpful (Schwarz, 1988). On the other hand, a collection of literary works that include texts and spoken language are popularly referred to as literature. It demonstrates how literature is a person's expression through words, deeds, and writings. Overall, literature might be considered as a piece of textual art produced by a certain author (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019). As Arafah (2018) stated literature can also be considered art, as it is utilized to transmit meaning and the beauty of language. Additionally, the advancement of literary studies has given rise to numerous multidisciplinary perspectives, such as sociology of literature, anthropology of literature, and literature psychology (Arafah, 2018). Literature can often be considered a reflection or mirror of society (Marliana et al., 2018). As Fadillah et al. (2022) stated that people engage and communicate with one another in a group or community for a set period, which eventually becomes the backdrop of how society lived when a literary work is written. Reading literary work with a specific background of a certain period is very possible to turn out as a satire of a condition at that time (Afiah et al., 2022). Furthermore, it is important to note that literary works are products of people's imaginations in which reality is not true. As a social product of human life reflection, readers should come with an uncertainty of whether what is written is based on facts or not (Mutmainnah et al., 2022). Readers can obtain social and cultural information from them by reading those (Asriyanti et al., 2022). Literary works reflect an author's thoughts, manners, behavior, and attitudes throughout their works. The patterns or style of the work can help readers grasp those (Hasanah et al., 2021). As a result, readers or individuals who are

engaged in the learning process about a literary work will gain knowledge more about it (Arafah et al., 2021).

Furthermore, Sunardi et al. (2018) stated that literature is an asset that could be considered a culturally important text that represents human life. When a literary work's text is examined in its context, such as through examining the cultural discourse, it becomes more meaningful and comprehensive (Arafah et al., 2020). Furthermore, exploring cultural discourse implies researching personal, cultural, societal, and aesthetic values and principles to comprehend human experiences in this life (Sunardi et al., 2018). Literature is also a product of art in society. The existence of literature in a society can be seen as a social product since the social phenomena that occurred are included (Suhadi et al., 2022). On the other hand, literary works can act as a catalyst to raise awareness of the value of preserving the harmony between people and nature or the environment (Siwi, 2022). Similar to cultural, political, and social studies issues, literary works can be viewed as social products (Irmawati et al., 2020). The best literary genres, including short stories, poems, novels, dramas, and songs, are therefore described in literature, which also offers significant information about them (Arafah, 2018).

The information technology era has recently altered people's thinking patterns and behavior patterns (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019). The common reason for these changes is that one event that is currently affecting the world, including Indonesia, is the Coronavirus pandemic or COVID-19. The quick change of circumstances has affected nearly every part of life, and everything appears to have gone online (Arafah et al., 2021). Moreover, Anggrawan et al. (2019) claimed that the online system has gone too far and changed the way people can get information easily through online learning where people can learn many things from the internet. The ease with which people can utilize the internet may have an impact on social elements, specifically how people connect and engage with others on social media (Arafah & Hasyim, 2022). One thing that can also be found online is parenting life. Parenting is a complex activity that includes many specific behaviors that work individually and together to influence a child's outcome (Baumrind, 1991). Parenting is a pristine job and requires high dedication and patience. At first, parents need to analyze the type of parenting before starting to grow a child as well as learners who need to analyze a subject material before studying in a learning process (Arafah et al., 2020). This is evidenced by the role of fathers and mothers, who always support their children from childhood to adulthood. On the other hand, parenting is a process that refers to a series of actions and interactions that parents take to support a child's development (Brooks, 1981).

The process of parenting is not a one-way relationship in which parents influence the child, but more than that, parenting is a process of interaction between parents and children that is influenced by the culture and social institutions in which the child is raised. The novel has the opportunity to represent the social conditions of a particular society through the observation of an author, in this case, John Steinbeck. John Steinbeck is a well-known American author whose work is largely inspired by real events, such as *The Pearl*. *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck is a novel that represents the state of society at the time this novel was created. *The Pearl* novel tells the life problem of a poor Indian pearl seeker named Kino (the main character in the novel). Kino knows the concept of living with nature as held by Indian ancestors.

Men as fathers quickly learn about the uniqueness of their newborn children, although they may not be as perceptive as mothers (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). This shows how quickly a father responds to his baby in recognizing and responding to things that are "difficult" or "different" from other babies. This is because fathers tend to pay close attention to their babies when carrying or just simply talking to them when they are in a father-son or father-daughter moment. On the other hand, the role of the father makes him more involved in the family, one of which is involved with children. The role of fathers is direct contact between father and child through the way fathers take care of or care for children and share joint activities between father and child (Lamb et al., 1985). Even though they cannot do effective communication yet, the baby may communicate in a unique pattern and unclear language but still contain meaning (Yulianti et al., 2020). In this case, the role of the parents is important to understand what the baby wants. Other than that, the responsibility to grow a child is a must, especially in the educational part. Providing a good educational environment and good quality of knowledge can help the child to shape a good character (Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022). Mexican fathers have a high level of co-residence with their children, as well as a high rate of marriage and cohabitation with their female partners and a low rate of multiple-partner fertility (Karberg et al., 2017). This shows that a habit for the Mexicans to build a good relationship between father-child has become a frequent activity many times over a long period and can be called a tradition (Arafah et al., 2020). In contrast, this father-child tradition is not always the same in other countries. The different kinds of environments can be a reason for the changing system of society, in this case, parenting life (Takwa et al., 2022).

In the United States, the number of children growing up without a father in the house has reached alarming proportions. There is a substantial research foundation that demonstrates that children raised in fatherless families have more psychosocial issues than children raised in fatherless households (Allen & Dally, 2007). This problem shows that fatherlessness has some quite harmful effects on children who, in their development, do not feel the love or attention of their fathers. The loss of a father can be the single greatest loss a person can experience (Jones, 2004). The most feared aspect of becoming fatherless is death. In 1960, more than 20% of female-headed households were due to death; today, only 3.6% of female-headed households are due to the death of the father (Nock & Einolf, 2008). Death, however, is unavoidable and is the end of one's life journey. It is unavoidable when the figure of a father must disappear because of the death he faces. This, of course, has an impact on those who are left behind, namely their wives and children.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of sociology and how it is reflected in literature is known as the sociology of literature. When it comes to sociology, it's impossible to deny that it's intertwined with society (Fadillah et al., 2022). It learns how individuals in a society interact and associate with one another. As a result, the sociological method aids authors in understanding the link between a literary work and the culture in which it was created. The sociological approach is a useful technique to examine not only human behavior in society but also how social communities influence or affect people's daily activities (Fadillah et al., 2022). The social context of a literary work is inextricably linked to it. Exploring the literary work's external features can provide a greater understanding to people who are also reading it. It may be inferred that these types of symbols are utilized in socio-cultural life in society to connect the relationship between one class and another class in one area (Hasyim et al., 2020; Hasjim et al., 2020).

Parenting is a series of interactions between parents and children that continues, where the process has changed on both sides (Brooks, 1991). From infancy through adulthood, the role of father and mother is inextricably linked to the growth and development of children. The father is responsible for making a living and providing for his child's bodily requirements, while the mother is responsible for spiritual satisfaction and needs, particularly in areas that support the child's gifts and interests. In addition, both parents have an active part in the psychological and attentional development of their children. Furthermore, Child care consists of several activities designed to help children develop properly and survive (Hoghughi & Long, 2004). It tries to enable their children to observe, comprehend, and feel the consequences of their parents' parenting.

Olson (2011, p. 11) describes parenting style as the way parents develop their children as they grow up. Olson describes the following aspects of the parenting style:

- a. *The Reliable Style*  
The Reliable parenting style is considered as warm and loving parents who provide emotional support, are receptive to their children's needs, encourage independence (with supervision), are consistent and fair in their application of discipline, and demand age-appropriate behavior.
- b. *The Nonchalant Style*  
The characteristics of the nonchalant parenting style include poor emotional connection, minimal reactivity from parent to child, high child independence from the parent (parents are disengaged from a child's life), easily negotiable regulations that are loosely enforced, and few demands made on the child.
- c. *The Permitted Style*  
The permitted parenting style is defined by parents who are spoiled by their children, very attentive to all of their needs, more of a friend to their children, indulgent in their disciplinary methods, and unlikely to put demands on their children.
- d. *The Absolute Style*  
The absolute parenting style is defined by tightly adhered to regulations, severely constrained child freedom, strict discipline, minimal response to children, and low emotional connection between parent and child.
- e. *The Prestigious Style*  
The prestigious parenting style shares traits with the nonchalant parenting style. The main distinction is that the prestigious parent genuinely wants to meet all of his child's demands and requests without considering them in many ways. When parenting in this way, the primary child comes first in everything.

The role of fathers has an important role, even the same as the role of a mother in the development of their children, even though it seems to have relatively less time and intensity, which is rarely seen compared to the role of the mother in the development of her child. The father is responsible for three main tasks. First, fathers must teach their children about God and educate them in religious matters. Second, a father must assume the role of a leader in his family. Third, the father must be responsible for discipline. Thus, he became an authority figure (Halverson, 2002, p. 102-104).

On the other hand, the role of the father is often considered the second caregiver after the mother. One of the factors is the assessment factor because the father functions as a breadwinner and an educator who is strict with his children. The role of fathers is how much effort is put forth by a father in thinking, planning, feeling, watching, monitoring, evaluating, worrying, and praying for his child (Palkovits in Cabrera & Tamis-LeMonda, 2015). The role of the father is associated with the availability of opportunities for children to do something, care, support, and a sense of security. Children whose fathers are involved in fathering will have good social and cognitive abilities and high self-confidence.

Lamb and Tamis-LeMonda (2004, p. 6-9) describe the roles of the father in the development of children as the way of fathering manage and control the behavior and attitude toward their children.

Lamb and Lewis describe the following aspects of the roles of the father in the development of children:

- a. *The Father-Child Relation.*  
The relationship between father and child occurs through direct and indirect patterns of interaction.
- b. *Availability of Father.*  
The accessibility of fathers by the time spent between father and child in a day, especially at the vulnerable ages between 5-6 years old.
- c. *The Responsibility of Father.*  
The child needs, especially the attention from his/her father that must be fulfilled or guaranteed during the play-time.

On the other, McAdoo and McAdoo (1997) describe the roles of the father in the development of children as father and child relationships that are believed to lead to the maturity of family care and education that will greatly affect the child's character.

McAdoo describes the following aspects of the roles of the father in the development of children:

- a. *A Provider.*  
The father must provide the facilities to support the child's growth and development.
- b. *A Protector.*  
The father is trying to bring a sense of security and an atmosphere of protection to his child from the environment that can interfere with or physically damage him/her.
- c. *A Decision-Maker.*  
The father is a leader in the family and suggests taking and providing decisions that are considered best for the development of their children.
- d. *An Educator.*  
The father acts as an educator in providing knowledge and insight into the development of their children, especially in the environment of social interaction.
- e. *A Nurtured Mother.*  
The supporters of the roles of mothers in the development of their children. A father's involvement in parenting ultimately means more emphasis on fulfilling materials for his child.

Children with an absence of fathers are at a marked disadvantage in human relationships (Dickerson, 2014). This happens due to the role that should exist in the household cannot fulfill a child's psychological well-being. The first is that the role of a father, in addition to his duty to fulfill his love, care, and attention, also serves to fulfill the material needs of his children. The second is as a protective figure in the home, which certainly provides a sense of security and comfort to children when this protective figure can be fulfilled as a father.

McLanahan et al. (2013) describe the causal effects of a father's absence, such as lagged dependent variable models, natural experiments, and individual fixed-effect models. Furthermore, McLanahan et al. (2013, p. 408-422) describe the following aspects of Father's absence:

- a. *Education is disrupted*  
The father's absence lowers children's educational attainment and decreases the likelihood that they will graduate from high school. This is affected by the inability to pay school fees, which should be expected from the role of a father as a breadwinner to support his child's education.
- b. *Mental Health Problem*  
The father's absence has a bad effect on the mental health of their children, who tend to smoke, drink alcohol, or even do drugs. Their children also tend to be more introverted and temperamental.
- c. *Declining Quality of the Workforce*  
Most of the children who grew up without a father tend to have a lower income than their complete parents. Also, their children tend to be in a better position than children who grow up without a father.
- d. *Poor Family Formation and Stability*  
The absence of the father in the family formation has an impact that seems to make other people's views bad. This is because there can be an imbalance in a family where the roles of the father and mother should be clear in the division, but it becomes a matter where the role of the mother takes on the role of the father, especially in earning a living and being a leader figure to replace the absence of the husband and father in the family.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher concludes that the act of a Mexican father is reflected by three factors, these factors are the parenting style of the main character, the roles of the father, and the negative effect of the father's absence. The parenting style in this play showed that the way of the main character parenting and the roles of the father took the main concern about the fathering of the main character in the text written, also the negative effect revealed in this play describes the result of the father absence during the action in fathering in the text written. It can be stated that an author who has lived through specific experiences sees reality and attempts to rectify the problem by writing a literary work (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019).

### III. METHODOLOGY

A qualitative study is conducted naturally using descriptive data. To identify literary works such as parenting style and literature, data was gathered. Qualitative is a study that investigates the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or material and is frequently referred to as qualitative research (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2012). In this research, the researcher used The Pearl's novel. The researcher examines this subject by applying the sociology of literature approach to determine the relationship between the play's condition and the social events that occurred during its creation (Fadillah et al., 2022). In analyzing the data, the researcher analyzes the ideas and behavior toward Kino as the main character in John Ernst Steinbeck's *The Pearl* using the sociology of literature approach, parenting style, roles of father, and the negative effect of the father's absence to find aspects and factors of roles of father represented by the main character in John Ernst Steinbeck *The Pearl*.

The researcher used identification and categorization to locate and gather data during data collection. The data was

collected by listing a sentence or paragraph that related to the roles of the father. Therefore, the researcher also read theses, journals, and articles related to the play and the act of a Native American father. The researcher then took notes to obtain the relevant information (Hasanah et al., 2021). Primary data in this research comes from The Pearl's original text, while secondary data is gathered from a certain source as supporting data (Purwaningsih et al., 2020).

#### IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

##### A. Parenting's Style

###### *Data 1 (The Absolute Style)*

Kino→“Our son must go to school. He must break out the pot that holds us in” (Steinbeck, 1992, p.38).

Based on the extract above, shows that Kino wanted his son to succeed with the opportunity that lay before him at the time. He believed that with Coyotito being able to go to school, everything that was hindering their lives could be overcome and the obstacles would not bother Kino's family again even though Juana had warned of the dangers and risks he would face because of the opportunity he kept defending. The reason is Kino has shown an absolute style of parenting. It always enforced rules and restricted child freedom with firm discipline and the high expectations of parents to their children.

###### *Data 2 (The Prestigious Style)*

Kino→ “My son will read and open the books, and my son will write and will know writing. And my son will make numbers, and these things will make us free because he will know-he will know and through him, we will know” (Steinbeck, 1992, p. 26).

Based on the extract above, shows that Kino overestimated the achievements of his son when he became a student who could save himself and his wife from the shackles they could not achieve because of their very limited education. The reason is the prestigious style is very high in closeness between parents and children. It is characterized by over-spoiled parents who attend to their children's every need and behave more like friends to them. In this case, Kino tried to regard his child as a brother in the hope of having a better education than himself, not as his son or teacher.

##### B. Roles of Father Data 3 (A Provider)

Kino→“You must go up there. Perhaps they will not find us there” (Steinbeck, 1992, p. 81).

Based on the extract above, shows that Kino wants Juana to go to a place that is considered safe and suitable for an emergency shelter. Also to protect the safety of his child. This is evidenced by the explanation sentence above that he first sought shelter for his wife and children while he would bet his life to save his family from the danger that was before his eyes. It is his duty as a husband and father to always look after and provide shelter for his family. The reason is a provider must meet the accommodation or place of residence, whether it be for a short or long period as a shelter for their families, especially in terms of fulfilling the development of their children.

###### *Data 4 (A Decision-maker)*

Kino→“Only until a day has passed and the new night has come. Then we will go” (Steinbeck, 1992, p.57).

Based on the extract above, shows that Kino does not want to put his brother in danger, but does not want to also put his wife and child in the silence of the night to immediately go to a safe place. Therefore, he decided that until evening he would leave the hut of his brother so that he and his family were safe and also Kino could continue and guide his family to a safe place. The reason is a decision-maker father must take the best decision for the best of his family, especially for his children.

##### C. The Negative Effects of Father's Absence

The absence of the father's role in this novel, in this case, the absence of the father figure or the role of the father of Kino gave rise to a sad ending, where when Kino tried to save Juana, his wife, and Coyotito, his son from the threat of the trackers carrying the rifle and left they were in the cave around the mountains heading to Loreto, at the same time he opened a huge opportunity for his son to be killed, the absence of Kino made Coyotito nervous and uncomfortable. the figure of a father who should protect and provide security away from him so that he cried and the irony of his cry was heard up to the shelter of the trackers whom they consider like the coyote baby crying. Ironically when Coyotito in Spanish also means Baby Coyote. An unexpected thing happened, the tracker that brought the rifle immediately pressed the trigger to the sound of the crying.

Tragically, the bullet shot hit the head of the innocent baby and he died instantly. Juana was hysterical, and Kino swiftly and angrily immediately took the rifle and shot the head of the tracker that had killed his son, and not satisfied with that, he aimed the rifle at the other two-tracker until they were scared and ran away from Kino. Kino's power and power, he got the Rifle he wanted, and his family was safe from threats but paid for with the blood of his son, Coyotito.

*“I don't know,” said the watcher. “It sounded like a cry, almost like a human-like a baby”* (Steinbeck, 1992, p.86).

*The man who had been sleeping said, “You can't tell. Some coyote bitch with a litter. I've heard a coyote pup crylike a baby”* (Steinbeck, 1992, p. 86).

*“.... Coyote maybe,” he said, and Kino heard the harsh click as he cocked the rifle.*

*“If it's a coyote, this will stop it,” the watcher said as he raised the gun* (Steinbeck, 1992, p. 86).

*Kino was in mid-leap when the gun crashed and the barrel flash made a picture in his eyes. The great knife swung and crunched hollowly. It bit through the neck and deep into the chest, and Kino was a terrible machine now. He grasped the rifle even as he wrenched free his knife. His strength and his movement and his speed were a machine. He whirled and struck the head of the seated man like a melon. The third man scrambled away like a crab slipped into the pool, and he began to climb frantically, to climb up the cliff where the water penciled down.*

*"... Deliberately he threw the lever of the rifle, and then he raised the gun and aimed deliberately and fired.".... In the moonlight, he could see the frantic frightened eyes, and Kino aimed and fired between the eyes (Steinbeck, 1992, p. 86-87).*

#### D. Discussion

Kino is the main character of this novel. Kino is a father who is struggling against a hard life, his life was very poor, and only relied on his livelihood as a fisherman to support his wife Juana, and her only baby was Coyotito. Something very bad happened to the baby when the scorpion poisoned it while they were relaxing in their hut, and his struggle and role as a father is being tested was so great, that he had to find a doctor to cure the baby. There are two types of parenting according to Olson's theory, five roles of the father in the children's personality development used in his life according to McAdoo's theory, and one evidence of the negative effects of the absence of the role of fathers. The researcher found there are two styles of parenting that Kino used in the novel, namely the absolute style and the prestigious style. Moreover, the researcher found there are five roles of a father, namely a provider, a protector, a decision-maker, an educator, and a nurtured mother. Therefore, the evidence that the researcher used to succinctly explain how the negative effect of the absence of the role of fathers has a negative impact.

#### V. CONCLUSION

After explaining and identifying the forms of roles of father experienced by Kino, the researchers draw conclusions related to how the role of fathers experience Kino's personality. Firstly, Kino gets two forms types of parenting that have been identified by the researcher. Among these are the absolute style and the prestigious style. Secondly, Kino gets five forms of father's roles in his experience in the children's personality development that have been identified by the researcher. Among these are a provider, a protector, a decision-maker, an educator, and a nurtured mother. Lastly, Kino shows the negative effects of the role of fathers in this case the absence of the role of the fathers in the novel that have been described by the research. There is only one sentence due to how his son, Coyotito died due to the absence of Kino's role and figure as a father and how his son died.

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