

**Universitas Katolik Santo Thomas**

**Repositori Unika Santo Thomas**

**<http://eprints.ust.ac.id>**

---

Fakultas Ilmu Budaya (FIB)  
Program Studi Sastra Inggris

Undergraduate Papers

---

Putri, Jessica Amelia

2025

# Children's Suffering in Arundhati Roy's *The God Small Things*

---

<http://eprints.ust.ac.id/id/eprint/378>

*Downloaded from Repositori Institusi UST, Universitas Katolik Santo Thomas*

**CHILDREN'S SUFFERING IN ARUNDHATI ROY'S *THE  
GOD OF SMALL THINGS***

**This undergraduate thesis is submitted as partial fulfilment to obtain Bachelor Degree at English Department Faculty of Cultural Sciences Catholic University of Saint Thomas Medan**



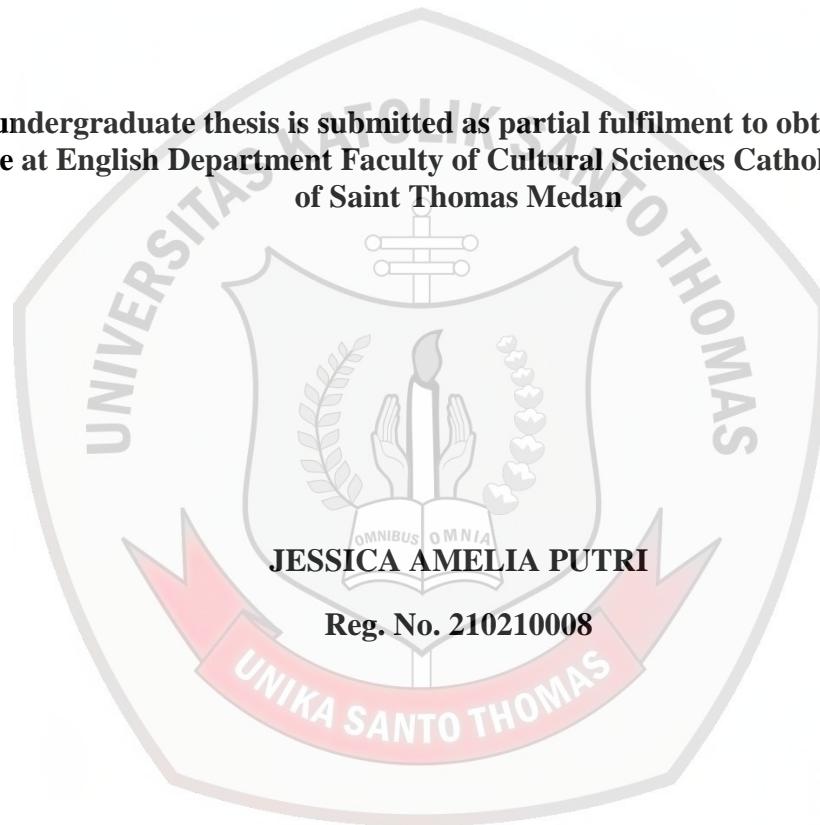
**JESSICA AMELIA PUTRI**

**Reg. No. 210210008**

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES  
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF SAINT THOMAS  
MEDAN  
2025**

**CHILDREN'S SUFFERING IN ARUNDHATI ROY'S *THE  
GOD OF SMALL THINGS***

**This undergraduate thesis is submitted as partial fulfilment to obtain Bachelor Degree at English Department Faculty of Cultural Sciences Catholic University of Saint Thomas Medan**



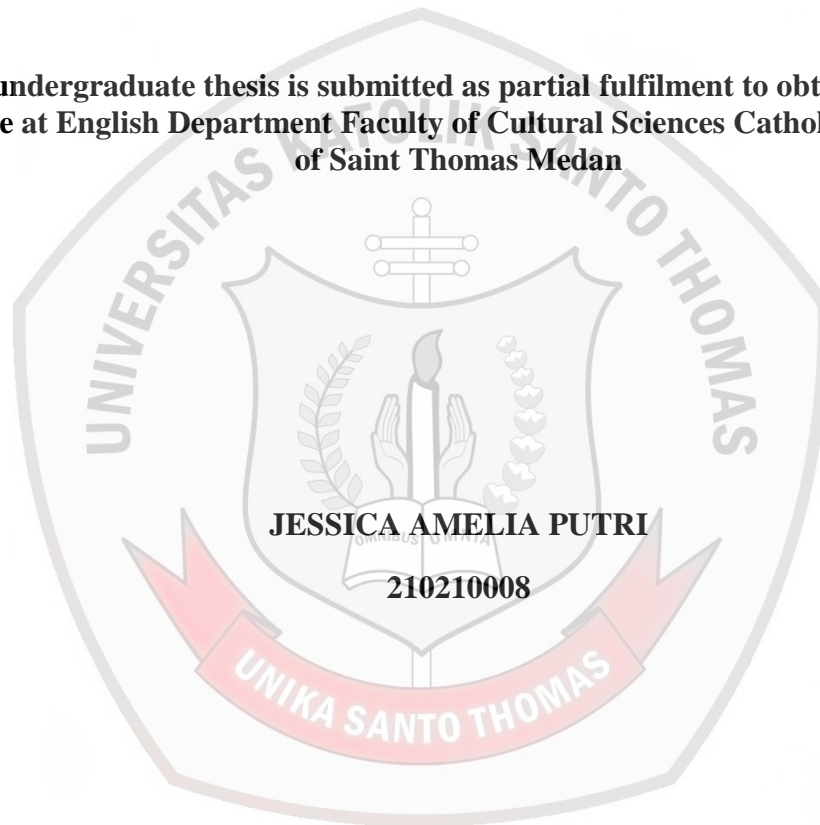
**JESSICA AMELIA PUTRI**

**Reg. No. 210210008**

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES  
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF SAINT THOMAS  
MEDAN  
2025**

**CHILDREN'S SUFFERING IN ARUNDHATI ROY'S *THE  
GOD OF SMALL THINGS***

**This undergraduate thesis is submitted as partial fulfilment to obtain Bachelor  
Degree at English Department Faculty of Cultural Sciences Catholic University  
of Saint Thomas Medan**



**JESSICA AMELIA PUTRI**

**210210008**

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES  
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF SAINT THOMAS  
MEDAN  
2025**

APPROVAL SHEET

THIS UNDERGRADUATE THESIS HAS BEEN APPROVED IN JULY 31, 2025

Supervisor

  
Dr. Bertova Simandjunguk, S.S., M.S.  
NIDN: 000590302

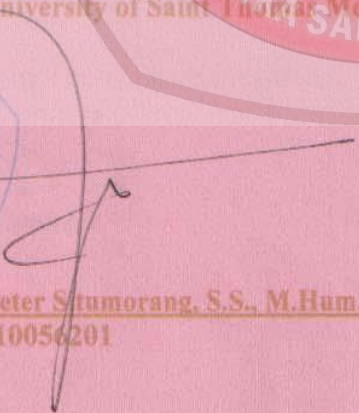


Approved by:

Dean  
Faculty of Cultural Sciences  
Catholic University of Saint Thomas Medan

Head of English Department  
Faculty of Cultural Sciences  
Catholic University of Saint  
Thomas Medan



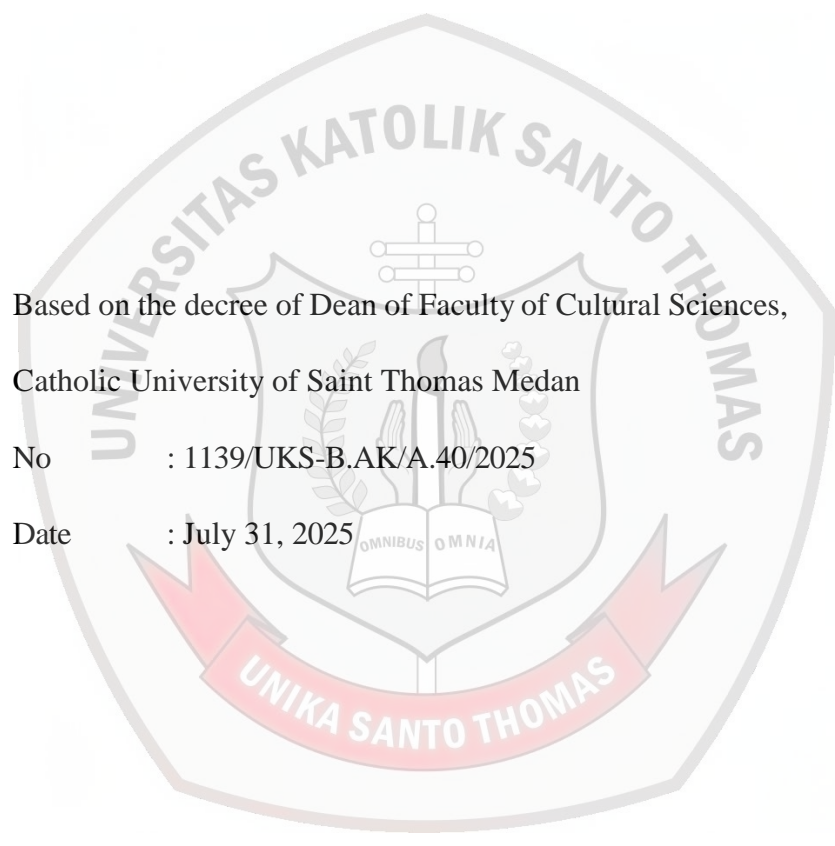


Drs. Jon Pieter Stumorang, S.S., M.Hum., Ph.D  
NIDN: 0110056201



  
Dra. Rosa Maria Simamora, M.Hum  
NIDN: 0113096701

THIS UNDERGRADUATE THESIS HAS BEEN APPROVED AND  
ASSESSED BY THE EXAMINING BOARD OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT,  
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES, CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF SAINT  
THOMAS MEDAN ON JULY 31, 2025



Based on the decree of Dean of Faculty of Cultural Sciences,  
Catholic University of Saint Thomas Medan  
No : 1139/UKS-B.AK/A.40/2025  
Date : July 31, 2025

The Thesis Examining Board

Chairperson : Dr. Bertova Simanihuruk, S.S., M.Si

Members : 1. Dra. Rosa Maria Simamora, M.Hum

2. Piro Benevolent Lariesto, SS., M.Hum

## AUTHENTICITY STATEMENT

I, the undersigned,

Name : Jessica Amelia Putri  
Place/Date of Birth : Medan, 31 May 2003  
Student Number : 210210008  
Major : English Department  
Faculty : Faculty of Cultural Sciences

Solemnly declare that this entitled “**Children’s Suffering In Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things***” is my own work, free from plagiarism. Quotations are referenced in accordance with scientific writing ethics that apply. if it is proven that this thesis contains plagiarism, deemed to have violated the rules, I am willing to accept sanctions for the act in accordance with the applicable regulations.

Medan, 31 July 2025

Jessica Amelia Putri

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful praise to the Almighty God for His grace and mercy. The writer has successfully completed the thesis entitled **Children's Suffering in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*** submitted as one of the requirements to obtain a Bachelor's degree in the English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Catholic University of Saint Thomas Medan.

In this valuable opportunity, the writer would like to extend sincere thanks and most appreciation to all parties who have assisted and contributed to the process and completion of this thesis:

- 1 Prof. Dr. Maidin Gultom, SH, M, Hum., who provided the opportunity for the writer to study English at the Catholic University of Saint Thomas Medan.
- 2 Drs. Jon Piter Situmorang, SS, M.Hum, Ph.D, as the Dean, who has facilitated all the undergraduate academic activities and learning process in the English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences.
- 3 Dra. Rosa Maria Simamora, M.Hum, as the Head of the English Department, has patiently and sincerely provided guidance, knowledge, motivation, direction, as well as moral and academic support that have been very meaningful for me, from the beginning of the writer studies until the completion of this thesis.

- 4 Dr. Bertova Simanihuruk, S.S., M.Si, and Mr. Pioro Benevolent Lariesto, S.S., M.Hum, as her Supervisor and Examiner, who have provided scientific contributions, direction, and valuable time in the process of compiling this thesis. The writer expresses my highest gratitude and appreciation for all your guidance and dedication, which are very meaningful for the completion of this thesis.
- 5 All Mr./Ms. Lecturers of the English Department who guided, taught, and shared knowledge during her academic courses.
- 6 All Mr. and Ms. Administrative Staff of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences who supported the completion of her study;
- 7 The writer expresses deepest gratitude to all classmates of 2021 who have been a part of this study journey. Thank you for the enthusiasm, togetherness, and warm support. In particular, the writer is grateful to all their closest friends, the six friends who always support each other through thick and thin, and who have been a place to share stories, laughs, and encouragement amidst all their academic challenges. Not forgetting the writer friends and beloved younger siblings, Asima Pakpahan, Aldi Saragi, and Katherine Aruan, who always encourage the writer, motivate, and bring happiness. To all who added color and strength to the journey to completing this thesis.
- 8 Most special thanks go to the writer's beloved mother, Mrs. Rosmelina Aruan, an extraordinary woman who has played a major role in the writer's life. She has always given everything she could to the writer: her unconditional love, wise advice, constant encouragement, heartfelt prayers, and endless support, both

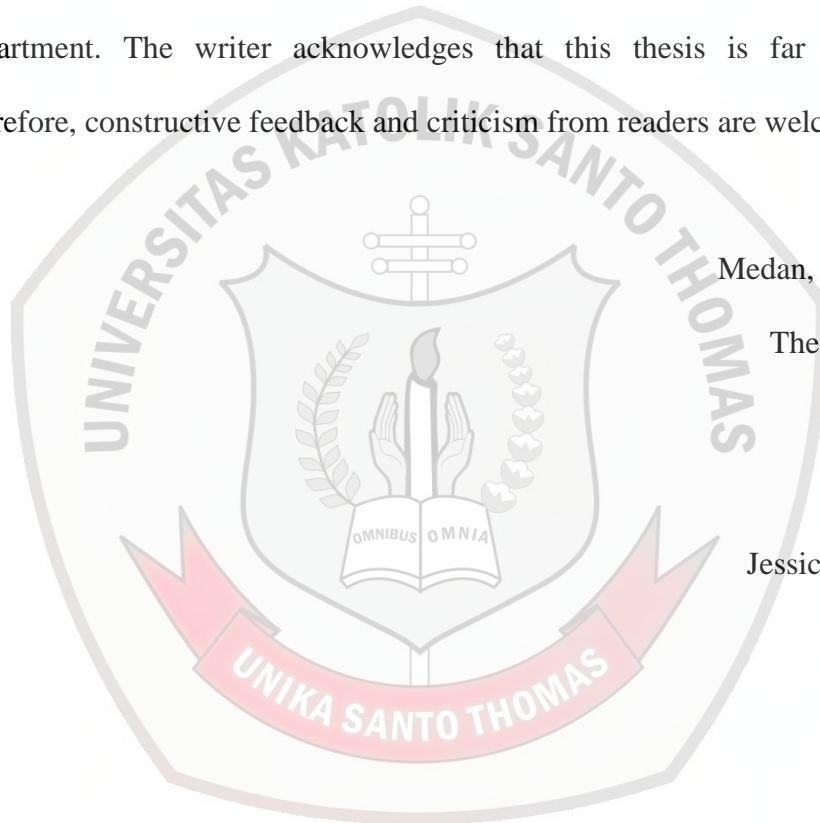
emotionally and financially, which have enabled the writer to complete this thesis. The writer also wishes to thank their sibling, Jensen Gideon Tobing, for consistently providing support and motivation throughout the writer's academic journey.

The writer hopes that this thesis will be beneficial to the field of the English Department. The writer acknowledges that this thesis is far from perfect. Therefore, constructive feedback and criticism from readers are welcome.

Medan, July 2025

The writer,

Jessica Amelia Putri



## ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the forms and effects of children's suffering caused by the family in the novel *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy. The analysis employs a literary sociology approach, especially based on Wellek and Warren's theory, which explains that literature cannot be separated from the social conditions of society. This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The data are collected by reading and analyzing the novel deeply: identifying relevant quotations, collecting supporting theories from academic references, and grouping the data based on the topic of children's suffering. The data are analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that the children's suffering in the novel appears in four main forms. First, the lack of love and emotional attention from the family makes the children feel unloved and neglected. Second, psychological violence and social pressure come from strict rules and expectations within the family. Third, rejection and neglect by parents and other family members cause deep emotional wounds. Fourth, the long-term impacts of this suffering are seen in trauma, loss of identity, and difficulty forming social relationships in adulthood. Through this research, readers are expected to be more critical to see the hidden suffering that children experience in their families and to understand the serious effects of emotional neglect and injustice in family power dynamics.

***Keywords: children's suffering, family, sociology of literature, power imbalance***

UNIKA SANTO THOMAS

## **ABSTRAK**

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bentuk dan dampak penderitaan anak yang disebabkan oleh keluarga dalam novel *The God of Small Things* karya Arundhati Roy. Analisis dilakukan melalui pendekatan sosiologi sastra, khususnya berdasarkan teori Wellek dan Warren yang menyatakan bahwa karya sastra tidak terlepas dari kondisi sosial masyarakatnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif. Data dalam penelitian dikumpulkan melalui pembacaan dan analisis mendalam terhadap novel, dengan mengidentifikasi kutipan-kutipan yang relevan, mengumpulkan teori-teori pendukung dari berbagai referensi akademik, serta mengelompokkan data berdasarkan topik penderitaan anak. Data dianalisis dengan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penderitaan anak dalam novel muncul dalam empat bentuk utama. Pertama, kurangnya kasih sayang dan perhatian emosional dari keluarga, yang menyebabkan anak merasa tidak dicintai dan terabaikan. Kedua, adanya kekerasan psikologis dan tekanan sosial yang dialami anak akibat aturan dan harapan yang kaku dalam keluarga. Ketiga, penolakan dan pengabaian yang dilakukan oleh orang tua dan anggota keluarga lainnya, yang menciptakan luka batin yang mendalam. Keempat, dampak jangka panjang dari penderitaan tersebut yang terlihat dalam bentuk trauma, kehilangan identitas diri, dan kesulitan menjalin hubungan sosial saat dewasa. Melalui penelitian ini, pembaca diharapkan dapat lebih kritis dalam melihat realitas penderitaan anak yang tersembunyi dalam lingkungan keluarga, serta memahami dampak serius dari pengabaian emosional dan ketidakadilan yang terjadi dalam relasi kuasa di dalam keluarga.*

**Kata kunci:** *penderitaan anak, keluarga, sosiologi sastra, ketimpangan kekuasaan*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INSIDE COVER .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>APPROVAL SHEET .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>AUTHENTICITY STATEMENT .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>ABSTRAK .....</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Problems of the Study .....	7
1.3 Objectives of the Study .....	11
1.4 Scope of the Study .....	12
<b>CHAPTER II CONCEPTS AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Children’s Suffering.....	9
2.2 Sociology of Literature .....	12
<b>CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1 Data and Data Source.....	15
3.2 Technique of Collecting Data .....	16
3.3 Technique of Analyzing Data .....	17
<b>CHAPTER IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS .....</b>	<b>19</b>
4.1 Forms of Children’s Suffering .....	19
4.1.1 Lack of Affection and Emotional Attention .....	22
4.1.2 Psychological Violence and Social Pressure .....	25
4.1.3 Rejection and Abandonment .....	28
4.2 Effects of Suffering on Children.....	35
<b>CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.....</b>	<b>42</b>
5.1 Conclusions.....	42
5.2 Suggestions .....	43
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>50</b>

## REFERENCES

- Ariesta, D. 2022. *Dampak Tekanan Psikologis Dalam Keluarga Terhadap Perkembangan Emosi Anak*. *Jurnal Psikologi Anak dan Keluarga*, 10(2), 45–52.
- Berk, L. E. 2001. *Development Through the Lifespan* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Bowden, P., & Jones, C., 2003. *Family Health Care Nursing: Theory, Practice, and Research*. Philadelphia: F.A. Davis Company.
- Creswell, J. W. 2014. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Erikson, E. H. 1963. *Childhood and Society* (2nd ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Granada, A., Botelho, M. A., Oliveira, A. C., & Sá, L. D. 2013. Suffering Indicators in Terminally Ill Children From the Parental Perspective. *European Journal of Oncology Nursing*, 17(6), 720–725. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejon.2013.03.001>
- Hurlock, E. B. 1980. *Child Development* (6th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia. (2022). *Kasus anak perempuan 13 tahun korban kekerasan emosional di Malang*. Diakses dari <https://www.kpai.go.id/>
- Mehta, R. 2021. *Caste and Social Discrimination in The God of Small Things*. [Journal Article].
- Miller, Alice. 1981. *The Drama of the Gifted Child: The Search for the True Self*. New York: Basic Books.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. 1994. *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

- Meliala, S. A., 2017. *Class Prejudice in Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things*. Medan: Catholic University of Saint Thomas.
- Nasution, I. 2021. Dinamika Identitas Anak Dalam Keluarga. *Jurnal Sosial dan Humaniora*, 10(2), 112–120.
- Roy, A. 1997. *The God of Small Things*. Fourth Estate.
- Swingewood, A. 1972. *The Sociology of Literature*. London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd.
- Sari, R. A., & Maulana, M. I. 2020. Penindasan Simbolik Dalam Relasi Keluarga Terhadap Anak. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Budaya*, 7(3), 150–160
- Tate, T. 2020. Pediatric suffering: A Philosophical Analysis. *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics*, 41(3), 179–195. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11017-020-09531-y>
- Utami, S. 2020. *Patriarchy and Women's Oppression in Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things*. [Thesis/Journal Article].
- Wellek, R., & Warren, A. 1949. *Theory of Literature*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

