

# The Impact of Mores on the Major Characters' Life in Ibsen's *Ghost*

**R. Widya Yudha Prawita & Ni Luh Putu Rosiandani**  
English Letters Department, Sanata Dharma University

## Abstract

*This study examines the presence of mores as one aspect which constructs the social life in society as portrayed in Ibsen's Ghosts. The mores as a manifestation of society's demands become important key aspect which may give influence in one's life in his efforts to build social interaction within the community. Through the mores, the society's expectation of ideal social situation is being projected.*

*Some problems have been formulated as follows to see the way the major characters deal with the mores and the impact that may occur in their life. Firstly, it observes how the major characters are presented and what are the mores practiced. Secondly, it discusses what the impact of the mores on the major characters' life that comes out as the result of major characters' responses toward the mores.*

*Based on the analysis, it shows that characters' characteristics are various. The obdurate and conservative characteristic can be seen through Manders while Mrs. Alving is presented as an open-minded and critical though she seems like a doubter. Being different is Oswald which is more expressive, liberal and rebellious. The various kinds of characteristics above have significant role in the way a character response the demands of the society (the mores). Meanwhile in the world of reality, sometimes what is considered as an ideal in mores is not always appropriate to be applied in the real condition. This dilemma may lead some people to give various responses or even behave recklessly in dealing with mores. Then, consequently, whatever the response taken or shown by the people in responding the mores at last will bring a new impact in their life as an individual.*

**Keywords:** *the mores, society, social life*

## Introduction

In this world of reality, every person was born to live side by side with other people and it will lead them to realize the need of others' presence in their life to complete each other. It is strengthened by the common view on human which is widely known as social creature for his nature that cannot live without the existence of other humans.

Starting from the inability of a person to handle all of the matters in his life individually, at last, he will try to form a group that we may call as society in this modern era. Society here can be said as a

mass of people who lives together with common interest, activity and structural system in creating, sustaining and developing the life into a better direction and condition (Neumeyer, 1953: 7).

To live in society means that a person will face new various responsibility and demands to do. He is expected to adapt, to follow and to take part on the social system practiced. As widely known, in a society there must be certain regulations in many forms as the fundamental to define the acceptable behaviour (Becker, 1992: 910). Those patterns and demands are important in creating a stable situation in the society. So,

for this condition, the people are obliged to practice them. There will be negative consequences for those who do not conform since sanctions are the supporters of the regulations (Bierstedt, 1963: 229).

Every person is supposed and expected to accept and stand in the same position with the norms used since it will be very difficult for a person to make an opposition individually for his dependencies toward society. "They (people) have not all arrived at the same formula for their common happiness, but each individual must live in a group, tribe, city, or nation to which he or she belongs, and must adapt to its way of living" (Gonsalves, 1986: 93). This condition that requires one's sincerity and obedience toward the norms has possibility to create an internal or even external conflict for those who become the member of certain society. Then, indirectly, this conflict may bring an impact in their life.

Starting from the depiction above, the topic about the impact of the mores as one sub division of the norms was chosen to show how the mores may have unpredictable influence and effect on some people. The positions of the mores which is respected and seen as something noble and has relation to morality sometimes make many people mistreat the presence of the mores.

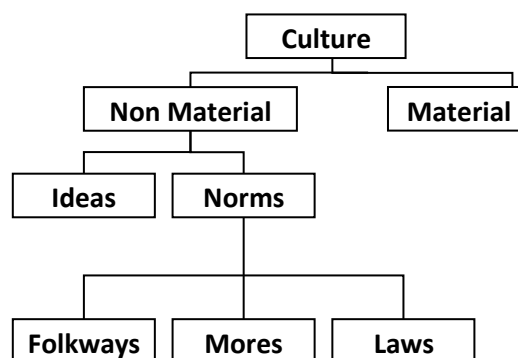
Then, for the function of literary works that can be used as a media to express and represent about certain object or topic in certain era, *Ghosts* which was written by Henrik Johan Ibsen in 1881 will be used as a vehicle to analyze on this topic. This literary work will be the starting point of the research to see and to observe the application of the mores in the middle of the society and their influence toward the member of society seen from the presentation of the major characters.

## The Mores

The society is identical to the presence of culture as its product. The culture is often called as the result of cumulative process in the human interaction in their society or even it is used to show the level of quality and

complexity of a society. Meanwhile, the culture itself is already complex since it can be classified into many sub divisions.

Under the concept of culture, the concept of ideas and norms as the representation of non material culture will be found. Under the concept of norms, the concept of mores which has contribution to create the conformity and regularity in the society is found together with folkways and laws. The interrelatedness of those concepts basically can be summarized in the flowchart below:



There is an integrated system in human life. The position of culture is on the top of the flowchart. It means that culture is a big concept which covers all of the subdivision below. First, culture can be classified into two big classes. The first one is non-material culture which can be made more specific into ideas and norms while the second class is material culture.

As mentioned above, the non-material culture is classified into ideas and norms. Basically both ideas and norms still can be spelled out into more specific terms but the focus here is given to the norms. The norms here actually can be simply said as a conduct life for human to live in society (Bierstedt, 1963: 222).

The norm here is explained as an instrument of the society to control its member. In other words, it can be said that society through norms also gives certain direction and limitation or even expectations for those who live inside (Maciver and Charles, 1950: 5).

There will be an agreement and demand from the society for each of its members in order to create regularity or certain purpose to be gained in the society. Though the norm is already defined as a standard and instrument for the people but the context of norm is still too wide.

The norms can be subsumed into folkways, mores and laws. There are some differences that creates the norms is spelled out into those three concepts. Folkways here are more about our customary conduct in daily life or habit (Bierstedt, 1963: 226).

Our habit to wear good clothes, our habit to always use right hand to eat are some examples of folkways. Being different from folkways, laws are norms which are more complex. It is usually only found in society with social-political organization like government while folkways and mores are found in every society (1963: 228).

The next is mores. Just the same with folkways and laws, a person also cannot runaway and escape from the practice of the mores. The presence of the mores as one form of the norms cannot be separated from the presence of human being. The presence of human is considered as one aspect that creates the mores. It is believed that the mores are the result of human interaction and compromise that finally shaped the common concept that can and should be accepted and followed by the member of society. Moreover, the mores are also believed as one of the most important element to construct a good quality of society. The mores here is different to folkways since they are not merely about habitual conduct but moral conduct, while the mores also different from laws since they have no special agent to enforce the practice of the mores (Bierstedt, 1963: 227).

Meanwhile, when it is traced back to the origin of the word, the mores have strong connection with morality. "Mores forms the root of the English word 'moral', thus literally referring to any act or belief in accord with customary group expectations" (Merril, 1965: 118). To the more specific, the mores also can be defined as bundle of system in which

the people in certain area believed and practiced because they have normative power. Besides they are also related with the social welfare (1965:117)

Then, indirectly, it can be concluded that mores are as important as folkways and laws. They have power and play significant role in creating and establishing the conformity and regularity in the middle of society. The power and influence of the mores are getting bigger for the negative sanctions for violating one of them is to be considered immoral (Bierstedt, 1963: 229)

In the application of mores, the presence of public opinion also plays important role. They have power in insisting the people to take part in the application of the mores. The public opinion here is functioned as one tool to control society's behaviour. It means that the opinion of public may give the biggest pressure for the people. For those who do not take part, they will be commented by the public as a deviator or even immoral person as mentioned before.

## The Presentation of Major Characters

There are three major characters can be found in *Ghost*, they are Manders, Mrs. Alving and Oswald. Those characters live in Norway society in around 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Each of them lives in the same social situation scene but with different characteristics, attributes and background.

Manders in *Ghosts* is presented as a Pastor of the parish. His position as the Pastor of the parish brings him to a bigger responsibility to take care of the people in that region and be their protector. In other words, the position of Manders here also represents the presence of the church in the middle of Norway society. Manders has responsibilities to be their shepherd. He has to be the one who teaches and shows the way of life based on Christian teaching.

At that time, in European countries, church with all of its structure indirectly also has the power in limiting and giving conduct in social life (McNeill, 1974: 82-83). It means that related to *Ghosts*, Manders deserves

special position in the hierarchy of the society. He may give the conduct of life to the people and as the consequence, the people see him not as an ordinary person but as the one to follow and respect.

In regard to his presentation as a Pastor, Manders is also presented as a respectable person. Then, he has to behave properly in front of the public, besides the attention from the people around on him is getting bigger.

ENGSTRAND. *Yes, because there will be a lot of fine folk here tomorrow. Parson Manders is expected from the town too* (Ibsen, 170)

His position as a Pastor also brings Manders to be accustomed with so many dogmatic matters. This situation may lead him as a closed-minded and obdurate person. The old and traditional views have been implanted in his mind and this condition alienates his mind from the change.

Those two characteristics above at last will contribute to shape him as person who will always believe and obey with something which is already definite or patent. It means that he will not question too much with something which is already practiced commonly in the society from past time. In other words, Manders tends to be a conservative person as well. He will question those who try to stand outside the definite pattern.

MANDERS. *Can you call it cowardice that you simply did your duty! Have you forgotten that a child should love and honour his father and mother?* (Ibsen, 198)

MANDERS. *But do you mean to say that it is possible for a man of any sort of bringing up, and a young woman, to reconcile themselves to such way of living-and to make no secret of it, either?* (Ibsen, 186)

MANDERS. *To crave for happiness in this world is simply to be possessed by a spirit of revolt. What rights have we to happiness? No! We must do our duty, Mrs.*

*Alving. And your duty was to cleave to the man you had chosen and to whom you were bound by a sacred bond* (Ibsen, 189).

Ironically, his respectable position as a Pastor also brings him to paranoia toward anything that may libel his name. Then, Manders also can be seen as a timorous person. As a pastor he has been accustomed to be respected by the rest of the society. This condition brings him to have more awareness in maintaining and keeping his reputation in front of the society to avoid any attack or blasphemy.

Being different from Manders, Mrs. Alving is presented as a widow. She is depicted as a woman with her complicated experience in past life. Before the death of Mr. Alving, she used to live under many demands and pressures. As the wife of Mr. Alving, she is demanded to be more careful in her behaviour. Unfortunately, this condition only brings her to live under pressure with no happiness. This condition later brings her to doubt and stand on the different side with the demand of the society.

In the past, she was taught about duty and she got nothing except problems and miseries from that. Now, after the death of her husband, Mrs. Alving transforms into a woman with a new mind set. She tries to free herself from the common view. She wants her opinion and perspective in seeing particular issues to be freed from the pressure from any side.

As the consequence of her failure to deal with the demand in the society in her past life, Mrs. Alving becomes a critic toward the common view in her society. She learns from her mistake in the past and it creates her to always question many things, include the mores, before practices and accepts them. Based on Mrs. Alving's perspective, every movement of a person is being limited by those regulations and it is only make the people to live in misery when they practice it rigidly. The life condition of the people becomes unnatural for the presence of those regulations.

MRS. ALVING (*going to the window*). Oh, law and order! I often think that it is at the bottom of all the misery in the world (Ibsen, 198)

Her critical thinking on particular matters also leads her to be more open toward new idea. It means that she welcomes new idea to influence her mind. She does not want to be trapped by the common views in the society. Whenever she thinks a new idea is suitable for the recent condition, then there is no reason to reject it. Not only stopping there, Mrs. Alving is also presented as a rebellious since she has courage not only to criticize or welcome new idea but also to practice it.

MRS. ALVING. *Not a bit of it. It is the best thing for an active boy, and especially for an only child. It's a pity when they are kept at home with their parents and get spoiled* (Ibsen, 186).

MRS. ALVING. *If I were not such a miserable coward, I would say to him: "Marry her, or make any arrangement you like with her-only let there be no deceit in the matter."*

MANDERS. *Heaven forgive you! Are you actually suggesting anything abominable, so unheard of, as a marriage between them!* (Ibsen, 199)

Besides those characteristics, Mrs. Alving is also presented as a self-reliant woman. The endless problems in her life create her as a self-reliant woman. Though it is very hard for a woman to face the confusion in the family, Mrs. Alving prefers to handle it herself. She keeps the problem in her family alone to avoid public attention on her family.

MRS. ALVING. *Well-now, Mr. Manders, now I am going to tell you the truth. I had sworn to myself that you should know it one day-you, and you only!*

MANDERS. *And what may the truth be?*  
Mrs. Alving. *The truth is this, that my husband died just as great a profligate as he had been all his life* (Ibsen, 191).

Though she is depicted as a critical, open-minded, rebellious and self-reliant woman,

the pressure from the outside and society makes Mrs. Alving appears like a doubter and reckless woman.

The last major character in *Ghosts* is Oswald. Oswald here is presented as the only son of Alving's family. He spends most of his time abroad. Most of his life time which was spent in foreign country gives him a chance to learn different culture and way of life. This condition leads Oswald to be more permissive toward new way of thinking. Besides, the lives of artists are known for its freedom. They usually live in unconventional way of living. Their nature as artists also leads them to be expressive and critical not only in doing art but also in viewing particular matters in life.

His critical and open minded characteristics lead him to reconsider and question the demand from the society. While his expressive characteristic leads him to encounter his interlocutor's words directly in front of her. There is no ill at ease when he encounters his interlocutor's words. When something is considered irrelevant in his eyes, he will just criticize it openly.

At first glance, Oswald seems to be a rude person. But, basically, Oswald just tries to see a matter objectively from his perspective. When the practiced more is already relevant, at least in his opinion, he has no doubt or opposition on it.

MANDERS. *Then what you are speaking of are those unprincipled conditions known as irregular unions!*

OSWALD. *I have never noticed anything particularly unprincipled about these people's lives* (Ibsen, 186).

MRS. ALVING. *It is dreadful to think of!—But surely a child should feel some affection for his father, whatever happens?*

OSWALD. *When the child has nothing to thank to his father for? When he has never known him? Do you really cling to that antiquated superstition—you, who are so broad minded in other things?* (Ibsen, 226)

Besides, his experience to live separately from his parents not only creates Oswald as a critical and open-minded person but also as a sensitive person. It means that Oswald becomes a person who can be easily hurt and offended especially in family matters.

### The Mores Practiced

The first more that can be seen in *Ghosts* is about the importance of public opinion. Public opinion can be said as the common view accepted and believed by the society in responding certain situation. For many people, the public opinion also can be used as the fundamental in the way they behave. It means that the public opinion may influence and give pressure on one's behavior and mind to be in line with the major voice (Bennet & Tumin, 1952: 236). In other words, it is important for a person to consider what others might think and say before a person decides to do something. Here, the public opinion that represents the voice of majority cannot be considered as a trivial thing. It is also shown here how the characters have to think not only the good or bad side of a decision but also what the people might think over the decision taken.

MANDERS. *My dear Mrs. Alving, there are many occasions in life when one has to rely on the opinion of others. That is the way in this world, and it is quite right that it should be so. What would become the society, otherwise?* (Ibsen, 178)

The second more is about the esteem of religious leader. The situation of Norway as a country under the domination of Christianity as the major religion leads the position of Pastor into the higher level of respect compared with people in common (McNeill, 1974: 82-83). The respect given to the Pastor also put him in a dilemmatic position. Most of the people believe that a Pastor is kind of person to follow for his deep understanding in religious matters. In regard to that view, then it will be very difficult for the society to see their religious leader doing mistakes. The pastor in every of their presence is demanded to show his best performance without any mistake. The society expect that every step

taken by a Pastor should represent and in line with the religious teaching.

Next is about the marriage bond. It is widely known that Norway is dominated with Christian people. Then, when it is related to the topic of marriage, we will see that the Christian values will be dominant in the institution of marriage. In Christianity, especially Catholicism, the marriage is a bond that may not be divorced by human because it is God himself who joins husband and wife in this sacred bond (Elliot, 1990: 143). Here, everyone is demanded to declare and legalize their relationship in the bond of marriage before he steps to more serious level with his mate. Besides, the people are demanded to keep their marriage till death comes. There is no reason for a man to divorce his wife and vice versa.

Following the importance to the marriage bond is the more to maintain husband's reputation. In line with common belief that a husband is the head of the family, the reputation of a husband also becomes the main standard to appraise the reputation of a family in the eye of the society. Here the husband is demanded by the society to be the representation of a family. It means that he is required to show his best performance. He is the head of the family. So, what people think and see on him also will be applied to the whole family. His reputation and quality will have an impact to the whole family. Indirectly, it also brings a new duty for wife and children to always help the head of the family in maintaining his name.

Then it is also can be found about the more that gives conduct about woman's position. Just like society that was dominated with patriarchal system, the woman in Norway experienced the inequality between man and woman. The woman was subordinated and home is defined as woman's proper place (Hedger, 1949: 704-705). A wife is demanded to give her best service toward her husband. No matter how horrible her husband characteristics, it is not wife's part to criticize and to complaint that. She is only required to do her duty like taking care of the children and household matters.

MANDERS. *To crave for happiness in this world is simply to be possessed by the spirit of revolt. What right we to happiness? No! We must do our duty, Mrs. Alving. And your duty was to cleave to the man you had chosen and to whom you were bound by sacred bond* (Ibsen, 189).

The last more gives conduct on children-parents relationship. Mostly, people in Norway believe that in domestic relation that children must respect and obey their parents (Hedger, 1949: 704-705). Besides, in *Ghosts*, a mother as the representative from parents' side is expected to be the one who gives enough care and guidance. She is expected to be the person who transmits the values and conducts of life to the children. The responsibility to raise the children up is totally in her hands.

### **The Impact of the Mores on Manders**

Manders position as a Pastor leads him to higher level of respect and the fact that the church has bargaining power in the society correlates with the increase of burdens in Manders' shoulder. He is viewed as the model for the people to behave and he is the focus of attention in the society. Then, like or dislike, this condition brings Manders in contact with public opinion. He has to create a good perception in the society in regard to his duty as a pastor since their opinion correlates to the stability of his good name. Meanwhile, to keep the stability of his name as a pastor is important for Manders since it correlates to his esteem of religious leader.

Regarding to his role in the society, there is no better way for Manders to be the ideal model of the society except by making adaptation and giving support to the mores. He has to make use of the mores as his partner in doing his work in the society. By doing this action, Manders will not only be seen as the morality keeper but he can also shape a good perception about himself in the society.

In his efforts to do both his role as a Pastor and duty to keep Pastor's reputation, he try to use the mores as his tool to give conduct of life in the society. He insists and

infiltrates that the practice of mores is something that the people cannot bargain to reach the ideal situation in the society. It is seen in his effort to support legal marriage institution. His attitude toward marriage institution meets Christian belief that the sexual union between man and woman outside the legal marriage is adultery (Elliot, 1990: 160-162). He believes that to prevent the people from committing sin, an intimate relationship between man and woman should be legalized by the institution of marriage.

MANDERS. *Then what you are speaking of are those unprincipled conditions known as irregular union!* (Ibsen, 186)

OSWALD. *What else are they to do? A poor artist and a poor girl-it cost a good deal to get married. What else are they to do?*

MANDERS. *What are they to do? Well, Mr. Alving, I will tell you what they ought to do. They ought to keep away from each other from the very beginning-that is what they ought to do!* (p. 186-187)

Besides, Manders also stands as the defender of marriage. Based on his belief that no one has right to separate two people tied in the bond of marriage, Manders is consistent to criticize and oppose those who want to break their sacred bond. The divorce is seen as an opposition toward God's words. Meanwhile, the opposition toward God's words is seen as the failure of a pastor in keeping and conducting the faith and life of the people. The failure of a pastor as the shepherd of the society may give negative precedent on the image of pastor in the social life which will always in line with the decrease of belief toward the reputation of religious leader. So, Manders as the pastor tends to see the marriage as the measuring rod of his success in doing the mission in the society.

Thus, it simply can be said that the motivation of Manders to defend the marriage is only for the image projection. The importance of public opinion to uphold the esteem of religious leader like him leads Manders to think superficially. The evidence of Manders' hidden motivation is also

portrayed in his response toward the more that gives conduct on parents and children relationship. Here, Manders insists that it is the children's duty to honor and give respect to their parents (p. 198). The pressure given by Manders above sounds illogical since he has already known the truth about Mr. Alving's past which is full of wickedness.

MANDERS. *Can you call it cowardice that you simply did your duty! Have you forgotten that a child should love and honour his father and mother?* (Ibsen, 198)

In short, Manders tends to support all of the mores because of his moral responsibility to be the perfect model of a person in his society. The demand from the society on Manders to keep the esteem and respect of pastor become reasons for him to be the supporter of the mores. Unfortunately this condition also shapes him to have paranoia toward anything that may ruin his name if he does not support the mores.

MANDERS. *No, that is just what I am thinking of. It is almost the worst part of the whole thing. The spiteful attacks and accusations—it is horrible to think of!* (Ibsen, 219)

The need of acknowledgement and also his self-interest to shape a good perception before the society support him to do this. He believes that it is the most effective way to get the sympathy and respect from the society. Unfortunately, his response to support the practice of mores does not come along with his full understanding on the essence of them. He only understands the content of mores textually. As the impact of this condition, many of his efforts in upholding the practice of the mores are done by ignoring other important aspects such as honesty and humanity.

### The Impact of Mores on Mrs. Alving

Mrs. Alving is presented as a woman with her critical and rebellious mind. Her failure in past life has led her to be more critical in responding to certain matters, including the practice of mores. It is seen on Mrs. Alving's

belief that her house condition is not ideal anymore to raise her son, and then she prefers to deviate from the common thing. She let Oswald to grow separately from his parents and this response can be seen a form of rejection toward the more practiced.

Besides, Mrs. Alving also gives her approval on Oswald who sees that the irregular union as something normal (p. 186). Indirectly, the approval shown by Mrs. Alving brings her as the one who oppose the importance of marriage bond. Then, as the result of her opposition, the position of Mrs. Alving is being cornered. She is not only exposed as a guilty mother but also exposed as the betrayer of the more in front of her own son. This situation can be seen as the impact that she has to undergo as the result of her decision.

Though it seems that Mrs. Alving's rebellious characteristic has brought her to stand on different side with the mores but in some cases she fails to be freed totally from them. It is seen when she still treats Mr. Alving as her legal husband and build an Orphanage to commemorate him. Actually she knows that her husband is not a man that she should commemorate. But she is aware that by building the Orphanage, she can keep her family reputation stable. Indirectly this can be seen as her failure to get rid of her husband shadow. This is happen as the result of society's pressure.

MANDERS. *And this is the man you are building a memorial to!*

MRS. ALVING. *There you see the power of uneasy conscience.*

MANDERS. *An uneasy conscience? What do you mean?*

MRS. ALVING. *I had always before me the fear that it was impossible that the truth should not come out and be believed. That is why the orphanage is to exist, to silence all rumors and clear away all doubt* (Ibsen, 193-194).

Her effort by sending Oswald letters that explains his husband as a good and respectable man also makes Mrs. Alving seems like a doubter. Since in one side, she hates Mr. Alving but on the different side she



has to make a lie that Mr. Alving is a great man. Besides, silence when her position as a wife is subordinated by Manders also can be seen as another evidence of her failure to free her own self from her husband hegemony

MANDERS. *I know only too well what rumor used to say of him; and I should be the last person to approve of his conduct as a young man, supposing that rumor spoke the truth. But it is not a wife's part to be her husband's judge* (Ibsen, 189).

Regarding to all of those conditions, it is clearly depicted that Mrs. Alving is positioned in non-beneficial side. She always becomes the victim in the social life. It is very rare for the society to consider and acknowledge the efforts done by Mrs. Alving. Everything is blocked by the hegemony of her husband.

Then, overall, it can be inferred that as the impact of mores' practice, Mrs. Alving's position becomes not clear. She stands in grey area. She tries to free herself from mores' pressure, but she has to ruin her own effort since she cannot really get rid of that demands. Not only that, she tries to save her son by breaking the mores but at last her effort becomes a boomerang that creates bigger distance between her and Oswald.

### **The Impact of Mores on Oswald.**

Oswald spends most of his life abroad alone. It means that he only experiences and shares less time with his family. The basic function of a family as an instrument to transmit the culture and belief also does not work properly. In regard to the condition above, most of the concept of culture in his mind is different with what believed by the society in his native land.

In viewing the more that regulates about the importance of marriage bond, Oswald also has his own opinion. His life as an artist makes him accustoms to the liberation to express.

MANDERS. *Then what you are speaking of are those unprincipled conditions known as irregular union?*

OSWALD. *I have never noticed anything particularly unprincipled about these people's lives* (Ibsen, 186).

MANDERS. *But do you mean to say that it is possible for a man of any sort of bringing up, and a young woman, to reconcile themselves to such way of living—and to make no secret of it, either? Oswald. What else are they to do? A poor artist, and a poor girl—it costs a good deal to get married. What else are they going to do?* (Ibsen, 186)

He does not see the practice of irregular union as something negative. Oswald's perspective here, indirectly, also shows his opposition toward the importance of marriage bond. He does not want the mores to limit his mind-set.

Though, in some cases he has different perspective in responding particular matters, but he still respect the relationship between children and parents. His intensive communication with his mother by using letter also strengthens his assumption. Unfortunately, the great imagination about his father fall down into ruins after the truth is revealed by his mother, Mrs. Alving. This shock causes a very significant change in the way Oswald views the relationship between children and parents.

MRS. ALVING *It is a dreadful to think of!—But surely a child should feel some affection for his father, whatever happens?*

OSWALD. *When the child has nothing to thank to his father for? When he has never known him? Do you really cling to that antiquated superstition—you, who are so broad minded in other things* (Ibsen, 225-226).

Overall, it can be concluded that the position of Oswald as a person who was deceived by his mother leads him to reject the practice of the mores. He cannot find any reason to respect his parents whenever there is no contribution given. As the impact, he has to lose his right to know the truth about his family condition. This confusion makes Oswald lose a figure that can be a role model

in his life. Both his mother and his father fail to do their role as his parents. His right as a son to get enough care and love is being ignored because of the practice of the mores.

Meanwhile, his open-minded characteristic that leads him to have different view in responding the mores leads him to be considered as an immoral person. At last, his freedom of mind, which is seen as the opposition toward conformity and morality, is being limited and imprisoned.

## Conclusion

In general all of the major characters in *Ghosts* have shown quite different response between one and another. The difference on their presentation, characteristics and background make it possible for each character to have different response toward the mores. As the consequence, each of them also undergoes various impacts in their life.

Manders who is presented as a pastor with obdurate and timorous mind treats the practice of the mores rigidly. As the impact, he deifies the practice of the mores though it may lead him to ignore other important values in life. Being different from Manders, Mrs. Alving is presented as a widow with her traumatic experience toward the mores' practice. She believes that her obedience toward mores has contribution in her failure to maintain her family life. For that background, Mrs. Alving becomes a person who stands in the grey area. Her confusion in responding to the mores finally brings more problems in her life and ruins her relationship with her son. In the meantime, Oswald who is presented as a critical person for his experience in living abroad also feels the impact of the mores practiced. He becomes alienated from the family and his right to get enough care from the parents is carried away for his mother's sake.

Therefore, it can be seen that as long as the application of mores ignores its humanity side and stay inflexible, the people might be oppressed by their presence. Unfortunately, it may lead the people to behave recklessly before finally ends in confusion and disorder in life.

At last, it can be concluded that basically the presence of mores have positive purpose for the social life of the people. But, when the practice of mores ignores the context in people's real life, they may turn as the source of problem in social life.

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