

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of the study, previous related studies, problems of the study, purposes of the study, limitation of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Youth is the time of life between childhood and adulthood. Furlong (2013) identified youth as a stage that is not fixed to a specific age ranges, nor linked to any specific activities. According to Jung (1931/1960a), youth is, or should be, a period of increased activity, maturing sexuality, growing consciousness, and recognition that the problem-free era of childhood is gone forever. Youth is a developmental stage of life. It is a period of semi-dependence between the full dependency that characterizes childhood and the independence of adulthood (Furlong, 2013, p.3).

During the postwar Japanese, American influence emerged since the beginning of 1940s. In Japanese society, the adoption of Western culture, particularly in popular culture, gives a certain cultural development in everyday life. Movies, music, fashion, even foods, all take their references from the Western

themes. With all of those influences, Japan began to construct a new identity as a Westernization country, not as a traditional Eastern country.

Erikson suggested that establishing a sense of identity has been thought of as the central task of adolescence. Erikson came up with the term “identity crisis” as a stage of personality development in adolescence. He defined this stage as “a turning point, a crucial period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential” (Erikson in Feist, 2008, p.250).

Identity includes two concepts. First is self-concept, the beliefs one has about oneself. Second is self-esteem, which involves evaluating how one feels about one’s self-concept (Gentry & Campbell, 2002, p.15). Self-esteem, or self-regard, is the overall feelings about oneself most of the time across most situations. It appears as one’s evaluation, judgment, and attitude toward the self. Rosenberg (1979) defined self-esteem as a self-reflexive attitude that results from conceiving the self as an object of evaluation.

Self-esteem and personality are likely to share common developmental roots, and examining the personality correlates of self-esteem across the life span might provide insights into the nature of self-esteem and its development (Robins, et al., 2001, p.464). It is believed that personality and self-esteem may directly influence each other, because one’s personality may influence how they perceive and evaluate themselves, in the other hand, one’s belief about themselves (self-esteem) may influence how they behave.

Psychoanalysis is a tool to understand characters' personality. Psychoanalytic criticism adopts the method of reading employed by Sigmund Freud to interpret texts. Tyson (2006) wrote that psychoanalytic concepts have become part of our everyday lives, if psychoanalysis can help us better understand human behavior, then it must certainly be able to help us understand literary texts, which are about human behavior (p.11).

The focus of psychoanalysis is the study of unconscious mind of either the author or the character in the story. Freud believed that unconscious motivates many of our action and we have little awareness of it. It is the home of instincts, wishes, and desires that direct our behavior. Psychoanalytic theory proposes that personality characteristics are mostly a reflection of the contents of the unconscious part of the mind.

Freud suggested that within each person's unconscious lies three personality structures; the id, ego, and superego. The id is working according to the pleasure principle because its function is to seek pleasure and avoid pain. The superego represents the moral and ideal aspects of personality and is guided by the moralistic and idealistic principles. The ego works to monitor both id and superego, and to find the balance between them. The ego is the rational aspect of the personality, responsible for directing and controlling the instincts. While the id and superego are unaware of the real world, the ego is aware of reality and operates in accordance with the reality principle. Each of them contributes to the development of self-identity.

Henckel (2009) denoted that “when analyzing Freud’s theory and its connection with self-esteem, it is assumed that the desire for positive self-esteem and self-regard would be housed in both the id and especially the superego”. The id, working out according to pleasure principle, would attempt to achieve a well done job and looking for appreciations. Furthermore, the superego, responsible for the need of absolute perfectionism, would strive to obtain an ideal moral self. If both of the desire of the id and superego are achieved, it would correlate with a high self-esteem. On the contrary, if there is an imbalance of id and superego, it would result with a low self-esteem. Basically, the id would at any costs, find a way to obtain self-esteem by gaining immediate please, while the superego would find more moral means to accomplish positive self-esteem. As a consequence, the ego have to find a balance between the id and the superego, and then try to discover a congruent path. However, in the cases when the ego regulates for these two desires, but is unable to motivate the individual into behaving toward the fulfillment of the desire, the person begins to feel lower self-esteem.

Psychoanalysis has been the central themes of many of Haruki Murakami’s works. As Dil wrote “previous psychoanalytic readings of Murakami's work have tended to take either the writings of Carl Jung or Jacques Lacan as their starting point.” (Dil, 2007, p.3). Haruki Murakami is a popular contemporary Japanese writer and translator. Murakami started writing in 1978 and published his first book in 1979. *Norwegian Wood* (1987) is one of Murakami’s notable works. After the publication of *Norwegian Wood*, Murakami achieved a major breakthrough and received international recognition. In 2000, Vintage Books has published the

English version of the novel, translated by Jay Rubin. The title of the novel, *Norwegian Wood*, is named after The Beatles' song, which is the favorite song of Naoko, the female character in the novel.

Norwegian Wood is a fictional coming-of-age memoir of Toru Watanabe during his college years. Back in the 1967, in the last year of high school, Toru has lost his closest friend, Kizuki, from committing suicide at the age of seventeen. In 1968, Toru accidentally met Naoko, Kizuki's former girlfriend and starts growing feelings for her. Naoko has feelings for Toru in return, but her mental health issues form an obstacle to their relationship. Naoko is overwhelmed with her life's pressure, caused by Kizuki and her elder sister's suicide several years before. Naoko then retreats from society to an isolated place. After several ups and downs conditions, she eventually hung herself in the deep woods. Naoko decided to end her life like her sister and boyfriend before her. Considering Naoko's mental health problem and the other characters' mental condition, the writer attempts to examine the characters' personality and how it is related to low self-esteem.

To support this research, the writer has provided several related studies that have been done. The first study by James, Briggs, and friends entitled "Tales From the Hard Side: A French Existentialist Perspective on Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood*" (2011). The study explores the existential struggles of the main characters in their adolescent lives and how they re-build their identities according to existentialist principles. The study compares and contrasts *Norwegian Wood* with *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky using a French existentialist/Sartrean existentialist perspective. The authors argued that Sartrean existentialist

fits well with the setting of the novel since it takes place in 1960s Japan where traditional Japanese values and concepts of identity collide with the transitory connections and sexual freedoms offered by the West (James, et al., 2011, p.129). The result of the study is only Toru and Reiko who are able to adapt to the difficulties of adolescent life and existentially re-create themselves, while Naoko, Nagasawa, and Hatsumi lack the willpower to create new identities and failed to learn from the past.

The second study is Jacquelyn Zuromski's "Getting to the Pulp of Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood*: Translatability and the Role of Popular Culture" (2004). This study discusses the translatability issues that arise regarding the novel's two English translations. The methodology used is a cultural study approach and reader response and reception theories by Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser. Zuromski compared the two translations and examined the functionality and significance of popular culture within the novel. The author argued that the novel's references of many popular culture indicating the roles of music, literature, and film in the way the character views himself and the world around him and help him to create his own identity. Therefore, the duality of the translations are examined to figure out the reasons and the results of the differences. The author believed that the reasons for the differences between the two translations lie with the issues of production and reception, also the time the novel was translated. The first English translation version by Alfred Birnbaum in 1989 is targeted for Japanese readers learning English, while the second version translated by Jay Rubin in 2000 is set for a third target audience that is people living outside

Japan. As the result, the author suggested that the Jay Rubin's version is the definitive English translation.

Another previous related study by J.P. Dil entitled "Murakami Haruki and the Search for Self Therapy" (2007). The study offers a reading of the first eleven novels by Murakami using psychoanalytic theories by Carl Jung and Jacques Lacan. In the study, *Norwegian Wood* is discussed from a Lacanian perspective focusing on Lacan's tripartite model of subjectivity. Dil argued that *Norwegian Wood* can be read as a warning about the psychological dangers of not growing up (p.136). Naoko and Kizuki are the characters who tried to avoid the pain of growing up, or in Jungian terms is *puer aeternus* or eternal children.

For previous related studies focusing in Freudian psychoanalysis, Moussa Pourya Asl's "The Shadow of Freudian Core Issues on *Wuthering Heights*: A Reenactment of Emily Bronte's Early Mother Loss" (2014) is included. In psychoanalysis, the unconscious mind or obsessional thoughts of an author can be projected into the content of the text. This study offers an interpretation of *Wuthering Heights* based on Freudian concept of mother fixation to justify Emily Bronte's emotional detachments of mother's love and her traumatic experience of mother's early death. The findings of the study show that nearly all the characters of the novel are stricken by their mother's death and suffer from certain Freudian core issues, such as; fear of intimacy, fear of abandonment, and low self-esteem. It can be concluded that *Wuthering Heights* is a projection of Emily Bronte's obsession towards a mother's role or in Freudian terms 'mother fixation'.

In regards with the previous studies above, the writer is interested to conduct a further analysis of Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis in one of Haruki Murakami's work. This study uses Freudian core issues proposed by Lois Tyson to identify the characters' psychological states. This study also uses Lacanian concept of tripartite order to discover the influence of the characters' trauma in building the characters' self-esteem.

Freud introduced six common core issues throughout many of his articles. In *Critical Theory Today* (2006), Lois Tyson has identified and discussed these six major core issues from Freud. The six major core issues are: fear of intimacy, fear of abandonment, fear of betrayal, low self-esteem, insecure or unstable sense of self, and oedipal complex (p.16). These major core issues are related to one another, one core issue can result from or can cause the emergence of another core issue. Each of the core issues might act as a defense and is related with anxiety. When the defenses are momentarily breaking down, anxiety would appear and it can reveal the core issues. Tyson believed that we are anxious in situations in which our core issues are in play (p.17).

In *Norwegian Wood*, each of the characters are suffered from trauma caused by various psychological experiences like the death of siblings, lack of parents' affection, and childhood pressure. In regard to Freudian psychoanalysis, the writer is interested to examine Haruki Murakami's novel *Norwegian Wood* to uncover the themes of low self-esteem which appears as a pattern of psychological behavior to the characters.

1.2 Research Questions

The research questions of this study are:

- 1.) What are the psychological states of the characters in Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood*?
- 2.) How do the psychological states of the characters appear in Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood*?
- 3.) How does character development influence self-esteem of the characters in Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood*?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

Based on the research questions above, this study is aimed:

- 1.) To identify the psychological states of the characters in Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood*.
- 2.) To describe how do the psychological states of the characters appear in Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood*.
- 3.) To discover the influence of character development in building the characters' self-esteem.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on portraying self-esteem of the characters in Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* using Lois Tyson's Freudian major core issues (2006) as the grounded theory. The writer choose Haruki Murakami's novel *Norwegian Wood* (1987) because the novel portray the life of Japanese youth in 1960s in a realistic way. This novel depicted each characters' struggles with their youth problems and how they deal with them in their own ways.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is conducted to give a better view to the students of English Departement in State University of Jakarta about psychoanalytic criticism in the terms of self-esteem and how it is applied to the characters of the novel. *Norwegian Wood* is a novel that has potential in psychoanalytic study. Therefore, the writer is interested to examine the novel psychoanalytically using Sigmund Freud theory.