

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

There is a strong relationship between literature and psychology since both deal with humans through various concepts, methods, and approaches. Psychology has become an important part of literature as it drives the concept of living and makes it fundamental to literature's existence.

Due to its function, psychoanalytic criticism is concerned with characters who represent symbols of existence and are presented as exceptional figures in an attempt to reveal the meaning of life. Because psychology is linked to psychoanalysis in literature, the characters are subjected to psychoanalytical approaches as well. Psychoanalysis can explain the psychological states of characters, including the patterns of relationships between them. Characters take a significant part of the story, as do their relationships and interactions in between dialogues.

Cancer, on the other hand, not only causes physical pain but also creates complex psychological obstacles for both the affected and those surrounding them. Cancer's psychological influence grows beyond those who are diagnosed; it has a profound impact on the dynamics of interpersonal relationships, showing the extent of human vulnerability and resilience. The concept of codependency emerges as a compelling lens through which to understand the intricate tapestry of

relationships among cancer victims and their loved ones within this complex web of emotions.

The term “codependency” occurs when each person in a relationship is mentally, emotionally, physically, and/or spiritually reliant on the other (Cermak, 1986). It can exist between romantic partners as well as family members and friends. It can be triggered by a poor self-image and poor set of boundaries, such as an inability to express themselves or say no. Codependency can take on numerous forms and styles, with different severity levels. It can also emerge in a wide range of relationships. Codependency takes part in psychology as something that can be analyzed and examined. This term became widely known as 2020’s pandemic outbreaks let loose. As people were in lockdown, the case of codependency flourished, as it also became one of the reasons why there was an increase in the number of divorces in that year (Relvas, et. all., 2023) Codependency, as a part of human psychology and relationships, could be included in literature and explained by psychoanalysis.

This analysis will analyze the existence of codependency between cancer’s victims in John Green’s *The Fault in Our Stars* novel. The novel was first published in 2012, telling the story of a teenage girl named Hazel Grace, who has terminal lung cancer, falling in love with Augustus Waters, a teenage boy who is a cancer survivor she met in a support group. The relationship between characters inside the story, as the researcher found, can be sensed as codependency. The nuanced portrayal of these characters by John Green allows for a profound exploration of how codependency manifests in the context of terminal illness. It

provides a one-of-a-kind opportunity to examine the complex interplay of emotions, needs, and coping mechanisms in the context of life-altering diagnoses. While the protagonists, Hazel and Augustus, find comfort in one another, their relationship is imbued with a sense of urgency and dependency, highlighting the intricate dance between love and emotional reliance in the face of approaching mortality. Furthermore, the novel explores the lives of parents and carers, whose continuous encouragement, while driven by love, frequently devolves into codependency. Their lives revolve around their sick children's needs, blurring the line between caregiving and codependency. This vivid depiction of parental codependence in the novel adds layers of complexity to the exploration of emotional interdependence among cancer victims and their families.

The previous studies regarding these characters mainly talked about fear, love, and a lack of focus on the connection and relationship between characters, as mentioned in a study by Sabrina Nur Husna in 2016 titled *Fear Reflected in John Green's The Fault in Our Stars*. As the literary world grapples with the implications of John Green's story, it becomes necessary to delve deeper into the characters' psyches, dissecting the manifestations of codependency within the context of cancer. The researcher attempts to analyze the characters' relationship, particularly their inclination toward codependency, through the concept of psychoanalysis and the theory of Freud in the conscious and unconscious. This investigation will result in a better understanding of the psychological complexities of relationships between cancer patients and their support networks,

shedding light on the multifaceted nature of human connections in the face of life's most profound challenges.

1.2 Research Question

The researcher formulated research questions as below:

- a. How is codependency manifested among cancer victims in John Green's "The Fault in Our Stars"?
- b. To what extent does codependency influence the character development and narrative trajectory of cancer victims in "The Fault in Our Stars"?

1.3 Objectives of The Study

The researcher has formulated the objective of the study as below:

- a. To find out how codependency is manifested among cancer victims and their support networks in John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars*.
- b. To know how far codependency influences the character development and narrative trajectory of cancer victims in *The Fault in Our Stars*.

1.4 Limitations of The Study

The researchers have set limitations for the study in order to focus on the issue. The study will focus on analyzing characters that are considered cancer's victims in John Green's novel *The Fault in Our Stars* characterization, psychological condition, and relationship. The aim of the study, as in having those limitations, is to fathom the codependency of characters and understand what influences it and the transformation it gives.

1.5 Significance of The Study

This research is set to contribute to further research in the literature. In an expansion, this research will contribute to adding numbers and references regarding the study of psychoanalysis, especially in the field of codependency found in literature. The study of codependency is still lacking when it comes to fiction literature. The researcher hopes that this study will add significant improvement to the field.

