

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the general information regarding the base and starting point of the study. They are background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of The Study

Emotions play a fundamental role in how individuals perceive and interact with the world around them. According to Ekman (1992) "Emotions organize and guide perception, thought, and action.". Each person develops within a complex emotional landscape, which can arise from both positive and traumatic events. When negative experiences occur, they can leave lasting emotional scars that contribute to trauma. It is important to understand the profound impact and factor of these emotional experiences, as they can expose underlying wounds that may not be immediately visible. As Herman (1992) notes, symptoms of psychological distress in traumatized individuals highlight the existence of the underlying wounds and serve to distract attention from them, highlighting the effects that trauma can have on a person's life.

According to Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (2012), "Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being". The effects of trauma can show up in many different ways, often leaving deep emotional scars that can lead to anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These challenges can ripple through a person's daily life, affecting their relationships, work, and overall sense of well-being. Understanding trauma is

essential, as it allows us to recognize the signs and symptoms that someone might be experiencing. More importantly, it highlights the need for trauma-informed care and support, system that can truly help individuals on their healing journeys.

The profound psychological impact of trauma on individuals underscores the importance of understanding not only its effects but also how it can be represented and explored in literature. Because stories often reflect the complexity of human experience, they provide a unique perspective through which we can explore the emotional and psychological struggles faced by characters. According to Cathy Caruth (1996), a leading scholar in trauma theory, literature is a powerful medium for expressing traumatic experiences that may be unspeakable or repressed, allowing readers to engage with the emotional truths behind such experiences.

One way to analyze literature is by applying various theoretical frameworks, including psychoanalysis, which highlight how literature not only reflects reality but also critiques, shapes, and deconstructs it. As Tyson (2006) emphasizes, literary theories such as psychoanalysis reveal how psychological forces shape human behavior and how literature offers a symbolic resolution to psychological conflicts. This shows that literary analysis plays a crucial role in examining the power dynamics, psychological influences, and societal values embedded within narratives.

Psychoanalysis, for instance, offers one way to explore the inner motivations and unconscious desires of characters. Eagleton (1996) states that Psychoanalysis is not only theory of the human mind, but a practice for curing those who are considered mentally ill or disturbed. This model, based on the theories of Sigmund Freud, focuses on how childhood experiences and suppressed emotions impact an individual's actions. Through Psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud especially the personality theory which include the sub theories to explore the impact of trauma and to find out what are the factors behind it, the writer analyzes the impact of trauma experienced by Ryle Kincaid in the novel.

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was one of the most influential theories in psychology. Colleen Hoover's novel *It Ends With Us* represents the tragic impact of trauma on her main antagonist character. Through Ryle's journey, Hoover explores the complex and delicate effects of trauma on the individual's mind and relationships.

Colleen Hoover, the author of *It Ends With Us*, was born in Sulphur Springs, Texas, on December 11, 1979. She is a widely recognized author with a strong fan base, and her novel *It Ends With Us* received the Goodreads Choice Award for Best Romance in 2016, [glamour.com+2en.wikipedia.org+2en.wikipedia.org+2](https://www.glamour.com/en.wikipedia.org+2en.wikipedia.org+2). The book also debuted at #1 on The New York Times Best Seller list and remained prominent for more than 90 weeks. It was adapted into a feature film that premiered on August 6 and 9, 2024, in New York and U.S. theaters respectively, people.com+3en.wikipedia.org+3ew.com+3. The novel's story continues in the sequel *It Starts With Us*, published on October 18, 2022, booknotification.com+1en.wikipedia.org+1. *It Ends With Us* published by Atria books on August 2, 2016, that explores the complex and nuanced effects of trauma on the personality and relationships of individuals.

The novel tells the story of Ryle Kincaid and Lily Bloom having a toxic relationship. In *It Ends with Us*, Ryle Kincaid, is depicted as a multi-faceted character with significant emotional baggage. From the pointed explanation above, it can be seen that the novel focuses on Ryle as having the important role to run the story. As the story progresses, step by step Ryle begins to miss the control his emotions that will turn to anger. Ultimately, when the situations getting worse, Ryle did something unforgivable to Lily.

Despite the important contributions of previous trauma studies in *It Ends With Us*, particularly those focusing on the experiences of Lily Bloom, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding the exploration of male trauma, particularly through the character of Ryle Kincaid. While studies such as those by Lidya and Ambar (2023) and Zahro (2022) provide valuable insights into female

characters and their coping mechanisms, they do not address how male characters navigate unresolved trauma and its implications for their relationships and emotional health. Additionally, existing studies using a psychoanalytic framework, such as Maghira (2022) and Septiadi (2019), often overlook the unique psychological effects of trauma on male characters in a Western context.

The present study aims to fill this gap by providing a focused examination of Ryle Kincaid, analyzing how his unresolved trauma influences his actions and interpersonal dynamics. While studies such as Padmini (2022) and Zahro (2022) explore the internal conflicts and struggles in the narrative, they do not examine into the psychological consequences of trauma for the male characters. By focusing on Ryle's emotional experiences, this study seeks to provide a new perspective on the complexity of trauma in *It Ends With Us*, thereby enhancing understanding of how trauma shapes character development and relationships in literature.

Several convincing reasons likely motivated the writer of this study to choose Ryle Kincaid as the subject of analysis in Colleen Hoover's *It Ends with Us*. Above all, Ryle Kincaid is a key figure in the book with a deep psychological complexity in his character. His behavior as an adult is heavily influenced by his troubling childhood, which included experiences of violence and emotional distress. His personality exemplifies the intricate relationship between the conscious and unconscious mind, a focal point in psychoanalytic theory. By studying Ryle, the writer can explore how Freud's ideas about several concepts of trauma to clarify his destructive actions, shedding light on his ongoing harmful behavior towards loved ones.

1.2 Research Questions

According to the background of the study, the statements of research problem can be breakdown as follows:

- a.) What impacts of trauma are portrayed in the character of Ryle Kincaid?
- b.) What factors influenced Ryle Kincaid's trauma in the novel *It Ends With Us*?

1.3 Objectives of The Study

Focused on the questions of research problem, this work intends:

- a.) To find the impacts of trauma that Colleen Hoover portrays in Ryle Kincaid's character
- b.) To examine the underlying factor that contributed to Ryle Kincaid's psychological trauma in *It Ends with Us* by Colleen Hoover

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to provide advantages, following are significant, described theoretically and practically

a.) Theoretical Advantages

Theoretically, this study is expected to give contribution to the development of Psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud especially the personality theory to provide additional knowledge and development in the field of literature in this instance related to the impact of trauma in a literary works which is novel.

b.) Practical Advantages

Practically, this study is expected to become a basis for people's thinking that trauma is not only a means of temporary feelings of stressed, but also certain another serious impact permanently, especially in the realm of psychological condition of someone. The writer expects the study can be

developed inside and outside the academic track. This study can be a reference in subsequent studies and is expected to provide the motivation to explore the process of adaptation in the field of other literature theory. Furthermore, studying the psychological phenomenon in literary work is also important for students majoring in language.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focuses on analyzing the psychological trauma experienced by Ryle Kincaid, a main character in the novel *It Ends with Us* written by Colleen Hoover. This study also explores the impact of Ryle's trauma on his behavior and relationships throughout the novel, using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory to interpret his psychological development. The research traced Ryle's character development and psychological changes, assessing how his past trauma impacts his interactions and decisions within the plot.

In the limitation of the study, this study uses the theory proposed by Sigmund Freud in analyzing the psychological aspects of Ryle Kincaid's character. As a result, the study does not explore the psychological development or trauma experienced by other characters, particularly Lily Bloom, whose experiences are also significant to the novel's overall narrative. Additionally, the study evaluated how Ryle's trauma affects his relationship with the protagonist, Lily Bloom, and how this dynamic propels the novel's narrative. This study is limited to Ryle Kincaid's trauma and does not analyze other characters or broader social themes presented in the novel *It Ends with Us* by Colleen Hoover.