

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents several sub chapters which consist of background of the study, research questions, research objectives, scope and limitation and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

This study presents an analysis of commodification of the body using the theory of Psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud. As a human, sometimes we cannot prevent a terrible thing to happen. For instance is the loss of someone loved. We can do anything to keep the things that we want even though it's not really ours. It is because the losing someone is a painful experience. It means that the loss of someone loved can make a big change in the life of the people who is left behind. It is as if life will never be the same again, because from that moment after the loss of that person everything will change forever. In this study, the loss of someone loved is caused by the act of commodification of body which causes various types of feelings/emotions which means these emotions influence her thoughts and behaviour.

Commodification is a new term that appears and is known by social scientists. Commodification is a change in the value of the form and function of a goods or services into a commodity or economic value. There is also the notion of commodification according to Louis Tyson "Commodification is an act related to objects or people in terms of their exchange value or exchange value sign" (Tyson, 2006:61). Which means that commodification is a form or action that can be carried out anywhere and at anytime by various groups of people to become something of value or has a sign of significant value.

Commodification has influenced human views on social and cultural changes and also have been making all things can be measurable reciprocally as in two books that have the same value but have their own price. High society

changing values humanity becomes a selling point then they unite the various differences that should be a hallmark of daily life. In this study, the writer discusses about commodification behaviour especially in the human body. Instead of taking human beings to be ends in themselves that ought to be respected, humans and their parts become objects and commercializes them (Marway, 2014:582). This is done to address or overcome the problems in difficulty of having a children which of course greatly affects the social and psychological life of almost all married couples because with the standard of marriage which has part of the ideal values that becomes a system as a whole.

Responding to a problem that causes self-alienation, a person will experience various emotions such as sadness, guilt, anxiety, panic and etc. In this study, the issue of commodification of the body by borrowing a womb with the lure of money made her feel alienated. Making a purchases and sales which is an important function of commodification, whose survival depends on buying and selling (Tyson, 2006:70).

Commodification of the human body is also very suitable for married couples who have been married for a long time but have not yet had children. However, this process is still widely used, sometimes this effect can be so excruciating for the biological parents and for the recipient. For the biological parent it's possible to lose a baby after doing all the agreements and the sequence of ways. The recipient who has cared for raising and giving the affection makes her even more want to have. So that after what happened it made her become alienated. Furthermore, it is also the thing that is done by Mia Warren as the main character in the novel *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng.

Every human being has their fear toward something that they are not like or afraid of. People unconsciously will do something to protect themselves in confronting or avoiding it which might create new behaviour called a defense mechanism. In Freud's definition of defense mechanism is a defense against unpleasant recollections by means of forgetting, seldom fail to raise the objection that they, on the contrary have had the experience that just the painful is hard to forget for example the recollection of an insult humiliation Freud (1930: 107).

The story of *Little Fires Everywhere* tells about the main characters, Mia Warren as a recipient of commodification. Mia is a female protagonist in a black novel. Apart from spending her time taking photos, she also lives alone in a different city from her parents. One day, Mia has made an agreement with the Joseph Ryan's family who couldn't have children, Mia is willing to lend her womb then she would be given fantastic money. Happy, sadness and guilt feeling Mia accepts the offer, so that the fertilization process has been carried out in Mia's uterus. But after the time Mia beginning to love the baby and after the baby was born she actually taking the baby away. She raised the baby moving from city to another city when she felt suspicious. This makes Mia feel alienate by her surroundings after doing commodification. The theory of Psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud is used to analysis this novel.

The storyline played by the main character by connecting emotions caused by commodification and psychoanalysis as supporting theories is the most interesting part of the novel *Little Fires Everywhere*. Moreover, the novel also brings a sensitive subject which makes the story become more interesting for the readers. This happens since the main characters do the commodification. It is because commodification is regarded as the sensitive subject by society. However, in this novel Celeste Ng can bring this sensitive topic in a different and beautiful ways. She is also talking about the theme of faith, love and hope. Through *Little Fires Everywhere* novel, the readers can learn about give a faith and have ways to cope the problem in social life. This novel inspires many people and shows the great contribution to the people with the same problem as the main character.

Related to the previous statement, the success of a novel cannot be separated from the genius background of the writer. It is Celeste Ng, the writer from American who has written a great and brilliant work like *Little Fires Everywhere* was No. 1 on *the New York Times Fiction best seller list* in April 2022. It was published in 2017 by Penguin Press. Celeste writes this novel with great detail and infuses her word with depth, emotion and conviction. Apart from being a book, this novel has also been adapted into a film. The novel takes place in Shaker Heights, Ohio, where the author grew up. The author described writing

about her hometown as a little bit like writing about a relative. Besides this successful novel, previously Celeste wrote several literature including *Everything I Never Told You* and *One Story Collected*.

Furthermore, through the story of *Little Fires Everywhere*, it can be seen that commodification is the main focus in this novel. The theory of Psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud is used to analyse the novel. Freud's theory focuses in emotion that is experienced by human. It fits in with the story because Celeste tells about women who is alienate with commodification. The author experiences several feelings of commodification as a result of the baby that was taken away by Mia Warren. This novel also shows the central need that the commodification people must meet in order to coping which are proposed by Freud. Therefore, Psychoanalysis theory is applied to analyse *Little Fires Everywhere* novel.

In conclusion, *Little Fires Everywhere* is a great novel with a deep and related to social situation from a brilliant writer that is very interesting to analyse. Furthermore, since the novel tells about the struggle of main character before and after the commodification are do, the psychological approach which focuses on commodification will be used in this study. Therefore, *Commodification of Main Character in the Little Fires Everywhere* is chosen to be the title of this study, since it is suitable with the main focus of this study.

The psychoanalysis approach is a relevant theory that would be used in another writer who analyses a different novel. The first writer is Peter Orji (2014) who analyses *The Commodification of Body Parts of Living – Looking eastward to go westward*. His study focuses on the main consideration in matching donors is body compatibility that is shown by the main character and how the main character overcomes her commodification. Second is “*Normalization and Commodification of the Body and Sexuality in Kim Kardashian and Kylie Jenner’s Instagram Post*” by Eva Leiliyanti (2020). The aim is to focus on dismantling the process of normalization body and sexuality in the lives of internet celebrities. The last is “*A Cross-Cultural Analysis of the*

Commodification and Embodiment of the Body Selves of Sex Workers” by Kristianne Anor. She focuses on how sex workers body parts are commodified.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, this study will discuss about a commodification experienced by Mia Warren to Ryan’s family and the social impact it had. This study is formulated as the following questions:

1. What are the impacts of Mia Warren’s body commodification?
2. How does Mia Warren cope with her commodification?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In line with the questions above, the purpose of this study are:

1. To elaborate the impacts of commodification by Mia Warren.
2. To elaborate the ways Mia Warren cope her commodification

1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Study

To get more understanding, scope and limitations are needed. The target of this study is commodification which is based on the psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud. The object of this study is *“Little Fires Everywhere”* novel by Celeste Ng. This study describes the impacts of commodification experience and the ways Mia Warren as the main character copes her commodification based on data taken from the novel and other sources that support this study analysis.

1.5 Significance of the Study

By analysis the novel, the significance of this study is based on two parts, theoretically and practically. First, theoretically, this study is expected to give better understanding about psychoanalysis theory with the content of the story from the *“Little Fires Everywhere”* novel by Celeste Ng. In addition, it is hoped that this research can contribute to further analysis of similar literary works and theories. Practically, this study is expected to enrich the reader’s knowledge and understanding about Psychoanalysis and commodification in life