

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of five subchapters. They are Background of the Study, Research Questions, Objectives of the Study, Significances of the Study, Scope, and Limitation of the Study.

1.1 Background of the Study

This study examines the hidden motivations and childhood trauma of Chris Chambers, a character from Stephen King's *The Body*. By analysing these psychological aspects, this study highlights how unconscious forces shape human behaviour and relationships, offering deeper insights into both literary characters and broader human experiences. This discussion is important because it highlights the ways in which literature reflects and examines the complexities of the human mind. Literature, in many ways mirrors life, it engages with society, individual psychology, and the intricate web of relationships between people and their environments. Wellek and Warren (1956) found that

“Literature is a social institution using as its medium language, a social creation ... literature represents life, and life is, in large measure, a social reality, even though the natural world or and the inner or subjective world of the individual have also been objects of literary imitation” (p. 103).

From this perspective, literature not only serves as a cultural product but also captures the complexities of human experiences. It allows readers to explore emotional and social aspects that are relevant across time, making literature a valuable way to understand both personal and shared experiences. This becomes even more insightful when we analyse characters through a psychoanalytic approach, especially when looking at their hidden motivation.

Psychoanalytic theory, developed by Sigmund Freud, suggests that much of human behaviour is controlled by the unconscious mind. In his major work *The*

Interpretation of Dreams (1913), Freud introduced the idea that hidden thoughts, repressed emotions, and early childhood experiences have a significant impact on adult behaviour. As Freud (1913, p. 76) stated, "... the source of the immorality of dreams in the germs and indications of evil impulses which pass through our minds during the day as tempting thoughts.". Dreams, in this sense, offers as a window into unconscious motivations that influence a person's actions. When applied to literature, this theory allows us to explore the psychological depth of characters, revealing their hidden motivation and childhood trauma.

Building on Freud's foundational work, his later studies continued to emphasize the importance of the unconscious in shaping human experiences. According to Freud (1913, p. 505), "That there are also unconscious psychic processes beside the conscious ones is the hotly contested and energetically defended issue.". This highlights that much of what controls human behaviour is outside our conscious awareness. This idea is important for literary analysis, as it shows that characters' actions may not just be the result of conscious decisions but also reflect unconscious drives. By analysing these unconscious drives, we can uncover what truly shapes a character's behaviour and gains a deeper understanding of their psychological complexity.

Freud's concept of repression is central to his psychoanalytic theory. According to Freud (1917, p. 12),

"I would very energetically oppose any attempt to count the principles of repression and resistance as mere assumptions instead of results of psychoanalysis. Such assumptions of a general psychological and biological nature exist... The principle of repression, however, is an acquisition of the psychoanalytic work, won by legitimate means..."

This means that the act of pushing down desires, memories, and emotions can strongly influence behaviour. This is particularly relevant in literature, where characters often suppress elements of their past, which later show up in their actions. Literature gives us a way to see how these repressed feelings

emerge, often leading to destructive or irrational behaviour, creating an opportunity for psychological analysis. Repression affects not only individual actions but also how characters interact with others, influencing both their personal struggles and their relationships.

A key aspect of Freud's psychoanalytic theory is the conflict between the ego and unconscious forces. Freud (1923, p. 51) stated, "... the super-ego displays its independence of the conscious ego and its intimate relations with the unconscious id". This shows the internal tension between the ego, which operates within reality, and the unconscious mind, which is driven by repressed desires. In literary analysis, this idea provides insight into characters' internal struggles, where their conscious choices often clash with unconscious desires. This tension results in complex character development and deeper narrative arcs, helping us better understand how psychological forces drive a character's actions.

Literary symbols are another important element of psychoanalytic analysis. According to Carl Jung (1920, p. 507), "The sexuality of the unconscious is not what it seems to be; it is merely a symbol," giving us a framework for interpreting symbols in literature. In literary works, symbols often represent the unconscious motivations and childhood trauma that characters might not openly express. By analysing these symbols, critics can reveal the psychological aspects of characters, uncovering their repressed feelings and hidden motivations.

Stephen King's *The Body*, part of his novella collection *Different Seasons*, offers a compelling illustration of how unconscious motivations, repressed desires, and unresolved childhood traumas shape a character's development. The story follows a group of four boys, including Chris Chambers, as they set out to find a missing child's body. Among them, Chris Chambers stands out as a character shaped by a difficult home life and a reputation tainted by his family's criminal background. Despite his circumstances, Chris demonstrates emotional depth and moral awareness, struggling to transcend the limitations imposed by his environment. His character reflects the Freudian concept of

unresolved childhood trauma influencing behaviour, as his past continues to shape his actions and relationships throughout the story.

Previous psychoanalytic studies have shown how repressed emotions and unconscious desires can deeply affect decision-making and relationships. For instance, Nadya Maghira and Moses Glorino Rumambo Pandin's (2022) study, *A Psychoanalytic Approach on Marayo's Behaviour as the Impact of Childhood Trauma in Yejide Kilanko's Daughters Who Walk This Path*, explores how childhood trauma from sexual abuse affects Marayo's personality and behaviour in adulthood. Their research highlights how trauma leads to low self-esteem, a fear of abandonment, and defense mechanisms like avoidance and selective memory. Similarly, Jihan Ainiyah Firdaus (2021) examines child abuse in the novel *The Pearl That Broke Its Shell*, showing how early traumatic experiences shape a character's resilience and choices. These studies provide a critical foundation for this research, which examines Chris Chambers in *The Body* through Freud's psychoanalytic lens. Chris's traumatic childhood, marked by emotional neglect and social judgment, plays a key role in shaping his behaviour and interactions with others. In this context, his repressed emotions are central to understanding his psychological state. This study will explore how Chris overcomes his traumatic childhood and how his hidden motivations have impacted his actions and relationships in the novella.

Freud's psychoanalytic theory not only helps us understand the hidden aspects of characters but also contributes to larger discussions in literary criticism. This study aims to add to the academic conversation on psychoanalytic criticism by showing how unconscious processes and early life experiences shape character development in literature. By analysing Chris Chambers through Freud's psychoanalytic theory, this study will offer insights into how early experiences, repressed feelings, and unconscious desires influence characters' actions, advancing the use of psychoanalysis in literary studies.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What childhood experiences caused Chris Chambers to have hidden motivation as represented in *The Body* novella?
2. How did Chris Chambers deal with his hidden motivation as represented in *The Body* novella?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To identify and analyse the childhood experiences that contribute to the development of Chris Chambers' hidden motivations.
2. To examine how Chris Chambers responds to and copes with his hidden motivations throughout the story.

1.4 Significances of the Study

This psychoanalytic study of Chris Chambers in Stephen King's *The Body* is important as it may offer both theoretical and practical contributions to literary analysis.

Theoretically, this study aims to improve the understanding of psychoanalytic literary criticism by providing a detailed analysis of the hidden motivation and childhood trauma that shape Chris Chambers' character. By applying Freud's psychoanalytic theory to this specific character, the study aims to build on and expand the knowledge of how psychoanalysis can be used to analyse literature. It aims to contribute to the field by clarifying how early childhood experiences caused hidden motivation that influence characters' behaviour and development within literary works.

Practically, this analysis provides a deeper understanding into Chris Chambers' character in *The Body*. This study gives readers and literary scholars a deeper understanding of his behaviour by revealing the childhood experiences that cause hidden motivation and influence his actions and decisions. This deeper understanding may help readers enjoy the novella more and promote

further discussions about how complicated characters are portrayed in literature. Additionally, the study provides an understanding of broader social issues such as family dynamics, societal judgment, and personal power, which can provide valuable perspectives on human behaviour and relationships with others.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focuses on a psychoanalytic analysis of Chris Chambers, a central character in Stephen King's novella *The Body*. Specifically, it specifically examines what causes his hidden motivations and how that shape Chris's character, behaviour, and his relationships with other character throughout the story. By applying psychoanalytic literary criticism, this research seeks to provide deeper insights into the psychological complexities of Chris Chambers' character and contribute to a broader understanding of how childhood experiences affect personality development in literary characters.

However, the study has several limitations. First, it exclusively employs psychoanalytic theory for character analysis, leaving out other literary approaches, such as Marxism or feminist theory, which could offer additional insights. Second, the analysis is confined to the content of *The Body* and does not consider interpretations beyond the novella. This study focuses solely on Chris Chambers rather than the entire ensemble of characters, relying on textual evidence from the novella itself, including Chris's utterances, dialogues, and the narrator's descriptions of him, as well as relevant secondary sources such as literary criticisms and essays. Lastly, because psychoanalytic criticism is inherently interpretative, the findings of this study are subjective and may vary depending on individual perspectives or academic interpretations. Consequently, the results are specific to Chris Chambers in *The Body* and may not apply to other characters or works.