

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Post-traumatic stress disorder, commonly abbreviated into PTSD, is a mental health condition that is triggered by a frightening event and involves strong feelings and thoughts about the trauma. PTSD disorder is a condition that tends cause sufferers to feel anxious and fearful when remembering the traumatic event. This can even trigger some PTSD symptoms, which include flashbacks, nightmares, excessive anxiety, and avoidance of situations reminiscent of the trauma. The novel Theater of War depicts the devastating psychological effects of war, poor economic conditions, and political.

In Andrea Jeftanovic's novel *Theatre of War*, the character of Tamara portrays an experience that is highly relevant to the factors of PTSD. Tamara is a character affected by the trauma of her war experience, reflecting how traumatic events can shape her personality and behavior, anxiety symptoms that occur after a person has been exposed to a traumatic event create feelings of horror, helplessness, or fear, and this emotional disturbance is experienced by a person after experiencing a traumatic event (Erlin and Sari, 2020). Tamara struggled with painful memories and her inability to continue living a normal life. She was often trapped in memories of painful events, resulting in traumatic memories of bad events she had experienced. This shows how trauma can interfere with daily life and social relationships. These criteria provide evidence of the diagnostic importance of PTSD in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM 5), which underwent a revision in 2013 by the American Psychiatric

Association (APA). PTSD is no longer categorized as an anxiety disorder. PTSD is classified in a new category, trauma and stress-related disorders, which have previously been triggered by some traumatic event.

PTSD from war and displacement has a significant impact on daily life, especially in severely traumatized individuals like Tamara, and can cause psychological disorders that affect one's ability to function normally in society. Tamara, a child victim of war, experienced symptoms such as nightmares, excessive anxiety, and difficulty trusting others. This reflects how past trauma can stay with an individual and affect personal relationships within the family and in society. In the context of society, Tamara's PTSD illustrates how literature can be a medium for understanding traumatic experiences and their impact on everyday life. This impact not only affects Tamara's quality of life individually, but also her relationships with others, as she finds it difficult to trust people, feels alienated, and has difficulty forming healthy relationships

The novel depicts Tamara's struggle with inherited trauma, emotional neglect, and the challenges of growing up in a conflict environment characterized by poverty and environmental and economic instability. It presents some of the internal conflicts that Tamara experiences from the perspective of a child who feels neglected by her family. By exploring Tamara's character through the lens of PTSD, it is possible to see how a child's psychological state is affected when experiencing the same thing in community life. With the war still going on, children are no exception this trauma, which can contribute to a better understanding of trauma in literature. In conclusion, research on PTSD in the novel *Theatre of War* provides critical insights into the psychological

consequences of war-induced trauma, while ensuring greater awareness and understanding of mental health issues in society.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Through the perspective of Tamara as a child, it is possible to see how memories and trauma not only shape everyday life, but also shape the way individuals interact with the world around them. As such, this statement of the problem will explore how PTSD influences Tamara's character development and how it affects her social interactions. Therefore, the following questions are relevant to this issue:

1. What are the trigger factors for PTSD on Tamara in Andrea Jeftanovic's novel *Theatre of War*?
2. How does Tamara's PTSD affect her social relationships as a result of the trauma she experiences in the novel?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Through Tamara's perspective as a child, it is possible to see how PTSD not only affects her daily life, but also shapes her character development and social interactions. Therefore, this study has two aims:

1. To identify the trigger factors for PTSD on Tamara in Andrea Jeftanovic's novel *Theatre of War*.
2. To analyze how Tamara's PTSD affects her highlight the social relationship impact of her trauma in the novel.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of this research focuses on Tamara's experiences as a child character aged 5-13 years, including the factors that contributed to the development of PTSD, as well as its impact on her social interactions and daily life. Through an in-depth psychological and emotional analysis of Tamara's character development, this study aims to understand how her traumatic experiences shape her perceptions and interactions with those around her. The impact of PTSD on Tamara's social relationships in the novel, such as Tamara's interactions with her peers and family members, is often influenced by her mental state. Therefore, this study will examine how Tamara's fears, anxieties and emotional experiences affect her ability to communicate form healthy relationships, how her perceptions and emotional reactions affect the quality of these relationships.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research has important implications in the fields of literature and psychology by examining the portrayal of PTSD in Andrea Jeftanovic's novel *Theatre of War*, by analyzing the character of Tamara, this research provides a greater understanding of how trauma is portrayed in literary works. Through the perspective psychology of literature, it can be examined how trauma and its effects on a child named Tamara are explored also reflected in the plot, characterization, and language style of the novel. It can also examine how literary works become a site for reflection on traumatic experiences, their impact on individuals, the real world of trauma in societies affected by war and conflict that trigger trauma.

This research is particularly relevant in the current context where PTSD and its effects are increasingly recognized as an important social issue, offering a literary perspective on trauma that complements psychological research. It also highlights the role of literature in fostering empathy and understanding, making a tangible contribution to the understanding and appreciation of literary works from a deeper psychological perspective. Ultimately, this research aims to discuss mental health in literature and its relevance in real-world issues.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Psychology of Literature

Psychology of Literature is a literary work that is believed to reflect psychiatric processes and activities (Minderop, 2010: 54). In this context, the novel describes how Tamara's mental state as a child experiences PTSD due to the war she experienced and its impact on her social environment. Through the perspective psychology of literature, we can see how Tamara's psychological process that literary works can be a means of her psychological condition, and understand that this depiction is not just a fictional narrative, but also represents the psychological reality experienced by war victims, especially children.

Andrea Jeftanovic's novel *Theatre of War* chronicles the emotional journey of Tamara, a young child grappling with the psychological repercussions of her traumatic experiences. As the daughter of an immigrant from the former Yugoslavia, she is caught up in the psychological fallout from her parents and the conflicts affecting her family. Psychological analysis of Tamara's life reveals a history of stress and trauma, which have had a profound impact on her interactions with others and her behavior as a child, resulting in long-term effects that persist into adulthood.

The intersection between literature and psychology is evident in the study of a child's experience of trauma and stress leading to the development of PTSD. Therefore, a psychology of literature approach is considered appropriate to understand the psychological condition and its effects on a child, Tamara, the

main character who experiences PTSD in the novel *Theatre of War*. Psychology might be defined as the study of human behavior (Hilgard et al, 1991). The psychological approach utilized in this study aims to ascertain the trauma factor and its impact on the character development of Tamara, a child figure in the novel *Theatre of War*.

2.2 Mental Disorder

Disorder generally refers to a condition that disrupts a person's normal physical, mental, or emotional functioning. In medical and psychological contexts, it is often associated with a pattern of symptoms that cause dysfunction in underlying psychological, biological, or developmental processes. Disorders are usually associated with distress or impairment in important areas. In this case, a mental disorder is defined as changes in thought patterns and emotions that easily interfere with daily activities due to significant disturbances in the brain.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental disorder condition that often occurs in people living in conflict-affected environments. It can develop after exposure to a highly threatening or terrifying event. PTSD can manifest as avoidance, dissociation, and social withdrawal, behaviors that greatly hinder a person's ability to build healthy relationships. Other factors, such as abuse, poor economic conditions, genetic inheritance, cultural differences, and habits, can also cause a child to feel traumatized also eventually develop PTSD.

2.3 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Trauma in children has serious long-term consequences, including the potential for the development of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), (Courtois

and Ford, 2009). Childhood trauma can have a profound and lasting impact on mental health, particularly in the form of PTSD. In this case, as a child living in an unsafe environment, Tamara often exhibited symptoms such as nightmares, avoidance, and excessive anxiety that interfered with her daily life, including at home also in her social relationships. Trauma factors such as traumatic events, neglect, and her family's genetic factors may have led to the development of PTSD in Tamara. Her upbringing in an environment where her parents had PTSD due to the war had a significant impact, especially the behavior of her father who was still stuck in the war even though the family had migrated to another country that was not affected by the war. However, the effects of this PTSD were still passed on from her parents, exacerbated by the unsafe and tense atmosphere of the home, thus contributed to the psychological development of the child, Tamara.

From psychology of psychology perspective, the novel *Theatre of War* provides an in-depth look at how trauma and PTSD can affect a child's life. Tamara's trauma affects not only her current mental state, but also her overall psychological development, which in turn affects her mental health as an adult. PTSD can affect a child's ability to establish safety, trust, and healthy relationships with others in their social environment. Andrea Jeftanovic uses powerful narrative and symbolism to depict Tamara's inner struggle also the role of literature in revealing the complexity of human experience.

Tamara experiences PTSD as a result of several psychological, social, and genetic factors. One of the main factors is her traumatic childhood experiences, including violence and loss. According to Barlow (2017), trauma

experienced at a young age can disrupt a child's emotional and cognitive development, increasing the risk of PTSD. Tamara witnessed and experienced frightening events, which led to a disturbing sense of alienation and disregard, which is a hallmark of PTSD.

2.3.1 The Factors of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

According to the National Center for PTSD, anyone at any age can develop PTSD. Several factors can increase the likelihood of someone experiencing PTSD, such as experiencing a traumatic event that is very intense or lasts for a long time. According to psychologists such as Judith Herman in his book *Trauma and Recovery* (1992), events that pose a threat to life or physical integrity can be a major trigger for PTSD. Everyone has triggers for trauma sensitivity based on factors such as genetics, personality, and previous adverse experiences. In this story, Tamara may have a higher psychological vulnerability because of previous traumatic experiences or family influences that have shaped how she responds to those experiences. Family history contributes a person's vulnerability to PTSD following trauma (Kessler et al. 1995). This vulnerability allows traumatic events to more easily trigger severe PTSD disorders. It also affects the events that shatter his psyche, thus creating an inability to continue living normally.

Yehuda (2007) states that psychological and social factors interact with genetic factors in an individual's life to influence the development of PTSD, indicating a relationship between these factors. Overall, both psychological, social, and genetic factors interact to influence the development of PTSD. Therefore, it is important to understand how these three factors contribute

Tamara's experience of PTSD in the novel in order to help her minimize the negative effects. In the novel *Theatre of War*, Tamara's journey illustrates the complexity of the recovery process, which is not only dependent on her personal psychological issues, but also heavily influenced by the social environment and family harmony surrounding her traumatic experience. Evans et al. (2013) suggest that support from family and friends may be protective against the development of PTSD following a traumatic event.

Overall, psychological, social, and genetic factors interact to influence the development of PTSD. In this study, an analysis of Tamara's character can provide insight into how these three factors play a role in her experience, as well as how the interaction between trauma, social, and familial support can affect her healing process. In addition, this study aims to examine how Tamara's PTSD affects her relationships with other characters in the novel, highlighting the social implications of her trauma. By examining the interplay between her psychological struggles and her interactions with others, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the broader social implications of trauma as portrayed in the novel.

2.3.1.1 Psychological Factors

Any individual who experiences a traumatic event over a long period of time can influence the development of PTSD, which is closely related to psychological factors (Ehlers and Clark, 2000). Psychological factors include self-defense mechanisms in which memories of the traumatic experience persist and interfere with the individual's ability to move on. This can lead to symptoms such

as flashbacks, nightmares, and persistent anxiety. Personal factors such as previous exposure to trauma, age and gender can influence whether an individual will experience PTSD. Post-traumatic events are also important, and stress is the leading cause of PTSD.

An important psychological factor is the coping strategy used by Tamara. Coping strategies are efforts a person makes to manage stressful or threatening situations by changing behavior or understanding through thoughts, experiences, and senses. The goal is to reduce or eliminate stress and gain a sense of safety. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1985), individuals experiencing stress can use coping strategies to deal with stressful situations. Tamara's inability to cope with feelings of anxiety and fear is the source of her repetitive cycle of trauma, which exacerbates her PTSD symptoms.

2.3.1.2 Social Factors

Tamara can provide insight into how these factors played a role in her experience and how social interactions also relationships may have influenced the development of PTSD. Tamara's character may have experienced the effects of a lack of social support, resulting in her inability to cope with the trauma she experienced. In other words, the combination of childhood trauma and stress can carry over into adulthood, even if left unconsciously. In this novel, the tense and violent social context creates an unsafe atmosphere for Tamara that exacerbates the effects of her trauma. Ultimately, it is important to understand that these complex social factors interact and shape Tamara's traumatic experience.

Brewin et al (2009) in his book *A Cognitive Theory of PTSD* explains that low social support can exacerbate PTSD symptoms. Lack of social support can exacerbate PTSD symptoms and complicate Tamara's recovery process. Without adequate social support, individuals tend to feel isolated and find it more difficult cope with PTSD symptoms. The long-term effects of PTSD on a child's social relationships include difficulties in building trust. Traumatized children tend to be more wary of others and have difficulty opening up to friends or adults around them. This could affect Tamara's ability to form strong, healthy attachments in the future. In this case, it is important for those around her to understand the challenges these children face in order provide appropriate support.

2.3.1.3 Genetic Factors

Genetic factors play a significant role in the development of PTSD, as individuals with a family history of mental disorders, such as anxiety and depression, have a higher risk of developing PTSD. Overall, an understanding of genetic factors in PTSD provides important insights for character analysis in the literature. Individuals with imbalanced levels of stress hormones, such as cortisol and adrenaline, are more susceptible to PTSD. These hormones play a role in the "fight or flight" response to stressful situations.

Genetic factors can be passed from parent to child. A study by Gelernter (2015) found that genetic variations in genes involved in stress response may increase the risk of PTSD. This suggests that individuals with certain genetic variants may be more susceptible to the negative effects of traumatic experiences. Traumatic experiences experienced by parents can leave chemical marks on genes

that can affect subsequent generations. This process is known as DNA methylation, where changes in the DNA structure can be passed on to the next generation. Children with a family history of stress and trauma may be at greater risk of developing similar disorders for example, children born to parents who have experienced severe trauma, such as war, are more likely to exhibit anxiety and depression. Genetics can influence how children respond to their environment, and if they inherit genetic vulnerabilities from their parents, they are more susceptible to the negative effects of an unsupportive environment.

2.3.2 The Impact of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder on Tamara's Social Relationship

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can have a significant impact on the social relationships of children, including Tamara in Andrea Jeftanovic's novel *Theatre of War*. Between the ages of 5 and 13, children like Tamara are at a crucial stage of development when social relationships and interactions with peers also family are very important. When a child experiences PTSD, it can interfere with their ability to form and maintain healthy relationships, which in turn can affect their emotional and psychological well-being. One of the major effects of PTSD on social relationships is the child's tendency to become alienated or withdrawn from others. According to Garcia (2021), children who experience PTSD may show distrust of others, which can hinder the formation of social bonds. Children with PTSD often have difficulty expressing emotions, are confused, and feel uncomfortable in social situations. In Tamara's case, her inability interact with peers can lead to loneliness and dissatisfaction in her social relationships.

Tensions in the family worsened over time communication between Tamara and her parents suffered. Neither the parents understood or supported her in an appropriate way, which could worsen her mental state and the development of social interactions, such as the ability to socialize, communicate, also resolve conflicts. The stressful environment at home may cause Tamara to blame herself for family's problems, making her feel responsible for the circumstances. This can lead to feelings of guilt and shame, further exacerbating her mental health. Relationships with close relatives and intimate partners are often especially difficult, this conflicted after the traumatic event (Cook et al, 2004).

PTSD in children like Tamara can have a significant impact on relationships, as the trauma causes emotional withdrawal, difficulty trusting others, and increased anxiety, which can create barriers to forming secure attachments and maintaining healthy interactions with those around them. The lack of effective ways to communicate about the psychology of building good relationships was difficult given the poor condition of Tamara's home, which made it difficult for her to communicate with other family members. As a result, relationships that should have provided comfort and security became an additional source of stress also confusion for Tamara, complicating her social relationships. In addition, the impact of PTSD on Tamara's relationships may extend to her intimate relationships as she ages.

Tamara's PTSD as a result of her traumatic experience has affected not only her mental health, but also her social interactions and relationships with peers, family, and neighbors. This impact can be seen in several areas, including communication, trust, and the ability to form healthy relationships. In fact,

causing Tamara to experience difficulties in communicating with others, when she tries to interact with her friends, she feels anxious or confused, which can hinder her ability to engage in conversation or social activities. This may lead to misunderstandings and alienate Tamara from her peers, which may eventually exacerbate the loneliness and isolation she has unknowingly built up. Tamara found it difficult to trust others, including her friends and family members. This inability prevented her from forming deep and meaningful relationships, so she may have felt alienated and lacked the social support necessary to overcome the difficulties.

2.4 Related Studies

In the analysis of PTSD in this research, several literatures with related topics were collected and studied as further information about PTSD in the characters in the novels studied. So that it can be used as a comparison of the research focus of the three titles, and can be seen from several aspects, including the object of research, the approach used, and the context of trauma experienced by the characters in the novel.

The first study, in the thesis conducted by Azizah (2023) PTSD as a Result of The Childhood Trauma Experienced by Ellice in *The All Her Little Secrets* Novel, explains that Ellice's character experiences PTSD, but in the context of frequent childhood trauma such as domestic violence, bullying, and traumatic experiences due to violence in the community. This study seeks to explore how childhood trauma affects psychological development due the violence she has witnessed and experienced firsthand. The study not write a literary detail the approach, but rather focuses on psychology analyzing the causes and effects of

childhood trauma on Ellice's PTSD. This study emphasizes the social and environmental factors that contribute to traumatic childhood experiences. This research can further explore how childhood trauma shapes Ellice's personality and affects her relationships with others. Ellice's trauma focuses more on childhood experiences that may be more personal and intimate in nature. This could include various forms of abuse or neglect experienced in family or social settings, which could provide a different perspective on how trauma affects a hidden child's psychological development and complicated relationships with those around her. The focus of this research will be more on the impact of childhood trauma on Ellice's behavior and choices in her adult life.

Secondly, Alnava Puti Avinda (2023) in her thesis titled *The Influence of PTSD on the Main Character's Personality in the Novel Girl Against the Universe* by Paula Stokes, using the theory of psychoanalysis initiated by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). This research focuses on the main character, Maguire, who experiences PTSD as a result of a personal trauma, namely a tragic accident that claimed the lives of his family. The purpose of the study is to examine how PTSD affects Maguire's personality, behavior, and emotional development throughout the story. Additionally, this study discusses how traumatic events can linger in the victim's subconscious and how therapy affects his personality. This research uses the psychoanalysis approach proposed by Sigmund Freud. Freud developed psychoanalysis as a theory of personality that emphasizes the influence of unconscious mental processes, the importance of sexual instincts, and the effects of early childhood.

To analyze the impact of PTSD on the traumatic experiences that affected Maguire's personality, behavior, and social interactions. This approach helps to explore the internal dynamics experienced by the protagonist in the healing process. The context of the trauma experienced by Maguire suffered from post-traumatic stress after several accidents happened to her and the people around her. The first trauma was a car accident, this accident had a huge impact on Maguire's psychology as he lost his father, brother and uncle in this accident. The next accident was a roller coaster accident and the last accident was a fire in a neighbor's house, because of this accident Maguire felt guilty towards the people around him who were injured. Because of his PTSD, Maguire has difficulty interacting with people because he always puts himself down and blames himself for all the bad things that happen to people around him. This trauma has affected Maguire's personality, where he has become introverted. But with the support of her mother, Maguire fought overcome the trauma by going to therapy and started living a new life.

Thirdly, a thesis by Malisa Surayya MS (2022) entitled Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Kathleen Glasgow's Novel in *Girl In Pieces*, explains the long-lasting effects of childhood trauma that continue into adulthood. The subject of this research is the main character, Charlie Charlotte Davis, who experiences PTSD due to personal trauma, such as seeing her father commit suicide, and self-harm. The focus of her research is how PTSD affects her personality, behavior, and bad habits of self-harm by hurting herself, getting drunk, also using drugs. All of these things he did get rid of bad memories and to feel calm when he did them. This traumatic experience greatly affected their psychology for the worse plus

their low economic condition. This study uses a psychological approach to analyze the effects of PTSD on Charlie. This approach allows researchers to examine the psychological aspects of the character, such as depression, avoidance symptoms, mood, and cognitive change symptoms. By analyzing the changes in Charlie's behavior, emotions, and thinking in response to the trauma he experienced, it can be seen that he experienced significant changes due to a childhood trauma that he could not forget, triggering the onset of PTSD.

The trauma Charlie experienced was personal and related to the death of his father, who committed suicide in front of him when he was a child. The incident occurred when Charlie was walking to school on his first day and saw his father kill himself near the river without being able to do anything to stop his father's actions. This triggered his trauma as a child, and as an adult he self-harmed by hurting himself, getting drunk, and using drugs. He did this to forget the trauma and make himself feel calm, even if it was only temporary. He always blamed himself for his father's death by not saying anything or stopping his father's suicide when it happened in front of him and he was a witness. Charlie matured into an introvert and ignored others, so he always had nightmares about the incident and always wanted to die like his father.

This study focuses on Tamara as a child with PTSD due to the traumatic experience of war, which has an impact on conflict in the home. This also causes Tamara to experience abandonment, nightmares because her parents have a history of previous trauma that is passed on to Tamara through genetics. This research seeks to understand how the trauma affects Tamara's psyche and how this is reflected in the narrative also characterization in the novel, thus affecting the

psychology of a child into adulthood. Literary psychology is the approach used to analyze how PTSD is experienced by Tamara and how it is expressed in the literary work, delve deeper into the psychological process and its effects on a child due to war.

Psychology and literature examine each other's lives that have a psychological connection, as in the character of Tamara as a child living in a bad environment and family. Therefore, literature can be a reflection of the psychological condition of a child character. The trauma that Tamara experiences is most likely related to a war or conflict situation, which provides a broader context of the social and political impact on a child. It also makes children feel abandonment, nightmares, and an unhealthy environment when in a war situation. The research also explains how literature is used to depict the symptoms of PTSD, the impact on the child's psychological state and social relationships.