

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Psychological trauma can be broadly defined as one or several events whose characteristics can change the psyche of the subject and mental cohesion (Perrotta, 2019). The original word trauma comes from ancient Greek which can be interpreted as "to harm or to damage". There are two types of traumatic events, the first is single or can be called type 1 and then accumulatively / repeatedly or can be called type 2, and if it is not handled properly, the condition of the trauma can become chronic very quickly and cause subject disturbance which include feelings of hopelessness, feelings of emptiness, despair, temperament, self-injury, and avoidance or denial of facts that have already happened.

From some of the explanations above, we can see that one of the causes of trauma is sex abuse or sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination that includes gender harassment including verbal and nonverbal behavior that conveys hostility, objectification, exclusion, unwanted sexual attention.(Johnson et al., 2018), such behavior involves sexual degradation, sexist material, jokes and comments, or other acts experienced by a person because of his or her gender that ridicules, threatens, or demeans the individual. Sexual harassment can occur anytime, anywhere and there are no exceptions to this.

Some places where sexual harassment often occurs are schools, workplaces, open public places such as traditional markets and bus stops, even in public modes of transportation such as buses, trains, and online drivers. Most of the victims of sexual harassment are women of all ages (Foa, 1997), it could be children, teenagers, adults and even in some cases there are elderly people who are victims of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment will obviously cause trauma to the victim, of course there will always be an imprint on the victim of sexual harassment, because there is pain and fear of this happening. The pain and trauma of the victim must have been very impactful for them, so that it is difficult to let go and forget the pain that exists.

Based on the causes, examples and explanations above, there are several examples of literary works in the form of novels that describe on sexual harassment which causes trauma to the victim, for example “*Lolita*”, “*Beloved*”, “*The Imaginary Domain: Abortion, Pornography and Sexual Harrassment*” and “*My Dark Vanessa*”. Based on some of the examples of the novels above, I took the novel *My Dark Vanessa* by Kate Elizabeth Russell to show and detail sexual harassment which causes psychological trauma to the victim.

My Dark Vanessa is a Kate Elizabeth Russell's first book/novel, debuted in March 2020 and quickly on to the top of the New York Times bestseller list. The story of a 15-year-old girl who has a sexual relationship with her male English teacher is told in this psychological thriller. The title of the book, *Pale Fire*, is a reference to Vladimir Nabokov's poem-novel of the same name. Russell has confessed that some of the book was inspired by her personal experiences. This

study guide pertains to the 2021 UK paperback release of the 4th Estate by HarperCollins.

This story begins with a girl who is 15 year-old named Vanessa Wyze who experiences psychological trauma caused by her age difference relationship with her own English teacher named Jacob Strane and also because of sexual harassment. All of these disgusting, sad and embarrassing experiences that Vanessa experienced in the past caused quite a deep trauma even when she reached adult. All of this was experienced when he started at Scholarship School, right where she first met Jacob Strane, Strane uses literature to establish a connection with Vanessa, a gifted poet. Strane is a perceptive observer of human nature and an experienced predator with a chant for young, intelligent, vulnerable female students. Vanessa gains a false sense of agency from him because of his emotional openness and vulnerability, which she lacks in other areas of her life. She also has mixed feelings about Strane, though. Vanessa occasionally finds his age and needs a rep, but he has never known power like his.

In accordance to statement that has been written above, the writer wants to analyze Trauma to women in the novel *My Dark Vanessa*, or more focused on the main female character in the novel, Vanessa. The trauma that Vanessa got in the past was when she started to meet and have a relationship with her male English teacher.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the statement and background that has been written, it has some problems which can be stated as follows:

1. What are the main causes of the trauma experienced by Vanessa Wyze in Kate Elizabeth Russell's *My Dark Vanessa*?
2. What are the form of trauma Vanessa Wyze experienced in Kate Elizabeth Russell's *My Dark Vanessa*?
3. What are the effects of the trauma experienced by Vanessa Wyze in Kate Elizabeth Russell's *My Dark Vanessa*?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is to address the research question that is outlined in the statement of the trouble, the goals are laid out as follows:

1. To find out the causes of Trauma towards Vanessa Wyze in Kate Elizabeth Russell's *My Dark Vanessa*.
2. To find out the form of Vanessa Wyze's Trauma in Kate Elizabeth Russell's *My Dark Vanessa*
3. To find out the effects of the trauma experienced by Vanessa Wyze in Kate Elizabeth Russell's *My Dark Vanessa*

1.4 Scope Of The Study

The limit of the study is to discuss the Trauma of woman in Kate Elizabeth Russell's *My Dark Vanessa* and the impactful effect of Trauma which related to the women in Russell's *My Dark Vanessa*.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this study will determine the causes and impact of the trauma in Kate Elizabeth Russell's *My Dark Vanessa*. The trauma experienced by the woman will have a huge impact in the future, and the impact is clearly a bad or negative impact. Starting from personal life, work, education and even romance are some of the part of life that will be greatly affected by the trauma that was experienced before.

As a result, researcher will provide benefits for all women, from women who have become trauma patients (have experienced incidents of sexual harassment to experience trauma) as references, female teenager's as references and as material to always be aware of the risks, impacts and causes of trauma caused by sexual harassment, and also parents who have teenage daughters who are moving into adulthood. Especially in the millennial era like today where everything is easy accessed by internet, many young people are

easily influenced by trends and what they see on social media without filters and knowledge to understand the negative effect in the future.

1.6 Approach of the study

By considering the context in which a work of literature was produced, scholars and critics aim to gain deeper insights into the meaning and purpose behind the text. They explore how historical events, cultural movements, and prevailing ideologies shape the themes, characters, and narrative techniques employed by the author.

Beside that, the data that researcher used for this study is qualitative method. Qualitative method frequently focuses on specific people, phenomenon, occasions, and contexts, it naturally lends itself to an idiographic style of analysis (Gerring, 2017). As for the reason, the researcher chose a qualitative approach because in this study, descriptive data were generated from data gathered from writings that related to the research object.

The researcher used Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory to conduct as a tool for analyzing each subject of the story, the researcher applied Freud in his book *The Aetiology of Hysteria* (Freud, 1971). Freud thought that all hysterical symptoms were brought on by sexual "abuse or molestation" during the

past/childhood, which left unconscious memories. Later, during adolescence, when exposed to situations that reminded the victim of the original trauma, those memories were brought to the surface.

Trauma repeatedly interferes with the ability to deal with it ,other challenges and victims of “reaping suppressed material as current experience”, this phenomenon is called "forced repetition" (Bulut, 2019)

The researcher conducted the study by applying the following steps. First he read Kate Elizabeth Russell’s *My Dark Vanessa*. Second, he identified the cause,impact and form of trauma experienced by women in Kate Elizabeth Russell’s *My Dark Vanessa*. Third for the data he found from identifying text of the novel relating to the cause,impact and form of trauma, the researcher analyzed the data based on Freudian’s trauma theory.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This research will be divided into 5 chapters, each chapter has its own main point. First chapter I is Introduction, in this chapter point discussed are the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, approach of the study and finally the organization of the study.

Chapter II contains the synopsis of *My Dark Vanessa* and the biography of Kate Elizabeth Russell.

Chapter III contains about reviews of related literature. It contains previous studies, literature, novel, psychoanalysis, trauma, the impact of trauma towards the women and the women in the world today's era especially in the modern era.

Chapter IV contains findings and discussion, It contains the causes trauma, the form of the trauma and last is the effect of the trauma.

Chapter V contains conclusion and suggestion. It contains the the end of the study and its summary as well as suggestions for readers and also future researchers who will use the same object.