

Traumatic Experience in the Novel “ The Perks of Being a Wallflower” By Stephen Chbosky’s (1999) : Individual Psychology

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Abstract

This research investigates an experience of past trauma experienced by the main character in the novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky's. Charlie as the heroine, a 17-year-old boy, has just entered high school. He is the youngest of a family of three, two boys, one girl He is a very quiet and shy child who makes him have no friends. Her strangeness made friends at her school bully her. The researchers' goal is to investigate the main symptoms of trauma and describe the trauma experiences in this novel. The researcher's method is descriptive qualitative. Supporting data sources include the novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, online journals, theses and articles. The author refers to individual psychological theories that are used to analyze data. From the results of the author's analysis, that there are trauma experiences in the past that require him to find people to tell stories about the problems he is facing.

Keyword: individual psychology, traumatic experience, the Perks of Being a Wallflower

INTRODUCTION

This study discusses the traumatic problem of Charlie, as the main character in the novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky (1999). The trauma experienced by the main character can change a person's character. According to Giler (1999), traumatic events are one of the triggers that cause tremendous stress and hinder the ability to overcome them. When children who experience trauma are suspicious of the people around them and find it difficult to have social relationships. Besides the fact that traumatic experiences affect the mind, they also affect the individual's physiology. In addition, mental health is not as important as physical health, especially for a teenager. Mental health plays an important role in adolescence, which is the transition from childhood to adulthood, where many changes occur, such as: B. physical, hormonal, cognitive or intelligence, emotions and behavior. A common mental health problem is depression or anxiety. Children, young people, and adults need support and help from others to cope with anxiety after a traumatic event. Many cases of suicide, mental disorders (crazy) experienced by adolescents and children due to depression and lack of support needed. From the facts of the case above, the writer proposes a survival story because it is closely related to the life of young people, because adolescence is very difficult and there are problems that must be overcome. Every teenager has different problems and also different problem-solving events. The problems at hand require solutions aimed at adapting to more severe problems and loads.

The same topic is addressed in other works by scholars who have examined this novel. There are two parts to the study of silent flower characteristics. specifically, literature and language studies. The advantages of having a low-key interest in language learning were the subject of two studies. In the meantime, a literature review was conducted by twelve additional researchers on *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. First, the novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* is studied by two academics. Atmaja (2013) looks into the role that auxiliary capital plays in filmmaking. In Sarana's novel, Saputra (201) examines prepositions that silence someone. Second are literary studies researchers who investigate research issues. Based on psychological research, researchers investigate research issues. In a movie, Putri and Nurhamidah (2012) investigate Charlie's anxieties and defense mechanisms. The psychology of objects is basically broken down into two parts. Special psychology and general psychology are the two subfields of psychology. The study of human psychological functions that are reflected in general behavior is known as general psychology. Personality psychology, educational, social, developmental,

community, and clinical psychology, among others, are examples of specialized fields of psychology that focus primarily on human physical activity. Linda, 1988:8). In addition, individual psychology is based on six fundamental ideas, according to Adler: The fictional finalism, inferiority and compensation complexes, the pursuit of excellence, social interests, lifestyle, and the creative self are all examples. This book covers six fundamental ideas related to personal psychology. The researcher applied Alfred Adler's theory of individual psychology to these findings. This theory works well for figuring out the main character and the supporting character, as well as how the supporting character helps the main character grow. The researchers have discovered a few.

Through various investigations, our researchers found that Charlie's past was not easy and made him different from other kids his age, which made the author very curious about what made him shy and how to overcome the events of his past. Based on these facts, the researchers named the study *Overcoming Traumatic Experiences in the Benefits of Being Novel Wallflower* (1999):

METHODOLOGY

The researchers use qualitative research methods. This study aims to reveal the circumstances, phenomena and facts that occur. According to Creswell (1994) states that qualitative research is defined as the process of inquiry to understand a social or human being who has problems based on a complex and holistic picture, formed with words, reporting details of the informant's views, and carried out in a natural setting. The researcher applied an individual psychology perspective in this study by analyzing the experiences of trauma in the past that the main character experienced in this novel. The source used by researchers is the novel *The Perks of Being Wallflower* (1999) as the main data and several sources of online journals, articles, and theses related to this research.

There are several stages of data collecting, such as reading the entire novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, paying attention to the character, stories, dialog and some of the phrases, words, phrases, and sentences contained in the characters elements of this novel.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. RESULT

The researcher found several findings of the trauma experienced by the main character, namely:

- a. Frequently recurring events
 1. Frequent Memories

Charlie's most memorable repeating memory is kissing Sam. Charlie received his first kiss. Sam's first kiss was very hurtful for him. That Charlie fell in love with Sam and adored him so much should make him happy. Charlie remembers when Sam kissed his Aunt Helen and abused him. Charlie's memories keep coming back whenever he attends Sam's house for a party to celebrate his graduation. In Sam's room, they almost have sex. Charlie, on the other hand, is concerned about Sam's lack of genital contact. It brought back painful memories for Charlie of being sexually abused as a child. Like a bad dream, she began to recall the day Aunt Helen had done what Sam had done to her that day.

2. Nightmare

Charlie dreams that he and his siblings are watching television with Aunt Helen. He thought Aunt Helen had done the same thing to Sam yesterday.

Because of this fantasy, his anxiety increments and he is compelled to reexamine previous occasions. He began to recall details from his childhood gradually. Charlie is unable to fall in love with Sam because of his beloved Aunt Helen, as the quote above demonstrates.

b. Avoidance

1. Attempts to divert while reading a book

To alleviate his feelings of sadness, Charlie frequently pretends to be a character in a book and reads a book. One of Charlie's endeavors to get away from the truth is understanding books. Notwithstanding, there is one novel that confounds the place of Charlie like the hero of the novel, specifically Peter Skillet. Because Peter Pan is a fantasy tale, Charlie does not consider himself a character in the book. In addition to the emojis, reading Peter Pan provides Charlie with a sense of community. It was the experience of adult betrayal. Charlie feels like his past memories have betrayed him. It turns out that Aunt Helen, whom she has always admired, was the one who sexually abused her. This was something Charlie couldn't accept. She didn't want to play Wendy because of this.

2. Bad Memories

On December 23, 1991, Charlie wrote a letter to tell him that it was his birthday and that Christmas was coming up. This was another difficult experience for Charlie. To avoid bringing up unpleasant memories of that time, Charlie desired those two days to pass. On her way to buy Charlie a present, Aunt Helen passes away. In his letter, Charlie says that he resembled a dull shadow that got him and placed him in a terrible spot for some time. Charlie could not have been clearer about the place or the shadow. These events are comparable to the signs and symptoms of amnesia. Because they are unable to fully recall their memories, people with amnesia occasionally recall fragments of their past, which causes them pain. Years of bullying have caused Charlie to be unable to recall his bad past. Charlie also went through a difficult time when his aunt Helen sexually abused him. When he was in sixth grade, he did this alone every weekend at home. Charlie was abused sexually. When Charlie has a dream about his aunt, everything becomes clear. Every Saturday, he dreams of his Aunt Helen making fun of him on the couch. Even though Charlie doesn't remember what happened, the passage above suggests that he might be dreaming about it. He is unable to adjust to early sexual behavior as a result of this. This made Charlie experience amnesia before he discovered that Auntie Helen had physically manhandled him. After Sam and Patrick are kicked out of college, Charlie goes home and feels crazy. He was unable to talk to anyone after returning home. Then, her parents discovered her lying on the couch inebriated. His parents took him to the hospital after that. He had forgotten that every Saturday, Aunt Helen gave the soldiers massages. Charlie remembers nothing after his folks thought that he is dropped.

2. DISCUSSION

The following is a description of the first study's findings, which can be viewed from an

individual psychological point of view: Due to his withdrawal, Charlie prefers to observe other people rather than interact with them, which contributes to his inferiority complex. Not being a friend of theirs around him. Until he met his English instructor, Bill. He asked Charlie to continue writing essays until he discovered his calling. Charlie is motivated by Bill's mission to overcome his inferiority complex by cultivating other aspects of himself. Charlie started to like writing. He even expressed an interest in writing later. In the fictional finalism of Charlie, he reads to escape his sadness from the real world. He likewise frequently envisions that the person in the book is himself. However, Charlie's situation is made more difficult by one book, *Peter Pan*, just like the main character of the book. Charlie does not view himself as a character in *Peter Pan* because of the fantasy nature of the story. Because of the same fate, Charlie is able to read *Peter Pan*. It was the sense of being betrayed as a child. That was something Charlie couldn't accept. She was reluctant to assume the role of Wendy as a result.

When Charlie finds his sister crying in the basement, the battle for supremacy begins. It frightened Charlie. Charlie's sister gave him a firm hug when he wanted to leave. Charlie made an effort to calm and make his sister feel at ease. She was said to be pregnant by her sister. To demonstrate that her brother has faith in Charlie, her sister then asks Charlie to accompany her to the clinic. He wanted to avoid disappointing his brother. His brother also thanks Charlie for helping him get to the clinic, but he keeps it a secret from his parents and everyone else. This demonstrates Charlie's success in assisting his sister. It is shown that Charlie is showing a proceeded with advantage.

Charlie's friendship with Patrick and Sam, who introduce him to a new environment, is the source of his social interests. Charlie is invited to a party by Sam and Patrick. At the party, Charlie meets various characters. Charlie is treated so well by everyone. Charlie's world gradually opened up, and he soon became very close to his friends. Charlie's emotional displays have increased, according to the researchers. All of his friends, including Mary Elizabeth, received gifts from him. It shows that he thinks often more about the others in his life. Charlie shows signs of confidence.

When Charlie goes from being a wallflower to being a participant, his creative self comes out. Two factors point to this. First, it is characterized by the reemergence of previously suppressed memories of Aunt Helen's sexual abuse. In the wake of recollecting his Auntie Helen's sexual maltreatment episode, Charlie is feeling much better that he no longer feels remorseful towards her. Charlie justifies Aunt Helen's actions in an effort to gain her forgiveness. Second, Charlie was able to adjust to his new social setting because Bill, Sam, and Patrick's words represented Charlie's internalized perspective on the outside world.

After the subsequent examination, the specialist expressed that the fundamental person, Charlie, has a cozy relationship with the essayist. Stephen Chbosky has a very personal connection to this book. Charlie and he worked together. Stephen Chbosky saw life like Charlie. When I read Charlie's *Catcher in the Rye* over and over, that becomes clear. In fact, as a child, it was Chbosky's favorite book. When Chbosky wrote *Perks of Being a Wallflower*, he realized how many different feelings and thoughts he had about people and the world. He wanted to write a book that was honest about life. Additionally, we hope to improve our relationship. From the examination results, analysts foster past investigations utilized in this review. The novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* was analyzed by 15 researchers, and two additional researchers did the same, albeit with different problems and outcomes. This study and the previous ones mentioned above share some similarities and differences. The researchers looked at the same book, "*The Perks of Being a Wallflower*," in line with previous research. The theory used in this study sets it apart from previous research. This study employs individual psychological theory, which was absent from the preceding ones. This research adds to the previous research by Febriantary, Octaviani, and Saraswati. They also talked about Charlie's traumatic experience and the main things that helped him develop his personality after it.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is drawn from the analysis of Stephen Chbosky's novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. First, there were three signs that Charlie had been through a traumatic experience. Re-experiencing, avoidance, and hyperarousal are those symptoms. Charlie's recurrent memories and recurring nightmares about Aunt Helen are a part of his Re-13 experience. Charlie's avoidance manifests itself when he is going through a traumatic event, when he tries to deny the reality while reading a book, and when he doesn't want to remember bad memories. Hyperarousal that shows up inside Charlie is encountering mental trip, anxiety toward recalling Auntie Helen, reckless way of

behaving, power outage, and trouble concentrating. Besides, As per Taylor (2006) People's adapting methodologies are impacted by two variables, Inner and outer elements are the two kinds of factors. The two elements showed the survival methods of Charlie in managing horrible experience in the book. Writing letters, mixing tape, reading books, and writing essays are examples of internal factors that originate within an individual. The outer elements are factors that come from beyond the individual incorporate Charlie's English educator, Bill, Patrick, Sam, and Mary Elizabeth. Thirdly, the author's urgent search for meaning in his life led him to address the topic of traumatic experiences in the book. Chbosky wants millennials to know that they are not the only ones dealing with mental health issues or depression. Chbosky suggested that the person with depression find the person who makes the most sense to them. They need to find the person who is right for them, like a boyfriend, girlfriend, or best friend. However, Chbosky stated that he advocates for professional therapy. There are still books for those who cannot afford them. He can draw the conclusion, based on his own experience, that time, focus, therapy, knowledge, and the belief that one deserves better can completely transform lives. It is possible to rebuild even the worst childhood.

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