

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explained the research background, question and scope of the research, objectives and significance of the research, scope of the research, operational definition, and systematization of the research.

A. Background of the Research

Human emotions could be triggered by various moments, such as falling from a bike or being laughed at in front of others. The event might have left them feeling emotionally rattled. Some may feel guilty of other people's unfavourable scrutiny. Even after the event has concluded, these poor self-esteem or humiliation feelings may linger. It is crucial to keep in mind that everyone responds differently to these kinds of circumstances. Some people might be able to get over these bad emotions fast, while others could need more time or outside help to get better and move on with their lives with confidence.

Little things that happened in the past, like losing a father figure or being shunned by friends, also had an impact on the author's adult life. The author occasionally tends to withdraw inside and engage in fun things like watching movies. Growing up in a broken home environment can cause a child to accumulate a lot of stress. This situation also often keeps the central nervous system of children in a state of constant, high alertness. Consequently, in adulthood, we may become individuals who tend to be reserved, requiring a lot of alone time. Typically, to soothe symptoms of anxiety, nervousness, and fear within us. This can be referred to as trauma. Trauma is an unpleasant and upsetting event that can happen to anyone.

Cavanagh on the Mental Health Channel cited in Hatta (2016) stated that trauma is an extraordinary event that causes injury and pain but is also often understood as a severe injury or pain resulting from an extraordinary event that affects someone directly or indirectly, whether it be physical or psychological injury or a combination of both. It is viewed as an experience that cannot be overcome by the individual and causes psychological instability.

Moreover, the impacts of a traumatic incident frequently persist in a person's day-to-day activities even after it has stopped. It could be hard to build close connections or incapable of handling disputes healthily. The writer is interested in delving into the portrayal of trauma in literary works, particularly emphasizing movies as a primary genre for in-depth analysis.

The writer felt that every movie has lessons or positive elements that we may learn from and apply to our everyday lives, in addition to being a kind of personal amusement. The trauma-related components of movies become fascinating topics for study in this light. The writer used the movie "*Blonde*" (2022) by Andrew Dominik, which had trauma elements that are extremely relevant to the writer's personal experiences. These elements include the loss of a father figure, broken families, and other traumatic events that are highly relatable to the realities of the current generation.

Every scene in the movie "*Blonde*" (2022) showed an air of psychological trauma for the audience because of the female character who adopts Marilyn Monroe's identity. Marilyn Monroe is one of the most famous cultural icons in the United States of America and even in world entertainment history. Everyone knows her, including the Gen Z and millennial generations,

even though they were not born at the same time. With her blonde hair and recognizable, seductive smile, Marilyn is recognized as a symbol of sexuality.

Known by her birth name, Norma Jean, she was a successful model and actress in the 1950s and early 1960s. Marilyn Monroe is associated with vintage motion pictures like "*The Seven Year Itch*" and "*Some Like It Hot.*" There has always been controversy surrounding Marilyn's life. She is well known for having a complicated personality, who lived in a patriarchal society and viewed as a sexual object in Hollywood. It simply exemplifies how women are subject to discrimination due to male superiority (Salsabila et al., 2023).

The dark life and trauma experienced by Marilyn Monroe have become a source of inspiration for authors of literary works, both novels and movies. Authors and filmmakers frequently examine the dark and nuanced aspects of an icon's life, such as complex relationships, mental health issues, and media pressure, in stories that are inspired by her life. One of the famous literary works is the novel "*Blonde*" by Joyce Carol Oates, which was published in 2000. The author fictionalizes Marilyn Monroe's life in this book, emphasizing the trauma and darkness in her life.

Oates immersed readers in the complex and demanding world behind Hollywood glitz by creating fictional characters that are modeled after Marilyn Monroe. He looked at how a person's past trauma, insecurities, and social pressures combined to create a complicated public persona. The fictional but realistically inspired story "*Blonde*" challenges readers to look beyond the conventional wisdom regarding the life of a Hollywood icon like Marilyn Monroe and to see the real person beneath the glamorous exterior.

Afterward, Andrew Dominik adapted the book "*Blonde*" into a movie, which was released on Netflix in 2022 under the same title. Problems with her father and her suspected murder are part of Marilyn Monroe's story. Due to Marilyn's personal experience as a victim of sexual assault, this movie was created in support of the #MeToo movement.

Marilyn Monroe is portrayed by Ana De Armas in the movie. This movie is rated NC-17 because it contains violent and sexual content, meaning that only adults over the age of 18 should watch it. Andrew Dominik has a profound fascination with Marilyn Monroe, which led him to conduct extensive research and even meet individuals who had connections to her. As he stated in an interview, "I have met people who knew her. I have done an enormous amount of research. But in the end, it's about the book. Adapting the book is really about adapting the feelings that the book gave me in this movie." In other words, "*Blonde*" (2022) cannot be considered an accurate reference to the real life of Marilyn Monroe.

Movies had a special capacity to bring literature into human lives. It is possible by transforming the imaginative concepts conveyed in words through a dynamic audiovisual experience. Movies have the power to expand viewers' imaginations and improve their comprehension of a wide range of subjects. This pertained especially to the study of trauma since movies are a kind of media that not only transmits information but also provides a special way to explore the intricacies of human existence, including the effects of traumatic occurrences.

By immersing people in the lives of the characters, viewers can elicit strong emotions and develop opinions about the scenes or events that are portrayed in the movie. To effectively communicate the message of the literary work, the authors of the movies often focus on the main character. The main character is crucial to the plot of the movie. Most screen time is devoted to this character, who frequently plays the dual roles of protagonist and active participant in events.

As a result, the writer ultimately selected the movie "*Blonde*" (2022) to delve into the trauma endured by the main character, Norma Jeane, a.k.a. Marilyn Monroe. The topic of past trauma that has influenced our current adult lives is so closely related to the pain suffered by Marilyn Monroe in the movie *Blonde* that the author was motivated to conduct this research. This movie also shows how a woman's life journey might be profoundly affected by trauma and how she must deal with it all.

It was also strengthened based on people's opinions on the internet. They had strong emotional reactions to the "*Blonde*" 2022 movie, particularly regarding the significance of the trauma that Marilyn Monroe's character went through. Since they were so emotionally invested in the narrative and the experiences of the lead character, many people found it difficult to watch this movie for an extended period of time. This demonstrates how effectively and directly the movie portrays trauma for the audience.

In developing this thesis, it is noteworthy that the examination of trauma within the character of Marilyn Monroe in the 2022 film "*Blonde*" represents an innovative research endeavour. Despite extensive research

efforts, there has been no specific exploration of Cathy Caruth's concept of trauma within the context of this character. Therefore, this study not only seeks to enrich our understanding of the fictionalized characters of Monroe but also contributes fresh insights to the discourse on trauma representation in the movie. Hopefully, this research will offer valuable insights into the complexities of trauma and its portrayal in literature.

B. Question and Scope of the Research

1. Question of the research:

- a. What are the traumatic experiences faced by Marilyn Monroe in the "*Blonde*" movie (2022)?
- b. How was trauma portrayed in Marilyn Monroe in the "*Blonde*" movie (2022)?

2. Scope of the research

This research focused on analyzing how Marilyn Monroe's trauma portrayed in the movie "*Blonde*" (2022). The analysis explored what are the traumatic events or experiences faced by Marilyn Monroe and how was the trauma portrayal in the "*Blonde*" movie (2022). Supported by Cathy Caruth (1996) trauma concepts, this research explored how the movie portrayed the psychological effects of trauma on Marilyn Monroe's character and behaviour growth, providing insights into the nuanced details of her experiences. By analyzing how trauma is portrayed in "*Blonde*" (2022) this study seeks to improve our understanding of the profound effects that traumatic experiences can have on a person's life and clarify how these stories are portrayed in motion pictures.

C. Objective and Significance of the Research

1. Objectives of the Research

- a. To find out the traumatic experiences faced by Marilyn Monroe in the “*Blonde*” movie (2022)?
- b. To analyze how trauma portrayed by Marilyn Monroe in the “*Blonde*” movie (2022)?

2. Significance of the Research

a. Theoretically Benefit

Hopefully, this research can be useful not only for the writer herself but also for the reader. The significance of this research theoretically, the writer hopes this research can contribute to the field of literature and psychoanalysis studies by exploring the trauma portrayed in the “*Blonde*” movie (2022) and the findings contribute to theoretical frameworks and expand our understanding of Literature and Psychology, especially about trauma and their implications. It is also beneficial for the reader to understand the causes, and symptoms, of trauma and how it is applied in literary works.

b. Practically Benefit

Practically, this research offers insight into how literature can inspire readers to write. The writer hopes, there would be a lot of literary works that show or highlight the issue of trauma.

D. Operational Definition

1. Literature

Literature is a window into other worlds where our emotions and imagination are free to run wild. It includes written pieces like plays, movie, novels, poetry, and short tales, among many more.

2. Trauma

Trauma is an unpleasant occurrence that can cause physical or emotional harm to a person. It can occur when someone experiences a frightening, harmful, or distressing event, such as an accident, a natural disaster, or suffering harm at the hands of another person. Trauma may affect a person's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and leave them feeling afraid, depressed, or angry.

3. Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis is a theory by Sigmund Freud, this is a method to understand a person's thoughts and feelings more deeply. This makes it easier to see how past mistakes and unrecognized losses can affect how someone behaves today and in the future. Psychoanalysis focuses on things that are not obvious or can only be explained indirectly, such as emotions, subconscious beliefs, and subconscious behaviors, to help people understand themselves and deal with emotional or mental problems.

4. Movie

A movie is a type of storytelling that is included in literary works that employ sound and moving pictures to tell a story. It presents characters,

plots, themes, and messages to the audience in a manner akin to other literary works like novels, plays, and poems.

E. Systematization of the Research

Chapter I Introduction consists of Background of the research, question of the research, the scope of the research, objectives of the research, significance of the research, operational definitions, and systematization of the research.

Chapter II Theoretical description contains theory of psychoanalysis, trauma in general, Cathy Caruth trauma concepts, narrative trauma, symptoms of trauma, and explores the elements in movies, and research of relevance.

Chapter III Research methodology consists of method of the research, procedures of the research, technique of the data collection, technique of the data analysis, and data sources.

Chapter IV Analysis data contain data descriptions, analysis data, and interpretation of the research.

Chapter V Conclusions and suggestions contain a summary of the results of the research and also includes suggestions from the writer for readers included in this last chapter as a closing discussion that the writer has researched.