

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Choosing the Subject

You know what's punk rock about marriage?
Nothing.
You know what's punk rock about marriage?
All the puke and shit and piss. (Offill, 2014, p. 25).

The quote above is what the main character, “she” in Jenny Offill's novel "*DEPT. OF SPECULATION*." says. “she” knew marriage was bad idea but “she” did it anyway. General population know marriage is goal of happiness, yet many couple have filled a divorce according to Our World In Data (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020), For example, in 2011, there were 3.6 thousand divorces in the US (Esteban Ortiz-Ospina, 2020). *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* presents readers with a unique perspective on married life, raising questions about why people often say 'welcome to the new life' when someone gets married. Does life truly improve after marriage, or does it become a nightmare?.

In this novel of Marriage—fiction and Family life—fiction, Jenny Offill creates a realistic reading experience for the readers about living as a female individual in agony from married life, which changes her permanently. The novel implies several ideas about life after marriage that might not align with the common perceptions people have. Additionally, what constitutes a good marriage? A happy marriage is all about the positive aspects of relationships:

trust, understanding, satisfaction, sharing, care, love, and forgiveness. These values is what made people still willing to have a marriage (Chang, 2022). The value of a good marriage is universal, regardless of location or culture. These are the essential elements that need to be achieved in a marriage for it to be successful (Fatima & Ajmal, 2012). In cases where one of these elements is not fulfilled, it can create a domino effect leading to a marriage crisis, as shown in the novel *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* where "the wife" did not achieve trust and understanding, resulting in a loss of care from her husband and ultimately leading to a lack of love between them, unlike their relationship prior to marriage (Chen et al., 2021; Weinberger et al., 2008).

This novel is one of the evidence that novel is an imitation of human action in society, often literature show how bad society at the times to make people realize that this society is in the wrong and in need of revise (Keerthika, 2018). This novel wrote by Jenny Offill titled *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* specifically talked about how society misconception of how marriage ideal life in reality, work. In real life people tend to talk about how marriage is heavenly good no matter what, for instance, a man came home from work and he has beautiful wife waiting for him at the door that will pleases the husband, making the husband food, and things (Banjo, 2002).

Women, on the other hand, are often told by society that it's great to have a husband because they will get what they want: money for shopping, a house to live in, and so on, especially for those seeking wealth or life comfort (Yusuf & Alkali, 2022). While it may be true for some that marriage is the best thing for

them, it doesn't work for everyone. Often, a family needs more than one income to survive, so the wife also needs to work. Many women also want to work. By the time the man comes home from work, his wife is probably tired from doing chores at home. Yet, people still fantasize about being welcomed by food and love at the end of the day. The expected beautiful marriage is just a facade that people still believe in today (Chang, 2022; Sabatelli & Pearce, 1986).

DEPT. OF SPECULATION is a novel about main character “she” in her daily life. there were up and down in her life but the essence of the novel is when “she” is in romantic relationship in marital life, “she” thought life after marriage would be pleasant, beautiful and glittery like every people talk about their prince charming. However it was actually her worst ever nightmare, all dreadful thing hitting her mentally, social stigma about her baby, her cheating husband, love hate love relationship and so on.

Marriage is supposed to be a peaceful stage for people, where they should feel relaxed because they finally have someone dear to them who will help them in times of need (Chang, 2022). Marriage is where two people specifically a man and women recognized in the society, establishing split duties with the couple and legitimizing newborn (Duvall & Miller, 1985). Marriage is where people should have found their identity, then they could move to the more important part and that is to trust the significant other that they must accept for what she or he is, this is the part where people tend to be intimate with the other in physically or socially to complete the stages (Arnett & Taber, 1994).

Marriage facade has been a problem for years, how it come into the effect is that divorce rate in this 10 years span from 2009 till 2019 have been steadily decreasing, in the US according to Census.gov (Anderson & Scherer, 2020). The drop on the divorce does not always means a good thing, at first the speculation of dropping divorce rate mean that less people is getting divorce and naturally less people would have experienced marriage crisis, or bad marriage, but more in-depth analysis by the researcher, found that marriage rate is also decreasing in the same time span (Gill, 2023). The decrease in marriage rate create different outcome on speculation of the data, which change the outcome of good thing happening into worse where people is getting scared to have marriage. This speculation is one of the main reason the researcher would like to research on the case of marriage crisis in this novel in order to analyze how society work to cope with this problem (Curtis & Susman, 1994).

The researcher selects the issue of marriage crisis due to the alarming rate at which contemporary society embraces divorce, treating it almost as an inevitable outcome. Moreover, many individuals opt to remain single to avoid the potential turmoil of married life, although this approach fails to offer an ideal solution to relationship challenges. And this marriage crisis is well portrayed in the novel written by Jenny Offill that was shortlisted in two big award that is the 2015 PEN/Faulkner Award and 2015 Folio Prize and also selected as the 10 best book in 2014 (Nytimes, 2014; Penfaulkner, 2015; Piepenbring, 2015).

This novel portrays marriage crisis life for women and creates unique engagement through its domestic drama plot, and its out of the box fragmentary writing style create the ambience the reader need in order to understand more of the main character feeling and unique mind. These characteristic of the novel create the perfect condition for domestic fiction plot to read, thus interest the researcher to analyze the domestic problem that is written in the novel.

The fragmentation style of writing also made the researcher need to accountable the important part of the story because a lot of part this novel have unrelating phrases to the main story. This writing style force the reader to construct the plot to create the storyline understandable themselves (Barthes, 1974). this why *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* novel need to be engaged more to create understandable plot story.

Fragmentation style of writing in this novel meant to seek for architectonic metaphor as in every few line there will be some kind of phrases, poetry or even some fun fact (Drag, 2017). However there's another reason the novel is written this way, this novel meant to be flowing memory of the Main character, In order to create engagement for the reader to feel how the main character feel in the novel (Wolitzer, 2014). This is why at the beginning of the story there are a lot of unique sequence of seemingly random phrases or sentence in the middle of the plot and then in the ending there are a lot melancholy expression (Rolen, 2023)

In understanding characterization in this novel where in this novel the main character experiencing varying change in personality development the researcher

choose to use Erik Erikson psychosocial theory. Erik Erikson psychosocial theory is the most suitable theory to analyze marriage crisis in this novel, since the story focuses on the main character “she” experienced in her marriage life. In the novel “the wife” is changing her character when “she” finally marries and Erik Erikson theory cover the cause of worsening condition of “the wife” in the marital life, by analyzing what stages “the wife” lost or not achieving the basic virtue in the theory the researcher conclude why “the wife” lack of assertive from husband assurance or secure emotional support ending up in marriage crisis. This changes or development of a character could affect their marriage life at the latter time (Russell et al., 2013).

Hence, the researcher is curious to analyze how the main character of “the wife” experience in the painful lie, a fantasy creates a big letdown of a marriage life expectation from herself, using Erik Erikson theory psychosocial development. Erikson Psychosocial is different with psychology theory. if psychology is talking about how to understand better one individual, their mental behavior occurrence, psychosocial is to understand mental behavior on a individual as a society as a whole (Erikson, 1968; Meliana, 2020). In this case the researcher use psychosocial to analyze one person in the novel in relation to society.

Theory of psychosocial stage of development consist of 8 psychosocial stages and that is Basic Trust vs. Basic Mistrust, Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt, Initiative vs. Guilt, Industry vs. Inferiority, Identity vs. Role Confusion, Intimacy vs. Isolation, Generativity vs. Stagnation, Ego Integrity vs. Despair (Syed &

McLean, 2018). Each of the stages will have different outcome depending on the completion on each stages. This stage of development has a domino effect affecting the next stage of development. for example if the childhood life full of memories where their parent lie to them, this individual could have problem of doubting someone else in next stages, this effect could affect any stages after the first stages which is infant, in the end the person personality and character developed according to the completion of the 8 stages (Chen et al., 2021; Mcleod, 2013) .

The plot the main character “She” in *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* spends mostly in her teenage and life after marriage, and that is in the stage of adolescence and young adulthood. In the stage of adolescence it is the stage of identity vs. role confusion mainly focuses in development of identity of the person itself and in young adulthood is intimacy vs. isolation focuses on having close relationship toward other person especially in romantic way (Cherry, 2022b).

To analyze how the intimacy vs. Isolation development affecting the marriage phase that greatly impact her final characteristic in marriage crisis. The researcher will use the psychosocial theory stages of development and ego structure by Erik Erikson to answer the research question. Psychosocial stages of development is a theory of about personality development and how human have 8 important stages in life where in this each individual stages that based on their age will receive specific personality that will affect the next following stages of their life (Erikson, 1950, p. 270).

In developing the psychosocial theory Erikson in the journal titled *The Problem of Ego Identity* (1956) of disprove the Freud theory on psychosexual and the understanding of Id and Super ego and this ego is mostly affected by their unconscious and driven by sexual urge. Psychosexual by sigmund freud lay down the understanding that the drive of human ego, id, and super ego is based on the development of human genitalia. While the development of genitalia stopped at pubescent, in freud theory it is enough to appraise the development through out their life. Freud psychosexual theory also heavily influenced by their unconscious libido force. Erikson believe this genitalia development and sexual urge does not assess how human really develop their personality, Erikson believe human mostly affected by their environment on the development of their personality and Ego (Erikson, 1956). In the other hand to Erikson theory psychosocial believe that human value is heavily influenced on their environment such as culture and its society value and it is about how the individual perceive themselves (Erikson, 1968). Ego identity is dynamic where one could have change or loss of identity through out the stage of psychosocial development, this is why Erikson said ego identity could be attained but forever to-be-revised (Erikson, 1968).

Ego Structure by Erik Erikson talk about 4 important ego that is happening throughout person entire lifespan, the 4 ego is Ego Identity, Ego Strength, Ego Ideal and Ego Control (E. Erikson, 1950, 1968, 1977). According to Erikson in *Youth and Crisis* 1968 Ego Identity is role image of a person, which is shaped by the success of the psychosocial crisis at each stage of development. Ego strength is person ability to be consistent in their choices of identity, this Ego is one of the

tipping points of successful psychosocial development. Ego ideal is a person desire of a perfect goal of themselves in term their ideal social value, Ego ideal formed from society culture, social value along with role models. Ego control refer to individual ability to control their urge and desire, finding balance between self-expression and satisfying societal expectations, Ego control fundamentally needed to adapt to social and cultural demands (Erikson, 1968). These types of egos are responsible for shaping an individual's awareness or consciousness in order to live in society conform to social culture and value (Alwisol, 2009)

The researcher choose this theory because by using Erikson theory of psychosocial development it is supposed to have a chronological order for big incident such as marriage crisis that happen in an individual creating flowing understanding what is the probable of the cause of the big incident (Cherry, 2022b). In theory the researcher should be able to find the cause by looking into the previous stage where the big incident happen, and by using psychosocial theory the researcher might found prevention solution for this problem in general for the society since psychosocial development is analysis from a person that will also apply to people in general (Newman & Newman, 2020).

The reason why the researcher wants to analyze marriage crisis in the novel is how alarmingly nowadays marriage ended in divorce or dissatisfaction, thus the researcher want to dig deep into the novel hoping to found ways to prevent or avoid marriage crisis in our society today. The researcher believe by analyzing the main character “she” in the novel *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* the researcher will found similar ideas to how society right now experience dissatisfaction

toward their marriage relationship, and perhaps found a similar point to understand better on this matter to prevent marriage crisis.

B. Scope of the Study

This research focuses on the character development analysis of “the wife” in the novel of *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* by Jenny Offill. With the use of Erik Erikson theory psychosocial stages of development for the reason that this theory will show why the character have the specific characteristic in the story. The researcher will use three parts out of 8 psychosocial stages of development because the researcher thinks these three stages relate more to the stories with enough detail to analyze on. The researcher focus on how “the wife” character developed personality in the stage of Identity vs. Confusion, Intimacy vs. Isolation and Generativity vs. Stagnation and will attempt to analyze with the use of Erik Erikson theory of psychosocial development on the cause of the main character “the wife” have miserable marital life that ended up in her having perplexity of loving his husband.

C. Problem Formulation

Based on the background of this research, this paper aim to analyze the main character of the novel *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* by Jenny Offill, named “the

wife” by using psychosocial stage of development theory by Erik Erikson. This research concern about two research questions:

1. How do the personality development of the main character “She” explained by using Erik Erikson Theory
2. How the personalities of the main character affect the marriage crisis in the novel *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* by Jenny Offill?

D. Objectives of Study

Based on the scope of the study, the objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To analyze the main character personality development in the novel of *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* by Jenny Offill.
2. To analyze how personality affect the marriage crisis in the novel of *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* by Jenny Offill.

E. Review on Related Studies

The researcher uses *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* by Jenny Offill and found few previous studies that use the same novel and theory as a reference in this thesis.

First, Journal titled *Jenny Offill's DEPT. OF SPECULATION and the Revival of Fragmentary Writing* (2017) by Wojciech Drąg from University of Wroclaw. Drąg research focuses on analyzing Jenny offill’s *Dept. of speculation*

fragmentation writing style. Drag uses Sharon Spencer's theory of the architectonic novel.

Drag explain the way Jenny Offill uses fragmentary writing is to create reader dependence nuance on how to understand the story of the novel, Such as using seemingly random anecdotal science fact, phrases, poetry writing in irregular places. This novel is a piece of art that you need to create by using your mind power to arrange all the random pieces into one piece of art in order to understand the meaning. Drag explain about how the usage of changing how the narrator refer the character is to create variety of perspectives what the character is experiencing in the plot.

While this journal main purpose is to analyze the fragmentary writing properties and not about analyzing the characterization, or plot of the novel the result of this journal still provide important information on how to analyze the novel successfully, even though the journal uses different theory to analyze the same novel *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* by Jenny Offill.

Second, is thesis with the title of *A Contrasted Analysis of Main Characters In Cradle of Secrets Novel By Lisa Mondel Seen From Erikson Theory* (2011) by Nugraheni Aditya from State Islamic University Jakarta.

In this thesis Aditya analyze two main characters in the novel *Cradle of Secrets* by Lisa Mondelo published in 2007 by using Erikson Psychosocial development theory and how they face their problem using Erikson theory. Aditya Thesis analyze mainly about how the character develop their character and personality by

using Erikson theory using all the 8 stage of development and create contrasted analysis of the 2 character facing the problem. while the thesis written by Aditya uses the same Theory of Erikson psychosocial development, Aditya use different novel and analyzing two character instead of focusing on one character, furthermore Aditya uses contrast analysis to analyze the two different character character development to get the answer on the problem of difference in character personality development while in this thesis the researcher will use Personality structural to support the Psychosocial development theory by Erik Erikson.

third is journal titled *Intimacy In Young Adulthood As A Predictor Of Divorce In Midlife* (2008) by Weinberger et al Weill Cornell Medical College, University of Massachusetts Amherst. This journal analyze whether or not young adulthood intimacy able to predict divorce, this journal uses Erik Erikson psychosocial analysis approach using qualitative interview method on the volunteer to analyze whether or not intimacy vs. isolation, actually inline with the rate of divorce in todays society. In this research theoretically if one individual fail in their young adulthood stage or intimacy vs. Isolation stage, the couple will most likely fail in their marriage life, but the outcome of the answer is unexpectedly not inline with the theory. This research will help by giving reference of psychosocial development that is happening in real life as a bargaining chip of a comparison to plot in the novel *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* by Jenny Offill.

Fourth is journal title of *Psychosocial Development in South Korea Couples and Its Effects on Marital Relationships* (2013) by Jea Eun Oh and Victor Minichiello. This journal analyze society with the theory of psychosocial

development to answer the actual effect of psychosocial development stage successful or not will affect the marital relationship in real life using quantitative method research. This journal is also inline with the third journal where the conclusion of the research is the same and that is there are limitation and different answer of the said theory and the actual result is actually differ. This journal specifically will provide addition information on how important the psychosocial stage of development successfulness will affect the downfall of marriage crisis that is happening in the novel *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* by Jenny Offill.

All the related studies will be the key reference in analyzing the research of main character personality development in the novel of *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* by Jenny offill as a supporting studies data. None of the research above have analyzed the psychosocial development that causes the marriage of the main character, thus the researcher wish to research this.

F. Methods of the Research

Methods of research according to Sugiyono (2009, pp. 4–6) is an act of researching with logical ways of thinking using rationality, empirical, and systematically way of mind. In this research the researcher will use descriptive qualitative analysis. The researcher will focus on the novel *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* by Jenny Offill by analyzing the main Character. Sugiyono (2009), Qualitative method could see social reality as dynamic, full of meaning and complex matter. This research focuses on psychosocial analysis of character in the novel hence the reason the researcher choose qualitative method.

1. Source of data

a. Primary data

The main data of this research is all the written words, sentences, and narratives contained in the novel *DEPT. OF SPECULATION* by Jenny Offill published by Alfred A. Knopf in New York 2014 will be used as the primary data of this research

b. Secondary data

The secondary data of this research will be taken from books, journal, electronic sources including but not limited to credible website, book review, and so on that related to this research.

2. Methods of Collecting Data

For the purposes of this research, the researcher will use library research. Library research is a qualitative inquiry method in which the researcher works directly with pre-existing data and numerical information, rather than collecting data from firsthand sources in the field or eyewitnesses (Zed, 2004). The data used in library research is readily available and prepared in advance.

The researcher will collect the primary data from the novel through in-depth reading and taking notes. The researcher will also take a note from journal and other sources from the previous research on marriage crisis and

theory of Psychosocial by Erik Erikson. After taking notes, the researcher will be able to get the completed data to answer the research.

3. Method of analyzing data

In analyzing the data the researcher uses a psychosocial analysis by Erikson for the main character during her life, with a focus on the character's personality and the environmental factors linked to marital life crisis. The personality development will be analyzed using psychoanalysis theory by Erik Erikson by using only 3 stages of psychosocial development and that is Identity vs Role confusion, Intimacy vs Isolation, Generativity vs Stagnation, this include the 4 ego that formed the personality in every stage of psychosocial development and the environment factor, to answer the second question the researcher use marriage crisis approach to analyze the marriage life of the main character. This approach is a fundamental aspect of the researcher analysis within the field of literary studies. The last is to make a conclusion based on problem formulation using qualitative approach to present the conclusion.

G. Presentation

This thesis will be presented into four chapters. The first chapter consist of introduction that contain Background of Choosing the Subject represent the researcher reason in doing the analysis, Scope of the Study a limitation of this analysis, Problem Formulation, Objectives of Study, Review on Related Studies,

Methods of Research, and Presentation. Chapter 2 consist of Theoretical Approach explaining how the researcher will utilize the theory the researcher choose in the beginning and that is Erik Erikson Psychosocial development and Personality structure to support the paper research. Chapter 3 will discuss the analysis and the chapter 4 is conclusion.