

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The pressure of teens and the momentary release that sex provides is real. Sex does not resolve a stressful situation, of course, but it does supply a temporary escape. While life gets hectic, stressful, or painful, teens will likely seek each other out for the comfort and relief of a sexual encounter. Desire to escape stress through sex or alcohol, drugs are signs of immaturity. Since a mature person has a healthy sense of self worth, shows self-control, and can make decisions that will not necessarily alleviate the stressful situations but will help him or her deal with stress without having to run away from it. A mature person has a solid set of values on which he or she bases behaviour, even when pressure is intense. Sexually active adolescents may blame their actions on stress, but they are responsible for their actions. They cannot control the future, their relationships with parents or friends, or the decisions of a teacher or coach. But they can control themselves. When teenagers are better able to deal with stress through personal discipline and self control, they won't feel the need to resort to sex as a release. When they begin to focus on the quality of their own character instead of an instant way for their problems, they will be able to establish and strengthen their personal values. The emotional side effects of premarital sex are also damaging to a young woman. According of Chasitiy.com, it is said that one of the most common

consequences of teenage sexual activity is depression. Since teenage sexual relationships rarely last, the girl's sense of self worth is often damaged. She may conclude that if she looked better, he would have stayed longer. This mentality can lead to harmful practices, such as eating disorders or the disappointment she feels may drive her into a state of self-hatred. Some young women even begin to hurt their own bodies in an attempt to numb the emotional pain. Such practices never solve the problems, though. If she wants to be loved, she needs to begin by loving herself. A depression of immature social relationship often leads teenager to such an extreme action such as suicide.

Nowadays, there are many cases of teenage suicide happen around us. The reasons of those teens commit suicide are vary widely. There are some common situations and conditions that seem to lead to such extreme actions. Teenagers are constantly confronted with new social roles, new relationships, and having to get used to their body changes. Other issues include financial uncertainty and fears of growing up. Thus feelings of stress, confusions, self doubt, and pressure to be success can be overwhelming to teenagers. It also can be seen from a family point of view, the lack of parental interest can be the biggest factor, parents and kids spend limited time together. Moreover, many children grow up in divorced households. The condition of a new family with step parents and step siblings, or moving to a new community can be very upsetting and can lead them into insecurity. In the other hand, teens are faced with

family alcoholism, domestic violence and sometimes sexual abuse. There are also some external factors such as; the pressures of modern life, competition for good grades and college entrance. The increasing numbers of violence in the newspapers or television make teenagers easier to get more tools and ways for suicide. In fact, family environment is a very important factor of suicidal behaviour. According to Asarnow in *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology* when perception of family environment has also been studied, family disorganization, conflict, and lack of control, cohesion, and expressiveness have been observed as common factors in the family backgrounds of children who develop suicidal behaviour (21). When some teenagers are looking for answers to their problems, then they find no one to talk to, it makes them feels quite lonely, and suicide may appear to be the only solution to their problems and stress mentioned above. The explanations above has a relation with the title of this study, *The Impact of Immature Sexual Relationship of Chris' Harte in Jodi Picoult's The Pact* which is aimed to reveal the impact that appears after Chris did his immature sexual relationship with Emily in Jodi Picoult's *The Pact* how Chris faces the reality after he decided to grant Emily's absurdity.

Some of authors adapt that kind of phenomenon into a literary work. While in fact, the word of literature can be used in many of ways. Suicide is an act of taking someone's own life on purpose. According to American Psychological Association, suicide is the act of killing a person

own life, most often as a result of depression or other mental illness. Jodi Picoult is one of authors who adapts this phenomenon and write it as a literary work. In 1998, Picoult wrote about a teenage suicide pact in her book "*The Pact*." Jodi Picoult has a good ability on it; she can make the reader know well about the character's feeling. Picoult brings the reader to life a familiar world, to know the real fact of life. With this interesting psychological drama, Jodi Picoult explores the dynamics of intimate relationships under stress from the apparently curious mind of a teenager to the relationships of friendship and marriage. The same as another author, Picoult always does a research while writing her books. She tries to know the real fact of the story that she wants to write. Picoult is the bestselling author of seventeen novels, those are; *Sister's keeper*, *19 minutes*, *House Rule*, *The Pact*, *Sing You home*, *Perfect Match*, etc. Those books are thought provoking to look at difficult modern issues. According to Picoult's site in 2003, she was awarded The New England Bookseller Award for Fiction. She already wrote at least 20 novels. She has also been the recipient of several awards, such as: an Alex Award from the Young Adult Library Services Association, one of ten books written for adults that have special appeal for young adults; the Book Browse Diamond Award for novel of the year, etc.

As mentioned by the writer above *The Pact* tells about suicide pact of couple of teenagers which caused conflicts and consequences for the boy character named Chris. In this case, the writer will focus on the main

character named Chris about the tension and the emotion surrounding Emily's death and Chris' consequent and trial, which is extremely about real life, and drags us into the characters' world. It tells the story of two teenagers who grew up together and fell in love. Then one night there is a shot to Emily's head and Chris is accused of murdering her. One child is dead, the other is charged with her murder. The parents questioning their own roles in this tragedy, wondering how they could not see it coming, how they could allow it to happen. Everyone wants to accuse their finger at another. There is a murder case and the book goes back in time when Chris and Emily were little to show how they were always with one another. As Denise Larkin stated in Picoult's site "Picoult's book shows suicide and depression minds of two children who is growing up by spending all their time together just by living next door (2008)."

The first part of the book tells that Chris and Emily committed suicide; they seem prefer to die than live with their parents, because "Chris specifically said "Em was going to go first. She shot herself. And before I got a chance to do it, too, the police came (Jodi Picoult, 34)." The consequence is both Hartes and Golds families have to face every parent's worst nightmare on how can they ever know their own children thoughts and fears. This is the issue that the writer is going to analyze. The reason why the writer chooses this book is because "*The Pact*" has an interesting conflict and a common phenomena which usually happens in today's life. The novel deals with the aftermath and trial, definition of right and wrong

in the ideal world between the right and wrong in character's mind, it is also about parents and children relationships and about the consequences of a choice that can totally changes someone's life.

New Criticism analyzes a text using only the real literature, while this criticism is no longer technically practiced as a separate criticism, its concepts have become integrated into other criticisms, so it is still valuable to know and understand the elements of this literary criticism. "In fact, whenever a reader analyzes the irony, ambiguity, symbolism, and even metaphors in a text, they are using the principles of New Criticism. New Criticism focuses only on the text of literature, without considering any other forces at work on the particular piece, such as the author's background or when or where the piece was written. New Criticism also does not take into account the author's intention behind the piece. According to it, New Critics view a literary work as "a timeless, autonomous (self-sufficient) verbal object." Readers and reading may change, but the literary text stays the same" (Tyson 137)." The theory above is compatible with this study, the writer try to observe some research problems, analyze it by doing close reading, and find the answer of those research problems based on the source text itself. Since the answer is only existed in the source text.

Hence, this study explores the immature sexual relationship and its conflicts portrayed in the novel. The analysis will be focused on the main character Chris Harte who in this case is a person who responsible of

the death of Emily Gold and the only one who knows about the suicidal motive of Emily's suicide. There are three basic questions proposed in this study which are, first, how the curiosities of sex are portrayed in the story, how Chris' conflicts after the suicide pact presented in the story and the last is how the impacts in Chris' life after he did immature sexual relationship. Thus, the writer uses new criticism to analyze and since the main source of the analysis is a novel.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Based on the background posed above, the study of the premarital sex in the inside of the novel *The Pact* is worth to analyze. There are three following statement proposed in this study;

- How are Chris' curiosities of sex potrayed in the story?
- How are Chris' conflicts after the suicide pact presented in the story?
- How does the impact of immature sexual relationship on Chris' life?

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study aims at reaching several objectives that are expected. The following objective will be answered according to the questions proposed in the statement of the problems. The objectives are as the following:

- To reveal the curiosities of Chris' to know about sex in inappropriate age and find the main factor of his curiosity.
- To elaborate Chris' conflicts after the suicide pact.
- To know about the impacts that Chris' gets after he did immature sexual relationship.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is aimed to examine how the teenager's depression and suicidal portrayed in the novel *The Pact* itself. Also this study is to observe how the main character, Chris Harte, reconciled with himself in the aftermath of Emily's suicidal. This is reflected in how the readers of this study have a deep understanding towards the idea of premarital sex in teenager which leads to suicide and how this newly happened on the teenagers, nowadays.

Indeed, there are several factors of teenager's suicide which are conveyed in this novel. This study is expected to make the following contributions to the teenage readers; it may helps teenagers to overcome their depression and give an explanation that suicide is not the only way to solve their problem. Related with many consequences that they will get after they tried to do that whether it is success or failed. To make the readers gain more knowledge about some significant conflicts in teenager's social life nowadays. Besides, this study also attempts to give contribution to the study of English Literature in the Faculty of Humanities

of Airlangga University who is going to analyze the conflict of literary works especially in a suicide pact case.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

Based on the study, *an Analysis of the Impact of Immature sexual relationship in Jodi Picoult's the Pact*. *The Pact* is connected to the theory of "new criticism." By using this theory, it is aimed to get close reading first as a part of "new criticism" theory, and it will make the writer know about the internal conflict of the first character after the suicide pact. This research was limited and conducted only at the first character named Chris. Focus on the character's physical, mental, emotional characteristics, and his whole life which included childhood, love life, daily life, motifs, conflicts and consequences that he got from that suicidal case. In analyzing Chris' conflicts, the writer will use the method of characterization which analyze more about the characters in the story, the character's conflicts, and the character's motivations to identify the type of conflict which appear in the story, there were other forms of conflict, such as Internal Conflict and External Conflict

1.6 Theoretical Background (formal elements)

New Criticism is formed upon the text and only the text; there are many different aspects of "the text itself" and the approaches to the text. In New Criticism, the text has to be considered as an object of literature, and

complete within itself. The critic should be free from the reader's own feeling or emotional response when reading the text.

In fact, the New Critics began the movement by looking at novels almost exclusively. It is very difficult to do a complete New Critical close reading of something as long as a novel. This is why a New Critic will usually abstract one or a few places of a novel in which to conduct a close reading, and then put it back into the context of the novel as a whole. "Given that the text was thus seen as an independent entity with a stable meaning of its own, New Critics believe that a single best, or most accurate, interpretation of each text could be discovered that best represents the text itself: that best explains what the text means and how the text produces that meaning, in other words, that best explains its organic unity (Tyson 148)."

Tyson maintains that multiple meaning of the text is the results of four linguistic elements: paradox, irony, ambiguity and tension. Paradox means a statement which seems to be self-contradictory. At the first sight, it contradicts or conflicts itself, but when analyzed deep, it intensifies the meaning by suggesting broader areas to the statement. Irony is also a statement or an event which seems to be contrary to its literal sense; an ironic statement, most of the time, presents a meaning which is opposite of the intended meaning. And tension, in New Criticism, means the conflicts within the text.

The writer using New Criticism to analyze "*The Pact*" because there are many implicit things that the writer get and analyze by the book itself, the problems of their family, and the roles of the parents, the children mind, and the children's life. The entire question can be answered and the textual details can be known by reading the text itself. In this section, the writer concerns on the "New Criticism Theory" to be used in analyzing the first character's conflict in Jodi Picoult's *The Pact*. Also the writer concern on the type of conflicts, such as Internal Conflict that can be any clash of ideas, desires or wills of the character's mind; External Conflict Character vs Self, Character vs Character, Character vs Nature, Character vs Society. The method of New Criticism is understandable and worked best on poems and stories because its formal elements can be analyzed easily.

In a new critic analysis of a literary text, there are some interpretations which may help to find or develop the connection between the formal elements of the text and its themes are received. Therefore, a new critic may concerns about the authorial intention, but just as much as it concerns about other interpretations. There are some methods of new criticism in analyse a literary work. New criticism is really connected with the term close reading, which means a careful analysis of a text with paying attention to its structure, syntax, figures of speech, etc. In order to examine the formal elements of the text, such as characterization, setting of time and place, point of view, plot, images, metaphors and symbols to

interpret the text and find the theme. Beside to examine the formal elements of the text, new criticism is aimed to find the organic unity of the text and the analysis of this study is limited on conflicts, setting, and character.

1.7 Method of the Study

This study is going to analyze the novel by using New Criticism theory. New Criticism tells about focus on the text only by giving the interpretation and it deals with close reading. "New Critics hold that understanding and appreciating a work of literature need have little or no connection with the author's intention, with the author's life, or with the social and historical circumstances that may have influenced the author. Everything the readers need to understand and appreciate a work is contained within the work itself (Griffith 134)."

The primary source of the study is in the novel of *The Pact* written by Jodi Picoult. This novel was distributed in 1998. The writer does close reading that is used to collect the information from the conversation and the story of the novel as the texts to be analyzed. In order to find the secondary sources, the writer goes to library to get information from books, thesis, essays, and journals; the writer also browses online to get the information from the E-books, articles, and commentaries.

The writer uses interpretative analysis that relates to the theory of the analysis. Interpretative is commonly used in paper research of

literature. To interpret something is to put it in words that the reader can better understand. To analyze is to examine the parts of a work with the goal of determining the nature of the whole. Interpretive analysis can help discover deeper meanings within a literature work. Interpretative way is used to explain the meaning of an actions or a conversation which happens in the novel. Furthermore, the writer uses interpretative analysis through the writer interpretation and the first character “Chris” is portrayed in the novel relate to the problems statements.

1.8 Definition of the Key Terms

Immature sexual relationship: A temporary escape of teens that get stressful and seek each other out for the comfort and relief of a sexual encounter.

Impact : A forceful consequence after an act.

Internal conflicts : A problem that a character has and something that a character has to overcome.

Suicidal behaviour: An action that could cause a person to die.

Suicide : An act of taking someone’s own life on purpose.

Consequence : An effect of some actions previous occurrence.

Suicide pact : An agreement of two or more people to commit suicide.

Struggle : A persistent effort to achieve something.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW