A. Background of the Study

The Ringmaster’s Daughter by Jostein Gaarder is an interesting novel to study. This novel was published almost sixteen years ago and was categorized as children novel. This novel is marvellously rich and successes to boil down to something quite simple to learn philosophy, meaning of life and love. This novel tells about human existence that may still exist in this real world. It is about choice, decision, existence, freedom, position, trauma, and response. The Ringmaster’s Daughter tells about how traumatic childhood experience can hugely change someone’s life. According to Susanti (in Dayanara’s paper, 2016: 7), she explains childhood trauma is a kind of soul damage happening because of trauma case. When trauma is aimed to pasca trauma stress molest, maybe the damage will involve the physical changing in brain and in brain chemistry destroy the ability to face the stress condition.

According to Bufka and Barlow (in Dayanara’s paper, 2016: 11), childhood trauma has possibility to get PTSD because people cannot forget trauma event happened when they was child. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD is mental disorder happened in people after experienced by traumatic event. PTSD is an extreme respond of huge stressor, includes the increase of anxiety, avoidance of stimulate which associated with trauma, and decrease of emotional response. PTSD causes the change of people mind, feeling, and behaviour, such as mind change, feel change, and behaviour change (Jeffrey, Spencer, and Baverly, 2009:174). One of the characters, Petter, was experienced with trauma when he was child. He saw his parents quarrel when he was three years old. He grew up in the broken house and he lived with his mother. His father leaved them since Petter was three years. He is a genius boy and has a unique ability to create stories from anything. He also got bullying from his friends because his appearance. He ever locked in bathroom by his mother because he wrote a fairy tale in wall of his mother’s room.
After Petter gets trauma, he has a weird behaviour. The weird behaviour in this case such as mind change, feel changed, behaviour change includes heart throbbed, lose appetite, isolated from society, daydreaming, lack of concentration, etc. Petter is a precocious child and fantasist who grows up to be a storyteller of disturbing mischief. He cannot differentiate between imagination and memories. He has an imagination friend, a metre man. He interacts with a metre man but he does not like to interact with other people. He never finished and published his story to public but he sold all his story to the others. He has nightmare in his dream. He never gives response normally to the others when he interacts with them. He always pretends to be normal and interest with something that talked by the others. He is unconfident and not open-mind and it caused he is always suspicious to the other. All his stories have sad and tragic ending. Petter does not like to be famous, and he is afraid to influence with his emotional condition. He just created plots and sold them through Writers Aid, a ghostwriter corporation that helps writers around the world to get brilliant plots for their novels.

According to this phenomenon, researcher focuses on Petter’s weird behaviour. When Petter saw his parents quarrel on three years old or when he was locked in bathroom by his mother, he was quiet, and does not cry or gives feedback. Generally, human always gives thousand response to anything that happened to him but, he choosed to be quiet. Petter has active thinking to create some story or plots but never finished it. He sells his story eventhough he knows that his story is able to make him famous. He chooses to become a ghostwriter to the other writers. He acts normally to the others eventough he does not like to more affected from people. He is aware interacting with his imaginary friend, a metre man. One of story was created by Petter, Panina Manina, the ringmaster’s daughter who did not know his father until it is too late. Petter turns out to have traumatic experience when he was a child. It is just like his mechanism to shut his brain from remembering the traumatic thing. Petter chooses to sell his idea than finishing his idea. He said that became well-known is embarrassing. Being a writer will make him mad. He infected crisis sense of possessing his own idea. He also tried to help the other by his plots to become a novel that can sell in store.
Based on the data above, the researcher analyzes *The Ringmaster’s Daughter* novel by applying the existentialist perspective proposed by Sartre. Petter acts weird behaviour to show his existence to his environment. He as a human is free to create himself. He is free to choose anything in his life such as selling his plots, interacting with metre man, and never gives response normally to the other people. He also does not like to be famous, and he is afraid to influence with his emotional condition. He avoids popularity too. Eventough he is unsociable man, he helps the other writer by his plots and gives ten tips to be writer. He chooses to became a ghostwriter so he still can write and help the other writer to became a writer that publish a story. He is kind because he helps the other, and it reflected to Sartre principles. Sartre (in Spade, 1996:14) said “existentialism is not pessimistic, but optimism, and existentialism is a humanism”. Sartre proposed about being and nothingness. In the other line, Satre (in Spade, 1996:15-17), he said “human situation is really hopeless. You take away all our hopes of ever being able to improve it. It is an effort to keep a distance with all hegemony to discover the existence and the essence of self. Freedom is the essence of human beings; usually humans are always free to create him-self. Humans are free to organize, select and can give meaning to reality.”

**B. Problem Statement**

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher focuses on Petter’s weird behaviour. Then the focus on main problem is broken down in the following question:

1. What are indicators of weird behaviour of Petter in the novel?
2. What are causes of Petter’s weird behaviour?
3. What are the impacts of that weird behaviour for Petter in his life?
4. Why did Jostein Gaarder address existence of human being in his novel?

**C. Objectives of the Study**

According to the problem statement mentioned above, the researcher has following objectives:
1. To describe the indicators of weird behaviour of Petter in *The Ringmaster’s Daughter* novel

2. To explain the causes of weird behaviour of Petter in *The Ringmaster’s Daughter* novel

3. To show the impacts of weird behaviour of Petter in *The Ringmaster’s Daughter* novel

4. To reveal why the author addresses existence of human being in *The Ringmaster’s Daughter* novel

**D. Limitation of the Study**

In this research, the researcher limits the problem on the analysis about weird behaviour of Petter in *The Ringmaster’s Daughter* novel based on Existentialist theory.

**E. Benefits of the Study**

This research consist in order to have benefits as follows:

1. **Theoretical Benefit**

   The research expected to give the additional information and contribution to larger knowledge particularly the literary study in Jostein Gaarder’s *The Ringmaster’s Daughter* novel by existentialist theory.

2. **Practical Benefit**

   In this research, the researcher wants to give some involvement to the development of literary study and enhance the researcher’s knowledge about literary work especially in understanding the novel related to the aspect of existentialist.

**F. Paper Organization**

This research paper organization is given in order to make the reader understand the context of the paper. The paper is organized into six chapters. The first chapter describes introduction which consists of the background of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, limitation of the study, benefit of the
study, and paper organization. The second presents previous study, and underlying theory which contains the notion of existentialist theory which is proposed by Kierkegaard and Sartre. Then, the third is research method. It concludes the type of the study, object of the study, type of data and data source, method of collecting data, technique of data analysis. Next, Chapter IV describes structural elements analysis. It contains character and characterization, setting, plot, theme, point of view and style. Chapter V explains about existentialist analysis and discussion. The last Chapter VI represents conclusion and suggestion.