

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains of background of the study, research question, objectives of the study, significances of the study, and chapter organization.

A. Background of the Study

Anxiety is a mental disorder that usually has symptoms such as recurring intrusive thoughts, overthinking, and even physical symptoms such as sweating, stomachache, headache, etc. People with anxiety disorder might avoid certain situations including socialization since for them events with a lot of crowd might be a trigger of their worried feelings. This condition can cause people who suffer from anxiety disorder to withdraw from social activities and isolate themselves instead (Parekh, 2017).

According to International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standard located in the US (2019), every year the case of students with anxiety keeps increasing. The unpredictable behavior of the students is likely to be the signs of anxiety. Specifically inconsistent academic result and missing class. The problem in mental stability on students can affect them to fail at school if not treated properly by the help from professionals.

Based on the data of National Institute of Mental Health located in the US (2018), approximately 1 in 3 of teenagers between the age of 13 and 18 will likely to suffer from anxiety disorder. This is because there are factors such as; high expectations and pressure to succeed and society that feels scary and threatening. The anxiety on teenagers is portrayed in *The Catcher in the Rye* by Holden Caulfield.

The Catcher in the Rye although is a good novel in portraying anxiety on teenagers, was considered a controversial novel because of the vulgar language

and explicit sexual content. This novel was banned in several high school libraries in the United States because it was considered inappropriate to be read by the students. In *Harris v. Mechanicville Central School District* (N.Y. 1978) a high school English teacher was dismissed for unruliness when he refused to drop the book from his curriculum. To be fair, this novel is not that bad for adult. The words used in the novel might be vulgar but the storyline of this novel is actually interesting because from the behavior of Holden Caulfield, the readers can catch that there is something wrong with his personality that reflects symptoms of anxiety.

The Catcher In The Rye novel is a subscription novel that gets the best novel ranking of the twentieth century. This novel is said by Nash K to be an extraordinarily fantastic novel. James Stern revealed that he liked the book while imitating Holden's voice. George HW Bush said the novel is extraordinary and has inspired him. Finlo Rohrer remembers adolescence every time he reads this novel. Adam Gopnik dubbed this novel as part of three perfect books in American Literature. This novel is also Bill Gate's favorite book.

However, *The Catcher In The Rye* also reaped negative comments from some quarters. Many people think that this book is too vulgar for teenagers to read. Holden as the main character who does have an eccentric nature is often regarded as an example and bad influence for teenagers. Holden is told as a student who was repeatedly expelled from school and this is certainly for some people is not a good thing to emulate. The conversations in this novel tend to be vulgar and impolite, some scenes such as ordering prostitution and going to bars are also strictly prohibited from adolescents under a certain age.

This book triggers were assumed to cause immoral behavior because it is suspected to be the cause of David Chapman killing John Lennon (Rodriguez, 2018). Holden is just a teenager who is often in trouble but has never been linked to a murder case. However, Chapman really believes that he is Holden and that he kills someone so he can be "somebody" (Fuqua, 2020).

This novel contains the journey of Holden Caulfield who obviously shows behavior of someone who suffers from anxiety. There are several scenes from the novel which shows that Holden experience intrusive thoughts, excessive sweating, fasten heartbeat, and other symptoms of anxiety. Holden is also an alcoholic for a very young age. Sixteen is not even a legal age for drinking in the US. In his journey from the school that he failed to the house of his parents, he went to bars and tried to get a drink.

The unique and unusual storyline of this novel sparks interest to the present researcher. Besides, the controversy of why this novel was banned in several countries, it sounds like public only see this novel from the language style when actually the researcher thinks that there is an important issue buried in the behavior of the main character.

The other reason the researcher chooses this novel is because it is a classic but still interesting book to read, and since the main character is a teenage boy who has several mental illnesses especially anxiety disorder, that is why the researcher is interested to find out more about the problem that cause him to develop such condition.

I choose this because the catcher in the rye is an interesting novel which portrays the mental issues of holden Caulfield as the main character and I'm also interested in studying mental health condition.

To conclude, the researcher decided to take the novel as the object of her study regarding the unusual way it portrays anxiety on teenagers. Despite the controversy of the novel, the researcher thinks that the novel is worth learned and analyzed as to understand mental health condition especially anxiety disorder on teenagers and the root causes of it.

B. Research Question

Based on the topic, there are several research questions of the study constructed by the researcher:

1. How does the behavior of Holden reflect the symptoms of anxiety?
2. What is the correlation between Holden's background story and his current anxiety?
3. Why does Holden talk to his deceased brother Allie every time he has a mental breakdown?

C. Objectives of the study

Based on the research questions above, here are several objectives of the study constructed by the researcher:

1. To understand how the behavior of Holden Caulfield reflects the symptoms of anxiety;
2. To know the correlation between Holden's background story and his current anxiety;
3. To reveal why Holden thinks of his deceased brother Allie every time he has a mental breakdown.

D. Significances of the Study

1. Theoretical Significance

The researcher hopes that this study can contribute to the body of knowledge, especially literary study on anxiety on the character of a novel or movie using psychoanalysis approach.

2. Practical Significance

The researcher hopes that this study can enrich the present writer's understanding of knowledge about psychoanalysis especially on the anxiety of the character of the novel *The Catcher in The Rye*.