THE STUDY OF ANXIETY AND OBSESSIVE DISORDER IN PAULA HAWKINS'S *INTO THE WATER*: A PSYCHOANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract
A variety of factors, including childhood experiences and environmental influences, can lead to psychological problems. Anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorders are common manifestations of these problems. In this study, the symptoms and effects of anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorder as exhibited by the main characters in Paula Hawkins' "Into the Water" are examined from a psychoanalytic perspective. Using psychoanalytic theory, this study uses observational techniques to gain insights from the novel "Into the Water. The analysis shows that both main characters have distinct manifestations that have a significant impact on their lifestyle. The fear of the first character blurs the lines between reality and fiction, while the obsessive behavior of the second character results in intrusions into the private lives of others. The narrative underscores the notion that individuals can hide hidden truths, presenting a facade that is a lie to their authentic selves. This research explores anxiety and obsession in the novel's characters, highlighting the complexity of human psychology. It demonstrates how internal struggles influence behavior and perception, portraying concealed truths within individuals and contributing to a broader understanding of multifaceted psychological dimensions.

Keywords— anxiety, *into the Water*, novel, obsessive disorder, psychoanalysis, Paula Hawkins

Introduction

Psychology is an issue that we all encounter on an ongoing basis. Psychology plays a role in our daily lives from the moment we wake up until we go to sleep at night. Psychology applies in almost all aspects of our everyday life. Aspects like relationships and memories in childhood life shape our way of thinking and the person that we are today. Research suggests that children raised in healthy environments and families with positive relationships live happier lives than their peers, but it is important to note that these findings are not universal and may not apply to all individuals (Patricia A Thomas, Hui Liu, Debra Umberson, 2017).

Some children may have had the opportunity to grow in a positive household, some are not as lucky enough to have the chance to grow in the same condition. This may affect the child emotionally and mentally as they grow older and step into adulthood. Emotional childhood may deform our psychologist in various ways, including developing psychological problems in later life. Psychological problems take many forms, from anxiety to the obsession of something that most people consider abnormal (Obsessive Disorder). Anxiety is one of psychological problems

that is common in society that can cause serious harm to the person who has it and the people around him/her. Same goes with obsession, it can be harmful to the people around the person who has it when the obsession level is serious. Obsessions can devour the mind. The thoughts race in circles, causing incessant worry, fantasy, or a search for answers (Lancer, 2016)

Research published by (Chopik, 2018) of the American Psychological Association found that "people who have fond memories of childhood, specifically their relationships with their parents, tend to have better health, less depression and fewer chronic illnesses as adults, even after 50" (Chopik, 2018). But what happens when a person lost a mother figure at a young age and grew distant with her other family member or when a person of a young age lost his mother and had to grow under the pressure of his abusive father?

"The Girl on the Train" and "Into the Water" both novels from the same author, Paula Hawkins, are two among many of Global hit Thrillers centered on the main characters suffering from psychological problems. Psychological problems can lead a person into doing something that they're consciously or unconsciously doing, and often in a dangerous way.

The writer is interested to analyze the psychological problems specifically focusing on anxiety and obsessive disorder suffered by both main characters by psychoanalytical perspective. By choosing psychoanalysis theory, the writer wants to delve out the characters' personality and behaviors. The writer thinks the related topic of the research is one of the common issues that's been happening in real life. And since there is not enough research about the related object, the writer believes that there will be differences that could be made in this research compared to the previous studies that have analyzed the same object before.

Literature Review
Psychoanalysis Overview

Psychoanalysis is a method of treatment for mental disorders that emphasizes unconscious mental processes; it is shaped by psychoanalytic theory and is sometimes referred to as "depth psychology" (Mcleod, 2023). Psychoanalysis was developed by Sigmund Freud, a Viennese neurologist, along with his colleagues including Wilhelm Stekel, Paul Federn, Max Etington, Alfred Adler, Hans Sachs, Otto Rank, Karl Abraham, Carl Jung, and Sandor Ferenczi. Ernest Jones also contributed to the subject (J.D. Safran, E. Gardner-Schuster, 2016). As Cherry (Cherry, 2023) stated, According to Sigmund Freud, behavior and personality are the result of interacting conflicting psychological forces that operate at three different levels of consciousness; the preconscious, conscious and unconscious (Cherry, 2023)

The preconscious mind consists of anything that could potentially be brought into the conscious mind (Cherry, 2023). This means that thoughts that we don't always think constantly but we can bring to awareness occasionally. Example, a person may not be thinking (conscious) of where he bought his glasses from but readily recalls it when being asked.

All thoughts, memories, feelings and desires that we are aware of at any given moment are contained in the conscious mind (Cherry, 2023). This is where we are aware of response to our surroundings and what we are doing. The consciousness is where the decision-making, planning and communicating to other people happens. The conscious mind is short-term memory.

Unconsciousness is all that is outside of our conscious minds - all those desires, aspirations, compulsions, and memories that lie outside of our awareness but still influence our behaviour (Cherry, 2023). Unconscious thoughts continue to influence our behavior, even if we are not aware of them. The unconscious can be made up of repressed feelings, buried memories, thoughts, or reactions that are too painful to be remembered and faced by the conscious mind.

Freud's analogy of the mind is that of an iceberg. The conscious mind is the top of the iceberg that is visible above the water. The preconscious is the part of the iceberg that is

submerged below the water but still visible. He used the metaphor to explain the three levels of consciousness. The unconscious is the bulk of the iceberg that lies unseen beneath the waterline (Cherry, 2023). In 1923, Freud introduced three other theories of human personality: the *Id*, *Ego* and *Superego*. These new structures did not change the old structures but mainly to complete the function and purpose.

Id

According to Sigmund Freud, the Id is the center of all dynamic mental energy in a person, also known as psychic energy. It is the main component of human nature that has existed since birth and is unconscious, involving primitive and instinctual behavior. The *Id* is driven by lust, desire, and needs. If these things are not fulfilled immediately, anger and anxiety will arise (Cherry, 2023). For example, when someone is thirsty, they immediately feel the urge to drink. The *id* is very important for humans even from birth because *id* make sure the baby's needs are fulfilled. Same goes with children, they are still entirely driven by the *id*. We cannot ask children to wait until noon when they are hungry in the morning.

Ego

The ego is a more advanced aspect of the id, allowing desires to be fulfilled in a socially acceptable manner.   It functions in the conscious, preconscious, and subconscious, making it crucial for navigating the real world. Actions taken with the ego in mind involve careful consideration of their pros and cons. He will not do what he wants carelessly (Cherry, 2023). For example, when you're queuing for food in a crowded restaurant and someone accidentally hit you, your *ego* tries to prevent you from being angry and hit the person back. So, this means, *ego* allows us to hold back the response that will be unacceptable in society.

Superego

The Superego serves as the moral compass of an individual's personality, distinguishing between right and wrong. Its primary function is to suppress any unacceptable desires of the id and to encourage the ego to act in accordance with societal standards. The superego exists in the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious mind. It is responsible for moral values, while the ego is more concerned with the opinions of others and the potential consequences of actions. The superego and ego may come to the same decision, but for different reasons (Cherry, 2023). For instance, a cashier only charged a couple for one meal despite their order of two. The couple could have easily left after paying for only one meal, but they chose to point out the cashier's mistake and pay for both meals. This act was driven by their honesty and understanding that the restaurant owner and staff rely on the income to make a living.

Self Defense Mechanism

In everyday life, humans may experience situations that put them into uncomfortable feelings, such as anger, fear, anxiousness and other unpleasant feelings. To protect themselves from these unpleasant feelings, humans have mechanism in themselves which Freud calls it as Self Defense Mechanism or Ego Mechanism. It is a strategy that humans use in the unconscious level to avoid uncomfortable or unpleasant situations, so they could easily forget or get away from it. As Paulhus (Delroy L. Paulhus, Bram Fridhandler, Sean Hayes, 1997) stated, "Defense mechanisms are usually defined more narrowly as mental processes that operate unconsciously to reduce some painful emotion". Painful event or memories from the past could lead someone to repress the events and eventually forget about it, but the memories still actually exist in the unconscious mind (Delroy L. Paulhus, Bram Fridhandler, Sean Hayes, 1997). According to McLeod (Mcleod, 2023) there are several kinds of defense mechanisms by Sigmund Freud, those are repression, denial, projection, displacement, sublimation and distortion.

Repression

Repression is avoiding thinking about something to put aside uncomfortable feelings or emotions. A person tries to repress something in purpose to forget about it because it is painful.

Repression is an unconscious process, so the person that's doing it is unaware that he/she is doing it (Sissons, 2020). Example of repression is, a person who faced abusive childhood in his/her earlier life but has no recollection of the events may have troubles in forming relationships with other people when he/she is older.

Denial

Denial is a common defense mechanism in which an individual a person consciously refuses to accept painful facts. The individual opted not to acknowledge the actuality of a stressful circumstance in order to shield themselves from excessive fear or anxiety (Sissons, 2020). For example, a person whose diagnosed with lung cancer but still continues his habit of smoking anyway because he refuses to accept the reality and instead blocks the current events from awareness.

Projection

This defense mechanism is an attempt by a person accusing another person of having the same feelings or thoughts that they're having (Sissons, 2020). They may do this as an avoidance of unwanted thoughts or responsibility for themselves. Projection can be harmful as it may stop someone from taking responsibility for his behaviours. Example of projection is a person whose being aggressive in an argument accuses the other person as being the aggressive one. He does this to divert criticism from him and onto the other person.

Displacement

This defense mechanism is when a person feels he cannot express his negative emotion toward someone specifically, so he directs those negative emotions toward someone or something else. For example, someone who is having an argument with his parents but he cannot say much, he later becomes frustrated and instead expresses his anger towards his sibling.

Sublimation

Sublimation is similar to displacement. While displacement can cause destructive activities and can be harmful to the people around, sublimation on the other hand, allows a person to manage and displace his/her negative emotions into behaviours that are constructive and socially acceptable. For example, a person who is extremely angry at another person. Instead of having an argument or doing harmful things to them, he channels his energy into renovating his house. With every hit of the hammer, he's using his energy to do something positive.

Distortion

Distortion is the belief that something is true when it is not. Distortion is a common feature of anxiety and depression. Distorted thinking is a common feature of anxiety and depression (Sissons, 2020). An example of distortion occurs when someone misrepresents the facts or reality by twisting them into something else.

Anxiety Disorder

According to Kazdin in Encyclopedia of Psychology (Kazdin, 2000)*,* anxiety is an emotional state characterized by feeling tense, thinking worried thoughts, and experiencing physical changes like increased blood pressure. Individuals may experience physical symptoms of anxiety, such as an increased heart rate and sweating (Kazdin, 2000). There are various things that can trigger anxiety to arise. Common causes of anxiety can be from stress of daily life events such as work, school, financial problems or relationships etc. Stress from childhood trauma such as the death of a loved one or abusive childhood trauma can also be the reason someone suffers from anxiety. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety disorder that can cause depression, shame, guilt, and self-blame. PTSD is characterized by nightmares or flashbacks. People with PTSD often do everything they can to avoid thinking about the

traumatic event and to suppress the feelings associated with it (Monnica T. Williams, Chad T. Wetterneck, 2019)

Obsessive Disorder

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is a mental health disorder characterized by recurring, unwanted thoughts, ideas, or sensations (obsessions) that drive individuals to perform repetitive actions (compulsions) (Colon-Rivera, H., & Howland, M., 2020). Obsessions can put harm on friendships and relationships. The long-term effects of this disorder can include depression and anxiety. The causes of obsessions are yet not fully known, but studies have shown there could be a series of genes that a person inherit, making OCD partially genetic.

Research Method

Qualitative research methods are used to analyze the research. Ary et al (Donald Ary, Lucy Cheser Jacobs, Asghar Razavieh, Christine K. Sorensen, 2009) define qualitative research is defined as the holistic understanding of a particular event or natural social setting. Moreover, it is their view that qualitative research describes the situation and the activities of the participants not with numbers, but with sentences (Donald Ary, Lucy Cheser Jacobs, Asghar Razavieh, Christine K. Sorensen, 2009). The writer in obtaining the data of this research depend on the library research. "Library research involves the step-by-step process used to gather information in order to write a paper, create a presentation, or complete a project." (Davis, 2021). The writer identifies and searches for relevant information, analyses and develops her own ideas by library research through the internet, books, journals and magazines.

The data and source of data in writing this research is obtained from the novel "Into the Water" written by Paula Hawkins. This novel has 426 pages and is divided into four parts, with a total of eleven viewpoint of characters in the novel. The writer uses two of the main characters' attitudes and behaviors, conversations, dialogues and sentences from other characters' perspectives toward the two main characters throughout the novel as the data of this research.

Data analysis according to Sugiyono (Sugiyono, 2018) is the systematic process of organizing, synthesizing, and categorizing data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation. This involves breaking down the data into units, identifying patterns, and selecting important information to draw conclusions that are easily accessible to oneself and others.

In this research, the writer uses the informal method and descriptive qualitative to analyze the data. "Informal method is used in the presentation of the results of data analysis in the form of ordinary words or descriptions without formal symbols of a technical nature" (Sudaryanto, 2005). Descriptive qualitative according to Kumar (Kumar, 2010) is a type of study that focuses primarily on providing a detailed description of a phenomenon, rather than exploring relationships or associations. The given statement aims to provide a systematic description of a situation, problem, phenomenon, service, program, or living community. It also aims to describe attitudes towards an issue or provide information about them (Kumar, 2010). There are six major steps in conducting descriptive qualitative, the first step is by identifying the problem of the related topic, the second step is reviewing the literature, the third step is selecting participants and instruments, the fourth step is collecting the data that is valid and reliable, the fifth step is analyzing the data and the last step is reporting conclusions of the research. Furthermore, "Into the Water" novel as the object of the research will be explained in descriptive analysis form by the writer in order to obtain the final conclusion.

Results and Discussion

Anxiety

Sean Townsend as one of the main characters had experienced a traumatic childhood. After his mother died in a tragic and mysterious way, he had to endure the rumors and the nickname the town used for him as "the boy who watched his mother die" since he was a child (Hawkins, 2017, p. 425). After the death of his mother, he didn't talk to anyone for days. His father physically abused him after the event and had made him believe that his mother died by suicide when in reality it was his father who killed her. He went on with the story that his father told anyway to live up public's expectation as "the tragic son of a suicided mother and decent family man" instead of "the son of a killer and the boy who watched his mother die and said nothing" (Hawkins, 2017, p. 425).

As he grew older, he started to remember things that actually happened the night his mother died but it contradicted with the things that his father always told him. This made difficulty on him distinguishing what was real and what was not. It became the turning point of the internal battles he always had with himself about that night. Sean started to have flashbacks about his mother and these experiences became the major causes of anxiety disorder suffered by Sean Townsend. These anxiety symptoms that Sean suffered from include feeling anxious or tense, feeling of danger, panic or fear, having flashbacks of the traumatic event and having a recurrent behavior.

Feeling anxious or tense

Many things can trigger someone into feeling anxious or tense. Sometimes when someone gets anxious or tense, it is visible in the change on his/her face expressions or demeanor. When Sean came to see Jules and Lena at their house to inform them about the latest news, Jules ended up showing him the final voice message that Nel sent her. In the message, Nel sounded worried and asked Jules to call her back, but Jules never did. Knowing this, Sean became tensed and it was visible in the change of tone in his voice that he was disappointed that Jules didn't call Nel back.

> **Jules:** I didn't lie, I said. I never spoke to her. It's like Lena said: she left messages, I didn't respond. So, I didn't lie, *(I repeated. I sounded weak, wheedling, even to myself.)* Look, you can't ask me to explain this to you, because there is no way in doing so to an outsider. Nel and I had problems going back years – but that doesn't have anything to do with this
>
> **Sean:** How can you know? *(Townsend asked.)* If you didn't speak to her, how do you know what it had to do with?
>
> **Jules:** I just… Here, *(I said, holding out my mobile phone).* Take it. Listen for yourself. (*My hands were trembling and, as he reached for the phone, so were his. He listened to your final message.*)
>
> **Sean:** Why would you not call her back? (*he said, something akin to disappointment on his face.*) She sounded upset, wouldn't you say?
>
> **Jules:** No, I … I don't know. She sounded like Nel. Sometimes she was happy, sometimes she was sad, sometimes she was angry, more than once she was drunk … it didn't mean anything. You don't know her.
>
> **Sean:** The other calls she made, (*he demanded, a harder edge to his voice now*). Do you still have the messages?
>
> **Jules:** *I didn't, not all of them, but he listened to the ones I had, his hand gripping my phone so tightly his knuckles whitened. When he finished, he handed the phone back to me.*
>
> (Hawkins, 2017, pp. 95-96)

From the dialogue above, it can be seen that Sean was anxious and tense as his hands were unconsciously trembling retrieving the phone from Jules. He tended to be disappointed

knowing that Jules didn't call Nel back. He found that the way Nel frequently made phone calls to Jules caused him to feel anxious because he thought it must've been urgent why she needed to speak to her sister but Jules never responded back. His tension continued by the way he was gripping the phone so tightly as he listened to another messages. The action by Sean of holding the phone too hard causing his knuckles to whiten was done unconsciously by him as he got frustrated. It is also a form of displacement mechanism. He felt angry at Jules but expressed his anger towards the phone instead.

Feeling of danger, panic or fear

Feeling of danger, panic or fear can be the result of someone's distressed emotion over a threat, whether the threat is real or imagined. These feelings are closely related to the emotion anxiety which can be unavoidable sometimes by a person and resulting in physical reaction. Determined on finding Lena who went missing after she went to Mark's house to look for her mother's bracelet, Sean on his way was already panicking receiving a phone call from Erin. He was impatient to hear about the news from her.

> *My phone buzzed in its holder, snapping me back to the present.*
>
> **Erin:** Sir? Where are you?
> **Sean:** On my way to the coast. Where are you? Did Louise have anything to say? *There was a long pause, so long I thought she perhaps hadn't heard me.*
> **Sean:** Did Louise have anything to say about Lena?
> **Erin:** Er... no. *(She didn't sound convinced.)*
> **Sean:** What's going on?
> **Erin:** Look, I need to talk to you, but I don't want to do this on the phone…
> **Sean:** What? Is it Lena? Tell me now, Erin, don't mess about.
> **Erin:** It's not urgent. It's not Lena. It's-
> **Sean:** For Christ's sake, if it's not urgent why are you ringing me?
> **Erin:** I need to talk to you the second you're back in Beckford, *(she said. She sounded cold and angry.)* You got that? *(She cut the call.)*
>
> *I had that dizzied sense again, like going too fast on a rollercoaster, light-headed with adrenaline.*

(Hawkins, 2017, pp. 354-355)

The conversation above shows Sean's fear for Lena and fearing harmful possibility that can happen to her. He got panicked when Erin said she needed to talk to him directly and not over the phone. He revealed that he had a dizzy feeling and light-headed with adrenaline which was a physical reaction caused by the anxiety and panic. The panic came from his assumption that something unpleasant happened to Lena when in fact it wasn't Lena that Erin needed to talk to him about. In the midst of his panic, he unconsciously snapped at Erin. He was unaware of doing so because he was in a state of urgency. He got irritated at Erin because he felt it was unnecessary for her to call him if it was not about Lena, and this made him snapped at her rudely.

Having flashback of the traumatic event

A flashback is when memories of a past trauma feel as if they are taking place in the current moment. Sometimes during a flashback, it can be difficult for someone to connect with reality. The traumatic event that happened to Sean came in flashbacks a few times and it made difficulties on him in distinguishing what was imagination and what was really happening.

Callie:	You can't interview him, Sir, *(Callie said, alarmed.)* Not without an appropriate adult.
Sean:	I'm not interviewing him, *(I replied tetchily.)* He's frightened and he doesn't want to go home yet.

(Hawkins, 2017, p. 214)

Sean was irritably conversing with Callie, a police officer, and then he unconsciously said the exact same words that was said to him years ago when he was younger. These words are memories that laid outside of his awareness. These words are the same words from the dreadful night that his unconsciousness had repressed as it was too painful to be faced by his consciousness.

The words triggered a memory: He's frightened and he doesn't want to go home. I was younger than Josh, just six years old, and a policewoman was holding my hand. I never know which of my memories are real – I've heard so many stories about that time, from so many different sources, that it's difficult to distinguish memory from myth. But in this one I was shivering and afraid, and there was a policewoman at my side, stout and comforting, holding me against her hip protectively while men talked above my head. "He's frightened and he doesn't want to go home," she said.
(Hawkins, 2017, p. 214)

This dialogue happened at the police station after Sean brought Josh there because he didn't want to go home after breaking Mark's windows with rocks. In the police station, a flashback occurred to Sean. A flashback from the night that his mother died, he was at the police station and he heard the police saying the exact same words that he just said to Josh. Although he stated that it's difficult for him to distinguish his memories, the words he said to Josh triggered a memory and made him remember that he had been in a similar situation that Josh was, where he was in a police station being comforted by a police woman saying the same words.

Obsessive Disorder

Another main character in the story was Nel Abbott. Nel was a single mother who lived with her only daughter. Growing up with both parents as story tellers, Nel was always intrigued of hearing the stories of the ways how the women had died in the drowning pool. She became curious and grew obsessed with the drowning pool and the secrets it held. This obsession led her to the point that she needed to swim there every day, even in the freezing winter. When most people found the place to be scary and mysterious, she found the place to be calming. Her obsession continued further when she started to get to know Sean. She probed about all the tragedies of the women in the river including Sean's mother. The obsessive symptoms that Nel suffered from include repeating a certain behavior, being dedicated excessively and having aggressive thoughts.

Repeating a certain behavior

Humans are creatures of habit. Having the comfort of knowing what to do or knowing what's coming next can feel safe. A routine can be helpful for so many people. The routine that Nel possessed of swimming in the river everyday surely made her feel safe and satisfy her feelings. Her routine turned into an obsession that most people think strange about because it is then considered to be not normal. Below is the description of proofs that Nel suffered from repeating a certain behavior.

There are people who are drawn to water, who retain some vestigial, primal sense of where it flows. I believe that I am one of them. I am most alive when I am near the water, when I am near this water. This is the place where I learned to swim, the place where I learned to inhabit nature and my body in the most joyous and pleasurable way. Since I moved to Beckford in 2008, I have swum in the river almost every day, in winter and in summer, sometimes with my daughter and sometimes alone, and I have become fascinated by the idea that this place, my place of ecstasy, could be for others a place of dread and terror.

(Hawkins, 2017, p. 44)

In this memoir that she wrote, she believed that she felt most alive when she's in the river. She admitted that she swam in the river almost every day ever since she moved to Beckford in 2008. In spite of the season, she still swam there even in the cold winter. The place that most people stay away from because of the mystery and the myths it held, she found herself drawn to it. This repetition of swimming in the river every day that she did was done consciously as she was aware of what was she was doing and when she was doing it. It was in her awareness that she found pleasure in the place that people were scared of. But this behavior was pushed by the drives and demands of the *Id,* where she felt the need to be in the water everyday as it was the only way to satisfy her desires.

Conclusion

In this research, the writer has analyzed two main characters in *Into the Water.* This analysis is conducted by applying the theory of psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud. The findings of this research were achieved by collecting the data from *Into the Water* novel. The writer uses observation technique in collecting the data where it is done by observing the dialogues, conversations, attitudes and the thoughts of the characters. Based on the results of the research that has been done about the main characters, it can be concluded that both main characters suffer from psychological problems, especially anxiety and obsessive disorder.

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