

**CHILDHOOD TRAUMA AND ITS EFFECTS ON CHARLIE, THE MAIN  
CHARACTER IN *THE PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER* NOVEL**

**(1999)**

**FINAL PROJECT**



**Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements to Obtain the  
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**ROUDYA FARHA PERENNIA**

**30801600276**

**ENGLISH LITERATURE PROGRAM**

**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCE**

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Prepared and Presented by:

**ROUDYA FARHA PERENNIA**

**30801600276**

has been approved by the advisor and to be examined by the Board of Examiners.

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Diyah Fitri Wulandari S.S., M.Hum

Advisor

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Prepared and Presented by:

**ROUDYA FARHA PERENNIA**

**30801600276**

**Defended before the Board of Examiners on April 21<sup>st</sup> 2022**

**And Declared Acceptable**

**Board of Examiners**

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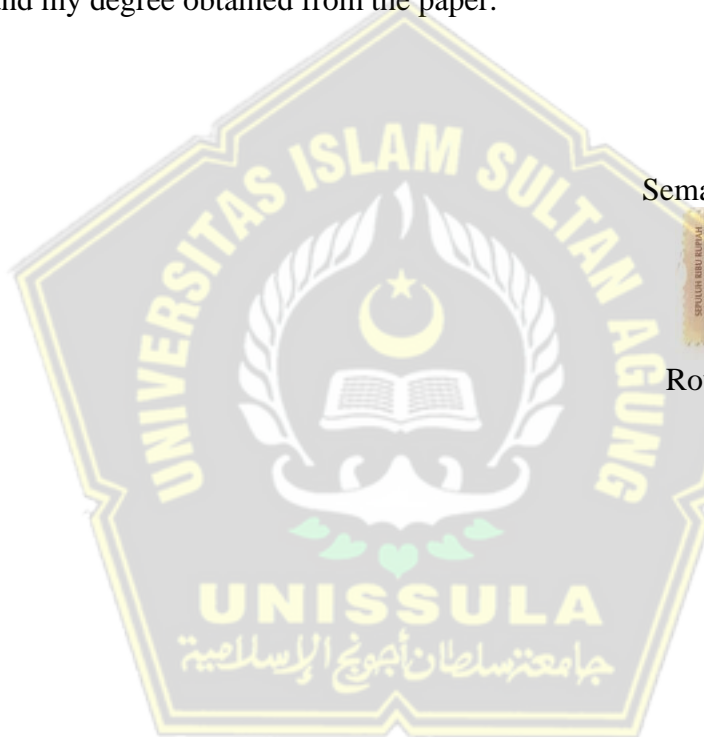
## STATEMENT OF WORK'S ORIGINALITY

Hereby, I honestly declare that the undergraduate thesis I wrote does not contain the works of other people, except those which were cited in the quotation and the references, as a scientific paper should. If my statement is not valid in the future, I agree to accept an academic sanction in the form of revocation of my paper and my degree obtained from the paper.

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Roudya Farha Perennia



## ABSTRACT

**Roudya Farha Perennia. 30801600276.** Childhood Trauma and Its Effects on Charlie, The Main Character in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* Novel (1999) Final Project of Faculty of Languages and Communication Science. English Literature Program. Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang. Advisor: Diyah Fitri Wulandari, S.S., M.Hum.

Literary work is a replica of our lives. There are many aspects of our lives that are mostly shown in literary work, one of them is psychology. Literature and psychology studies about human lives. Not only study about the same object, but psychology also can contribute to the literature in four categories, there are: the psychology of the writer, the psychology of the creative process, the study of behavior, and the responses to literature.

This study is analyzing about childhood trauma and the effect of childhood trauma in the novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky. This study used a psychological approach focusing on the study of behavior of character in literary work. The purposes of this study are to describe the portrayal of childhood trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder experienced by Charlie, the main character in the novel. This study used a descriptive qualitative method to analyse childhood trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder. The data are taken from the novel, such as monologue and dialogue, and supported by secondary data such as journals and articles. The steps were also used to collect the data for this study, including, reading the novel, identifying the data, classifying the data, and reducing the data.

In this study, the novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* showed the causes of childhood trauma in Charlie, there are traumatic grief after losing his best friend and his aunt and also sexual abuse done by his aunt. The writer also found that Charlie has experienced some symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder in this study namely intrusive, avoidance, and arousal symptoms.

**Keywords: Childhood Trauma, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Grief, Sexual Abuse, Psychology.**

## INTISARI

**Roudya Farha Perennia. 30801600276.** Childhood Trauma and Its Effects on Charlie, The Main Character in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* Novel (1999) Final Project of Faculty of Languages and Communication Science. English Literature Program. Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang. Advisor: Diyah Fitri Wulandari, S.S., M.Hum

Karya sastra merupakan tiruan dari kehidupan kita. Banyak aspek dalam kehidupan kita yang seringkali terdapat dalam karya sastra, salah satunya adalah psikologi. Sastra dan psikologi mempelajari tentang kehidupan manusia, tidak hanya mempelajari objek yang sama, psikologi juga dapat berkontribusi dalam sastra di dalam empat kategori, yaitu: psikologi penulis, psikologi dari proses kreatif penulisan, kajian perilaku dan respon terhadap karya sastra.

Penelitian ini menganalisis tentang trauma di masa kecil dan efek yang terjadi setelah trauma di masa kecil pada novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* dari Stephen Chbosky. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan psikologi yang berfokus pada kajian perilaku dalam karya sastra. Tujuan dari penelitian ini ialah untuk mendeskripsikan gambaran trauma pada masa kecil dan gangguan pasca trauma yang dialami oleh Charlie, karakter utama di dalam novel. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskripsi kualitatif untuk menganalisa trauma pada masa kecil dan gangguan pasca trauma. Data diambil dari novel seperti monolog dan dialog, dan di dukung oleh data sekunder seperti jurnal dan artikel. Langkah Langkah yang digunakan dalam memperoleh data untuk penelitian ini meliputi, membaca novel, mengidentifikasi data, mengelompokkan data dan mengurangi data yang tidak dibutuhkan.

Dalam penelitian ini, novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* menunjukkan penyebab trauma masa kecil pada Charlie, yaitu trauma atas duka setelah kehilangan sahabatnya dan bibinya, dan juga pelecehan seksual yang dilakukan oleh bibinya. Peneliti juga menemukan bahwa Charlie mengalami beberapa gejala dari gangguan pasca trauma yaitu, gejala yang mengganggu, gejala pengelakan dan gejala reaksi.

**Keywords: Trauma Masa Kecil, Gangguan Pasca Trauma, Trauma atas Duka, Pelecehan Seksual, Psikologi**

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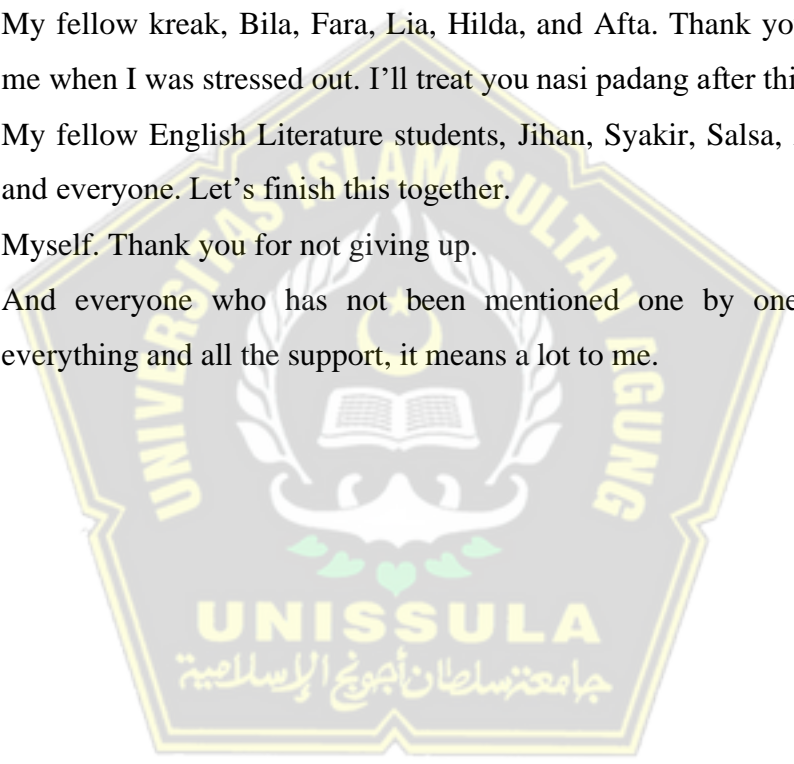
Big thanks to Allah SWT for his blessing, for making the writer be able to finish this final project, and also to His prophet, Muhammad SAW, who has guided humans from jahiliyyah era, may peace be upon Him.

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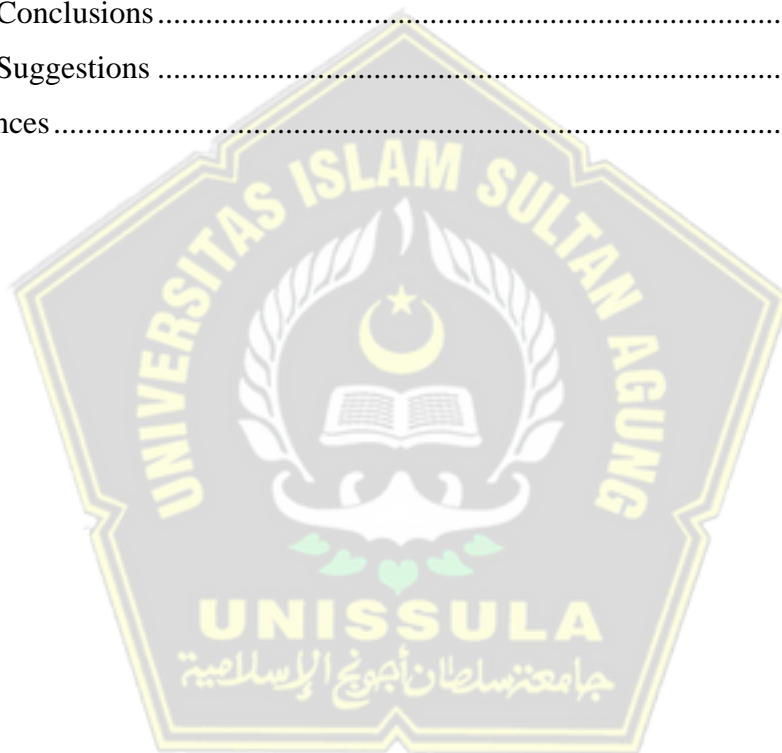




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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

Literature is an imitation of human's life. It means that literary work is a form in which the author expresses real life. Every literary work is related to real life. It represents the author's imagination through language that shows their character. It is also the author's expression of his emotion and thought. According to Yimer, a literary work supports psychology in terms of depicting human psychological conditions (159).

Psychology values logic, which is very contrary to literature. According to Russel "Psychologists prefer observations that can be replicated, whereas a serious writer deals with the analogy, metaphor, and perhaps intentional ambiguity" (551). Nevertheless, both offer the target of understanding the improvement of their subjects, real or fictional characters, separately, through the contentions and issues they look at throughout everyday life or in the imaginary. This quality according to Russel leads to the fact that knowledge of one field (psychology) can contribute to the other (literature) in at least four categories: the psychology of the writer, the psychology of the creative process, the study of behavior, and the responses to literature (551).

A novel is one form of literary work besides the drama, poetry, and songs. The novel was created to make the reader experience life through the author's imagination. By reading a novel we will likewise know the way to the author's thoughts and feelings. The novel is divided into two categories: they are fiction and nonfiction.

What is the difference between fiction and nonfiction? Anthony explains that Fiction can be defined as the art or craft of human life through written words, which means that fiction is not based on a real event. While non fiction is based on a real event and factual (2020). Various events in life are faced by characters in a novel. One issue that most likely appears in a novel, either fiction or nonfiction, is the psychological aspect. Related to the psychological aspect, trauma is one of the psychological aspects of a human's life.

People have at least one traumatic event in their life. People will not be able to escape from bad things and it often makes people trauma. But, do you know that not only adults who experienced trauma, but kids also experienced trauma. According to a survey held by National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) half of the nation's children have experienced at least one traumatic event in their lives. Data Resource Centre for Children and Adolescent Health describes childhood trauma as scary and upsetting event for children that affect their mental health. For

instance, watching a loved one suffer can be extremely traumatic as well. Exposure to violent media can also traumatize children. What happens to a child who has experienced trauma is they may act differently when they are adult. NSCH also explains that among 3% and 15% of girls and 1% to 6% of boys establish post-traumatic stress disorder after experiencing traumatic event. Most people who have experienced trauma may have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD. PTSD is the real effect of someone who has trauma. PTSD mostly happens hours or days after the traumatic event, but it may also take weeks, months, or even years after they appear. The trauma that they have remained in their unconscious mind.

Children with PTSD more possibly will re-experience the trauma in their minds over and over again. They will also avoid the things that make them trauma. When they could not avoid what makes their trauma, they will likely re-enact their trauma in their play. To prevent future trauma happens, children will become hyper-vigilant in looking for warning signs that something bad is going to happen. Children with PTSD may also grow up having other problems such as Anger and aggression, anxiety, depression, and difficulty trusting others. Feeling of isolation, poor self-esteem, etc.

This study will analyze the trauma that occurs on the main character, Charlie in the novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* tells a story about a 15 years old boy, Charlie, who suffered from trauma caused by her aunt.

When he was a kid, he was sexually harassed by her aunt. His aunt also threatened him to keep silent after what his aunt did to Charlie. One night, after meeting Charlie, his aunt died in a car crash in front of Charlie. Ever since then Charlie became an introverted person. He could not be able to socialize with his friends, and barely even talk with his family neither. Even after years after the traumatic event happened, Charlie is still shadowed by fear. He even tried to kill himself twice and got into rehabilitation to treat his trauma. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* is an interesting novel because we got to know how children with PTSD think and feel.

Based on the illustration above, this study will use a psychological approach focused on the psychological aspect of the characters in the novel. This study took the analysis of childhood trauma in Chbosky's novel as the title of this study, focused on the post-traumatic stress disorder faced by Charlie, the main character of the novel

## **B. Problem Formulation**

This study will discuss two important problems in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel, they are:

1. What are the causes of childhood trauma experienced by the main character, Charlie in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel?
2. How are the effects of the childhood trauma experienced by the main character, Charlie in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel?

### **C. Limitation of the Study**

This study's limitation is on childhood trauma and its effects on Charlie, the main character in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel through a psychological approach and focused on his childhood trauma and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

### **D. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel are:

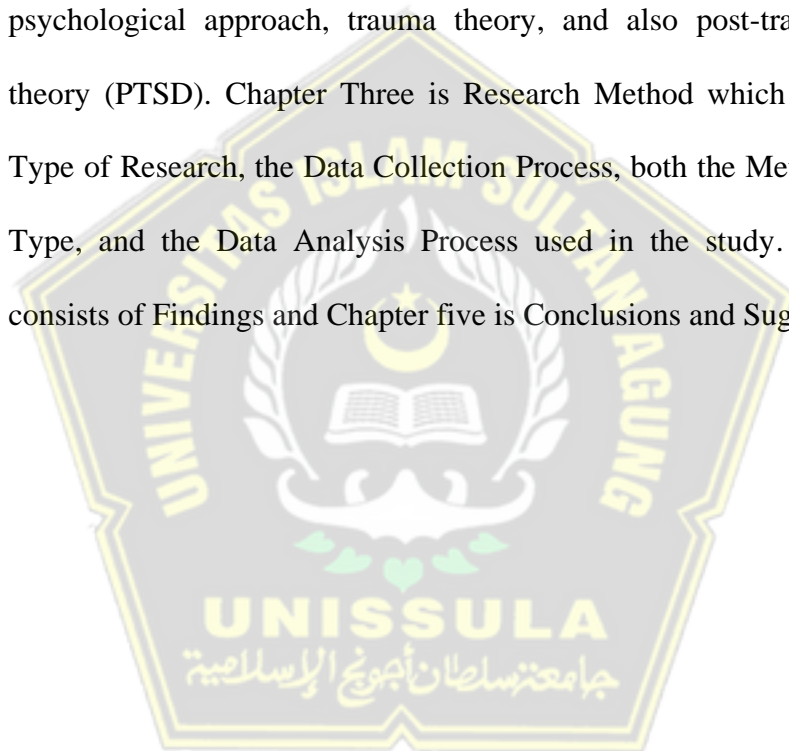
1. To portray the cause of the childhood trauma experienced by the main character, Charlie in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel.
2. To analyze the effects of childhood trauma experienced by the main character, Charlie in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel.

### **E. Significance of the Study**

This study would be helpful for researchers, readers, and students who study literature and the psychological approach. To help people who are interested in the childhood trauma and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder topics in the Faculty of Language and Communication Science, Sultan Agung Islamic University. For parents to understand more about childhood trauma and what is likely to affect their children. To understand the symptoms and also the effects of childhood trauma in the future (PTSD). Hope that when their children are in a bad situation and the symptoms appear, they can help their children from the trauma.

## **F. Organization of the Study**

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter One is the Introduction which includes the Background of the Study, Problem Formulation, Limitation of the Study, Objectives of the Study, Significance of the Study, and Organization of the Study. Chapter Two is a Review of Related Literature. It contains synopsis of the novel, psychological approach, trauma theory, and also post-trauma disorder theory (PTSD). Chapter Three is Research Method which discusses the Type of Research, the Data Collection Process, both the Method and Data Type, and the Data Analysis Process used in the study. Chapter four consists of Findings and Chapter five is Conclusions and Suggestions.





## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### A. Synopsis of *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*

*The Perks of Being a Wallflower* tells a story about a 15-year-old boy, named Charlie who started to write letters “dear friend” addressed to unknown. Charlie tells his stories through the letters about everything in his life. His thoughts, his daily life, his friends, his family, and also his trauma. Charlie has trauma after losing two of his closest people, Michael and Aunt Helen. He was also sexually harassed when he was a kid by his aunt.

When Charlie was a kid, he was really close with his aunt, Helen. She often came to his house and played with him. One day when she wanted to buy Charlie a gift on Christmas day which is also Charlie’s birthday, she died due to a car crash. Charlie saw the accident and blamed himself for murdering his aunt.

Junior school was really hard for Charlie, once again he had to overcome one of his closest people’s deaths, Michael Doblin, his only best friend. Charlie is an introverted person, he was so shy toward any other students, but Michael approached him first, and did everything together. One day, the entire school got shocked because of Michael’s death news. The fact that Michael killed himself worried the school’s principal about other students’ conditions, especially Charlie

who is his best friend. Ever since then, Charlie has become quieter. He even blamed himself for not being present for Michael, he also questioned why Michael killed himself

Later on, he is now in senior high school, Charlie tells a story that he has one close teacher, and also his favorite teacher, Bill, and his two best friends, Patrick and Sam. Bill recognizes Charlie's interest in literature. He assigns Charlie to read more novels and review them. He is also concerned about Charlie's personal life. Charlie believes Bill as he is his brother. Charlie even told Bill about her sister's problem with her boyfriend which no one knows. Patrick and Sam are pretty well-known people at their school, while Charlie is less well-known or we can say "a wallflower" which means he only watches people and analyzes them from afar. Patrick who is usually called Nothing by his friends is a funny guy, which often makes people laugh. He is easygoing and befriends many people. Sam, is a pretty girl with short hair. She is unique, according to Charlie, Sam is the prettiest girl he has ever seen. After Charlie becomes their friend, Charlie is invited to parties and tried alcohol for the first time as well. After a few weeks of getting together, Charlie develops feeling for Sam, but Sam treats him like her brother.

Day passed by, Charlie begins to come out of his comfort zone. He becomes less shy and more open toward people. But his life, his friends, and his family's lives become more complicated. The holiday is really difficult for his family because it reminds them of Aunt Helen's death. This time is not different than any other year. Even Charlie finds some solace in reading and re-reading *The*

*Catcher in the Rye*, but Charlie still finds it difficult to cope with his depression and his flashback about the time spent with aunt Helen. However, Charlie's acceptance of his friends makes Charlie in a better condition. When Charlie knows about his sister's pregnancy, he tells Bill about it because he could not tell anyone about it. But Bill somehow talks about the problem to Charlie's parents which makes his parents angry with his sister but after this problem, Charlie's relationship with his sister becomes deeper and closer. She even asks Charlie to drive her to the clinic to get an abortion.

At the end of the school year, Charlie becomes more afraid that his friends are going to leave soon. One day when Sam packs her belongings for her pre-summer program, she and Charlie begin to be more intimate. But suddenly Charlie feels uncomfortable, he starts to have a flashback when aunt Helen sexually harassed him when he was a kid. The sexual contact with Sam brings the repressed memory back. Charlie ends up in a mental hospital after his family found him faint. He ends up in a mental hospital.

Two months later he writes a letter to his "dear friend" about how his parents found him and brought him to a mental hospital, and that he remembers when aunt Helen sexually harassed him. But he had to repress all the memories. At the end of the novel, Charlie tells that he forgives aunt Helen and he will stop writing letters to his "dear friend" and will become more present in his life.

## **B. Related Literature**

### **B.1. Psychological Approach**

To understand a literary work better, we need a method to analyze it, which is a critical approach. Rohr Berger and Woods 1971 describes there are five kinds of critical approach. There are the sociocultural-historical approach the mythopoeic approach, the biographical approach, the formalist approach, and the last is the psychological approach (1-15). One of the critical approaches which is mostly used is the psychological approach. The psychological approach is an approach to study more about human psychology. In addition, Guerin, Labor, Morgan, and Willingham 1979 also propose that the motive of this approach is to analyze the underlying human behavior (155). By using this approach, the writer tries to find out and interpret the meaning of each line stated in the literary work through the psychological lens. In Theory of Literature by Warren and Wallek 1977 explained that there are four types of literary psychology based on the subject of the research (81), there are:

1. Psychology that studies the author. It studies about the author of literary work who can not be separated from their literary work, they would create a literary work which is based on their emotion, background, and their own lives.
2. Psychology that studies the creative process. It studies about the making and the process of the literary work.

3. Psychology that studies the types of psychology applied in the literary work. It studies about psychological cases and behavior applied to the character of the literary works.
4. Psychology that studies the impact of literary works on the reader. It studies about the influence of literary works on the reader's life.

To understand and observe *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel better, the writer will use the third case, which to study the psychology of literature through the topics and cases that are applied to Charlie, the main character of *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel.

## **B.2. Childhood Trauma**

Traumatic experiences are relatively common among children. At least one traumatic incident happened during childhood. According to Goodwin and Murray (2004), trauma is long-term depression and psychological illness. He explains that trauma is caused by traumatic events that happened. It is clear that people will get trauma when they face a terrible event and are forced to repress it. National Child Traumatic Stress Network explains Childhood trauma as an event when a child is involved or witnesses and threatened by it. (2010) it can be understood that childhood trauma is a bad memory for a child. According to National Child Traumatic Stress Network, there are types of traumatic events to which children can be exposed. There are:

- a. **Bullying:** Bullying is a deliberate and one-sided act aimed at causing social, emotional, physical, and / or psychological harm to a person who is often considered weak.
- b. **Community violence:** Community violence is the exposure of people who are not closely associated with the victim to intentional acts of interpersonal violence in public.
- c. **Complex trauma:** Complex trauma represents both the child's exposure to multiple traumatic events (often invasive and interpersonal in nature) and the widespread long-term effects of that exposure.
- d. **Natural disaster:** Natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, wildfires, tsunamis and floods, and extreme weather events.
- e. **Early childhood trauma:** Early childhood trauma generally refers to the traumatic experience that occurs in children up to the age of 06.
- f. **Intimate partner violence:** Intimate partner violence (IPV), also known as domestic violence, occurs when a person intentionally harms or threatens to harm his or her former or current partner or spouse.
- g. **Medical trauma:** Medical traumatic stress in children refers to a series of psychological and physiological responses by a child and his or her family to a single or multiple medical events.
- h. **Physical abuse:** Physical abuse occurs when a parent or guardian commits an act that causes physical harm to a child.
- i. **Refugee trauma:** It is a trauma associated with war and persecution and can affect their mental and physical health long after the incident.

- j. Sexual abuse: Child sexual abuse is any interaction between a child and an adult (or another child) in which the child is used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or an observer.
- k. Sex trafficking: Sex trafficking of children involves giving and receiving something of value to an individual (money, shelter, food, clothing, drugs, etc.) in exchange for sexual activity with a person under the age of 18.
- l. Terrorism and violence: is a trauma-affected by mass violence, terrorist acts, or community trauma in the form of shooting, bombing, or other types of attacks.
- m. Traumatic grief: After a sudden and unexpected death, the child may show a traumatic reaction.

Not all threatening and dangerous events children experience are considered a traumatic event. Children define their experiences differently, a traumatic event for a child might not be traumatic for another. Trauma comes in many forms and the response varies for each person. An adolescent might think that children who are exposed to trauma are going to be fine, but they are not. Even though they may not be able to express their thoughts and emotions clearly. Their verbal skills developed very rapidly during early childhood, but children still have difficulties expressing their feeling, emotions, and experiences. (Cohen, 2010).

After children have experienced a traumatic event, many effects are affecting them. Clinical and survey studies show people with childhood trauma

tend to have a higher chance to have a mental disorder (2). Just like what Gina Ross said that emotional trauma is a response to a big traumatic event that destroys children's lives and made children feel powerless (2010). Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration explains that child trauma survivors may experience:

- Learning problems
- Changing behavior
- Difficulties in interacting with other people
- Mental health problems (anxiety, sleeping, and eating disorders)
- Long-term health problems

From the statements above the writer concludes that childhood trauma is a threatening event a child is exposed to or witnesses to that will have an impact on their behavior, mental health, and social problems.

### **B.3. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

Most people who experienced trauma may have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD. PTSD is an effect that may develop after following traumatic events either witnessed or experienced. (Norris and Slone,2007). Smith and Segal also define post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a disorder that can develop following a traumatic event that threatens your safety or makes you feel helpless (2008). While American Psychiatric Association describes PTSD as formed by high-frequency, distressing, intrusive memories and by amnesia for the details of the event (2020). Based on the definitions of trauma, it can be understood that



after a person experiences an event that threatens their life, it will most likely stay on their mind throughout their lives and destroys their safety feeling also their happy life.

The signs of traumatic stress may vary for each person. Some of them might have a short impact while some of them have a long-term impact. Age also could tell apart the impact of one on another people. American Psychiatric Association also explains that people who have PTSD may have feelings and disturbing thoughts related to the event, and they may relive it through flashbacks and nightmares (2020). In some studies, not only having flashbacks, they will appear in vivid and long-lasting memories.

When these reactions develop in a person, they happen automatically as their attempt to manage negative emotions that emerge in response to memories of the events. PTSD is a bodily response which different from depression and the body's general response to the stressors (Flannery: 78). PTSD can present immediately or later. It might also continue days, weeks, or months after the traumatic event, some memories might resurface and they might have PTSD throughout their life.

There are many events that can lead to PTSD. Based on what Smith and Segal (2018) state, traumatic events which can lead to PTSD are: War, sexual or physical abuse, rape, kidnapping, childhood neglect, and death of a loved one, etc.

Based on the statements above, it can be concluded that post-traumatic stress disorder is a disorder that comes after someone experiences traumatic

events. the emotions that arise inside a human are a common reaction after something bad happened like rape, violence, bullying, and sexual abuse. It could affect their mental and physical. Some people who have post-traumatic stress disorder will get some disorders like a flashback, easily ill, nightmares, unwanted thoughts and feelings that remind them of the trauma, and anxiety.

### **B.3.1. Symptoms**

After a person is exposed to trauma, they will experience some symptoms of PTSD. Hermann states that PTSD's main symptoms can be classified into three steps: first, the re-experiencing symptoms come in the form of flashbacks and nightmares. It can be caused by environmental cues that remind them of the traumatic events. The second symptom is avoidance and numbing symptoms. People who experienced trauma will avoid the thoughts, feeling, places, and people that remind them about the trauma. Furthermore, they will be experiencing a loss of memory of the traumatic event and emotional numbing. The third symptom is hyperarousal symptoms which affected their sleep difficulties and their unconscious mind.

Even if every person reacts to PTSD differently, Flannery also states that PTSD has three main common symptoms (78). The three main common symptoms are:

#### **A. Intrusive symptoms:**

1. Continuously re-experiencing events in images, thoughts, memories, daydreams, and nightmares
2. Acting and feeling as if re-occurring the event
3. Distress when there is a symbolic reminder

**B. Avoidance symptoms:**

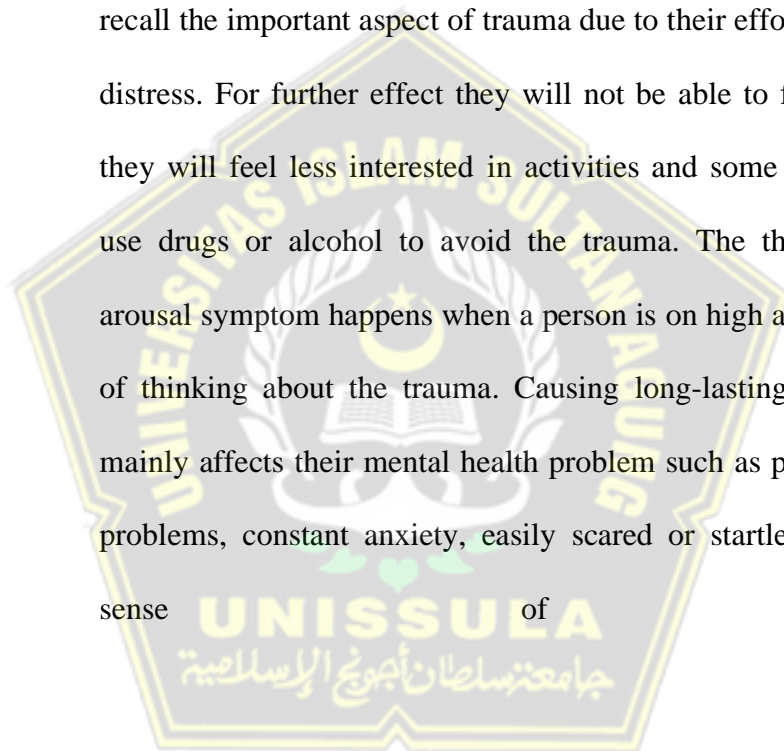
1. Avoid places and ideas that symbolize trauma
2. Difficulties to recall the important part of the event
3. Lost interest in important activities
4. Less emotions
5. Using drugs or alcohol

**C. Arousal symptoms:**

1. Constant anxiety
2. Exaggerated startle response
3. Sleep disorders
4. Difficulty concentrating
5. Irritability or outburst of anger
6. Panic attack

Based on the main symptoms above it can be concluded that in the first stage, the intrusive symptom, the person will experience flashbacks, and nightmares, and they will recall the trauma simultaneously. They will act like the trauma is reoccurring

and also feel like they are in the same situation as the trauma. They will feel like there are reminders and symbols of the trauma which will make them distressed. The second symptom is the avoidance symptom. The person will be trying to avoid the symbols and reminders that remain them of the trauma. They will give efforts to withdraw themselves from the trauma. They could not be able to recall the important aspect of trauma due to their effort to avoid the distress. For further effect they will not be able to feel emotions, they will feel less interested in activities and some of them even use drugs or alcohol to avoid the trauma. The third symptom, arousal symptom happens when a person is on high alert as a result of thinking about the trauma. Causing long-lasting stress which mainly affects their mental health problem such as panic, sleeping problems, constant anxiety, easily scared or startled, and heavy sense of guilt.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

Chapter Three is Research Method which discussed the Type of Research, the Data Collection Process, both the Method and Data Type, and the Data Analysis Process used in the study. This chapter aims to explain the procedures used to collect the data and analyze it.

#### **A. Type of the Research**

Type of the data in this study is qualitative type. Qualitative research is used to collect and analyzing non-numerical data, such as audio, video, and text. According to Creswell, qualitative research is a research method to explore and understand the meaning that some individuals or groups of people think come from social or human problems (2013). In short, qualitative research is a method used to analyze non numerical data such as audio, video, and text to understand more about the social or human problems. The research form is in descriptive data by explaining each sentence. In this study, the writer used qualitative research to analyze Charlie, the main character of The Perks of Being a Wallflower novel.

#### **B. Data Organizing**

##### **B.1. Data Collecting Method**

To collect the data, there were some methods that this study used

### **B.1.1. Reading the Novel**

Reading a novel is the main step in collecting the data. Reading *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel several times intends to analyze it. To understand more about the data through understanding the character, plot, behavior, and setting of the novel.

### **B.1.2. Identifying the Data**

After reading the novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, the upcoming step in collecting the data is to identify the data. The goal of identifying the data is to analyze the specific data by using highlights and underlining sentences.

### **B.1.3. Classifying the Data**

The third step of collecting the data is classifying the data. Classifying the data is a method of classifying the data based on the answer to the problem formulation. To classify the data, the writer classified it in a form of an appendix.

### **B.1.4. Reducing the Data**

The last method is reducing the data. Reducing the data is a process to reduce some data that does not have any relation to the objectives of the study. To minimize the data, some techniques

were used. This step is very effective in finding data that only matches the object of the study.

## **B.2. Types of the Data**

The types of data in this research were divided into two, there were:

1. The Primary data is data in this study process from the source by using appropriate data collection (Safi'I: 141). This means, that primary data is data collected by the writer from its original source. The data was taken from one of Stephen Chobsky's books, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel which was published by Pocket Books in 1999.
2. Secondary data is data that is compiled by someone else, it comes in the form of articles, journals, and so on (Safi'I: 141). In another word, secondary data is data that has been existed, written by someone. In this research, the secondary data the writer used are taken from journals, books, and articles which related to the study of the primary data.

## **B.3. Analyzing the Data**

Analyzing the data is the final method used in this study. It aims to analyze the report of the data that the writer has collected. This data comes in a form of a monologue, dialogue, and narrative. The data is supported by secondary data such as journals and books. This data later will be reported with more explanation

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter aims to elaborate on the answer to the problem formulations that have been stated in chapter one. The problem formulations of this study are. The first is what are the causes of childhood trauma experienced by the main character, Charlie in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel, and the second is how are the effects of the childhood trauma experienced by the main character, Charlie in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel. This chapter will show what are the causes and the effects of childhood trauma experienced by the main character in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel, Charlie.

#### **A. The Causes of Childhood Trauma Experienced by The Main Character, Charlie.**

As what has been explained in chapter two before, National Child Stress Network explained there are thirteen causes of childhood trauma. Charlie, the main character of *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* has experienced two, out of thirteen causes. There are traumatic grief and sexual abuse.

##### **A.1. Traumatic grief**

###### **A.1.1. Michael Doblin's Death**

According to National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) traumatic grief is one of the causes of childhood trauma. Cohen explains childhood traumatic grief as a condition in which children will show traumatic characteristics due to mourn of losing someone (307). When someone close to a



child dies, it could be painful for the child. But children's reactions vary from one to another, many children may adjust well after losing closest people, but others may not. Age, developmental level, and previous life experiences also affect how they react. The cause of death and the child's perception of death are also important aspects to consider in childhood grief and loss (Ferow, 2). Cohen also added that it happens especially when the death of the closest people is due to a traumatic event (307). Children may have traumatic reactions after losing someone that was sudden and unexpected or anticipated such as suicide, accident, war, etc. NCTSN also explains that children with traumatic grief will show a wide range of emotional behavioural responses such as common responses, for example: sad, anger, anxious, social interaction, changes in sleeping, learning problems, and losing appetite. Traumatic grief is one of the causes of childhood trauma experienced by Charlie. Traumatic grief can be seen in the monologue below when Charlie lost his junior high school best friend, Michael:

So, this is my life. And I want you to know that I am both happy and sad and I'm still trying to figure out how that could be. I try to think of my family as a reason for me being this way, especially after my friend Michael stopped going to school one day last spring and we heard Mr. Vaughn's voice on the loudspeaker. "Boys and girls, I regret to inform you that one of our students has passed on. We will hold a memorial service for Michael Dobson during assembly this Friday. (11)

From the monologue above, we could see that Charlie has changed. It all started when Charlie heard the news about Michael's death last spring which was

unexpected. He often does not know how he feels, he could not differentiate his feeling, even after he tries to resolve the problem.

Another reaction of how Charlie reacts to his best friend's death is shown in the monologue below:

I don't know how news travels around school and why it is very often right. Maybe it was in the lunchroom. It's hard to remember. But Dave with the awkward glasses told us that Michael killed himself. His mom played bridge with one of Michael's neighbors and they heard the gunshot. I don't really remember much of what happened after that except that my older brother came to Mr. Vaughn's office in my middle school and told me to stop crying. Then, he put his arm on my shoulder and told me to get it out of my system before Dad came home. We then went to eat french fries at McDonald's and he taught me how to play pinball. He even made a joke that because of me he got to skip an afternoon of school and asked me if I wanted to help him work on his Camaro. I guess I was pretty messy because he never let me work on his Camaro before. (11)

From the proof above, it can be seen that being sad is one of the responses after traumatic grief and Charlie was sad due to losing his best friend. The news of Michael's suicide spread quickly around the school. One of Charlie's schoolmate, Dave told everyone that Michael killed himself with gunshot. He knew because his mom was playing bridge with Michael's neighbor and they heard the gunshot. When Charlie heard the news, he felt sad and did not stop crying, he even forgot

about the details of the day when the event happened. Mr. Vaughn and his brother realized that Charlie was pretty messy after he heard the news, so Mr. Vaughn called his brother and told him to pick him up. His brother tried to calm him down by going to McDonald's, taught him how to play pinball, and made a joke. He also let Charlie work on his Camaro, which he had never done before.

When the counselor came to the school to interview some of the students, Charlie also shows some signs of trauma:

This one guidance counselor went through the whole group and finally came to me. "What do you think, Charlie?" What was so strange about this was the fact that I had never met this man because he was a "specialist" and he knew my name even though I wasn't wearing a name tag like they do in open house. "Well, I think that Michael was a nice guy and I don't understand why he did it. As much as I feel sad, I think that not knowing is what really bothers me." I just reread that and it doesn't sound like how I talk. Especially in that office because I was crying still. I never did stop crying. Then, I started screaming at the guidance counselor that Michael could have talked to me. And I started crying even harder. He tried to calm me down by saying that he meant an adult like a teacher or a guidance counselor. But it didn't work and eventually my brother came by the middle school in his Camaro to pick me up. (12-13)

After Michael died, the school gathered students who were close to Michael to counsel them. When the counselor interviewed Charlie to ask how close he

was with Michael, and asked Charlie's opinion about Michael, Charlie seemed sad and confused. He talked while he was crying. He told the counselor that Michael was a nice guy and he was really sad because of Michael's death. He did not stop crying and even started screaming and blamed himself for not being there for Michael. He thought that Michael should have talked to him. Charlie did not understand why Michael killed himself. In this case we could see how Michael's death bring sorrow to Charlie's life. Not only showing some symptoms like crying and screaming, Charlie even began to blame himself.

In the monologue below, Charlie also shows his trauma:

I think about it sometimes. I wonder what went on in Michael's house around dinner and TV shows. Michael never left a note or at least his parents didn't let anyone see it. Maybe it was "problems at home." I wish I knew. It might make me miss him more clearly. It might have made sad sense. (13)

In this monologue, Charlie talked about how he wondered about what Michael's problem at home, he was also curious about what went on in Michael's house. Charlie was confused because Michael never left a note or something, but he thought maybe Michael's parents hid it. He questioned why Michael killed himself. Not only once or twice Charlie questioned the cause of Michael's suicide.

The monologue below also shows how Charlie responds to traumatic grief:

For the rest of the school year, the teachers treated me different and gave me better grades even though I didn't get any smarter. (13)

It can be seen that after the event, the teacher seemed to be worried about Charlie's condition because they knew how close Charlie with Michael, so they treated Charlie differently and even gave higher grade to Charlie even if he did not get any better at his grade. It proved that Charlie had learning problem after Michael died. He did not get smarter after the event.

Another sign of traumatic grief experienced by Charlie also shown in monologue below:

I keep quiet most of the time, and only one kid named Sean really seemed to notice me. (15)

As what stated on the reference above, children with traumatic childhood tend to be have problem such as social interaction. It can be understood that after Michael died, Charlie has problem with how he interacted with other students. Charlie tended to be quitter because he had no friend. He also had difficulty to socialize with other people and no one also noticed him because he was quiet and there is only one kid, Sean, who noticed him.

Another proof of how traumatic it was for Charlie when he read and asked to his friends in high school about the author of the poem that Michael used to read:

It was a poem that Michael made a copy of for me. And I have read it a thousand times since because I don't know who wrote it. I don't know if it was ever in a book or a class. And I don't know how old the

person was. But I know that I want to know him or her. I want to know that this person is okay. (65-66)

Nobody knew who wrote it, but Bob said he heard it before, and he heard that it was some kid's suicide note. I really hope it wasn't because then I don't know if I like the ending. (72)

Michael gave the copy of the poem for Charlie. He has read it many times because he did not know who the author is, but nobody knew who the author was. He wondered if the poem was somewhere in a book or maybe in a class, he did not know what age the author was. But all he wanted was to make sure that the author is okay. So, when Bob answered that he heard it somewhere and as what he heard that the poem was a kid's suicide note, Charlie hoped that it was not true, because it means that the poem may a suicide note from Michael and Charlie did not like the probability that it might be Michael's suicide note because Charlie hoped that the author of the poem is okay.

Another data how traumatic grief experienced by Charlie can also be seen in monologue below:

So, please believe me when I tell you that I felt terrible after Michael died. (188)

In this monologue, Charlie finally told the reader that Charlie felt terrible after losing his best friend. When the event happened Charlie was younger, so he had difficulty to express how his feeling was, all he did was crying and blamed himself. Some of the reaction also showed when Charlie had to experienced

traumatic grief due to losing his best friend such as cry, angry, social interaction and learning problem.

### **A.1.2. Aunt Helen's Death**

Not only experiencing traumatic grief from his best friend, Charlie also showing signs of traumatic grief after losing his aunt, Helen.

My Aunt Helen was my favourite person in the whole world. (11)

It can be seen from the monologue above that aunt Helen is the most favourite person for Charlie. Traumatic grief will happen if someone who is close to a child die. Looking at how close Charlie were with his aunt made Charlie experiencing traumatic grief from losing his aunt.

In case below, Charlie showed that Michael and Helen are his closest people, so when something happened Charlie hopes that they will show up:

I always get sad when this happens, and I wish Michael were here. And I wish my Aunt Helen were here. I miss my Aunt Helen like this. Reading the book isn't helping either. I don't know. I'm just thinking too fast. Much too fast. It's like tonight. (83)

Just like Michael, Aunt Helen's death also brought Charlie to trauma. From the monologue above, Charlie shows that when something bad happened, he hopes that his closest people is here. But the fact that they are gone and Charlie has to endure his trauma by himself makes him even worse.

Charlie also explained how bad the trauma was for Charlie after losing his aunt:

After my aunt Helen was gone, I went to that place. It got so bad that my mom had to take me to a doctor, and I was held back a grade. But now I am trying not to think about it too much because that makes it worse. (82)

From reference above, we can conclude that when someone experiencing traumatic grief, the person who experienced it could have learning problem and many other effects. In this case Charlie showing his signs of trauma through experiencing learning problem so that he had to hold his grade and had to go to doctor because of the trauma. Charlie also stopped to go to that place because it reminded him of his memories and also his trauma. Besides the fact that losing his aunt was traumatic when he was a kid, it also affects him when he is a teenager.

In dialogue below between Charlie and his mom, Charlie shows that how losing his aunt affect his mental condition after he is older:

She just noticed that I looked very sad today, and she didn't think it was my friends leaving because I looked okay yesterday when I came back from sledding. "Is it your aunt Helen?" It was the way she said it that started me feeling. "Please, don't do this to yourself, Charlie." But I did do it to myself. Like I do every year on my birthday. "I'm sorry" (77).

From the dialogue above, Charlie and his mom talked about why Charlie looked very sad. When his mom guessed his sadness is because Charlie remembered his aunt, Charlie started to feel the same thing again. Charlie also told that his feeling



always feels the same way on his birthday because he feels guilty for his aunt's death. His feeling and trauma towards his aunt's death stay for years even after the incident happened. It shows that when Charlie experienced the trauma because of his aunt's death when he was a child, the trauma stays within himself even after he becoming a teenager.

In monologue below, Charlie tells the reader about what happened during the day of his aunt's death. Charlie also tells that how bad it was for Charlie during that time:

I don't really know what happened next, and I never really asked. I just remember going to the hospital. I remember sitting in a room with bright lights. I remember a doctor asking me questions. I remember telling him how Aunt Helen was the only one who hugged me. I remember seeing my family on Christmas day in a waiting room. I remember not being allowed to go to the funeral. I remember never saying good-bye to my Aunt Helen. I don't know how long I kept going to the doctor. I don't remember how long they kept me out of school. It was a long time. (88)

From the monologue above, Charlie said that he felt really terrible at that time. Children used to have difficulty to express their feelings through words nor expression when they were children, for that reason, children tend to have higher possibility to have traumatic experience, including Charlie. Considering he could not release his emotion when the incident happened, Charlie needed doctor's help to get out of his trauma. Not only for a short period of time, Charlie needed the

doctor's help for a long time proved that he was in a bad shape after losing his aunt.

Besides the fact that losing his aunt brings him trauma, Charlie also feels guilty of his aunt's death:

Despite everything my mom and doctor and dad have said to me about blame, I can't stop thinking what I know. And I know that my aunt Helen would still be alive today if she just bought me one present like everybody else. She would be alive if I were born on a day that didn't snow. I would do anything to make this go away. I miss her terribly. I have to stop writing now because I am too sad. (88-89)

Not only having common reactions towards losing someone, such as sad and anger, Charlie also blamed himself for the incident. He blamed himself for letting his aunt bought two presents for him. He also blamed himself because he was born on snowy day. He thought that his aunt would be alive if he was not born near Christmas, so that his aunt did not need to buy him two presents. The fact that Charlie still feels guilty even after his mom and doctor helped him to get rid of that feeling worsen his trauma until he is a teenager. He could not omit his guilty feeling after he is older makes him harder to accept his aunt's death.

In data below, Charlie shown how sad he is when he visits his aunt cemetery:

I remember when I was just about to say good-bye to my aunt Helen, I started crying. It was a real kind of crying, too. (90)

When Charlie was a kid, he did not have a chance to say good bye to his aunt in funeral, because his family did not allow him to go to funeral. So, when he is older, he goes to Helen's cemetery to say the thing that he did not have a chance to say, which is good bye. The way Charlie cries during his visit proves that he still feels sad after all this time.

After becoming a teenager, Charlie finally decides to make peace with his trauma for losing his aunt:

The next thing I knew, I was sitting in a doctor's office. And I remembered my aunt Helen. And I started to cry.

The monologue proved that even after Charlie a teenager, he still has his trauma. Just what the reference has proven that children with trauma could have the possibility to have the trauma within years. However, after being a teenager, Charlie finally tries to get better and to get rid of his trauma after a long time. He finally makes peace by going to doctor to make himself better. It can be concluded that childhood trauma caused by the traumatic grief after losing his aunt and his best friend stays for years in Charlie, which also affected his learning problem and his mental condition.

## **A.2 Sexual Abuse**

According to the World Health Organization definition, Child Sexual abuse means "It includes a child who is unable to give consent, under compulsion, fear or any other circumstances, not prepared physically, mentally or emotionally for sexual activities, any illegal activity, other

activity which not relates with the moral values of the society, child trafficking, child prostitution, child pornography, and many other similar acts, which are done against the will of kids”,

Sexual abused also happened to Charlie when he was a kid. Monologue below shown how sexual abuse is traumatic to Charlie:

When I fell asleep, I had this dream. My brother and my sister and I were watching television with my Aunt Helen. Everything was in slow motion. The sound was thick. And she was doing what Sam was doing. (186)

From monologue above, it can be concluded that Charlie experienced sexual abuse while he was a kid. It was done by his aunt, Helen. Even when he was a kid until he is a teenager, he does not even remember about the incident, but when something reminds him of the incident, he remembers the incident right away. It means that the trauma about what his aunt has done when Charlie was a kid remains within Charlie's unconscious mind.

After Charlie dreaming about the incident, he keeps remember about the incident and he finally found out that it was true:

Except maybe my aunt Helen. But she's gone. And even if she were here, I don't think I could talk to her either. Because I'm starting to feel like what I dreamt about her last night was true. (188)

But I kind of figured out that everything I dreamt about my aunt Helen was true. And after a while, I realized that it happened every Saturday when we would watch television. (191)

When Charlie dreamt about the incident, he keeps thinking whether it was true or not. After having a dream about the incident, Charlie collapsed and brought to hospital by his family. The trauma that stays in his unconscious mind worsen his condition. It could be concluded that the sexual abuse that his aunt did to Charlie caused childhood trauma to Charlie and the trauma has long term impact until Charlie becomes a teenager.

#### **B. The Effects of The Childhood Trauma Experienced by The Main Character, Charlie.**

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) happens after a person is exposed to a trauma. PTSD is a mental disorder that may occur after someone is exposed to a traumatic event (1). Bisson also added that PTSD can happen after a single traumatic event or a prolonged trauma such as sexual abuse during childhood (1). PTSD effects vary for each person some people have short impact and some of them have long impact. Some people with short impact PTSD may only get PTSD for hours until a week, but people with long term impact of PTSD may have PTSD for years even throughout their life.

Kirkpatrick explained that PTSD could be caused by events such as personal assault, natural disasters, motor-vehicle accidents, rape, childhood physical and sexual abuse, loss of loved ones (339). Charlie experiencing PTSD

after experiencing loss of loved ones after losing his best friend, Michael and his aunt, Helen. And after he is sexually abused by his aunt, Helen.

## **B.1. Symptoms**

After a person has been exposed to a trauma, some symptoms of PTSD will appear. Like what have been stated in chapter two before, PTSD comes in many forms including flashback, anxiety, nightmares, etc. Flannery states that common symptoms of PTSD are divided into three, there are: intrusive symptom, avoidance symptom, and arousal symptom. Charlie have experienced three symptoms that have stated before.

### **B.1.1 Intrusive Symptom**

Intrusive symptom is unintentional re-experiencing symptoms and intentional recall of trauma narratives (Ehlers, 2004). Some of intrusive symptoms are: continuously re-experiencing events in images, thoughts, and memories, daydreams and nightmares, acting and feeling as if re-occurring the event and distress when there is a symbolic reminder. Charlie experiencing intrusive symptoms such as flashback and feeling as if he is re occurring the event:

When I fell asleep, I had this dream. My brother and my sister and I were watching television with my Aunt Helen. Everything was in slow motion. The sound was thick. And she was doing what Sam was doing (186).

From the monologue above, it can be concluded that Charlie dreamt about the incident when he was sexually abused by her aunt. Just like what the reference has been stated, one of the symptoms of PTSD is intrusive symptom which includes having flashbacks or nightmares. It means Charlie has PTSD which is showed by having flashbacks or nightmares that reminded him about the incident.

Not only having re-experiencing the trauma through dreaming, Charlie also re-experiencing his trauma in his thought:

My brother ... football ... Brad ... Dave and his girlfriend in my room ... the coats ... the cold ... the winter ... “Autumn Leaves” ... don’t tell anyone ... you pervert... Sam and Craig ... Sam... Christmas ... typewriter... gift... Aunt Helen ... and the trees kept moving ... they just wouldn’t stop moving ... so I laid down and made a snow angel. (94)

From the monologue above, it can be seen that how Charlie remembers every trauma that he has. Even if he is half awake, he is still remembering about his trauma and about his memories that made him uncomfortable. The way Charlie stated “aunt Helen” and “don’t tell anyone” Refers to when Aunt Helen sexually abused him when he was a kid. And when he stated “gift” it refers to the day of Aunt Helen’s accident that made him trauma. It means that Charlie has post-traumatic stress disorder shown by

intrusive symptom, continuously re-experiencing events in images, thoughts, and memories, daydreams and nightmares.

Apart from the fact that Charlie dreamt about his trauma, Charlie also feels like he is re-occurring his trauma of losing his aunt:

She just noticed that I looked very sad today, and she didn't think it was my friends leaving because I looked okay yesterday when I came back from sledding.

"Is it your aunt Helen?"

It was the way she said it that started me feeling.

"Please, don't do this to yourself, Charlie."

But I did do it to myself. Like I do every year on my birthday.

"I'm sorry." (77)

From the dialogue of Charlie and his mom, we can see how Charlie always feels as he is re-occurring the event on his birthday because he lost his aunt on his birthday. Charlie always feels sad and guilty about the accident that happened to his aunt. He also stated that he does that every on his birthday. It is the effect of his trauma that make him feeling sad and guilty. it means that Charlie has PTSD which is showed in intrusive symptom, he feels as he is re-occurring the losing of his aunt.

In addition, Charlie also feels like he is re occurring the event when aunt Helen sexually abused him:



I did what she told me. And just before I fell asleep, I said something. “I can’t do that anymore. I’m sorry,” I said.

“It’s okay, Charlie. Just go to sleep,” Sam said.

But I wasn’t talking to Sam anymore. I was talking to someone else.

From the dialogue above, it can be assumed that when Sam tried to talk to Charlie, and he replied with “I can’t do that anymore” it relates to his trauma when he is sexually abused by his aunt. After what they have done, Charlie suddenly feels he can’t do that anymore because it reminded him of his trauma. He talked to Sam, but he is actually talking to “his aunt” even when his aunt is dead. He feels that he will re-experiencing the accident again. It is the effect of his trauma that made him scared. It can be concluded that Charlie has intrusive symptom which showed when he is re-occurring the incident, when he is sexually abused by his aunt.

Another proof of how Charlie experiencing intrusive symptom is when Charlie always goes to the same place each time on his birthday:

I’m really glad that Christmas and my birthday are soon because that means they will be over soon because I can already feel myself going to a bad place I used to go. After my Aunt Helen was gone, I

went to that place. It got so bad that my mom had to take me to a doctor, and I was held back a grade (72).

It can be stated that, during his birthday after losing his aunt, Charlie always goes to bad place. He went to that place because he is reminded of his aunt. The place also reminds him about losing his aunt. Charlie also stated that it was very bad that his mom had to take him to a doctor. It means that he has PTSD which is showed by the intrusive symptom, namely recollection of her traumatic event that he experiences great distress in the face of the place that remind him to his traumatic experience.

### **B.1.2. Avoidance Symptom**

Avoidance symptom is an effort of someone who has exposed to a trauma to avoid certain situations that remind them of trauma. Avoidance symptom is included: avoid places and ideas that symbolize trauma, difficulties to recall the important part of event, lost interest in important activities, less emotions, using drug or alcohol. Charlie is also experienced avoidance symptom. It can be seen in monologue below:

I read the book again that night because I knew that if I did not, I would probably start crying again. The panicky type, I mean. I read until I was completely exhausted and had to go to sleep. In the

morning, I finished the book and then started immediately reading it again. Anything to not feel like crying. (90).

From the monologue above, it can be seen that Charlie remembers his aunt, but he avoids his thoughts. He does everything such as reading book and sleep to avoid it. His memories of his aunt are still in his head, so it disturbs his life, in this data, the writer found that he has avoidance symptom when he is trying to avoid his thought about his aunt by doing other activities. His trauma goes around his mind and he tries to avoid it. It means that Charlie has avoidance symptom, which is avoiding his thought related to his trauma.

Another symptom of avoidance symptom is difficulties to recall the incident, Charlie also experienced this symptom shown below:

I don't really know what happened next, and I never really asked. I just remember going to the hospital. (51)

I don't know how long I kept going to the doctor. I don't remember how long they kept me out of school. It was a long time. (51)

The monologue above shows that Charlie is difficult to recall about the accident when his aunt died. He also did not remember about how long he was when he kept going to doctor. The effects of the trauma that he has

showed that he is having difficulties to recall important event. He could not remember about of his aunt accident and how bad it was for him too. It can be concluded that Charlie has avoidance symptom namely difficult to recall important part of the event.

Not only difficult to recall important part of the event, Charlie also lost interest in important activity such as reading:

Reading the book isn't helping either. (74)

Charlie likes reading novel. His teacher, Bill assigned him to read certain novel each day. Charlie always read in his spare time. The fact that he is does not want to read means that Charlie has lost his interest in important activity. Due to his trauma, Charlie explained that when he is feeling helpless and anxiety, Charlie does not feel to do anything, including reading, which he likes the most. It can be concluded that Charlie has avoidance symptom showed in lost interest in important activity.

### **B.1.3. Arousal Symptom**

Arousal symptom is a symptom of PTSD which affect their sleep difficulties and their unconscious mind. (Hermann, 2012). Arousal symptoms is included: constant anxiety, exaggerated startle response, sleep disorders, difficulty concentrating, irritability or outburst of anger, panic attack.

Not only experiencing intrusive and avoidance symptom like what has been stated above, Charlie also experiencing the last symptom of PTSD which is arousal symptom. The first arousal symptom of PTSD that Charlie experienced are constant anxiety:

I probably shouldn't write this down because I'm still seeing things move. I want them to stop moving, but they're not supposed to for another few hours. (91)

I went to the library and checked out a book because I was getting scared. Every now and then things would start moving again, and sounds were bass heavy and hollow. And I couldn't put a thought together. (96)

According to Almkhatar anxiety is a condition that has an extreme disturbance of mood or emotional tone. Anxiety has various signs and some of them are disturbances of sleep, concentration, social and/or occupational functioning. (580-581). In monologue above Charlie shows how he has anxiety because he has difficulty concentration. After experiencing many traumas that affected his mind. Charlie often feels scared. Not only once or twice, Charlie often has difficulty concentrating. Difficult to concentrate is caused by his feeling of anxiety and worry. It

means that Charlie has PTSD which shows arousal symptom, namely constant anxiety and difficult concentrating.

Charlie also has anxiety and difficulty concentrating shown in data below:

I don't know if you've ever felt like that. That you wanted to sleep for a thousand years. Or just not exist. Or just not be aware that you do exist. Or something like that. I think wanting that is very morbid, but I want it when I get like this. That's why I'm trying not to think. I just want it all to stop spinning. If this gets any worse, I might have to go back to the doctor. It's getting that bad again.

(90)

After going to aunt Helen's cemetery. Charlie feels sad and panic. He started feeling anxiety because he remembers about his aunt. Charlie says that everything is spinning shows that Charlie also has difficulty concentrating. Difficulty concentrating is caused by his anxiety. This is the effect of his trauma. It can be concluded that Charlie has PTSD which is showed in arousal symptom, constant anxiety and difficult to concentrate.

Besides the fact that Charlie is having anxiety, his anxiety also has led him to sleep disorder:

It's now 4 o'clock in the morning, which is the new year even though it's still December 31, that is, until people sleep. I can't sleep. Everyone else is either asleep or having sex. I've been watching cable television and eating jello. And seeing things move. I wanted to tell you about Sam and Patrick and Craig and Brad and Bob and everyone, but I can't remember right now. (90)

In monologue above, Charlie explains how he can not sleep during New Year's Eve. He also stated that he still seeing things move. This is the effect of his trauma. Charlie faces difficulty to sleep caused by anxiety that caused by his trauma. In this data, the writer found that Charlie has post-traumatic stress disorder, shown in arousal symptom, problem with sleep.

Furthermore, Charlie also experienced few panic attacks in his daily life:

I started breathing fast in the library. (96)

Panic attack is an unexpected intensive fear (Bonevsky, 1). From the reference it can be concluded that Charlie has unexpected fear when he is in library. Charlie is breathing fast caused by his panic. He is often feeling panic caused by the traumas that he has. In this data, the writer found that Charlie has PTSD which is showed by arousal symptom, panic attack.

Apart from having panic attack in the library, Charlie also had panic attack when he was on his family gathering:

I am sitting in my dad's old bedroom in Ohio. The family is still downstairs. I really don't feel very well. I don't know what's wrong with me, but I'm starting to get scared. I wish we were going back home tonight, but we always sleep over. (73)

Just like the reference has been stated above, Charlie has panic attack when he is in family gathering. He started to feel scared because he remembers his trauma. During his birthday he always feels like he is tortured because he remembers his aunt death and he feels guilty for it. So, when the day of his birthday come, he often feels scared and has panic attack. It means that Charlie has arousal symptom which showed through panic attack.

Based on the data above, Charlie has experienced every symptom of PTSD. He has experienced intrusive, avoidance and arousal symptom. Yet, the most symptom that appear in Charlie are intrusive and arousal symptom. The childhood trauma that Charlie experienced has affected his life. Not only affecting his personal life, it also affecting his social life.

It can be concluded that childhood trauma is very damaging to a child's life. Besides the fact that it affected the kid's life when he was a kid, it also affected the kid's life when he is older. Charlie is one of the



proofs that his childhood trauma affected his life when he is a teenager which is showed by the symptoms of PTSD.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter provides conclusion and suggestion. After finding causes and the effects of childhood trauma in Charlie in “*The Perks of Being a Wallflower*” novel, this study gives some conclusions and suggestions.

#### A. Conclusions

After analyzing the data, this study concludes the result of the research, they are:

1. In novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* novel by Stephen Chobsky, this study found there are two causes of childhood trauma in Charlie. there are:
  - a. Traumatic grief: Charlie has been dealing with his childhood trauma after losing his best friend Michael and his aunt, Helen. Furthermore, Charlie showing some common reactions such as sad, anger and feeling guilty. Besides the fact that he is showing reactions, he also having some problems due to the trauma such as learning problem and social interaction. Not only he has to deal with his trauma during his childhood, but the trauma stays within himself until he is teenager.

b. Sexual abuse: Charlie has childhood trauma caused by sexual abuse done by his aunt, Helen. Charlie does not remember exactly about the incident, but after something reminds him of the trauma, Charlie remembers it vividly. It can be concluded that the childhood trauma caused by sexual abuse stays in his unconscious mind. The trauma has long term impact until Charlie older.

2. This study also found that there are effects caused by the childhood trauma. The symptoms of PTSD are found by this study to clarify the effects after experiencing trauma. There are three symptoms of PTSD shown in Charlie:

- a. Intrusive symptom: intrusive symptoms are showed as many as three data, there are: continuously re-experiencing events in images, thoughts, and memories, daydreams and nightmares, acting and feeling as if re-occurring the event, and also distress when there is a symbolic reminder.
- b. Avoidance symptom: avoidance symptoms are showed as many as three data, there are: avoid places and ideas that symbolize trauma, lost interest in important activity, and difficulties to recall the important part of event.
- c. Arousal symptom: arousal symptoms are showed as many as four data, there are: constant anxiety, difficulty concentrating, sleep disorder and panic attack.

## **B. Suggestions**

This study emphasized about the psychology of character in literary work. For further research, the researcher can also analyze psychology in literary work from the aspect of the psychology of the author or the reader, and provide different analysis. The writer also hopes for the future research to learn more about trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder to conduct more research about kinds of trauma in literary work. This study also hopeful to help students of Faculty of Language and Communication Science of Sultan Agung Islamic University, also other people who have been interested and studying about trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder in literary work for their further research are welcomed.



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