



## THE ID DOMINANCE IN KATHLEEN GLASGOW'S NOVEL *GIRL IN PIECES* (2016)

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### Abstract

In the psychoanalysis theory developed by Sigmund Freud, the personality structure consists of three main elements that interact with each other: id, ego, and superego. A balanced personality between the id, ego and superego is considered the basis for optimal personality. Therefore, if one of the three personality elements is more dominant, there is a potential for experiencing a personality disorder, such as the main character of the novel "Girl in Pieces" (2016) by Kathleen Glasgow whose id is more dominant than her ego and superego named Charlie. This study aims to examine how id dominance influence of the character Charlie's behavior in Kathleen Glasgow's novel "Girl in Pieces". This research is a literary research carried out using qualitative research method. The theory used in this research is the Theory of Personality by Sigmund Freud (1923). Data collection techniques in this research are close reading, highlighting and annotating, and finding quotations. The result of this research shows that id dominance in character Charlie's influences her to do self-injury behavior such as cutting and hitting.

**Key words:** *Id dominance, Self-Injury Behavior, Theory of Personality, Girl in Pieces.*

### A. INTRODUCTION

In the psychoanalysis theory developed by Sigmund Freud, the personality structure consists of three main elements that interact with each other: id, ego, and superego. The id is part of the personality structure which is related to the individual's instincts and unconscious drives. The id operates on the principle of uninhibited pleasure and tends to satisfy immediate desires without regard to social norms or long-term consequences. The ego is the part that develops later and functions as a mediator between the id, external reality, and social norms. The ego tries to fulfill the id's desires in a way that is acceptable to the

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surrounding environment. Meanwhile, the superego represents moral norms and values instilled by society and authority, attempting to inhibit id impulses that are considered inconsistent with ethics and morality (Bertens, 2006).

The id, as part of the personality structure proposed by Freud (1923) represents an individual's basic instincts and instinctual drives, which often conflict with social norms or broader self-interest. Id dominance individuals may be more susceptible to addictive behaviors and hedonistic pursuits. The relentless pursuit of pleasure without restraint can lead to substance abuse, compulsive behaviors, and a general disregard for one's well-being. Id dominance can strain interpersonal relationships. The failure to consider the needs and desires of others in pursuit of personal gratification may result in broken relationships, isolation, and a lack of social support. Id dominance can lead to irrational and irresponsible actions, as well as sacrificing long-term interests for instant gratification (Arumndari, 2018).

In this research, researcher will discuss how id dominance influences character's behavior in the novel "Girl in Pieces" (2016) by Katleen Glasgow. The novel describes the emotional and struggling journey of a teenager named Charlie Davis. Charlie, an emotionally and physically scarred young girl, begins her story against the backdrop of a dysfunctional family and a traumatic past. From Charlie's character behavior, it can be seen how her id is more dominant than her ego and superego. This can be seen from how she always follows her desires or instincts without deep thinking or considering the consequences.

This research aims to explore the influence of id dominance on character's behaviour, as depicted in the novel "Girl in Pieces" (2016) by Kathleen Glasgow. Based on Freud (1923)'s psychoanalysis, which suggests the interaction between the id, ego and superego in forming personality, this research explores the character of Charlie, a teenager who struggles with emotional and physical wounds amidst a tumultuous and traumatic family background. By analysing Charlie's behaviour through the lens of Freudian theory, specifically emphasizing the dominance of the id over her ego and superego, this research seeks to explain how instinctual desires and impulses drive her actions, often without considering long-term consequences or social norms. Through this exploration, the research aims to deepen understanding of the complexity of human behaviour depicted in literary works.

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is literary research which involves studying and examining various aspects of Kathleen Glasgow's Novel entitled "Girl in Pieces" (2016). Literary research is a scholarly investigation and analysis of literature. It involves studying and examining various aspects of literary works, such as novels, poems, plays, essays, and other forms of written expression (Klarer, 2011). The goal of literary research is to enrich our knowledge and understanding the meanings, themes, cultural contexts, and other elements within literary texts (Maharsi, 2012:32).

To understand this literary research more deeply, this research used a qualitative research method with a focus on Theory of Personality by Sigmund

Freud (1923) to investigate id dominance influence in the novel "Girl in Pieces" (2016) by Kathleen Glasgow. Qualitative research method is research that focuses on in-depth understanding, interpreting and context of a phenomenon. This method is usually used to explore and understand social or human problems (Creswell, 2014:246). By focusing on in-depth interpretation and validation of findings supported by evidence from the text, this research aims to reveal a better understanding of the causes of the Id dominance itself.

In conducting this research, several data collection techniques are needed. First, close reading which involves careful and disciplined examination of a subject to achieve a deeper understanding of the true meaning conveyed in the novel. Second, highlighting and annotating to help improve reading comprehension. Highlighting is used to highlight or color text related to id dominance. Annotations are used to add notes or comments to highlighted text to explain how id dominance is reflected in the novel. Finally, finding the quotations involves careful reading, recording, and organizing quotes that are relevant to the research focus, particularly the influence of id dominance on character's behavior.

## **C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter discussed in more depth the findings and analysis that have been revealed in this research regarding the influence of id dominance on character Charlie's behavior in the novel "Girl in Pieces" (2016) by Kathleen Glasgow. The main question answered in this chapter is how id dominance influence character Charlie's behavior. This discussion provided deeper insight into the conflict experienced by Charlie, as well as its relevance to Sigmund Freud's theory of personality.

### **1. Result Finding**

#### **1.1 Id Dominance Influence Character's Behavior**

The id, in Freudian theory, represents unconscious, instinctive drives, which tend to fulfill individual needs without regard to consequences or rational considerations. In a literary context, the influence of id dominance on character behavior can open a deep understanding of the character's personality. One example is self-injury behavior, as found in the character Charlie in the novel "Girl in Pieces" by Kathleen Glasgow. Taking into account Freudian personality theory, the influence of id dominance can be seen as the main driving force behind acts of self-injury, where individuals use destructive actions against themselves as a way to fulfill unconscious instinctive needs or to overcome internal conflicts. By exploring the complex relationship between id dominance and self-injury behavior, deeper insight into character and personality dynamics in the context of literary works can be gained.

##### **1.1.1 Self-Injury Behavior**

Id, in the context Freud (1923)'s personality theory, is a part of the personality that operates based on the pleasure principle without regard for reality or consequences. This means that the id tends to fight for the most basic desires and satisfy impulses without considering long-term consequences or social norms. When the id dominates, the ego as mediator may be unable to moderate these impulses effectively, while the superego,

which represents moral norms, may also fail to restrain the id's uncontrolled impulses. As a result, individuals tend to be less able to restrain themselves or control themselves because the instant and uninhibited impulses from the id overcome the rational considerations of the ego and the moral norms of the superego.

This id can be seen from the character Charlie in “Girl in Pieces” (2016) by Kathleen Glasgow, how she always follows her desires and instincts without thinking about the consequences and only for temporary pleasure. Charlie tends to engage in self-injury behavior without thinking about the impact on herself. Self-injury refers to behavior in which someone intentionally harms themselves without the aim of committing suicide (Klonsky, 2007). This behavior can vary, including cutting oneself, hitting oneself, burning the skin or engaging in other physically destructive acts aimed at relieving emotional tension. From the seven forms of self-injury behavior that Walsh (2012) has presented in his book, there are two forms of self-injury found in Charlie's character, namely cutting and hitting.

#### **1.1.1.1 Cutting**

In the context of self-injury behavior, cutting oneself is one of the most common forms of self-injury behavior. This procedure involves using a sharp object such as a knife, scissors, or broken glass to make an incision in the skin of the body, usually on the arm, wrist, or thigh (Walsh, 2012). This behavior is often be a way for individuals to distract or soothe the emotional pain they are experiencing, even though this cutting behavior can result in serious and even life-threatening physical harm. This cutting behavior can be seen in the character Charlie in the novel “Girl in Pieces” (2016) by Kathleen Glasgow. In her narrative, she tells how her first cutting experience was like in the quotation below:

I cut because I can't deal. It's as simple as that. The world becomes an ocean, the ocean washes over me, the sound of water is deafening, the water drowns my heart, my panic becomes as large as planets. I need release, I need to hurt myself more than the world can hurt me, and then I can comfort myself. (Glasgow, 2016:42)

From quotation above there is a strong metaphor in the description “the world became an ocean,” which creates a picture of the incredible feelings of anxiety and pressure experienced by the character. The metaphor of the “ocean washes over me” reflects feelings of being washed away and oppressed by emotional stress. Apart from that, there is also the use of a simile with the comparison “my panic became the size of a planet” which describes how much panic and anxiety the character feels. This analogy strengthens the impression of the intensity and seriousness of the character's emotional state. Ultimately, there is a strong contrast between the character's need to hurt herself and her desire to find comfort in that pain.

The quotation also expresses the character's id dominance in making the decision to commit self-injury, especially in the form of cutting. The character describes that her panic and anxiety became so great that "my panic became as large as planets". This shows the dominance of the id because the id aims to fulfill needs and desires without delay (Minderop, 2016). In highly tense emotional states, characters feel the need for immediate release. When a character says that she needs to hurt herself more than the world can do for her shows the impulse of the id wanting immediate relief from its enormous emotional distress. The urge to self-injury becomes her preferred means of obtaining immediate release or comfort, as she feels unable to cope with the stress she is experiencing in any other way.

In this context, the dominance of the id in character is stronger than the function of the ego and superego. The ego, which operates based on reality, and the superego, which functions based on morality and social norms, try to restrain or manage the urge to self-injure. However, the needs and drives of the id, which is concerned with fulfilling wants and needs without delay, dominate the decision-making process. Thus, the character feels compelled to commit self-injury to relieve her emotional distress and achieve immediate release, even if it means injuring herself.

Another quotation that shows how id dominance in Charlie's influences her to carry out self-injury behavior:

In a rush, it happens again, only this time it's remembering what it's like to cut, and cut hard. The way you have to dig the glass in, deeply, right away, to break the skin and then drag, and drag fiercely, to make a river worth drowning in.

Oh, it hurts to make that river. The pain is sharp and bleary all at once; curtains part and shut over your eyes; bull breath from your nostrils.

It fucking hurts, hurts, hurts. But when the blood comes, everything is warmer, and calmer. (Glasgow, 2016:44)

In the quotation above, there is repetition of the word "pain", which creates an increasing rhythm and intensity in the character's experience of pain. This repetition powerfully illustrates how sick the character is. Furthermore, there is the use of the phrase "fucking hurts", which gives a deeper sense of emotion and intensity to the experiences the characters are going through. This quotation shows a strong contrast between the initial painful experience and the feeling of warmth and calm after the hemorrhage depicts the character's attempt to find comfort or relief from the pain through self-injury behavior.

From the quotation above, can be seen how the character responds to her instinctual drives and desires with no regard for moral consequences or considerations. The character's impulsive

response is seen in how she feels rushed to commit self-injury, as seen in the phrase "In a rush, it happens again." This shows that the character acts without thinking, directly following her instinctual impulses. Additionally, the character feels satisfied with her actions even though they are painful, because she feels a sense of warmth and calm when she sees the blood flowing. This reflects the id's need for immediate gratification, even if it comes from destructive or harmful actions (Schultz & Schultz, 2017). Then, the character's urge to cut herself intensively, as depicted in the quotation, reflects her instinctual desire to relieve the tension or she feels, without regard for the negative consequences. Even though she hurts, the character continues her actions because she feels that "when the blood comes, everything is warmer, and calmer." This suggests that the character is more focused on fulfilling her instinctual desires than considering the consequences or long-term impact of her actions. Thus, in this quotation, the character's id dominance is seen in her impulsive responses, desire for immediate gratification, strong instinctual desires, and lack of consideration for consequences or moral considerations, all of which drive her to commit self-injury in the form of self-injury.

In the novel "Girl in Pieces" by Kathleen Glasgow, the character Charlie shows the dominance of the id in her behavior which drives her to commit self-injury, one of which is in the form of cutting. In the quotations above, Charlie expresses her need to relieve her emotional tension instantly, even if it means hurting herself. The above analysis shows that Charlie's id dominance is stronger than her ego and superego functions, which try to restrain or manage her urges to injure herself. When Charlie feels a rush to self-injure and feels relief even though it is painful, it reflects her id's need for instant relief and a lack of consideration for the negative consequences of her actions. Thus, Charlie's character is driven to self-injury to relieve her emotional tension and achieve instant forgiveness, even if it means hurting herself.

#### **1.1.1.2 Hitting**

In the context of self-injury behavior, hitting oneself is one form of various actions aimed at physically hurting oneself. This action involves the use of physical violence against one's own body, such as hitting with a hand or using certain objects to hit the body (Walsh, 2012). Even though cutting can cause major, even fatal, bodily harm, people frequently engage in this behavior as a means of diversion or as a means of easing their mental distress as the character Charlie does in the quotation below:

The plastic chair bounces off the burses' station. The container holding the pens with plastic flowers taped to them falls to the floor, the pens fanning out across the endless beige carpet. The endless, everywhere beige carpet. I start to

kick the station, which is bad, because I have no shoes, but the pain feels good, so I keep doing it. (Glasgow, 2016:17)

In this quotation there is the use of imagery with the image of pencil boxes and pens falling to the floor, as well as pencils scattered on an endless beige carpet which creates a strong image of the chaos that occurs in this situation. Apart from that, the quote above also uses repetition of the word "endless" to describe the monotonous and endless atmosphere of the beige carpet that stretches everywhere, giving the impression of a feeling of being trapped or stuck that the character might feel. The quotation above also shows that there is a contrast between the character's angry actions and the calm and "safe" atmosphere of the surrounding environment, giving rise to a strong tension between internal and external in the character's thoughts and feelings.

The quotation above shows the character's id dominance is stronger than her ego and superego functions because it encourages her to commit acts of self-injury. The id, which operates on the principles of pleasure and instant gratification, pressures the character to seek emotional release in uncontrolled and destructive ways (Bertens, 2006). When a character feels angry or disturbed, the id's drive for gratification immediately overcomes the ego's considerations about the consequences and moral norms of the action. Even though the character realizes that the act of hitting the nurse station is bad, she continues because "the pain feels good." This suggests that the drive to relieve emotional pain is stronger than rational or moral considerations. In other words, the character's need to relieve emotional distress and obtain instant relief from discomfort predominates over considerations of long-term impact or moral worth. Therefore, the strong dominance of the id in this situation encourages the character to commit self-injury in the form of hitting, even though this action is destructive and unhealthy.

The next quotation also shows self-injury behavior which influenced by id dominance in Charlie's character is seen in the quote below:

I kick the suitcase away and stand up. I close my eyes, drink the last of the bottle, smash it against the wall. I am dark, dark, all dark. I have to cut it out, this thing in me that thought I could be better. I have to remember how stupid I was, how fucking stupid— (Glasgow, 2016:342)

The quotation uses the word "dark" repeatedly to reinforce the impression of intensity and despair. The act of breaking a liquor bottle and declaring "I have to cut it out, this thing in me" creates powerful symbolism. A broken bottle can be interpreted as a literal breaking or destruction of oneself, while an "this thing in me" can symbolize internal conflict or anxiety that triggers self-defeating behavior. The narrator is described as someone who struggles with

inner darkness and anger at herself. The actions taken, such as drinking alcoholic drinks and breaking bottles, provide an illustration of her miserable emotional and psychological condition.

From quotation above can be seen that the dominance of the character's id is stronger than the function of her ego and superego because it encourages her to commit acts of self-injury in the form of hitting. The id, which operates based on primitive and instinctual drives, pressures the character to overcome self-dissatisfaction and negative emotions in an uncontrolled way (Minderop, 2016). When a character feels “dark, dark, all dark” and feels that he must “cut it out” and “remember how stupid” she feels, her id's urge to let go of emotional discomfort overrides the ego's considerations about the consequences of the action. Although the character realizes that the actions of hitting and breaking bottles are destructive actions, her id's drive to relieve self-dissatisfaction and emotional discomfort trumps rational or moral considerations. In other words, the character's need to express her anger and frustration physically prevails over considerations about long-term impact or moral worth. Therefore, the strong dominance of the id in this situation drives the character to self-injury in the form of hitting to deal with self-dissatisfaction and instant emotional release.

In the context of self-injury behavior, hitting oneself is one form of various actions aimed at physically hurting oneself. In these two quotations, the dominance of the id in Charlie's character is stronger than the ego and superego functions because it encourages her to commit acts of self-injury. The id, which operates on primitive, instinctual drives, drives Charlie to seek emotional release in uncontrolled and destructive ways. When Charlie feels angry or disturbed, her id's drive for instant fulfillment dominates the ego's considerations about the consequences and moral norms of the action. Although Charlie realizes that hitting is bad, he continues because "the pain feels good." This suggests that the id's drive to relieve emotional discomfort is stronger than rational or moral considerations. In other words, Charlie's need to relieve self-dissatisfaction and obtain instant emotional release dominates considerations about long-term impact or moral value. Therefore, the strong dominance of the id in this situation drives Charlie to commit self-injury in the form of hitting, even though this action is destructive and unhealthy.

The concept of id dominance as defined in Freud's personality theory is explored in depth, especially its manifestation through the character Charlie in the novel "Girl in Pieces" (2016) by Kathleen Glasgow. Charlie's propensity for self-injury, including cutting and hitting, is analyzed through the lens of id dominance, in which her actions prioritize immediate gratification over rationality and moral considerations. Through vivid excerpts from the novel,



Charlie's impulsive responses and the intense emotional turmoil that drives her self-destructive behavior are examined. Although aware of the negative consequences, Charlie's id-driven impulses override any restraints of her ego or superego, leading her to seek solace in self-harm to deal with her inner turmoil. Thus, this chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of how id dominance influences Charlie's behavior, highlighting the complexity of human psychology and the character dynamics depicted in the novel.

## **2. Discussion**

The analysis of Charlie's behavior in "Girl in Pieces" through the lens of Freudian personality theory, particularly focusing on the concept of id dominance, provides a compelling reflection of Freud's theories in action within the realm of literature. Sigmund Freud's (1923) psychoanalysis theory, which posits the existence of three components of the human psyche - the id, ego, and superego - offers a framework for understanding the complexities of human behavior, particularly in relation to unconscious drives and conflicts.

In the context of Charlie's self-injury behavior, the id emerges as the predominant force driving her actions. According to Freud (1923), the id operates on the pleasure principle, seeking immediate gratification of instinctual desires without regard for consequences or moral considerations. This is evident in Charlie's narrative, where she describes her compulsion to self-injure as a means of coping with overwhelming emotional distress. The id's influence is depicted through Charlie's impulsive and instinctual responses, as well as her prioritization of temporary relief over long-term consequences.

Moreover, Freud's (1923) concept of the ego, which mediates between the id's demands and the constraints of reality, is also reflected in Charlie's behavior. Despite her awareness of the potential harm caused by self-injury, Charlie's ego struggles to moderate her impulses effectively, particularly in moments of heightened emotional turmoil. This is illustrated in her descriptions of feeling overwhelmed by panic and anxiety, leading her to seek immediate release through self-harm without considering the rationality of her actions.

Additionally, the superego, representing internalized moral standards and societal norms, appears to have a limited influence on Charlie's behavior in the context of self-injury. While the superego typically acts as a restraining force, guiding individuals towards socially acceptable behavior, Charlie's actions suggest a weakening of superego control in moments of emotional crisis. Her primary concern becomes the alleviation of emotional pain rather than adherence to moral or social norms, highlighting the overpowering influence of the id in such circumstances.

Overall, the analysis of Charlie's behavior in "Girl in Pieces" offers a nuanced reflection of Freud's (1923) psychoanalysis theories of personality. By examining the interplay between the id, ego, and superego within the context of literary narrative, readers gain insight into the complexities of human psychology and the intricate dynamics that drive individual behavior. Through Charlie's character, Freud's (1923) theories find resonance in the exploration of unconscious

drives, internal conflicts, and the quest for emotional gratification, underscoring the enduring relevance of psychoanalytic principles in understanding human nature.

## **D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **1. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the analysis of id dominance in the character of Charlie in "Girl in Pieces" (2016) by Kathleen Glasgow provides valuable insights into the complexities of human behavior, particularly in the context of self-injury. Through the lens of Freud's psychoanalysis theory, it is evident that Charlie's actions are heavily influenced by her id, which prioritizes immediate gratification and emotional release over rationality and moral considerations. This dominance of the id is manifested in Charlie's tendency to engage in self-injurious behaviors, such as cutting and hitting, as a means of coping with her inner turmoil and emotional distress.

Despite being aware of the negative consequences of her actions, Charlie's id-driven impulses override the restraints of her ego and superego, leading her to seek solace in self-harm as a way to alleviate her emotional pain. The vivid descriptions and internal dialogue provided in the novel illustrate the intensity of Charlie's emotional struggles and the relentless pursuit of relief through self-destructive means.

Overall, the exploration of id dominance in Charlie's character enhances our understanding of the complexities of human psychology, particularly in the context of trauma and coping mechanisms. By delving into the intricacies of Charlie's behavior, we gain valuable insights into the interplay between instinctual drives, emotional turmoil, and the subconscious mind. Through this analysis, we are reminded of the profound impact that past experiences and inner conflicts can have on individual behavior, highlighting the importance of empathy and understanding in addressing mental health challenges.

### **2. Suggestions**

Based on the discussion of this thesis, here are some suggestions for further research:

1. Research how the concept of id dominance is depicted in other literary works, such as poetry and drama. This may provide additional insight into the different ways these experiences are conveyed and understood in literary contexts.
2. Investigate the novel using other theories. Adopting alternative theories can help deepen understanding of the phenomenon in the novel "Girl in Piece" (2016) by Kathleen Glasgow from different perspectives, such as structuralism theory, feminist theory, or postcolonial theory.
3. Conduct psychoanalysis from different expert points of view. This approach may help in expanding understanding of the motivations and consequences of id dominance from a variety of psychological perspectives.

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