

Freudian Analysis of Freedom: Comparing 'Aku Perempuan' by Indah Pratama and 'The Sky is the Limit' by Rohini Vij

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Abstract

This comparative research analyzes the freedom of the main characters in two short stories "Aku Perempuan" by Indah Pratama and "The Sky is the Limit" by Rohini Vij using Sigmund Freud's Tripartite Personality, which consists of the Id, Ego, and Superego. The main issue in this research is how the conflict between personal desires, reality, and social norms affects the freedom of the main characters in these two stories. The aim of this research is to understand the psychological dynamics experienced by the main characters as they struggle to achieve freedom that is limited through self-realization. The researcher wants to see freedom from Id, Ego, Superego of each of the main characters of desires and what they actually want. The method used is qualitative analysis with Freud's theoretical approach, where data is obtained from the narrative texts of the two short stories. The finding of this research shows that they navigate the conflicts between the Tripartite of how the characters can get freedom through self-realization. This analysis highlights the importance of perseverance, social support, and self-determination. By understanding this, readers, especially women can achieve personal freedom within restrictive social contexts.

Keywords: freedom, Sigmund Freud, Tripartite Personality, social norms

INTRODUCTION

We are born into a perfect freedom. We are naturally free. We are free to do what we want, when we want, how we want, within the bounds of

the "law of nature" (Locke, 1689). In literary studies, the themes of freedom through self-achievement in a social context are often the main focus. This research discusses this theme by analyzing the main characters in two short stories,

"Aku Perempuan" by Indah Pratama and "The Sky is the Limit" by Rohini Vij. In other words, freedom is defined as something that can be achieved by someone based on its natural desire. This relates to how the main characters from both stories have the desire to achieve freedom but there are things which deter the characters from achieving it.

In this research, the researcher is supported by several previous studies which are relevant to this research. In their paper, Khofifa R. Endrawati, Tini Moge and, Merlin M. Maukar in their study under the title "*Analysis of Id, Ego and Superego of The Main Character In The Movie Script Cruella*" by Tony Mcnamara and Dana Fox, discussed the id, ego, and superego manifest in Estella/Cruella's character throughout the movie script. The research is qualitative and descriptive, relying on non-numerical data. Data were collected through multiple viewings of the movie, analyzing the script, and referencing related literature. The analysis applies Freud's psychoanalytic theory to understand Estella's psychological development. The research found that Estella's id is depicted through her eccentric and barbaric thoughts of revenge. This aspect of her psyche is dominant and often leads her to impulsive and aggressive actions. Ego: Her ego is illustrated by her ability to manage her vengeful impulses in more realistic and socially acceptable ways. The ego mediates between her raw desires and practical execution. Superego: Her superego is the least dominant but is evident in her feelings of guilt and her realization of her true self. It surfaces when she feels remorse for her actions and contemplates the moral implications of her behavior. The study concludes that Estella, as Cruella, is primarily driven by her id, with her ego playing a significant role in executing her plans in a feasible manner, and her superego being the least influential but still present in moments of guilt and self-reflection. Last previous study, In the studies by Regita Gonibala and Ana Mariana under the title "*Psychoanalysis of The Main Character in Dubliners*" by James Joyce discussed each main character using Sigmund Freud's theory of id, ego, and superego. The researchers used descriptive qualitative methods and used the theory to study the literary works created by James Joyce in the

book of Dubliners. Using the literary work to collect the personal expression of the author's feelings in the form of experiences, ideas, and thoughts. In the analyzed story, the Id characteristics show how the Id of the main character emerged because of his inner thirst for savage sensations in their desire to let go of school stress. In the ego part, the ego controls the id desires of the main character and looks at the principle of reality of which the one which can be fulfilled. The superego shows in the story of how the main character feels worried because superego is a moral branch of personality.

Based on the above studies, there is a difference that can be seen because most of them used a descriptive-qualitative method that they used in their analysis while our analysis is "using qualitative method as our research method." In the first paper on Cruella, the researchers took the movie Cruella as their research, while in our research we took two short stories as our research. In the first paper on Cruella, the researchers took the movie Cruella and the second researcher took the story about in the Dubliner book as their research, while in our paper, we took two short stories as our research. The similarity between their analysis and ours is the theory they used which is Sigmund Freud's theory of id, ego, and superego analyzed from the main character.

According to Huifang Li (2021), The tripartite personality theory is actually the most unique of Freud's hypotheses and is often employed in literary criticism. Freud holds that one's personality is made up of the id, ego, and superego. These two stories provide rich material for analysis through Sigmund Freud's Tripartite Personality theory, which consists of the Id, Ego, and Superego. This theoretical framework allows us to understand the psychological conflicts that characters face as they confront the personal desires, lived realities, and social norms that shape their lives. The background to this research is the problem of gender bias and socio-economic challenges that limit individual freedom, especially women. In "Aku Perempuan," Rani, a diligent and ambitious young woman, struggles against social expectations and family pressure in her pursuit of higher education and personal fulfilment.

Likewise, in "The Sky is the Limit," Shalu confronts the real gender injustices in her family and society while nurturing her unique inner world and deep connection to nature. Both stories emphasize the tension between personal aspirations and external limitations, making them ideal for psychological analysis using Freud's model.

This research is important because it explains the complex relationship between individual psychology and the social environment. By understanding how the Id, ego, and superego influence a character's decisions and actions, which can see a broader picture of the human experience of seeking freedom in a limited context. This analysis not only contributes to literary criticism but also provides a valuable perspective for psychology and gender studies, highlighting women's resilience and agency in a patriarchal society. This issue is relevant not only for literary analysis but also for broader discussions of personal freedom and social restriction. Understanding these dynamics can provide valuable insight into how individuals, especially women, navigate their paths to self-fulfillment in the face of adversity.

The findings of this research indicate that both Rani and Shalu succeeded in achieving freedom and self-fulfillment by successfully navigating the conflict between their Id, Ego, and Superego. Despite facing significant challenges from their social and economic environment, their perseverance, social support, and determination played an important role in their journey. This highlights the importance of internal psychological resilience and external support systems in coping with limiting social contexts.

This research aims to deepen our understanding of the psychological dynamics experienced by the main characters in "Aku Perempuan" and "The Sky is the Limit" as they struggle for freedom and self-achievement. Applying Freud's Tripartite Personality theory, this study reveals the intricate balance between personal desires and social reality, offering readers, especially women, valuable insight into how to achieve personal freedom in a restrictive environment. This analysis emphasizes the

enduring relevance of psychoanalytic theory in literary studies and its potential to inform and inspire real-world applications in efforts to achieve gender equality and personal empowerment.

METHODS

The method used in this research is qualitative analysis focusing on the textual evidence provided by the story. By analyzing narratives through Freud's Tripartite Personality, this study explains how the characters' Id, ego, and superego interact and conflict, shaping their paths to self-achievement. This method allows for a detailed and contextualized understanding of the character's psychological landscape. The main issue discussed is the conflict between personal desires, reality, and social norms, as well as how this conflict affects the freedom of the main characters in "Aku Perempuan" and "The Sky is the Limit."

According to Hasan (2024), Qualitative analysis is a study methodology that collects and analyzes non-numerical data to explore and understand people's ideas, attitudes, behaviors, and experiences. This research is using qualitative analysis and focusing on Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory approach, especially the concept of Tripartite Personality which consists of Id, ego and superego. This approach allows us to outline the psychological dynamics and internal conflicts experienced by the main characters in two short stories, "Aku Perempuan" by Indah Pratama and "The Sky is the Limit" by Rohini Viji which related to method used because it focuses on the concept and opinions towards human behavior, attitudes, and perceptions. The main data for this research were obtained from the narrative texts of the two short stories.

The data collection procedure involves identifying texts, in-depth reading which aims to gain deeper meaning, comprehension of a text, research detailed information for an assignment, read difficult sections of a text Ventanas Tazer (2014), and additionally, data extraction in the form of dialogue, internal narrative, and interactions between characters. Data analysis was carried out by applying the concepts of Id, ego, and

superego from Freud's theory to identify main themes, interpret internal conflicts, and explain their impact on the character's psychological development. This research does not require special equipment other than access to short story text sources and literature on psychoanalytic theory. The analytical approach used is a qualitative method with triangulation of sources and approaches to ensure the validity of the findings. This method provides a clear and structured framework for understanding the psychological dynamics of characters in their social context, which can be applied in a variety of literary and psychological research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Human's pure instinct, desire, need related to the ego, and also the way it differs a sense of right and wrong are the one component in the concept of Tripartite Personality which consist of Id, Ego, Superego by Sigmund Freud. The id is known as a condition of happiness since using this id as the human's operational system controls, increases, and arranges for the minimization of stress resulting in satisfaction. According to Husin, (2018) cited in Khoirunisa, et.al (2022), Id is a part, it is indeed the passion of their soul as it is seeded in every human. In the Id part of Freud's psychosexual stages, it is actualized or put into action and then in the pleasure part.

The ego is a realistic component that acts as a mediator between the superego and id wants. It addresses the needs of reality. According to Saul Mcleod (2024) and Kendra Cherry (2021), the ego is a realistic component that acts as a mediator between the superego and id wants. The ego must mediate and serve as a referee in conscious situations where the objectives of the superego and id clash and has a system which aims to present on how to transform the impulse from its origination in the id into a realization of an action.

Super ego gives ego a moral worth in place of a purely pragmatic approach, thereby controlling the id from engaging in any unethical behavior. The ideal self and conscience are the two systems that make up the superego. Referring to the "inner voice". According to Prof. Mrinal Kanti

Sarkar (2021), super ego is formed through following instructions and codes, particularly those that start with "don't". The latter, on the other hand, is about a psychological condition that determines our behavior toward one another and how we portray ourselves in public. Among these three roles have a large impact on the behavior of a person and are highly determinative of what is the best that the person should do when the wish requires an immediate action in order to be transformed into a real action.

Maksimenko Sergiy & Serdiuk Liudmyla define self-realization as the process of a person's personality being actualized and implemented, as well as their internal positive and creative quest of development, psychological maturity, and competence. Self-realization is also related to freedom, where someone gets to know themselves, they can get a new vision and understanding of it and bring them to permanent happiness because they can express themselves freely. The freedom towards self-realization is marked by her silent rebellion against societal constraints. Because of that, they get their own desires from the realization which makes them more conscious of their lives. In a journey of Shalu In "Aku Perempuan" by Indah Pratama, shows the characters' behaviors and decisions using Freud's Tripartite Personality Analysis:

1. Id (Desires)

- a. Rani's desire to pursue higher education despite financial constraints and societal expectations reflects her innate drive for personal growth and self-improvement.

"Suatu hari, sekolah Rani kedatangan tamu dari salah satu Universitas Negeri untuk melakukan sosialisasi. Rani sangat antusias menyimak penjelasan dari pihak Universitas. Mendengar semua itu membuat minat Rani untuk melanjutkan pendidikan semakin menggebu-gebu."

"Ayah...tolong izinkan Rani untuk menempuh pendidikan yang lebih tinggi lagi."

- b. Her aspirations for independence, success in academics, and later in entrepreneurship are manifestations of her deep-rooted desires for achievement and self-fulfillment.

"Rani dan ke lima orang temannya dinyatakan lulus seleksi SNMPTN di Perguruan Tinggi yang mereka inginkan."

"Tiga tahun terakhir, tepatnya setelah Rani mendapatkan gelar sarjana, ia mulai merambah ke dunia bisnis".

"Setelah berhasil menjalankan bisnis, tidak serta merta membuat Rani berpuas diri. Dia mulai peruntungannya di dunia bisnis kuliner. Dia membuka beberapa rumah makan hingga beranak pinak. Cabang rumah makan yang ia dirikan tersebar hingga ke beberapa kota besar di Indonesia".

2. Ego (Reality Perception):

- a. Rani's desire and also her perception of reality is shaped by her awareness of her family's financial limitations, her gender role expectations, and the societal norms that suggest education may not be a viable path for her.

"Saya tidak yakin, Bu. Ayah saya hanya seorang nelayan. Saya tidak mau memaksakan kehendak saya dan menambah beban kehidupan bagi kedua orang tua saja jawab Rani lesu."

- b. Despite these challenges, she maintains a pragmatic approach by seeking scholarships, considering practical options like working part-time, and negotiating with her family to pursue her dreams.

"Ayah...tolong izinkan Rani untuk menempuh pendidikan yang lebih tinggi lagi."

"Tapi Ayah, Rani akan usahakan untuk masuk perguruan tinggi negeri dan mendapat beasiswa. Rani janji akan tidak akan menuntut banyak dari Ayah dan Ibu"

3. Superego (Social Norms):

- a. The societal norms and expectations regarding gender roles, especially Sodri's derogatory comments, represent the clash between Rani's personal desires and the prevailing social attitudes.

"Sodri dan teman-temannya terkenal akan kenakalan dan berasal dari keluarga yang kaya raya. "Aku dengar kamu mau lanjut kuliah ya, Ran?" tanya Sodri dengan nada menyindir.

"Kamu itu sadar dirilah, kuliah itu hanya untuk orang kaya seperti kami." sahut Sodri lantang disusul dengan gelak tawa teman-temannya."

- b. Rani's response to Sodri's remarks showcases her defiance against traditional gender stereotypes and her assertion of equal rights and opportunities for women.

"Aku memang perempuan! Dan aku bangga menjadi seorang perempuan!"

"Malahan laki-laki sepertimu itulah yang merusak bangsa ini! Meremehkan kaum perempuan dan malah membanggakan kekayaan orang tuamu!"

- c. Rani's character through her internal struggles between her desires and awareness of the inadequacy of her family's economic condition. On the other side, she wants to take that opportunity but her superego

appears in herself and realizes that her identity is not able to pursue her desire because of her family's condition.

"Tapi Ayah, Rani akan usahakan masuk perguruan tinggi negeri dan mendapat beasiswa. Rani janji tidak akan menuntut banyak dari Ayah dan Ibu"

In the first story of 'Aku perempuan' There are conflicts between Personal Desires, Reality, and Social Norms that has happened in the main character which means Rani. Rani's desire for education clashes with her family's financial constraints and societal expectations of traditional gender roles. This conflict creates tension and challenges her sense of agency and autonomy. The derogatory comments from Sodri highlight the external pressures and judgment Rani faces, adding complexity to her journey of self-realization. In addition, it can be seen that there is Freedom and Self-Realization in Rani's Journey. She involves navigating societal expectations, overcoming financial obstacles, and challenging gender norms. Her perseverance, resilience, and determination lead her to achieve academic success, entrepreneurship, and ultimately, gaining acceptance and support from her family. Overall, Rani's story illustrates the interplay between personal desires, societal norms, and the pursuit of freedom and self-realization. Through her struggles and triumphs, she breaks free from societal constraints, achieves her dreams, and becomes a symbol of empowerment and inspiration for others.

In Rohini Vij's short story "The Sky is the Limit," Freud's Tripartite Personality Analysis can be used to explore the characters' behaviors and motivations.

1. Id (Desires)

- a. Shalu's Id: Shalu's innate desires are evident in her longing for freedom, education, and a better life. She is deeply curious about the world, as shown by her fascination with the birds' stories

and her desire to learn from her brother's schoolbooks.

"She was often found enjoying the company of the birds. One day, as she was staring at a chattering group of birds, she turned to her mother and said, 'I love the stories these birds exchange. Some talk about a new fruit they've tried while others discuss new places for food. But, you know ma, which stories I love the most,' she continued without waiting for her mother to ask, 'the ones where they talk about distant lands.'"

"It was time for her for her little brother to go to school. Shalu was livid, she and her sisters were never given this opportunity. They looked at his new bag and books with awe. She touched and smelt the pages of the books."

2. Ego (Reality Perception)

- a. Shalu's Ego: Shalu perceives the harsh realities of her life, including gender discrimination and financial hardship. She navigates these challenges by making pragmatic choices, such as striking a deal with her brother to learn how to read and write.

"So, she struck a deal with him. He would go to school, learn how to read and write and come back home and teach her. He agreed."

3. Superego (Social Norms)

- a. Shalu's Superego: Shalu's behavior is influenced by her family's expectations and the broader societal norms that devalue girls. Despite this, she nurtures her own moral compass and dreams, symbolized by her connection with the birds and their stories of freedom.

"One night, as her mother was clearing up the dishes, Shalu went over to her. Careful not to speak too loudly, she whispered, 'The birds have asked me to fly with them. They have been asking me every year but I

was too scared to go. They say, the clouds show them the way, the moon sings to them and the wind carries them when their wings get too tired. And, when everything seems dark the sun shows them the light.”

The results of this analysis were conflict between personal desires, reality, and social norms that has happened in the main character in this story which means Shalu. In the second story of "The sky is limit", the main character faces Shalu's Conflict that Shalu's personal desires for education and freedom conflict with the reality of her family's financial situation and societal norms that limit opportunities for girls. This conflict is a source of emotional and psychological strain for her and also there is the problem of her parents' conflict that the parents face the tension between their desire for a better life (through having a son) and the harsh realities of poverty. Their adherence to social norms creates an internal conflict when these norms do not bring the expected happiness.

Conflict between ID and Superego

The conflict between Rani's id and superego is a dynamic interplay of her desires, reality, and societal expectations. Her id drives her to seek higher education and professional success, while her ego helps her navigate the practical challenges posed by her family's financial situation. Meanwhile, her superego reflects the internalized social norms and values, sometimes causing her to question her aspirations but also pushing her to challenge gender stereotypes. This internal struggle illustrates the complexity of human motivation and the psychological processes that shape individual behavior and decision-making.

In addition, Shalu's conflict between personal desires, reality, and social norms that has happened in this story. The freedom conflicts with the reality of her family's financial situation and societal norms that limit opportunities for girls. This conflict is a source of emotional and psychological strain for her and also there is the problem of her parents' conflict that the parents face the tension between their desire for a better life through having a son, and the harsh realities of

poverty. Their adherence to social norms creates an internal conflict when these norms do not bring the expected happiness.

CONCLUSION

It is the discussion of the Tripartite Personality by Sigmund Freud which consists of Id, ego, and superego, it clearly shows that the needs and natural desire, balancing between the needs and reality, and also the way controlling the ego are part of the Tripartite Personality. This also seen from the comparison of two stories of 'Aku Perempuan' by Indah Pratama and 'The Sky is the Limit' by Rohini Vij" of how the Id, ego, superego take role of the characters and how it makes people could see not only from one point of view but also from the other using this Sigmund Freud's theory analysis. This research also conveys how the characters from those two stories, even though the way they overcome the problem are different but they were in the same phase of self-realization which is the aim to get freedom.

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