

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is another form to express human psychic or behaviour. According to Greil and Sollor (2009) “Literature is not only what is written but what it sounds, what is expressed and invented in whatever form”. Literary works are created to interpret a person’s (author’s) life or his experience. This is supported by Supriyatno (2022) that ‘literary works as an imitation, reflection, or representation of the world and human existence, and the main criterion is to show the ‘truth’ of its representation and human life’. In this research, the present writer found that human social issues, such as juvenile delinquency, are also portrayed of Japan in the novel *Confessions* by Minato Kanae.

Literary and sociology have a strong relationship because, through literary works, the authors always gets inspiration to make their works by looking at some phenomena that are memorable for them. According to Davita (2005), “Sociology is the study of various traits of society and the relationship between societies to the social stability of their environment” (p.3). It means society always coexists in realizing social stability in their environment. Other aspects that are the subject of research in sociology are the structure of society, social stability and social change. Social change occurs when ideal social relations confront social phenomena such as social inequality. The object of it seen in children’s lives is called juvenile delinquency.

Confessions is a novel by Minato Kanae, a prominent Japanese author renowned for her contributions to fiction and thriller literature. Her passion for writing emerged in her thirties, leading her to become a member of both the Mystery Writers of Japan and The *Honkaku* Mystery Writers Club of Japan. Her debut novel that brought her into the spotlight was *Kokuhaku*, internationally known as *Confessions*, which earned the prestigious Japanese Booksellers Award. Minato is often referred to as “the queen of *iyamisu*” (mystery), a subgenre of mystery fiction that explores the darker aspects of human nature. Released in 2010, this psychological thriller gained international acclaim following its film

adaptation, which won several accolades, including Best Film at the 34th Japanese Academy Awards and 53rd Blue Ribbon Awards.

One interesting fact about the novel *Confessions* is that it received reviews from several readers who are authors of famous novels as well, and the reviews can be read on the last page of the novel. Emily St. John Mandel, known for writing *The Lola Quartet* and *The Singer's Gun*, is among the reviewers of this work. This novelist from Canada said, "Kanae Minato is a brilliant storyteller, and *Confessions* is a superb and haunting work. As Minato expertly shifts the perspective from one character to the next, each change in perspective lends a startling new dimension to a gripping and profoundly unsettling tale. It's a novel I'll think about for a very long time." Another fact, Minato Kanae used the Rashomon effect, inspired by a film titled Rashomon from Japan. The conflict in the story used a mixed plot and was viewed from different points of view of each character.

Confessions is a psychological thriller novel that tells its through various narrative perspectives. The story delves into the themes of punishment, despair, and tragic love, ultimately leading to a confrontation between a teacher and a student that endangers the safety of the entire school. The novel offers a new perspective on classroom dynamics and power relations in an educational setting. The novel begins with Yuko Moriguchi, a middle school teacher, who resigns from her position after a personal tragedy involving her only daughter, Manami. Before officially leaving, she delivers a final lecture to her students. In this speech, she reveals a shocking truth about two of her students, challenging their assumptions and triggering a meticulously planned act of revenge. Two of her students are Naoki Shitamura and Shuya Watanabe. Yuko's revenge plan against her two students had a very bad impact on their lives.

Confessions has several interesting issues to analyze, one of which is that the present writer wants to focus this research on social problems such as juvenile delinquency, which is reflected in social groups, namely juveniles (underage children around 13-14 years old). Therefore, the present writer wishes to explain how Yuko (as an adult and parent) sees these juveniles as full of mystery and darkness. Yuko's revenge against two of her students is a form of her confession

because of her hatred for the children who commit crimes. Also, the present writer will correlate this topic to themselves, parents, society, juvenile law and media as causes of juvenile delinquency, based on previous study of this novel about power relations.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the study above, the present writer writes down research questions as follows:

1. What are the forms of juvenile delinquency in Japan portrayed in the novel?
2. What are the causes of Japanese juvenile delinquency committed in *Confessions*?
3. How does Japanese society respond to and treat juvenile delinquency as portrayed in the novel?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study are:

1. To find out what forms of juvenile delinquency in Japan are portrayed in the novel.
2. To explain the causes of Japanese juvenile delinquency committed in *Confessions*.
3. To explain how Japanese society responds to and treats juvenile delinquency as portrayed in the novel.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study was conducted to develop a deeper sociological understanding of juvenile delinquency in Japan. It is also intended to serve as a useful reference for readers who share an academic interest in examining how sociological perspectives can be applied to analyze this issue.

1.5 Methodology

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method. Based on Sudjana (2002), the qualitative descriptive research method is a research method aims that aims to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate description or depiction of the

phenomenon being studied by collecting data from primary sources such as documents or texts, and analyzing the data descriptively. The connection of literature and sociology lies in the fact that many stories drawn from real life are transformed into literary works. According to Davita (2005), “Sociology is the study of various traits of society and the relationship between societies to the social stability of their environment”.

The present writer uses the novel titled *Confessions* as the primary data and reads it. Then, portrayed the forms of juvenile delinquency, the causes, and the society response or treatments to juvenile delinquency in the novel. Therefore, the present writer will use quotations of dialogue or narration from the novel.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

In this study, the present writer will use the whole book titled *Confessions*. This novel features six characters: Yuko, Shuya, Naoki, Mizuki, Takahiro, Sakuranomi, and Werther. The scope of this novel is about mother-daughter relationships, revenge, and human psychology. However, this *skripsi* has a limitation, which is to portrayed juvenile delinquency found in *Confessions*. This includes providing some forms of juvenile delinquency, causes, and society's responds and treats to it. Additionally, this phenomenon is examined from the perspective of teenagers in Japan; thus, the author includes seven values upheld by Japanese society and connects it with the Japanese society's response and treatment of it as presented in the novel.

1.7 Status of the Study

Miftah Khurrohmah (2020) on the research entitled *The Pride of the Main Character Shuya Watanabe*. This study aims to examines the arrogant behavior of the main character Shuya Watanabe and using psychological theories about the emotion of arrogance.

A previous study by Mega, Helena, and Sandra (2023), titled *The Analysis of Character Yuko Moriguchi*. This study aims to identify the intrinsic elements and characteristics of the main character, Yuko Moriguchi. The research was

conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach through content analysis of the novel, which deals with the theme of revenge.

Choiriyah, Novitasari, and Suprayitno (2018), titled *Konflik Batin Tokoh Novel Confessions Karya Minato Kanae (kajian psikologi sastra)*. This study aims to describe the inner conflict of the characters in the novel. The approach used in this study is literary psychology, specifically Alfred Adler's individual theory.

Alif Khalifatur Rafiqah (2016), titled *Abnormal Behavior in The Main Characters of Confessions Movie*. This study aims to reveal abnormal behavioural system (DSM-IV) using the theory of abnormal psychology by Laura A. King that reflected by main characters, which are Yuko Moriguchi and Shuya Watanabe.

Muhammad Yusdwindran (2018), titled *Mechanism of Defense Ego Yuko Moriguchi in the film Confessions Literature Psychology Review*. This study aims to discussed the conflict experienced by the main character that is Yuko Moriguchi using the theory of personality analysis, instinct theory, and psychoanalytic theory by Sigmund Freud.

Vico Arie Prasetyo (2021) titled *Mother Absence Potrayed in Val Emmich's Dear Evan Hansen and Kanae Minato's Confessions*. This study aims to show similarities and differences regarding Mother Absence that is experienced by two main characters of both literary works and using theory absent mother by Jasmin Lee Cori.

Last, Nina Febriana Sejahterawati (2008), titled *An Analysis of Power Relations in Kanae Minato's Novel Confessions*. This study aims to investigate how power is exercised in the novel using Foucault's theory of power.

The difference between this paper and previous studies is that several studies sociological perspectives employed in this analysis. Therefore, the present writer interested in discussing it in this *skripsi*, as new research has found juvenile delinquency to be a significant finding. Another reason is that there has been no research analyzing juvenile delinquency on *Confessions*, especially in English Literature, at the Universitas Kristen Indonesia.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The organization of the study in this *skripsi* consists of four chapters:

Chapter I is the Introduction. This chapter provides a general overview of the topics to be discussed. It consists of eight sub-chapters: background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, methodology, scope and limitation, status of the study, and organization of the study.

Chapter II is a Review of Related Literature. This chapter addresses topics related to the subject, covering the Intrinsic elements theory, Japanese Society, Juvenile and the causes of it such as parents, media, and juvenile law. The present study compiles research articles related to juvenile delinquency from other journals and systematically organizes them to convey the topic effectively.

Chapter III Juvenile Delinquency in Minato Kanae's *Confessions*. In this chapter, the novel's findings will be explained and addressed in all statements of the problems. The findings encompass the forms of juvenile delinquency, the causes of it, and lastly, the responds and treats of society to juvenile delinquency.

Chapter IV is the Conclusion and Suggestions. In this chapter, the writer will concluded the analytical actions in the novel and will provide suggestions for further research on the novel *Confessions*.