

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This research investigates the impact of Eva's emotionally neglectful parenting to Kevin's psychosocial development through to approach of psychoanalytic literary criticism. By utilizing Freud's concept of human psyche, the id, ego, and superego, Tyson's core issues of anxiety theory, and Erikson's stage of psychosocial development theory, this study reveals how Eva's emotional neglect estranges her interpersonal relationship with her son Kevin, which later severely influence his psychosocial development, resulting to a troubled and destructive personality. Eva's emotional neglect that she exhibits since her son's birth becomes the main contributing factor to their mutual rejection and the absence of emotional attachment between a mother and a son that persists throughout Kevin's growth.

The findings of the research presents the possible causes of Eva's emotional neglect towards Kevin. Eva's inconsistent view towards motherhood is marked by the lack of maternal instinct and selfish reasoning to embrace parenthood. It reflects her unresolved inner conflict, having to sacrifice personal freedom to conform parental responsibility. Eva's maternal ambivalence leads to her blame on Kevin, while she is the one who reluctantly surrender her romantic child-free marriage life with Franklin. Moreover, Eva's emotional alienation represents her fear of intimacy, which serves as a defense mechanism. She subconsciously protects herself by resenting Kevin, avoiding genuine affection that may expose her vulnerability. This allows Eva to intellectualize and hide her true emotion. As a result, Kevin grows up without a decent emotional support from Eva, which severely affects his psychosocial development, according to

Erikson's framework. The absence of maternal affection prevents Kevin from developing trust to Eva, which later worsen into mutual resentment. Furthermore, it distorts his development in autonomy vs shame and doubt, and identity vs. role confusion stage, marked by Kevin exhibiting destructive behavior that drives from aggressive tendencies and socially unacceptable self-image. Kevin also struggles in resolving the third (initiative vs. guilt) and fourth stage (industry vs. inferiority) of psychosocial development, he lacks initiative in social interactions and acts malice by advantaging his industry.

Conclusively, this research highlights that *We Need to Talk About Kevin* serves not only as a narrative that conveys family dynamic and moral responsibility, but also a psychological exploration of how the absence of a mother figure deeply affects a child's growth and the shaping of their personality. Through psychosocial perspective, Eva and Kevin's relationship reflects the tragic consequences of emotional distance between each other, highlighting the importance of a secure relationship between a mother and children.

This research opens opportunities for further researchers to examine the psychological and interpersonal dynamics between parents and children in narrative, particularly through the lens of psychoanalytic literary criticism. Similar research can be conducted on other narratives that portrays family dynamics or child maltreatment to examine how early emotional relationship affects an individual's personality and behavior. Further researchers can also examine how parental neglect is depicted in other literary works to investigate the underlying motives, in order to gain understanding about parenthood in fiction. By expanding the scope of Eva's neglect and Kevin's

psychosocial development, this research can contribute how fiction reflects real human struggles with parenthood and psychological problem in contemporary literature.

