



**DENIAL AND IDENTITY CRISIS IN *ATONEMENT*
BY IAN MCEWAN, *NEVER LET ME GO* BY
KAZUO ISHIGURO, AND *MIDNIGHT'S
CHILDREN* BY SALMAN RUSHDIE: A
PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH**

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion the dissertation submitted by Rukhsar Nadhm KAREEM titled “DENIAL AND IDENTITY CRISIS IN ATONEMNT BY IAN MCEWAN, NEVER LET ME GO BY KAZUO ISHIGURO, AND MIDNIGHT’S CHILDREN BY SALMAN RUSHDIE: A PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH” is fully adequate in scope and in quality as a dissertation for the degree of PhD.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

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Signature :

FOREWORD

First and foremost, I owe this humble work to Allah. With his blessing, this work could be done. Alhamdulillah.

My extreme gratitude to my dear supervisor Assoc. Prof. Tavgh Ghulam SAEED for her guidance throughout the process of writing this thesis. She provided me with support, motivation, and knowledge. I would also like to show my gratitude for Assoc. Prof. Dr. Harith Ismael TURKI for his fruitful guidance and support since the first day of my Doctoral journey.

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ABSTRACT

In this study, denial and identity crises plague the novel's main characters. Ian McEwan, Salman Rushdie, and Kazuo Ishiguro explore the layers of the human psyche and identity crisis through their characters in *Atonement*, *Midnight's Children*, and *Never Let Me Go*. They portray the influence of the unconscious mind actions and behaviors of the characters.

In *Atonement*, Ian McEwan portrays the destructive effects of denying the truths and one's identity. He delves deep into Briony Talis's psyche to depict the denial mechanism's role in her life. McEwan presents an image of Briony's unconscious mind and its destructive effects on her decisions, resulting in the tragedies of Robbie and Cecelia's lives. He presents multiple versions of Briony to create identities for those around her. Kazuo Ishiguro portrays the struggle of identity construction through Kathy H and her friends. Various manifestations of suffering are portrayed. *Never Let Me Go* shows the desperate attempts of the human clone's characters to find the original models that they are copied from to have a clue about the purpose of their existence and their original identities. On the other hand, Salman Rushdie presents the struggle of the identity crisis of his main character Saleem Sinai due to the political upheaval; his real identity is lost even inside his family. This study will explore identity crisis and the layers of the human psyche through the Lens of Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development and Freud's denial mechanism. In particular, it examines the unconscious mind's role and fragmented identities in the life of the main characters.

Keywords: Denial, Identity Crisis, trauma, Erik Erikson, Fragmented identities

ÖZ

Bu çalışmada romanın ana karakterlerini inkâr ve kimlik bunalımı sarmaktadır. Ian McEwan, Salman Rushdie ve Kazuo Ishiguro, Atonement, Midnight's Children ve Never Let Me Go'daki karakterleri aracılığıyla insan ruhunun katmanlarını keşfediyor. Bilinçaltının karakterler ve eylemleri üzerindeki etkisini tasvir ediyorlar.

Kefaret'te Ian McEwan, gerçekleri ve kişinin kimliğini inkar etmenin yıkıcı etkilerini tasvir ediyor. İnkâr mekanizmasının hayatındaki rolünü tasvir etmek için Briony Talis'in ruhunun derinliklerine iniyor. Briony'nin bilinçaltının bir görüntüsünü ve onun kararı üzerindeki yıkıcı etkilerinin, Robbie ve Cecelia'nın hayatlarının trajedileriyle sonuçlanan bir resmini sunuyor. Etrafındakiler için kimlikler yaratmak için Briony'nin birden fazla versiyonunu sunuyor. Kazuo Ishiguro, kimlik inşası mücadelesini ana karakterler aracılığıyla sunar ve acının çeşitli tezahürleri tasvir edilir. Roman, insan klonu karakterlerinin, varoluş amaçları ve orijinal kimlikleri hakkında bir ipucu elde etmek için kopyalandıkları orijinal modelleri bulma konusundaki çaresiz girişimlerini gösterir. Rushdie, Saleem Sina'nın siyasi çalkantı nedeniyle yaşadığı kimlik bunalımı mücadelesini sunar; gerçek kimliği ailesinin içinde bile kaybolmuştur. Tez, Erik Erikson'un psikososyal gelişim teorisi ve Freud'un inkar mekanizmasının Merceğinde kimlik krizini ve insan ruhunun katmanlarını keşfedecek. Özellikle bilinçaltının ve bir dizi savunma mekanizmasının ana karakterlerin hayatındaki rolünü inceliyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İnkâr, kimlik krizi, parçalanmış kimlik, Erik Erikson

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ABBREVIATIONS

p./pp. : Page

Vol : Volume

Ed. : Editor

SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

This thesis examines denial and identity crises in three novels: Ian McEwan's *Atonement*, Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*, and *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie. Characters of these novels experience insecurity, an unstable layer of the conscious mind, fragmented identity, role confusion, and identity crisis. The characters use various ways to overcome these physiological and identity issues to grow and gain self-confidence. Ian McEwan, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Salman Rushdie are prominent postmodern literature writers from different backgrounds. Their background enriches their writing style and makes them distinct from others. However, they reveal similar issues to show the internal and external conflicts that the individuals are experiencing.

The aim of this research is to understand and analyze the inner layers of the human psyche and the identity crisis in the postmodern world throughout the use of Sigmund Freud's denial mechanism and Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory. The novels present the complex side of human beings and the consequences of their decisions. These complexities primarily affect the main characters and the people that surround them. Moreover, the research analyzes the identity crisis and identity confusion through the characters. Ian McEwan, Salman Rushdie, and Kazuo Ishiguro highlight the issues that led to identity crises and the actions individuals must take to resolve these issues, letting them have healthy personalities within their surroundings.

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

In the postmodern world, individuals suffer from various psychological traumas due to wars, displacement, diaspora, and scientific revolutions. These traumas affect the individuals of the society resulting in isolation, a sense of loneliness, fragmented identities, and identity crises. Individuals struggle to draw a unified sense of identity to resolve these issues. Though the works of literature are fictional, they reflect the real stories of society and present various layers of human psychology. Therefore, this study is significant in promoting a better understanding of Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory of the human cycle and the denial defense mechanism individuals use to protect their minds from harsh realities.

In *Atonement*, Ian McEwan uses Briony's character to depict the function of the human mind and the consequences of the dysfunction of the unconscious mind. He also presents identity issues through his characters to analyze their behaviors and actions. Kazuo Ishiguro presents the cruelty of human beings and the misuse of science in *Never Let Me Go*. He deals with the sufferings that the human clone characters' experience as their fate is already settled for them by ordinary human institutions. In *Midnight's Children*, Salman Rushdie depicts alienation, isolation, fragmented identities, and identity crisis to show the sufferings of the Indian individuals due to colonialism and the national institutions that govern India.

The Significance of this study has theoretical and practical prospects. Theoretically, this study aims to contribute methods to develop the study of literature and aspects related to human psychology. Practically, by analyzing and understanding the aspects of these theories, readers can better understand the behavior of individuals around them. Thus, readers will become familiar with the defense mechanisms as a part of psychoanalytic theory and the human cycle of identity formation. They will be able to apply these psychological mechanisms to solve the issues in their lives or to analyze the behaviors of the people around them.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

In this thesis, the researcher uses Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory to analyze the concept of identity formation and identity crisis in each novel. In Erikson's theory, there are certain stages that individuals experience to form their identities. In addition to Sigmund Freud's denial mechanism in some parts of the novels to get a close understanding of the internal conflicts of the main characters and the unconscious instabilities that affect their behaviors. All the novels will be read and examined deeply. In addition to the novels as the primary source, journals, books, and other written materials, including internet-based materials, are used by the researcher as secondary data to analyze the human psyche and identity formation.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH / RESEARCH PROBLEM

Individuals experience fragmented identities, identity crises, psychological insecurities, and internal conflicts in the modern world. These struggles impact the psyche of individuals and leave them in a state of isolation, alienation, and despair. This study is concerned with the reasons contributing to an identity crisis and the effect of these issues on the human psyche. It also examines the effect of the unconscious mind in controlling human behaviors and actions. Moreover, the researcher responds to the following questions throughout this study

- How does the human psyche affect an individual's actions and behaviors?
- What are the layers of the human psyche?
- What causes fragmented identities?
- How identity crisis can be resolved?
- How can individuals obtain a sense of identity?

SCOPE AND DEFFICULTIES

All the novels that the researcher uses in this thesis belong to English literature. Nevertheless, the writers come from different backgrounds. Salman Rushdie is Indian in roots, and Kazuo Ishiguro is Japanese-British. However, the tragedy of their characters is similar. It might be difficult to understand Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* since it portrays a dystopian world where human clones are used to serve ordinary humans. The difficulty in *Atonement* lies in the complexity of Briony's character and the difficulty in differentiating between what is real and what is not. In *Midnight's Children*, the difficulty in analyzing occurs due to the complexity of Saleem's character as he presents the identity and sufferings of a nation.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of human psychology and identity crisis became significant issues in the postmodern world, influenced by the fragmentation of the period. The aftermath of the Second World War profoundly affected societies and individuals, leading to a loss of faith in life and disillusionment. After the war, people started to question the fundamental aspects of their existence. Trauma, displacement and the immense loss of life shattered previously held values and beliefs. This created a void in people's lives, leaving them searching for new purposes and meanings.

Furthermore, significant cultural, political, and economic changes occurred during the post-war era. Cultural traditions and norms were challenged, and individuals were exposed to rapid globalization, causing a clash of identities. The political landscape went through the rise of new ideologies and power struggles. Economically, the war caused economic inequality and widespread poverty. These circumstances hindered the individuals' ability to find purpose in their lives and failed to find psychological stability. These factors created a fragmented society where people struggled to establish identities and find a sense of self. Thus, writers started to use literature to express the psychological layers of humans, the challenging conditions of life, and the fragmented identities.

Moreover, throughout engaging literature, writers started giving voices to individuals to express their shattered inner psychology, internal and external conflicts, personal growth, and the journey of finding the self. Writers started to portray diverse experiences and perspectives, shedding light on mental health, identity issues, insecurities, and individual's psychological instability. In this study, the researcher uses three novels to examine the denial defense mechanism and identity crisis to explore the complexity of human psychology and experience. The researcher makes this exploration by using the human mind's denial defense mechanism to examine the layers of the human psyche and the psychosocial development theory of Erik Erikson to explain the character's identity crisis. In addition, this study examines how individuals overcome each period of identity crisis to build their sense of self and develop their individual growth.

The first chapter contains six parts. The first part starts with explaining the concept of the denial defense mechanism as a part of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic

theory; it analyzes the defense mechanisms and the structure of the human mind, which contribute to better understanding of the individual's behaviors and actions. The second part starts with Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory, explaining the factors that take part in identity formation along with the eight stages that individuals face to obtain a balance in their identity. The third part focuses on Identity formation which involves individual 'self-concept and self-belonging. It encompasses various factors such as social interactions, personal experience, and cultural influences. The fourth part analyzes the concept of an identity crisis where individuals fail to define themselves within a social context and to examine their self. At this stage, individuals encounter conflicts between their current self and the desired identity; this part sheds light on individuals' efforts to overcome identity crisis. The fifth part draws the connection between traumatic events and their impact on an individual's identity. The researcher describes the theme of identity crisis in literature in the sixth part, shedding light on the motives behind using this theme by literary writers from different backgrounds and genres.

The second chapter is divided into three parts. The first one describes Ian McEwan as a postmodern writer and *Atonement*. It explores Ian McEwan's writing style and the literary devices he used to compose the novel. In addition to, explaining the structure and the narrative style of *Atonement*. The second part delves deep into the inner psychology of the major characters, such as Briony, Cecilia, and Robbie. It highlights the structure of human mind from childhood to adulthood. In this part, the researcher discusses the psychological concept and motives that led characters to act in specific ways. Then, the third part provides the readers with denial and identity crisis in the novel. It analyzes the concept of denial mechanism in Briony Talis's life, highlighting the utilize of denial in Briony's decisions. Furthermore, it analyzes the characters' identity formation and the identity issues that the character's encounter through Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory.

The third chapter discusses Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* as the central part. *Never Let Me Go* is set in a dystopian world where human clones donate their vital organs to normal humans to provide them with a longer life regardless of the clone's emotions or feelings. The first part of the chapter discusses the setting of *Never Let Me Go* and Kazuo Ishiguro's biography. Kathy H, and other children live in Hailsham school. These children have no parents or ancestors; their creation aims to grow up and then donate their organs to humans. Their fate is settled for them, and they cannot accept

it. In the second part, the researcher discusses the denial of existence and imitation concept. The authorial institutions deny the simple rights everyone should have, such as goals, careers, or being presented as humans. These clones want to imitate humans and struggle to find their origins in order to identify themselves within someone. The third part is dedicated to identity crisis, explaining the identity of the characters through the lens of Erikson's theory. Kathy and her friends are desperate to find their own identity. Thus, they start to look for origins to know what they would look like if they were normal humans. Kathy and Tommy ask for deferral to extend their living period, thinking that love can change their destiny, but they get disappointed to find out that even their soul might not exist. Moreover, this part reflects on how the social, political, and cultural contribution in impacting the clone's identity formation since they are driven two times from reality.

Salman Rushdie and his novel *Midnight's Children* are the central discussions of the fourth chapter. Rushdie gives his voice to the main character Saleem Sinai and presents the identity of Indian nation through Saleem. Rushdie creates Saleem's character to portray the multidimensional faces of India such as religions, culture, and politics. Saleem is born at midnight of India's independence from Britain and gifted with the power to hear other people's voices and thoughts. Thus, his mind is full of other people's voices, and he fails to distinguish his voice and identity from others. The first part analyzes Salman Rushdie as a novelist and *Midnight's Children*. All the characters suffer from fragmented identities a, which is part two's main discussion. Saleem, Shiva, Abdul Aziz, and the women characters all have fragmented identities and psychological issues that put them in a difficult situation. It explores the reasons behind these fragmented identities and the characters' contributions to creating a unified identity. The third part sheds light on Saleem's identity transformation. Saleem faces many struggles during his lifetime, and because of war, he flees to Pakistan with his family. In Pakistan, Saleem loses his telepathy and memory; he becomes part of a Pakistani soldier and starts killing innocent people. A snake bite puts Saleem in a comma for a few days, and then he restores his memory when he wakes up. It is considered a new beginning for Saleem and starts his journey in shaping his identity. These events are examined in the lens of Erikson's psychosocial identity theory and the internal and external factors that impact identity formation

Finally, the researcher concludes the conclusion as the last part of the discussion. The conclusion discusses the main points analyzed in the previous chapters and reveals the importance of the study in assisting individuals to personal growth and gaining healthy characteristics. This study highlights denial mechanism, fragmented identities, identity crises, and identity formation experienced by characters in *Atonement*, *Never Let Me Go*, and *Midnight's Children*. It analyzes the internal and external conflicts that enhance the characters' personality and contribution to building a healthy community.

1. DENIAL AND IDENTITY CRISIS

1.1. Denial

Denial is an important concept in psychology which mainly highlighted in Sigmund Freud's early writings of psychoanalytic theory (1894). In Freud's psychoanalytic theory, id, ego, and superego are three motivating forces or mental dynamics that influence human behavior. The goal of these dynamic forces is different as each of them has contrasting purposes. In addition, the core of this study was to understand individual's behaviors and their actions. In Freud's theory id, ego, and superego are three fundamental structures that have a major role in shaping the individual's personality. Freud presented defense mechanisms as indirect expressions that are expressed indirectly by the individuals because they might not be incompatible with the moral standards of society.

According to Sigmund Freud, defenses are mental mechanisms that mediate unconsciously between the wishes of the id and superego. Freud noticed these mechanisms when incompatibility took place in his patient's ideational life. Further, defense mechanisms can be identified as a set of strategies that are used by people to reduce uncomfortable feelings such as anxiety or fear. Freud sheds the light on self-defense mechanism; he explains that it tries its best to act against anything considered traumatic, unbearable, or undesirable by remaining it in the unconscious mind. Sigmund Freud in *Remembering, Repeating and Working Through* (1914), implies that these memories express themselves and slip out from the unconscious mind, he observes "the patient does not remember events of what he has repressed and forgot, but acts it out. He reproduces it not as a memory but as an action; he repeats it, without, of course, knowing that he is repeating it" (Freud, 1944. p.150). However, according to Freud, the memories of individuals repetitively manifest themselves and exhibit themselves in their transference. In his view, there is a possibility in in the transference process as the forgotten memories corresponds to a state where the resistance has been put on one side" (151).

Berteens states that "individuals utilize the self-defense mechanism as a way to reduce feelings of stress, conflict, anxiety, and depression of their unconscious or

conscious mind. In Freud's point of view, people operate their self-defense mechanisms whenever they feel that they are in danger or when anxiety signals a danger (1986). Moreover, in a research study, Alwisol defines the self-defense mechanism in the following words "the ego of individuals uses the strategy of defense mechanism to fight the impulses of id and the pressures of the external reality of superego" (Alwisol, 2011, p.10). The ways that the ego defended itself against internal or external events and feelings that are not easily accepted by the ego such as sexual desires or aggressive behaviors were the focal points in Freud's works. In his belief, what shapes personality of an individual is based on the amount of effort that they do to avoid Id's satisfaction.

Moreover, these psychological defense mechanisms are crucial components in maintaining the emotional homeostasis of individuals. The conscious mind will be vulnerable to negative emotions such as depression or anxiety. As Lange's outline "the system of defensive conscious can be highly vulnerable and fragile to disruption or distraction due to emotional charged impingements. Thus, the conscious system evolves itself through a natural selection as a safeguard to protect itself" (Langs, 1994, p. 14). The set of defense mechanisms protects the mind as they allow the individual time to master changes and time to respite that is difficult to be immediately integrated. Regarding this notion, Valliant indicates that:

The defense mechanism set refers to processes of innate involuntary regulatory where allows individuals to minimize sudden internal or external changes and to lessen cognitive dissonance. This will be done through alteration in the way that individuals perceive the events. Defense mechanisms can modify the perception of individuals of object (other), subject (self), feelings, or notions (Valliant, 1990, p. 4).

Defenses can increase biological drives or deny sudden events; they diminish instinctual wishes and replace them with wishes that are admired by the person. They enable individuals to cope with unresolved struggles. The defense ego mechanisms have the ability to keep a person from shame, anxiety, and stress during sudden internal or external conflicts. According to psychoanalytical theory, these psychological defenses develop in early childhood; the child develops a distraction if there is any dysfunction. If they do not get treatment and enough care the dysfunction leads to psychological issues and leaves a negative impact on their personality in their later adulthood. Contrary, the normal functioning of defense mechanisms creates healthy individuals. Therefore, they are considered as an essential part of the development of humans. Sigmund Freud (1937) in *Analysis terminable and interminable* highlights "what would

the ego do without using the defense system during the individual's development'' (Freud, 1937, p.237). He also explains that during childhood, the child's ego is still fragile. Thus, the ego is protected by the defense mechanism from the effect of a painful events that would disrupt the function and development of the ego. It is only when ego development is complete that the use of defenses may have negative consequences. During childhood, the function of defense mechanisms is arbitrary and they likely continue to develop during the adulthood period. Further, the defense mechanisms may preserve the integration and stability of the ego. In a journal named *Defensive organization and autonomous ego functions*, Lowenstein states ''defenses organize the integrity of the ego and work as a protection tool. Therefore, they function as an adaptation mechanism'' (Lowenstein, 1967, p.800).

The list of self-defense mechanisms is huge and there is no theoretical consensus on the exact number. However, many important mechanisms were indicated by Freud and Anna Freud, as Krapp states ''Freud and Anna distinguished primary defense mechanisms in *Psychologists and Their Theories for Students*'' (Krapp, 2004, p.11). Freud labeled undoing, regression, reaction formation, reversal, sublimation, repression, introjection, identification, isolation, denial, projection, and turning against the self as the main mechanisms that affect the composition of one's personality. These defenses are considered as a representation of maturity level in terms of age and cognitive complexity. Psychologists can analyze human beings' characteristics by studying their defense mechanisms. In *Maturity of ego defenses concerning DSM-III Axis II personality disorder*, Valliant notes '' What makes a significant contribution to the individual's different responses to stressful events is the choice of defensive style'' (Valliant, 1990, p.3).

Denial is one of the main parts of defense mechanism which was central to Freud's writings in the early twentieth century. In Freud's view, denial occurs where individuals attend to deny unpleasant events, grief, emotions, or feelings from the unconscious awareness. It serves to safeguard the ego from conditions that are hard to cope with. Sigmund Freud shows denial as a struggle between a person's to maintain idealistic motive to maintain righteous and unconscious motive to maintain pleasure. In the context of psychology, there is a direct relationship between self-deception and denial as a person attempts to protect himself from threats or unpleasant realities that face him. When an individual fail to comprehend or record the meaning of a threatening

event, anxiety will be created as a result of these external forces and imports the event as not seen. Furthermore, denial is often presented as an intra-psychoic mechanism that is influenced by the individual's matrix of conditions. Thus, in Freud's conceptualization, societal forces have a vital role in denial, as he states in his book *Totem and Taboo* "the taboo nature of specific behaviors that would be illegal if an individual performed them can be denied, transformed and considered legitimate if a whole group (e.g., society) assumes responsibility" (Freud, 1989, p. 32).

Denial can indeed serve as a protective function for the human mind. When faced with information or events that are difficult to process, denial can provide a temporary shield, allowing the mind to gradually integrate and come to terms with what has happened. This can help to reduce the psychological impact of the traumatic event or facts. In Freud's point of view, denial manifests in adulthood from repressed conflicts or urges and is considered to be one of the defense mechanisms that react to threat; in his conceptualization denial is a conflict between unconscious motives of a person to obtain pleasure and the moral standards to be accepted by others. The efforts to keep this balance disrupts and results in triggers such as denial. In denial, a person may refuse to accept his character, unpleasant events, and emotions; they face difficulty in reconciling the discrepancy between the actual occurrence and what is desired by the person.

In addition to Freud's psychoanalytic theory, denial has been studied extensively in the field of social psychology, where it is considered a cognitive process. Researchers have explored how denial can impact decision-making, perception, and behavior in various contexts, including health-related behaviors, addiction, and political beliefs. Anna Freud considered denial as a fundamental pre-stage defense that originates from the narcissistic phase and fully developed during the adulthood period. Based on a series of empirical researches, it has been discovered that the denial mechanism develops in young children up to age five in order to protect the self and reduce anxiety. Children over-utilize the denial mechanism when they are overwhelmed by stress at a specific developmental level. In a study named, Proximate effects of sexual abuse in childhood report on 28 children, Adams-Tucker (1984) found out that the majority of those children who are sexually abused were using denial in their later childhood as their governing defense mechanism. On using the concept of denial by children, Cramer outlines "those children who are incapable to escape physically use denial to disconnect themselves psychologically from unpleasant experiences" (Cramer, 1991). Victim children who had

no options to the circumstances that they have faced denied and dissociated all the actions, Terr (1991) observes “ psychic numbing and massive denial are primarily associated with the long-standing horrors of childhood. Children who go through these psychological issues or this kind of stress may use extreme numbing and denial that they look highly inhuman or withdrawn” (Terr, 1991, p.177). Hence, denial makes a person cope with his current condition the way that his mind wants to interpret instead of interpreting the actual realities. Moreover, Denial makes a person cope with stressors by refusing the reality and their consequences which ranges from resisting the events to a psychotic denial. As mentioned by Baumeister denial construct “ fantasies to replace the stressor and might include negation. It maximizes one’s comfort and dismiss the stressor and minimizes the anxiety. This function of denial makes some researchers to suggest that denial is more a class instead of a single defense mechanism” (Baumeister et al, 1998, p.12).

Furthermore, denial can negate the conscious awareness of an acceptable intrapsychic state and is considered to be an essential part of the normal function of the human mind. The role of denial is not considered to be fully negative as it works as a protector of the mind and gives it time to proceed with events. Some cognitive theorists such as Wheeler, Lord 1999, and Gosling believe that denial performs as a mechanism to reduce cognitive dissonance. Wheeler and Lord outline that “ denial allows information to integrate slowly, avoiding the impact of an immediate and traumatic introduction to one's system” (Wheeler and Lord,1999, p. 5). An individual in his conscious mind denies the traumatic event or fact that is not socially acceptable. The reality might be too harsh, therefore, he wants to deny the truth. Thus, the role of denial can have positive impacts on a person as it gives him time to proceed the stressful events.

Defense mechanisms are considered pathological by some researchers, among these researchers is Anna Freud. Indeed, research has found that the use of denial and dissociation and other defenses associated with earlier stages in development positively correlates with suicidality, delinquency, and violence in adolescents. This concept will be further developed in the following chapters. Goldberger's emphasis on the awareness of the threatening stimulus in denial is also consistent with the idea that denial can be a conscious or unconscious process, depending on the individual's level of awareness and their ability to acknowledge their emotional response to the threat. Goldberger's distinction between denial and repression is also consistent with Freud's theory.

Repression involves pushing unwanted thoughts, feelings, or memories into the unconscious, where they are not accessible to conscious awareness. In contrast, denial involves acknowledging the reality of a threatening stimulus but refusing to acknowledge its emotional significance or impact. Erdelyi (2006) has a contrast view of Goldberger. He considers denial as a form of structured repression and he emphasizes that denial is a ‘‘defense failure insight’’ (2006, 504). In his opinion, an individual may get stimuli from either external or internal origins but fail to gain a deeper meaning. Some researchers believe that denial has different forms. In his study, Spellings (1958), he conducts that denial catalyzes neuroses and perversions. He analyzes a second form of denial where it leads to psychoses where a subject outright rejects the existence of an object. As defense mechanisms, their ultimate trajectory is pathological, whether psychotic or neurotic. In psychoanalytic terms, both neurotic and psychotic forms of denial are unconscious processes, or as one author illustrates, a denial of denial’’ (Breznitz, 1983, p.4).

In another work, Dorpat (1983) characterizes four elements of denial such as preconscious appraisal of danger or trauma, a responding painful affect, the arrest of rational thought and communication about the objective reality, and screening behavior that asserts an opposite and positive reality to the negative reality rejected by cognitive arrest. Dorpat’s research provides additional insight into the cognitive and affective processes involved in this defense mechanism. The first element, the preconscious appraisal of danger or trauma, highlights the role of perception in triggering a denial response. The individuals may engage in a preconscious appraisal of the situation when they face a traumatic situation or potential threat which can trigger a denial response as a result. The second element is responding to a painful affect where it underscores the emotional component of denial. Individuals may engage in denial as a way to avoid emotional discomfort or reducing it when they go through painful experiences such as fear or anxiety. The arrest of rational communication and thought about the objective reality is the third element. This element highlights the way in which denial can interfere with cognitive process. When captured in denial, the individual tends to resist acknowledging the objective reality of the situation. Thus, they may experience a cognitive arrest that prevents them from engaging in rational thought or communicating effectively about the situation. The fourth element, screening behavior that asserts an opposite and positive reality to the negative reality rejected by cognitive arrest,

underscores the way in which denial can involve the creation of an alternative reality. In order to cope with the discomfort associated with acknowledging the negative reality, the individual may engage in screening behavior that asserts a positive reality, which can further reinforce the denial response. Overall, Dorpat's characterization of denial underscores the importance of considering both affective and cognitive factors in understanding how individuals cope with anxiety and stress. In addition to highlighting the complex role of defense mechanisms in individual's behaviors and actions.

Other researchers discuss the denial concept and the different levels at which a person may know or learn information yet stays in denial of its existence. They distinguish between someone who is in an unconscious denial which is characterized by unawareness of the psychic defense and someone issuing a denial consciously. The authors also clarify that denial is the negation of something in terms of action or talk and cannot be confused with ignorance, simple avoidance, or prevarication. To illustrate the different levels of denial, Manoussos and Williams (1998) utilize an information-processing model similar to Breznitz's (1983) seven-stage model. Each subclass of denial is related to a specific inquisitive response to threatening information, such as whether the information exists, is threatening, is relevant to the person, is urgent, and whether the person can cope with it. Breznitz describes seven types of denial which include denial of information, denial of threatening information, denial of personal relevance, denial of urgency, denial of vulnerability/responsibility, denial of affect, and denial of affect relevance. These responses are determined by the unconscious question asked of the information that dictates the mode of denial. To wrap up, denial is a complicated psychic process that individuals may face at different levels of information processing. Understanding these different levels and responses can help in identifying and addressing denial in individuals.

In literature, writers started to use characters in order to analyze human mind and their identity concept through social psychology. Moreover, Social psychology has an important role in literature. The word of psychology refers to psyche and ology. Psyche resources from a Greek word which refers to soul, spirit, and mind. While ology is the study of a particular thing. In this regard, social psychology is the study of the human mind and its environment. In their study entitled *Psychology: A Journey*, Coon and Mitterer clarify that, "psychology is now defined as the scientific study of behavior and mental processes" (Coon & Mitter, 2021, p.14). The mental process comes from the

inner parts of human beings and their behavior is a result of this inner process. Hence, in literature, psychology can be used to analyze the behavior and mind of characters in the literary works. In this case, readers will gain a deeper perspective of the characters. Characters and personalities of human beings are being used by psychologists as raw material to study the cognitive perspectives, socio-cultural status, and behaviors. Thus, unique information about individuals can be provided by them as they observe people's emotional, mental, social attitudes. "Despite having some similarities with others from the same group, each human is a unique entity because nobody else has the same combination of typical psychological qualities" (Lahey, 2021, p.5). Even though, these diversities make each individual have his distinct identity but this uniqueness does not exclude having shared goals or interests that regulate people into collectivities that require efforts to attain goals more effectively. As both psychosocial study and literature deal with the human's psyche, a connection between them can be revealed. They observe human's feelings, thought, and behaviors. They depend heavily on how social conditions can affect individual's life. In literature these social conditions are presented through fictitious characters and the psychosocial approach can be used to draw more hints about the characters.

1.2. Psychosocial Development Theory

The German-American psychologist, Erik Homburger Erikson (1902-1994) is a modern practicing psychoanalyst. The central part of his works is the concept of ego identity, the theory of psychosocial development, and the matrix of psychoanalytical theory. Erik Homburger Erikson was born in 1902. His works are concerned on the psychosocial theory which analyzes the individual's identity. He studies the social manners such as history, culture, and community that affect the formation of individual's identity. During his life, he experienced issues of social conditions which impacted the process of his identity formation. Thus, he was triggered to discover more about the social conditions and identity formation. He has done several works regarding this issue such as *The Life Cycle* (1959), *Childhood and Society* (1963), *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (1968), and *The Life Cycle Completed* (1982).

The theory of identity and psychological development was proposed by Erikson, which he named Psychosocial development. This theory focuses on the interaction of

individuals with others surrounding them. In Erikson's view, the individual's interaction impacts their identity development. Psychosocial development theory concentrates on the different life stages that individuals go through from childhood to old age. It focuses on the virtues and interactions that led to crises during each period. As a critic and follower of Freud's theories, in Erikson's belief, parts of Freud's principles were not accurately presented. In his opinion, there were misinterpretations of the important aspects of human development. Thus, he established a ground breaking theory on identity. Parts of Freudian theory of identity are found to be influential in Erikson's works. He added his own touch to the theory of psychosocial development. The contents of his model are very convenient to use and much relevant to life. With the use of these models, one can have a deeper understanding in analyzing the behavior and personality development of people. This will help individuals to have more knowledge of managing, self-awareness, dealing with conflicts, and solving the issues. The term of psychosocial refers to psychology and environment. The mind and the brain are related to psychology whereas social is related to the environment. According to Erikson, a man goes through several internal and external conflicts standing in opposite poles. A balance should be maintained to go through the stages successfully. Each stage of Erikson's theory has its significance and uniqueness.

Furthermore, Erik Erikson's Psychosocial development is considered as one of the lifespans and influential theories of human development. The interpretation of this theory changes depending on the individual's life experience. The psychoanalytic theory of Freud was a source of influence on Erikson's Psychosocial development; he disagreed with Freud in some points and he extended his own touch to it. Erikson's emphasis on the ego as a crucial component of human development is a departure from Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which placed greater emphasis on the id and superego. Erikson saw the ego as the central mediator between the individual and their social and cultural environment. He believed that the ego's ability to create a balance of the struggling demands of the id and superego was essential for healthy human development. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development focuses on how individuals evolve a perception of self and identity over the course of their lives. According to Erikson, each stage of development presents a unique challenge or crisis that must be resolved in order for the individual to move on to the next stage. The successful resolution of each stage results in the development of a healthy ego and the ability to cope with the demands of the next

stage. Erikson's theory has been influential in the fields of psychology, education, and sociology, and has been used to guide interventions and support the healthy development of individuals across the lifespan.

Erikson developed a lifespan theory in which he theorizes the nature of personality development; in this theory individual's personality changes as it unfolds from birth to an old age contrary to Freudian theory who believes that the personality is fixed from the age of five. In this approach, Erikson gives importance to cultural and social factors across the lifespan; he considers them as vital factors in conceptualizing one's identity. In a study about Erikson's psychosocial development states, Fleming states that:

By recounting Freud's works, Erikson extended the development stages to contain the human life cycle, from childhood to the old age. Moreover, Erikson contributed to his theory by encountering young stages of adulthood, middle age, and later years of human life. He presented more insights into the tasks that is presented to individuals as they mature and grow older (Fleming, 2004, p, 9).

Erikson believed that in each stage of life, individuals are facing some sort of external and internal conflicts that shape their personality development. He concentrated on ego identity formation, identity stage, and identity crisis. Ego identity is considered to be one of the main elements of the psychosocial theory which is the conscious sense of one's self that develops through cultural and social interactions. Ego identity formation is conceptualized as the process of forming the personality characteristics and life cycle transformation. It spans through all eight psychosocial stages and can be called the life cycle notion. Its elements are transformed in accordance with intimacy issues, individual's particular circumstances, exigency of the social world, and ego integrity stages. It does not only interact with itself or other psychic structures but also with the individual's social environment. As Erikson suggests, the quantity of support and recognition that the ego receives from the sociocultural environment affects its maintenance and development. The main source of ego strengthen is the interactions with significant social institutions. Thus, a stable sense of ego identity will be an assist in sustaining a positive identity and makes a more unified personality. Ego identity is never established as unchangeable or static but as Erikson outlines 'ego identity is a forever to be revised sense of reality of the self within social reality' (Erikson, 1968, p, 211). When major changes occur, individuals redefine their ego-identity. Getting a new

job, marriage, going to college, parenthood, or death of loved ones impact one's ego identity.

Moreover, according to this theory, ego identity changes constantly as human beings experience new challenges and go through various circumstances. Erikson views that the conflicts which face individuals become a turning point in determining the personality; if a person can handle the conflict well then a sense of mastery will be developed. Contrary, a sense of inadequacy will be developed if the situation was not handled in a good manner. Erikson places a great focus on the socio-cultural factors as he believed that they play a part in shaping identity; in his opinion, the childhood background plays an important role in composing identity through adolescence and adulthood. However, he believed that identity evolves through the course of a lifespan, "Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory revolutionized developmental thought" (Hoare, 2002, p.7). In *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (1968), Erik Erikson (1968) outlines that "I will show the human evolution from various point of view of struggles, such as external and internal forces which are vital in one's personality, an increase of good judgement, and an increase in the capacity to do well according to his own standards and to the standards of those who are significant to him, and passing and reemerging from every crisis with a maximized perception of inner unity" (1968, 91-92). Erikson proposed eight psychosocial stages in which each stage is a crisis or inherent conflict that the individuals must encounter in order to proceed it to obtain a balance in personality. The eight stages are:

1-Trust and Mistrust (Infancy): This stage is the first fundamental stage of Erikson's theory where infants develop a sense of reliability and responsibility of their surroundings. In this stage, infants trust or distrust their surrounding depending on the care that they are given, the amount of food, and sleeping. The center of this stage is mouth, thus it refers to this stage as an oral sensory stage, "initially the infant lives through, and loves with his mouth" (1968, p. 97). However, besides orally, children are receptive to maternal love in many other ways. Children cooperate with the one who provides comfort and cozy atmosphere for them whether the mother or someone else. Erikson considers this stage to have a vital role in identity formation; he explains trust as "'means an essential trustfulness of others as well as fundamental sense of one's own trustworthiness'" (1968, p. 96). The ideal experience of living in a secure and predictable world in which their needs are provided emerges a sense of trust and development. On

contrary, irregularity in essential needs and repeated delays results in building a sense of mistrust, fear, and a belief of the world's inconsistency. In Erikson's perception, all the stages are directly connected and the early experiences leave significant consequences later in life. The trusting infant develops the first requisite for later developing optimism, feeling security, and gaining confidence. On the other hand, the mistrust results in a dystonic outcome which may later contribute to identity confusion in adolescence, as Erikson explains "absence of experiences leading to the development of trust in early childhood may impair the capacity to feel identical with others during adolescence" (1968, p.105). As trustworthiness and mutual recognition are the most undifferentiated experiences of later sense of identity, it's very essential to provide a healthy environment for children during this period to contribute in creating trustworthy children to be ready for society.

2-Autonomy Vs Shame and Doubt: This stage takes place during the early childhood where they develop a perception of personal control. The issue of this stage in the human cycle is between becoming independent or a creative individual, and autonomous, or shameful individual who is filled with self-doubt. In Erikson's perspective, in this stage it's vital for children how to play, food choices, clothes, and toy preferences because if they are able to control their body a feeling of independency will develop in the child's character. According to the theory, completing this stage successfully, the child will become confident and secure and can gain autonomy well. This stage reflects the new sense of child's autonomy. Self-assurance, self-confidence, and autonomy are among the syntonic attributes. Children start to think of their needs and start questioning of who they are. This autonomous form will pave the way for a mature ego identity in the later stage of the adolescence period. Therefore, developing the sense of control in a child is something vital in this stage, Erikson states that "the majority of human beings feel frightened of being embarrassed in situations where does not meet the expectation of other people. Thus, in this stage, the child experiences shame feelings and starts to blush when they realize that other people watch their moves" (1968, p.19). Contrary, if the child is not able to be autonomous, a feeling of incompetence and inadequacy will develop and the dystonic outcome will be self-doubt and shame. The identity crisis during the adolescence grows and revives as a result of the unresolved autonomous issues. The issue of being autonomous from family becomes one of the major issues in adolescence struggle for identity.

3- Initiative Vs guilt: In this stage, children attempt to have power and control in their surroundings. During this stage, the psychosocial conflict of life is the development of a sense of initiative with a sense of guilt. Children at this stage are curious to explore their power and show a great deal of exuberance or an immobilization of guilt and fear. It takes place during the preschool years. During this period, children want to assert their roles and build social interactions. The child here “must appear with a perception of initiative as a basis for a realistic sense of purpose and ambition” (1968, p.115). He further describes the situation by stating “the child seems to be more activated and activating; he is in the free possession of a certain surplus of energy which permits him to forget many failures rather quickly and to approach new areas that seem desirable, even if they also seem dangerous, with undiminished zest and some increased set of direction” (1968, p.115). Moreover, children start to have dreams and goals for future, therefore, they want to work hard to be competent. Failing in this stage will lead to guilt, lack of initiation, and self-doubt. The dystonic result might be more permanent immobilization by fear, role fixation, role inhibition, and guilt. While Successful mastering of the crisis of this period lead to the basis of curiosity and ambition to explore more during adolescence.

4-Industry vs inferiority: This period is between entering school and puberty in which it becomes a period of mastering and learning new skills. Children start to acquire essential knowledge in order to take pride for their works. Thus, this period is known as the appreciation of life. Children start to seek for recognition and approval for doing things to become industrious. They cope with the environment in this stage of life; it takes place during the early childhood years from age five to eleven. Children start to develop a sense of pride through their abilities and accomplishments. In this psychosocial stage children cope with academic demands and social norms. To develop a sense of competence, parents should encourage children to get success and confidence within their personalities. At this stage, a great focus should be given to the child’s mental development capacity to raise a healthy child, “The danger at this stage is the development of an estrangement from himself and from his tasks-the well-known sense of inferiority. This may be caused by an insufficient solution of the preceding conflict” (1968, p.124). Contrary, those children who are not supported by their families or surroundings will doubt their ability to be successful. They might be plagued with inferiority and a feeling of inadequacy which in turn causes ego diffusion in the next

stage of the human cycle. This stage makes contribution to the formation of identity in its ‘‘capacity to learn how to be, work skills, what one is in the process of becoming’’ (1968, p.180).

5- Identity and Confusion: The fifth stage of psychosocial development starts within the early teenage years where individuals start to form their identities. This stage leaves influence on behaviors; teens begin to form self-identity. According to Erikson, ‘‘the potential for the development of the ego strength comes out from the successful completion of all the earlier developmental processes’’ (31). In Erikson’s point of view, it’s important that they explore their self in order to avoid forming weak personalities and develop the feeling of insecurity. In Richard Evans’ book of Dialogue with Erik Erikson, Erikson argues that the adolescent’s identity is comprised of a mixture of positive identity as well as a negative identity which constitutes of things he is ashamed of, things he was punished for his failure and things he feels guilty about (32). Receiving a proper encouragement at this stage creates a strong sense of personal exploration and feelings of independence. Helen Bee and Denise Boyd state ‘‘during this stage the person feels a reintegrated sense of self, of what one wants to do and be, and of one’s appropriate sexual role’’ (248).

6- Intimacy VS Isolation: This period covers the early period of adulthood during exploring personal relationships. This stage occurs after achieving personal identity. thus, the need of personal intimacy moves into the foreground. The conflict of this period is between the relationship of intimacy and isolation. As a basis for enduring relationships, intimacy involves establishing emotional closeness with other people. During this period, it’s necessary to form secure relationships to avoid the feeling of loneliness. Erikson believed that to have intimate relationships, an individual should have a strong perception of individual identity. In this stage, Erikson analyzes that intimacy occurs when ‘‘ individuals start to fuse their identity with somebody else without thinking of the possibility of losing their own identities’’ (1968, p. 48). He also highlights that at this period of identity construction, individual start to progress close connections within their inner self and others such as love, sexual intimacy, friendship, and they get more excitement of what is coming next’’ (1968, p. 48). In this stage, the syntonic outcome encounters sexual intimacy, stable love, or genuine friendship. While the dystonic result in loneliness and separation. Adults who have insecurities and uncertainties in their identity do not find comfort in interpersonal relationships and

might face emotional instability. In interpersonal relationships, distancing and detachment might emerge “the readiness to be repudiate, isolate, and, if necessary, destroy those people and forces whose essence seems dangerous to one’s own” (1968, p.136).

7- Generativity vs. Stagnation: During these stage individuals become more engaged with their surrounded society and becoming more productive. Individuals continue to build their live with focusing on career and families. Erikson considers generativity as “those things that is generated form a generation to another such as ideas, products, children, and works of art” (51). He notes that achieving generativity is not connected to being a mother only. Even if someone has no children, they can find their path to exhibit generativity by being productive to their communities or to help in providing a healthy environment for others” (51). People who success during this stage will make positive contributions to their communities. Contrary, those who fail in attaining the necessary stuffs will feel unproductive and uninvolved in the worlds.

This period is considered as the productive years of the human cycle. Generating encompasses the driving force in human behavior where individuals are creative in terms of professional and vocational contributions to the society. The successful person tends to be useful and productive to the community, during this stage “new virtue, that of care, emerges from the dialectical relationships of generativity vs. stagnation” (1968, p. 67). Failing to develop will result in stagnation which includes the repetition of daily activities and a stereotypical social relationship. Erikson describes the state of these individuals as “self-absorbed, self-indulge, egotistical as if they were their own one and only child” (1968, p.138).

8-Integrity VS Despair: This final stage occurs during old age when individuals reflect on their past life events and determine things that made them happy or sad. The last stage of human cycle covers the productive years of life. The achievement of ego integrity with its despair and disgust is the conflict of this stage. The conflict lies in combining the appreciations of the previous life experiences. Fulfilling life correctly develop sense of wisdom while failing leads to regret and despair. What makes people have good choices about family or career is having wisdom. Here, people will have flashbacks of their past experiences; completing this stage successfully develops a sense of pride. While failing leads to a sense of regret for the time that had been wasted.

However, ‘‘during despair, life is concise now; individuals do not have enough time to take new paths or to start another journey, as there is no time to change anything, they fall into a state of hopelessness’’ (1968, 242). It is noteworthy that this stage implies the entire eight stages as it’s the outcome of the other stages. The acceptance of one’s life and one’s self without regret or bitter feelings are the syntonic outcomes of this period. The experienced individual gained wisdom and gained a healthy ego integrity. While the confusion, helplessness, and the feeling that one’s life is wasted is among the dystonic results of this last stage. There is regression and fear of death which in turn results in despair and regret.

During the entire eight stages, individuals confront crisis and they are expected to proceed the crisis to form a healthy identity. In Erikson’s perspective, each of the psychosocial stages is characterized by a conflict which contains the possibility of bipolar outcomes. Erikson uses the terms of syntonic and bipolar to refer to positive and negative consequences of the psychosocial stages. In his view, it’s essential for individuals to experience both syntonic and bipolar sides in order to learn subsume them into higher synthesis. For Erikson, the resolution of the psychosocial stages contributes in individuals’ growth and gaining a positive self-concept. However, if the conflict resolved unsatisfactory, the dystonic will be incorporated with the structure of personality. This negative attribution may manifest psychopathology and impaired self-concept. Erikson highlights the healthiness and necessities of individual’s reaction to both sides of syntonic and dystonic; he notes that ‘‘both syntonic and dystonic and both sympathetic and antipathy potential are necessary for human adaptation’’ (1987,80). It is crucial to highlight the importance of Erikson’s theory to the field of human psychology as it sheds light on the importance of both social and biological factors in human development. However, his perspective resonates with psychosexual development of Freud but he expanded these works in a more comprehensive way and added more contribution such as the transition from childhood to adulthood period.

1.3. Identity Formation

Erikson (1968) proposes that the identity development’s first stage is childhood period. In his view, the identity seeds are planted at a young age when children start to separate themselves from parents or when they recognize themselves as a unique human

being. The child acquires the admired features and characteristics of parents or others around them as maturation occurs. Erikson calls this as identification process which makes the child to create a collection of expectation of their needs. Eventually, the child loses desire in adopting roles and at this point the process of identity formation will be on motion. In Erikson's perspective, identity formation starts with the end of the usefulness of identification. As taking other's characteristics does not satisfy them any longer. At this stage, the individuals desire to shape their unique way in the world. The identity formation starts with a synthesis of childhood beliefs and skills into a unique and coherence continuity with the past and their moves towards future.

Erik Erikson is considered as one of the most prominent researchers that developed the concept of identity formation and development. He introduced identity as both sociocultural and personal. Erikson believed that cultural values and their expressions play a major role in shaping one's identity. It consists of one's beliefs, ideas, is conscious of one's self, and expresses how individuals see their place in the world. There is not a strong agreement the concept of identity definition, as Hoare notes " Even Erikson uses various terms to define identity, such as identity development, identification, formation, foreclosure, consolidation, and identity resolution" (Hoare, 2002, p.11). Buckingham (2008) defines identity in the following words:

During the progression and development period in life, individuals get certain notions about themselves which involves a variety of facets including beliefs, religion, skin color, and personal choices. These facets contribute in demonstrating the identity of individuals and they define their self through their identities. Therefore, people who have identity confusion fail to draw a self-definition (Buckingham, 2008, p.13).

Psychological theory of identity suggests that what shapes individual's identities is the structure of their inner psychology such as beliefs, personality traits, and values. According to this theory, introspection, self-reflection, individual characteristics, and personal experience contribute to identity construction. Thus, it emphasizes on the individual's uniqueness and how their inner psychology designs their identity. On the other hand, social identity theory concentrates on the factors that shape individual's identity. It suggests that individual's identity is shaped by their social groups and their connection to these groups. In Identity Construction, Cerulo explains that "within modern sociological thoughts, the study of identity is one of the critical cornerstones. What sociologists primarily focus on is the formation on (me) and explore ways in which interpersonal interactions shape a person's perception of self" (Cerulo, 1997, p.14).

According to social identity theory a person can hold countless self-images that extend to circles of group membership. This theory was first developed by Turner and Taifel in 1979. This theory first started by presenting social group assumption rather than individuals' assumption (Trepte et al., 2017, p.3). These theories can be mutually combined to gain a more comprehensive understanding of identity. These social groups may include groups such as ethnicity, religion, and nationality. The theory outlines that through group affiliations individuals seek to enhance their self-esteem and strive to maintain a positive social identity. Moreover, Social identification can be explained as the process in which individuals identify themselves within a group. Shared manners and attitudes of the group make the individuals to act alike or have the same features within each other. It's worth noting that both social and psychological factors contribute in shaping one's identity.

The study of the identity or self is deeply rooted in history; some researchers date it back to the time of Aristotle and Plato. According to Plato's philosophy, the concept of self and soul are closely tied together. Plato posited that the soul exists before and after individual's physical existence and is immortal. In his belief, the essence and true self reside in the soul not in the physical body. On the other hand, Aristotle believed that a person's identity can be obtained through the realization of their potential and the pursuit of virtues. He argued that the self is not separable from the mind, body, and social context. Thus, according to his concept, these interconnected aspects should be examined to understand the individual's identities. In the modern systematic study of identity, Sigmund Freud has a major contribution to the concept of identity formation as he developed the theory of personality. He indicated that the unconscious process plays a major role to understand the human personality. He considers the mind as an iceberg where the unconscious feelings lie and controlling this part determines the individual's personality, as Charles Barker states "individuals shape their identity and the world through the interaction and workings of conscious and unconscious together" (Barker, 2007, p. 43). In the Freudian psychoanalytic approach, an individual's identity is formed during the first five or six years of age and it shapes his later personality and identity. As a person develops from childhood to adulthood the conflicts between id, ego, and superego increase. In *an Introduction of theories of Personality*, Ewan notes "According to Freud, identity is structured so that there are three basic elements: unconscious, preconscious, and conscious of what he called a topographic model"

(Ewan, 2003, p.14). How individuals compromise in certain conditions determines how they settle out the struggles the behavioral tendencies and pleasure drive. These conflicts are: oral, anal, phallic, latency, and genital. This approach has been called the psychosexual approach as it mainly focuses on the sexual stage of pleasure. Moreover, in Freud's point of view, sexual desire is the dominant factor in shaping one's identity and personality. Contrary, Erikson pays close attention to the role of sociology, environment, and culture in shaping one's identity. He believes that identity is something that changes and shifts as people confront different experiences. He defines Identity as 'Identity provides one with a sense of well-being, a sense of being at home in one's body, a sense of direction in one's life, and a sense of mattering to those who count'' (Erikson, 1968, p.34). Furthermore, Erikson considered identity as an intensive exploration of self-concept. He presented identity as a continuing process that changes according to one's investment in his lifetime. He considered the adolescent years as the beginning of identity formation and an ongoing process throughout adulthood. Regarding the identity formation in adolescents between ages, Erikson analyzes that the formation of identity is psychosocial task of adolescence. Adolescents' onset of puberty lead to newfound physical abilities and exploring new skills. Thus, Erikson called this period the developmental conflict identity vs. confusion. In addition, during the adolescence period, individuals increase their autonomy and become more independent. They start to interact with community, school, and neighbors. According to Erikson (1968) 'this interaction allows individuals to discover new ideologies, vocations, and relationships'' (135). Gradually, the adolescent matures assume new expectations of adult responsibilities. Eventually, the question of twin identity emerges and they want to discover their contributions in the world. According to Erikson in this stage identity is formed when individuals are able to assess their personal attributions. On contrary, role confusion occurs if the person fails in managing this developmental task. Individuals start to question their views and essential personality; this quest can lead to a very different human experience. In consequence, the person experiences doubt and the reason of their existence, leading to a sense of confusion and loss. The majority of adolescents go through role confusion due to social factors and physical changes. Thus, in Erikson's view, adolescence is a time when identity becomes the focus of concern. Adolescents who fail to draw a clear identity of their own arrive to a state which is called identity repudiation. In this state, adolescents are not aware of their needs and find a

difficulty in decision makings. Thus, they do not seem to take accountability of their behavior and actions. As a result, they might get involved with illegal issues or commit crimes. Therefore, having a stable identity is very essential for creating a healthy community. Several factors affect adolescents in giving and perceiving meaning towards circumstances or issues that happens to them during identity crisis. Social factors, family, friends, culture, and history are all part of the factors that leave impact on one's psychology. As Erikson notes " both culture and history play important roles in the formation of identity since they can give impact towards inner consistency of a child" (1968, p. 159). Therefore, adolescents who undergo multi-tradition and multi-culturalism are going to have higher risk of experiencing identity repudiation. They might choose to focus on a specific culture which is rejected by family or society. As a result, they undergo inner crisis and must have enough power to get through this crisis successfully.

Erikson (1955) characterizes the adolescence period as a stage where individuals must establish a sense of personal identity to avoid the dangers of the rote of identity confusion and identity diffusion. Identity achievement implies that individuals assert weakness and strength to determine the way that they deal with it. Thus, adolescent has to look for the answer of their questions about who they are or what is their goal in life. Identity is something that individuals should establish and it is not readily given to them by society. Instead, it should be acquired through the sustained efforts of individuals. If individuals do not make efforts, on contrary, danger of role confusion occurs in which it results in a sense of isolation and alienation. Past, present, and future should be gathered in one form in order to establish a unified whole of identity. The identity establishment during adolescent goes through several challenges in terms of the relationship with parents and society. In addition to the physical changes that happens during this period including genital maturity, sexual awareness, and body growth. These experiences are quite different from the childhood one's. Therefore, young individuals are confronting internal and external struggles. The internal refers to the psychological crises that revolves around self-define and identity issues. In order to maintain a well sense of identity, individuals must accept the libidinal feeling and body changes. Thus, the formation of a satisfactory ego integrity is a significant step to avoid role confusion. In Erikson's perception, individuals who are attached to delinquent behaviors doubt their skills and fail to resolve psychological tasks. The inadequacies in this period is the

outcome of the failures of the earliest stages of the cycle. The adolescent who fails in establishing self-identity will struggle with role confusion, role diffusion, and self-doubt which in turn results in negative personal outcomes. Regarding this concept, Erikson observes that ‘‘many adolescents if faced with continuing diffusion, would rather be no body or somebody bad, or indeed, dead’’(Erikson,1987, p.132).

Erikson proposed that the identity issues will not stay fixed as it modifies itself throughout adulthood years because of life conflicts and struggles. In a research called Change in goals and values of men and women from early to mature childhood, Harker and Solomon outline ‘‘both women and men constantly alter their goals, plans, and values during the transition from young to middle adulthood. They always find new goals and different purposes to strive toward’’ (Harker & Solomon, 1996, p.21). Furthermore, the process of identity formation is more complex during adulthood since this period is characterized by instability in terms of personal relations, obligations, roles, career, and future plans. Therefore, adults are trying a variety of prospects of how to live their future. During adulthood, individuals may experience shifts in personal relationships such as romantic partnerships, forming new friendships, or occurring changes within existing relationships. These transitions can impact personal priorities, obligations, values, and responsibilities. In addition, career factors play an outstanding role in shaping adult identity. Professional achievements and choices contribute to a sense of purpose and identity. Many adults spend a significant portion of their lives engaged in their careers. However, unemployment, career shifts, career instability can lead to adjustments and reevaluations to one’s identity. Future aspirations and plans are among the other factors that contribute to the adulthood’s identity formation. Individuals may explore different prospects for their future as they face new challenges. They may reassess their personal priorities, goals, and values which in turn shape their sense of identity. Regarding adulthood period, Arnett outlines ‘‘during the appearance of adulthood period, young people, especially the students of the universities, attempt to reflect on choices of diverse identity and explore a variety of alternatives. Many shifts of identity happened in this period compared to other periods of the human cycle’’ (Arnett, 2000, p.12). Erikson’s explanation on the concept of identity during adolescent and adulthood period received criticizing as it does not offer enough insight. J Kroger (2007) in *Identity Development: Adolescence through adulthood*, points out ‘‘Erikson provided various comments on the formation process of identity of adolescents.

However, he did not present enough detailed insights about the progression of one's identity during the adulthood period" (Kroger, 2007, p. 14).

Erikson's works on identity influenced other psychologists to explore more about the status of identity formation. A Canadian clinical psychologist and developmental, James E. Marcia whose work focused on the lifespan identity development and psychosocial development of adolescents. He agreed with the identity crisis theory of Erik Erikson and added a new framework to it. According to Marcia, "the amalgam of childhood beliefs, skills, and identifications is a ground for identity formation and evolves itself into a more unique and coherent form in which it will be connected to the directions of past and future" (Marcia, 1993, p.15). In his opinion, "there are four statuses of Identity evolution which can be divided into four parts: identity achievement, moratorium, foreclosure, and identity diffusion" (Marcia, 1966, p.16).

In Marcia's opinion, Adolescents can experience and undergo several identity statuses. He divided identity status into four parts. The first status that they might experience is identity diffusion which marks the beginning of identity crisis where they try to find a sense of themselves. In this condition, they are not sure about their goals. These uncertainties are related to education, culture, and forming relationships. It causes the lack of self-definition, thus, individuals tend to suffer during this period and find difficulty to form relationships with their surroundings. Moreover, this instability makes individuals to build short term relations with others as their decisions goes through changes. The second one is identity foreclosure where it is marked by committing to specific beliefs, virtues, and roles. While foreclosure is a given identity to a person by others, for instance, a person might become an engineer due to parental pressures and considers that the identity of engineer does not belong to him foreclosure is thought to be less stable than identity achievement and can regress into identity diffusion or moratorium (Marcia, 1976, p.39). Lastly, the moratorium and identity diffusion are forms of role confusion where a person is confused about his/her self-identity and seeks to resolve the identity crisis.

Identity Moratorium during the adolescence years is closely connected to the issues of identity crisis. Erikson considers moratorium as "a timespan where adolescents make a variety of experimentation hoping to find a corner of society that suits their ideas and beliefs" (qtd in Zwerdling, 1986, 67). In other words, adolescents who go through

identity moratorium try to do more discoveries in order to obtain their sense of identity. They experience a variety of roles without committing to any of them. Therefore, in moratorium status, adolescents experience broader feelings of anxiety compared to the other status. They are eager to obtain more and do not feel satisfied about their life. In Marcia's opinion, crisis bring growth and maturity into people, specifically adolescents. Identity achievement is similar to identity moratorium where adults do more explorations about themselves. Identity achievement is described as the status where a person develops a satisfying sense of self-identity. Marcia believes that in this stage, adolescents are aware of their needs and make clear decisions about their life. It can be concluded that, the construction of identity is a dynamic process. It is a result of social interactions and negotiations. The process of identity negotiation refers to those type of activities where people maintain, establish, and modify their identities. The self-image must be reconstructed and renegotiated as there will be new encounters or new conditions in which the role of a person is challenged. Thus, identity is under constant revision and it's not established only once. As soon as a person's identity faces incongruence, a space for a new identity could be negotiated and a new identity can be established.

1.4. Identity Crisis

Identity denial or identity crisis can be described as a type of social identity threat when individuals fail to be recognized as society members that they belong to due to differences of sharing interests within a group. Further, Identity denial is an exclusionary experience, subtle, and a blatant questioning of where to belong. Identity crisis happens as a result of struggles and conflicts between individuals. This may lead to drastic changes of one's personality. 'The word crisis originates from the Greek word krisis which defines unstable or a dangerous situation in which it leaves negative impacts on individuals. Also, it can be a negative change in certain things. Erikson analyzes three ways in which the identity crisis may take shape: severity, prolongation, and aggravation. Erikson believed that identity crisis become severe when ego identity is overwhelmed by the perception of identity confusion. When the identifications of childhood and adolescent's realignment occurs for a long period of time prolonged identity crisis establish. Lastly, when identity resolution's attempts are unsuccessful,

identity crisis will be aggravated. During the Second World War, Erikson coined the term identity crisis while he was working with soldiers who had “neither been shell-shocked nor become malingerers, but had through the exigencies of war lost a feeling of historical continuity and personal sameness” (Erikson, 1968, p.17). These patients survived the war and suffered from trauma which led to losing the sense of self and their ego identity was extremely impaired. Erikson observed similar symptoms of ego identity impairment associated with identity confusion, “the young people who were severely conflicted had a sense of confusion and an internal war within themselves, and in destructive delinquents and confused rebels who war on their society” (17). To draw a connection between the two situations, Erikson designated identity crisis as a period on which individuals are no longer able to experience their previous identifications and are misaligned with the new social and personal context.

Based on Erikson’s explanation, by Robert Ewan, the term identity crisis is defined as “experiencing feelings of inner fragmentation, no sense or very little of where one’s life is headed, and an ability to gain the support provided by a social role or vocation. The sufferer may feel like an outcast or stranger, or not quite somebody” (Ewan, 2014, p.161). Based on this statement, there is no restriction for identity crisis to a specified person but any individual whose inner psyche is being affected by something negative. Based on Psychosocial theory, Erikson highlights that “since awareness and instinct are significant parts, they work together with a shift in instinctual energy and yet cause specific vulnerability in that part. Thus, each stage becomes a crisis in one’s life” (Erikson, 1980, p.56). Erikson demarcates the stages of an identity crisis; according to his theory the first stage starts between the individual and his or her environment, along with the result of the crisis a person starts to have identity confusion, “in Erikson’s perception, identity development will not stay the same with its formation” (Hoare, 2002, p.26). Erikson analyzes more about identity crisis; in his perception crisis cannot be considered as something fatal the whole time. He explains crisis as “crucial moment that happens in the life of individuals and designates a necessary turning point. Individuals can grow or recover from negative emotions if they can handle the period of the crisis” (Cherry 2016, p. 4). He also adds that crisis should not be considered as negative the whole time. Sometimes crisis led to development and growth. Thus, identity crisis not always led individuals to negative circumstances but to a self-discovery as they ought to pass the crisis, McLean and Syed highlight that Erikson utilizes the term of

crisis to “refer to individual’s internal conflicts and struggles to find out who they are, what they want to be, and what they need from themselves” (McLean & Syed, 2014, p.116). Further, identity crisis happens more than once in one’s life. Nevertheless, the most serious crisis occurs during the teenage years as they start to questioning who am I, what kind of person I am going to be, or with whom I want to be. Factors such as language or cultural differences impact one’s identity as they have essential roles in designing one’s identity.

Furthermore, an identity crisis occurs while an individual fail to cope with the conflicts or his surroundings. He fails to identify himself and conceptualize his characteristics. Thus he experiences loneliness, lack of confidence, shame, and alienation. “as a result of physical changes, social factors, and their contribution to community, almost the majority of adolescents go through diverse forms of role confusion” (Kroger, 2007, p.34). In Erikson’s point of view, identity needs conformity and stability within social groups. Therefore, identity is a continuing process from early childhood to the future trajectory and it locates individuals within the social world. In a study Cote & Levine observe that “gender, social class, ethnic background, and social structural are among the factors that impact one’s identity crisis at different ages” (Cote & Levine, 1987, p.79). As it has been mentioned earlier, the process of identity constructions changes from an individual to another depending on their current psychological situation within themselves. The process is usually fraught with anxiety and fear. Here the defense mechanisms play their role to control the anxiety to protect the person from a mental breakdown. Cramer states “it has been demonstrated that the use of defenses is a linear function of the degree of crisis associated with the identity status” (Cramer, 1997, p.34). According to some studies it has been found out that heightened use of defense mechanisms causes a threat to an individual’s identity. Moreover, Erikson highlights the importance of crises in shaping people’s personality and identity. In his theory, each crisis presents an opportunity for development and growth; the successful resolution of each crisis will led to an adaptive and healthy personality. One of the significant period that individuals face crisis is during adolescence as they faced with the struggle of developing a stable sense of self and identity. This process in influenced by a range of environmental factors, family, friends, and culture. Erikson notes that a successful resolution during the adolescent period would enhance the development of ego identity. As a result, individuals navigate the

adulthood conflicts with resilience and conflict. However, a failure to handle the crisis will lead to a sense of disconnection and identity confusion from one's self. Thus, it's important for individuals to resolve the crisis successfully.

1.5. Identity and Trauma

Trauma and identity have a strong link and role in determining one's identity. Witnessing a traumatic incident leaves negative impact on one's identity construction. Many researchers have studied the connection between identity and trauma. Identity crisis and trauma can be interconnected in several ways. Identity crisis refers to a period where individuals go through a period of confusion and uncertainty about their values, identity, and the direction of their lives. On the other hand, trauma can be explained as an overwhelming experience that disrupt an individual's ability to cope with the circumstances around him and ruins their sense of safety. Trauma leaves negative impacts on individuals such as shattered sense of self, fragmented narratives, disrupted core beliefs, and alters self-perception.

Trauma can leave a great impact on a person's sense of self. The distractions experienced during a traumatic event can shatter one's previously values, beliefs, and perception about themselves. This distraction paves the way for a struggle to gain back the old self and a loss of identity. The second impact is on the individual's core beliefs; traumatic incidents invalidate or challenge individual's core beliefs about themselves. For instance, when someone experience abuse may struggle to trust others or start to question his self-worth in the world. This conflict between pre-trauma and post-trauma beliefs can trigger identity crisis. Nevertheless, individuals clash with reconciling past experiences with grasping an understanding their present. Moreover, trauma can create fragmented narratives where it fragments an individual's life story. Individual's often attempt to draw a connection between their past experiences with their present identity to construct a coherent narrative. However, trauma can produce gaps, inconsistencies that disrupt this coherence. This fragmentation may work as contribution to individual's identity crisis and they start to struggle to form a cohesive identity. Also, trauma may develop negative beliefs in individuals such as unworthy and damaged feelings. They may develop negative self-views about themselves. Another consequence of trauma is loss of meaning and purpose where individuals challenge the sense of meaning in life as

traumatic events can disrupt future goals and plans. This loss of direction and propose pave the way for identity crisis. Individuals have different responding to trauma. Some individuals may find reaffirmation of their identity through a healing and recovery process and some of them experience identity crisis.

Communications that are negative, belittling, demeaning, and biased can one's overwhelmed emotions. Trauma impacts the individual's personality regardless of whether it happened in the past or present. It causes stress, disorder, and posttraumatic growth. In return, trauma has power to destabilize the commitments of the existed identity. According to Van der Kolk's perception (1987) trauma "occurs when people do not feel safe anymore as they experience internal and external loneliness and helplessness" (qtd in Kahane-Nissenbaum, 2011, p.3). Traumatic experiences leave negative impressions on one's self-esteem and a shift of identity. Negative, biased, prejudiced, and demeaning communications impact one's overwhelmed feeling which results in ineffective coping mechanisms. In Steven Berman's point of view, "traumatic experiences can distract our goals and modify our lives in different and sometimes permanent ways" (Berman, 2016, p.1). For instance, when a person identifies himself according to life roles and social relationships such as mother, father, husband, wife, sister, or brother might reconsider those roles when a sudden change occurs like death or an expected tragic event. Moreover, when a person does extreme efforts to build relationships or a career but a sudden vanish can change them all. Thus, the person experiences hard times and have to start over once again. In Berman's words, "in specific conditions, individuals are required to reconsider or revise their personal beliefs and values regarding the concept of humanity and the world that they live in. They must expect to face violences or crimes in order to avoid shock feelings" (Berman S., 2016, p.7).

People from all ages might experience traumatic experience that have the ability to change their personality. Individuals must have an understanding of the life span from early childhood to senility as trauma can leave a long-term effect on people. Further, it's very important to pay crucial attention to trauma in children and youngsters as it leaves great impacts on their future personalities. The numerous side effects of childhood trauma are related to identity as they grow up, the side effects will lead to anxiety disorders, risk of violence, psychotic thinking, and eating disorders. Associate Chair of Psychiatry at Stanford University, David Spiegel (2008) creates a link between traumatic

events to the loss of one's identity, he mentions that "the essence of traumatic stress is incompetent, a loss in control over individuals' emotions. The mental imprint of such freighting experiences results in losing control over parts of one's mind-identity, memory, beliefs, and consciousness" (Spiegel, 2008, p.3). The identity issues related to trauma may last for a short or long period depending on the factors that resulted in the trauma. The affected person struggles to find inner peace and finds difficulty in adapting with the new situation.

In literature, writers started to use traumatic events and traumatized characters within their works to represent real-life images that confront individuals. It is the representation of success, grief, misfortune, and happiness. As trauma triggers into events of everyday life, it's hard to find a work of literature that does not refer to a traumatic event directly or indirectly. The use of traumatized characters and traumatic incidents has become increasingly prevalent in literature over time. Authors often incorporate traumatized characters to shed the light on the complexities and realities of human experience such as emotional turmoil and struggles that individuals experience in their lives. Portraying the theme of trauma leave a profound impact in exploring personal growth, resilience, and healing. At this stage, writers engage their readers on a deeper emotional level and provide the readers to explore the broader implications of trauma and empathize with the characters.

Moreover, writers can explore the various paths to recovery and healing by portraying traumatic events. Authors can highlight multi faces of nature of trauma through their works of literature such as the potential for personal growth and its long-lasting impacts on individual's self-growth. Jeffry Alexander in *Trauma* (2004) writes "Trauma scripts are performed in the theaters of everyday collective life" (Alexander, 2004.p.4). Regarding the use of trauma in literature Cathy Caruth (2016) in *Unclaimed experience: Trauma, narrative, and history*, states "like psychoanalysis, literature has interest in exploring the connection between knowing and not knowing" (Caruth, 2016, p.3). Moreover, it's important to pay close attention to cases connected to memory to have a better understanding of trauma. It involves interpretations and representations of events, flashbacks to past events, and one's adaptation to the future. that describe one as a member of a particular group; therefore, people can create their own comprehension of who they are by taking factors such as language, race, religion, and culture into

consideration. By considering these factors, individuals will be successful in differentiating themselves from other groups.

1.6. Theme of Identity in Literature

Throughout history, the concept of identity has been a recurring theme in literature. Writers central concern were the nature of identity and its formation. Some literary works highlight the theme of identity crisis where characters struggle to design their identity or redefine their sense of self. This narrative type often explores societal expectations, internal conflicts, and the search for personal authenticity. As Miller outlines “ In English literature, the crisis of identity is a severe issue for novelists or any other person related to the area of literature (Miller et al, 2019, p.45). Another type of literary works focus on the theme of ethnic and cultural identity especially works that deal with marginalized group of people. the texts of this type navigate into cultural heritage and the tension between individual and collective identity. The theme of identity allows the writers to present diverse perspectives, delving into the intricate of human existence. Writers use literature as a platform for people and communities to reflect on the intricate of identity Literature, “Literature is the space in which questions about the nature of personal identity are most provocatively articulated” (Bennett and Royle, 2009, p. 130).

Readers are provided with the opportunity to explore their own identities and gain a better understanding of the human experience by examining the struggle and the journey of character’s self-discovery. To begin with ancient literature, themes of the search for one’s true identity, heroism and self-discovery were recurring themes in literary works such as *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* by Homer. These epic poems often portrayed cultural identity and spiritual journeys. During the Renaissance period, the plays of William Shakespeare mirrored the multifaceted nature of identity. In his plays such as *Macbeth* and *Hamlet* characters assume false identities and struggle to differentiate between reality and appearance. Furthermore, during the Romanticism and Enlightenment, literature witnessed the emergence of the individuals as central figures. Johan Wolfgang Von Goethe and Jean Jacques Rousseau highlighted tension between reason and emotion, personal identity, and self-reflection. In Romanticism period works of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge were reflecting on the

individual's genuine authentic self and their connection to nature. Furthermore, during the 19th century, writers like Virginia Woolf, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Gustave Flaubert focused on the inner workings of human mind. They shed the light on themes of alienation, self-identity and societal expectations. On the other hand, in the 20th century writers such as Ralph Ellison and James Joyce examined the complexities of cultural, racial, and social identities.

During the postmodern period, the concept of identity became one of the recurring themes of postmodern literature due to the variety of struggles that faced people because of the bad conditions of life. Postmodernism as a philosophical and a literary movement that emerged as a reaction against the modernist ideas of unified and a stable sense of self in the mid of twentieth century. Postmodern literature highlights the fluid, fragmented, and contradictory nature of human identity, Kusnir notes that "Since postmodern literature is a way to represent and reflect the postmodern life and culture, it helps to view the crisis of identity of human beings and their conflicts (Kusnir, 2011, p.13). Postmodern writers shed the light on the multitude factors that shape individual's identity including cultural influences, societal pressures, personal experience, and historical context. They portray the conflicts people face in constructing and understanding their identities in a world marked by political, social, and economic insatiability. The hard conditions of life such as alienation, loss of traditional values, the erosion of collective identities, and social inequality contributed in further exacerbating the struggles facing individuals. Writers started to depict characters who grapple disorientation, sense of rootlessness, and lost the meaning of life. These struggles are often heightened by blurring the boundaries between fiction and reality and breakdown of traditional narratives. Dumitrescu (2001) mentions that " in the context of postmodernism, identity is a critical issue. Thus, the majority of postmodern works of literature contain issues related to identity crisis and they present the impact of it on the lives of characters"(Dumitrescu, 2001, p.10) .Postmodern literature allows reader to engage with dilemmas and challenges of maintaining and constructing the character's sense of self as it presents characters who go through identity crisis or those who experience identity denial. Moreover, it highlights the tension between societal expectation and individuality as they search for the meaning of life and identity. Postmodern literature also reflects on the theme of identity through pastiche and intertextuality. They often remix devices from different genres, texts, and cultural

references to portray the fragmented nature of identity. In addition, postmodern writers highlight issues of marginalization, power, and the social manner that contribute in shaping identity. It examines the role of factors such as gender, race, and class in designing one's identity.

One of the essential genres that focuses on the concept of identity is the genre of migrant literature and postcolonial literature where authors often use their work to express their experiences of migration, displacement, and the formation of new identities in a foreign country. These authors often draw on their own cultural and linguistic backgrounds to create works that reflect their unique perspectives and experiences. Migrant literature has various forms including short stories, novels, poetry, and memories. These works portray themes such as cultural heritage, culture assimilation, the impact of migration, and adapting to a new culture. Writers of migrant literature offer unique perspectives on the complexity of human experience and identity through their writings, among these writers are Salman Rushdie (*Midnight's Children*), Amy Tan (*The Joy Luck Club*) Jhumpa Lahiri (*The Name Sake*), Maxine Hong Kingston (*The Warrior Woman*). These writers in the genre of postcolonial literature and migrant literature depict unique perspectives on the complexities on human identity and experience. They highlight the triumphs, individual transformation, and the challenges that face people when they migrate to a foreign country and the cultural adaptation in a foreign land.

Italo Calvino, Kazuo Ishiguro, Ian McEwan, Jorge Borges, among others explore the theme of identity with the use of different literary devices such as metafiction, deconstruction of linear narratives, and intertextuality. They reflect the multifaceted and reflect on the complicated nature of human identity with drawing attention to the external factors that influence individuals in analyzing themselves. These writers mirror the individual's journey through literature and by engaging the readers in analyzing the characters, they provide with the opportunity of exploring their personality, identity, and personal development. By portraying diverse perspectives and narratives, literature paves the way for readers to draw a better understanding of the complexities of human identity. It offers a platform for exploring social norms, search for belonging, and selfhood. Thus, literary works help individuals to find a deeper understanding of their identity, find solace, and overcome the struggles that they face.

2. ATONEMENT

2.1. Atonement

Ian McEwan is a contemporary British novelist and screenwriter born in 1948. McEwan started writing in the early 1970s. He won the Jerusalem Prize in 2011 for his writings which express the freedom of ideas and individualism. According to the Judges of the Prize, McEwan represents individuals' conflicts against their society and denies their freedom of self-expression. As a contemporary writer, he is interested in writing about controversial issues and sends his message through his fictional characters.

Atonement is one of the most remarkable literary works that Ian McEwan wrote in 2001. It is considered as one of the best novels that McEwan wrote during his career and was shortlisted for the Booker Prize, Whitbread Book Award, and James Traut Black Memorial Prize. It won the National Book Critics Circle Award, Santiago Prize for the European Novel, and the W.H. Smith Literary Prize. Also, Time Magazines named it as the best fiction novel of the year. As Julie Ellam implies, “before *Atonement*'s publication, the works of Ian McEwan was appreciated, however *Atonement* can be considered as one of Ian McEwan's biggest achievements. It took McEwan to another level of proficiency and is celebrated as a writer of literary fiction and popular with the reading public” (Ellam,2009, p.5).

Atonement is a combination of the classic and postmodern world. It combines the old fashion of storytelling and explores the literary creations of postmodern period. McEwan combines self-conscious devices, traditional realistic narrative, and deconstructionism and presents it with modern experimental techniques which adds extra aesthetic beauty to the work. He employs techniques such as flashbacks and narrative montage. The novel presents a grotesque of chaos and conflicts on diverse levels of the human psyche; the events are contradictory to what they are shown. The duration of the novel takes more than 60 years, it opens up in a hot summer day in England 1935 with Tallis Family and ends in 1999 when Briony, the protagonist, is sick. It presents three different period of times including the period before the Second World War, during the War, and the late of 90th. Thus, the readers can draw their interpretation based on the circumstances that they have gone through. McEwan molds into rich with

the fragrance touch and seclude peace of rural life. He resembles this masterpiece's romantic events, identity issues, psychological instability, and tragic events. The narrative techniques used in the novel are in favor of behavioral study. Incidents have multiple narratives and reflect upon how the characters' process and perceive their daily routines. The novel contains many postmodern elements, including unreliable narrator, intertextuality, and metafiction.

The novel presents various images of human beings and the consequences of their decisions in life. The novel delves into the depth of the psychics of humans and the motives that drive them into committing certain actions. Bruno M. Shah holds that McEwan's chief interest lies more with consequences than action. (Shah, 2009, p. 40). Further, McEwan's full deployment of Briony's psyche and consciousness in the course of the novel allows the readers to analyze the level of consciousness as Smith observes "McEwan convince that one of the greatest values of the novel is the ability to enter other people's consciousness. (Smith & McEwan, 2010, p. 112). He deviates the readers to enter Briony's psychological expectations. *Atonement* is influenced Virginia Woolf and Henry James who are known for dealing with psychological analysis. Furthermore, the novel explores the connection between the conscious incidents of the novel and the subconscious notions that characters have within the story. It revolves about the act of *Atonement* of the main character Briony Tallis who likes to take control and enjoys the power to control the outcomes of the actual events. She wants to organize the events as she does in her writings. When things are contrary to her expectations, she gives herself the right to interfere and put them fit without considering the consequences of her actions. Briony destroys the lives of innocent people, Robbie Turner, the son of their servant who is in a romantic relationship with her sister Cecilia Tallis. She accuses Robbie of Lola's rape due to her prior false expectations and misinterpreting events. Her accusation leads to Robbie's imprisonment and deployment to the French war during the Second World War. Brian Finney notes that the decision of Briony "results in tragedy to the lives of her close people" (Finney, 2004, p.74). After this judgment against Robbie, the story descends into misery and tragedy. Briony wants to atone for her sin after realizing the amount of devastation that she caused. Briony Tallis want to perform the act of atonement of what she has committed. However, the readers read what the unreliable narrator tells, where mendacity and evasion undermine and shadow the story

that is told. Briony becomes a nurse to help soldiers of war and a writer to sublimate feelings of guilt of what she did in her past.

Throughout the novel, McEwan's writing style utterly intrigues the painful trajectories of his characters. Everyone's identity action is questioned and doubted; revealing the actual author at the end of the story puts the whole book into doubt. The readers are in a state of irresolution, and the narrative flings into a state of unreliability. According to McEwan, "the writer can contribute to a broader goal of fostering intellectual growth and expanding the comprehension of individuals by facilitating critical engagement and doubt as it can open up new discussions. Also, the active thought that criticizes a literary work is saving moments for both reader and the write" (Ricks, 1979, p. 25). A systematic analysis of the novel highlights the significance of the Freudian unconscious theory, including the deciding factors, has a highly outstanding role in regulating an individual's actions. In addition to the role of Erik Erikson's psychosocial development and identity crisis theory in understanding the characters' behaviors. Characters are going through mental traumas due to repressed feelings and emotions. In return, these unresolved traumas and repressed emotions affects the flow of the actions in the context of novel.

2.2. Layers of Human Psyche and Unconscious mind

In literature, writers started to use psychological elements to portray fictional characters to let their readers get a better understanding of the motifs and reasons that let human beings do certain acts and actions. In this novel, the human psyche and its influence on thoughts and actions are central parts of the narrative. In *Atonement*, McEwan skillfully uses psychological elements to delve deeper into the complexities and motivations of his characters. Each character presented in the novel is the prototype of rational convolutions, highlighting the complexity of their psychological makeup. McEwan explores the intricate layers of human actions and thoughts through vivid expressions and brilliance of human nature, thus, even unique behaviors get feelings. He presents the human psyche in this novel with his striking narrative style and vivid picturesque descriptions. The writer portrays the human being's unconscious mind and provides insights to the highly significant role of the unconscious mind in regulating good or bad practices of individual's behaviors.

Moreover, in this masterpiece, Ian McEwan portrays diverse sides of the human mind throughout the dichotomies of male/female, good/evil, child/adults characters, and he resembles the capacity of human beings to navigate events in various situations. He shifts the reader's perspective from objective viewpoint to a subjective one. Instead of looking at the situations only from the outside, readers are drawn inside the character's mind. James Phelan comments that "readers are given the opportunity to draw their ethical judgments and interpretations about the novel's characters, the choices that they make, their conditions at the point of narrative ethics, aesthetics, and narrative form" (Phelan, 2007, p.7).

The protagonist of *Atonement*, Briony, is presented as a typical order seeker who wants to design the world's order. Throughout the novel, her complicated personality makes readers elicit mixed feelings about her; one moment, readers may be furious at her, but the next moment sympathizes with her. In addition, Briony's character is both pitiable and hateful, she causes the central tragedy in the novel and punishes herself for seeking redemption. Ricks states "McEwan tends to circumvent any procedural moral preaching" (Ricks, 1979, p.25). McEwan puts the readers in a critical context and lets them empathize and sympathize with the characters. He gradually engages the readers with the narrative process by following Briony's self-seeking journey to understand better what Pam Morris calls "epistemological progress" (Morris, 2004, p. 11). In this perspective, readers reshape the fiction world with their understanding. Briony desires to control the lives of others through her works of literature and the imaginary order enchants her. Despite her numerous attempts to enter the symbolic realm, she frequently slides into imaginary order. Tyson defines imaginary order in children as "the control of children over their illusionary environment where they consider their lives as completeness, delightful, and fullness" (Tyson, 2011, p.28).

Growing up in an adult family, Briony does not get enough attention from her surroundings. Hence, she finds fulfillment and solace in an imaginative realm. She creates her fictitious world by writing fairy tales, and she wants to take control over the events as a form of compensation for what is missing inside her soul. Briony allows preconceived knowledge to guide her rather than the realities before her eyes, so she intends to designate the flow of the incidents that are going to take place. Her potential fantasy blurs the line among fiction and reality. According to Freud's *Essay Creative Writers and Daydreaming*, Freud, Children's fantasies are viewed as unfulfilled wishes.

In line with Freud's view, Briony has faith in the fantasy world that she created for herself can fulfill the lack of emotions in her reality. Since in Freud's perception, every single fantasy is a correction of one's unsatisfied reality and a fulfillment of one's desires. Thus, Briony's unfulfilled erotic wishes can be lined to her drama *The Trails of Arabella* as the fantasies motive forces are unsatisfied wishes.

Sigmund Freud's work in psychoanalysis is a ground break to get a deeper understanding the human psyche. Despite the amount of criticism that overshadows the Freudian concept, its relevance in assessing the human psyche has never been reduced, successfully portraying the motifs behind an individual's behavior and actions. Id, ego, and superego are layers of the creation of the human psyche, which are for determining one's behaviors or actions. Briony's id is in control of her actions and wants to perform the play that she wrote no matter what. As a teenager interested in literature, Briony has a restless nature when she wants to pursue her desires. She seeks fulfillment from other objects, and therefore, when rehearsal does not fulfill her expectations, she moves from one object to another in order to satisfy her desires. Her play does not satisfy her wishes, and try to find compensation in another object. According to Fink, Briony gains benefit from this dissatisfaction since "if one can get things easily, then the desire will not be strong and the desire will be vanished by satisfaction" (Fink, 1997, p. 51). Consequently, once more Briony returns to literature and tries to be a novelist in the end. Briony's desire for writing can be considered as a sign of her narcissist character as the act of writing serves one's needs and desires.

Further, Briony is an order seeker and emerges to establish order. Thus, she desires to fix the wrongs. Often, she looks for recognition, affection, and attention, and she likes to take control to be recognized. In Naomi Booth's understanding of Briony's position in *Atonement*. She posits:

Briony's witnessing of the primal scene in the library and by the fountain between Robbie and Cecilia led in inhibiting the desire of control to adjust the events by using her authorial power. These primal scenes wound Briony's ego thus she decides to take the control. According to this point, compared to the other characters Briony exists in the capacity of peripheral. (Booth, 2015, p.4). Briony also suffers from her father's absence, whom she considers a fixed point, "the household was fixed and organized when Briony's father was home. However, he did nothing, never told his children what

to do, and spent his time in the library, yet his physical presence made everything in order and allowed freedom” (McEwan, 2001, p.85). Thus, due to the lack of physical presence of her parents, she finds the substitution of parental care and love in her older sister, Cecilia: “during Briony’s childhood, she was prone to terrible screams at night and prone to nightmares. At those moments, Cecilia took care of Briony and used to go to her room to calm her down. She used to whisper and comfort her, come back, Briony it’s just a dream” (31). In his psychological theories, Freud concentrates on the importance of a healthy childhood, and modern child development theories focus on the same point. Elizabeth B. Hurlock, a famous child psychologist, outlines the importance of the role of the family in molding fit and responsible individuals into society. She states, “The family atmosphere lays the foundations for children’s attitudes toward things, people, and life. Healthy families allow their children to think of themselves as productive members of community” (Hurlock, 1978, p. 494). Hence, childhood experiences leave their influence on adulthood period. A false self-awareness is generated in Briony due to the inadequate care she receives from her surroundings. False self-awareness can be analyzed as failing to view the self and the ability to relate with others. Not receiving enough validation, nurturing, and support are among the factors that allow room for false awareness as a distorted version of self appears. Thus, the parent must create safe zones for their children to gain a healthy development. On the contrary, Briony’s mother does not create this assurance for her daughter. As a result, her mother's lack of attitude creates a gap inside Briony. Briony’s mental trauma results from her repressed emotions in the unconscious part of her mind. Once Briony is denied by others, she tends to fulfill this gap by getting appreciation through other objects such as writing and showing herself to her cousins. Briony is her mother's object of desire to fill her husband's lack at home. Also, Mrs. Talis wants to compensate for her craving for writing through Briony's stories. She is satisfied when Briony can write literary fiction successfully.

Further, adults' expectations go far beyond the children's abilities most of the time. Children are expected to fit in the rules that adults have imposed; a child enters the process of subjectivization from the beginning of the symbolic order, where the adults generally impose local rules on children. This process depends on two major elements; the first one is where adults use the child as a replacement for their lost objects; the second process is when a child has to embrace the desires of adults to be accepted and

admired. According to Peter Childs, ‘’ adults reflect their fears and needs in children. Briony wants to enter the adult world as she tends to understand their world but fails to get an insightful comprehension of it’’ (Childs, 2016, p.98). Therefore, according to Freudian psychoanalytic theory, analyzing Briony's character, layers of Briony's unconscious mind influence her behaviors. There are pent-up childhood frustrations on her psyche, which affect the flow of her actions and behaviors. Freud explains a child's personality through five stages of psychosocial development: oral, anal, phallic, latent, and genital stage. He believed that children have sexual desires even in their early lives. In Freud’s perspective, all children have curiosity about the origin of sex and they create childhood fantasies of sexual desires and considers libido as an essential part of every development stage.

The oral stage is the first stage of psychosexual development, where the child wants to put everything in his mouth that tastes like the mother's breast. The second stage is anal where the child develops control over their bodies; parental support is significant to avoid the fixation of libido. Completing this stage successfully, the child will develop a sense of independence and a feeling of accomplishment. According to Freud, Briony's obsession with order can be traced to this stage, ‘‘the anal personality is ‘‘orderly, parsimonious, and obstinate’’ (Freud, 1976, p.55).

The third stage is the phallic stage, and the child realizes the difference between male and female, love and hatred. Freud proposed the term Oedipal Complex when the mother becomes a cathexis for the male child. As Freud writes in his essay on ‘‘Female Sexuality, ‘‘the father becomes the new object to be loved by his daughter during the end of the girl’s progression’’ (1976, p.3). Briony is preoccupied with Cecilia's life to compensate for the absence of her parents. As stated in the novel, ‘‘her mother had always lived an invalid's shadowland, Briony had always required mothering from her older sister’’ (McEwan, 2001, p. 71). Briony’s mother is identified as unavailable, isolated, and immersed in suffering. She is considered as an absent figure in Briony’s life. Therefore, Briony has a strong emotional bond to her older sister Cecilia. In her expectation, she protects Cecilia from Robbie's threat ‘‘something irreducibly human, or male, threatened the order of their household, and Briony knew that unless she helped her sister, they would all suffer’’ (McEwan,2001, p.79). According to psychoanalytic theory, Cecilia is a ‘‘Pre-Oedipal mother’’ to Briony. Freud emphasizes the importance of this psychosexual phase in a girl's sexual development. If the pro-Oedipal complex is

not resolved properly, fixation can occur, and “a woman may remain arrested at the original mother-attachment and never properly achieve the changeover to men” (Freud, 1976, p.1). Briony is presented in three stages: thirteen, eighteen, and an old widowed woman but never presented as a loving woman or mother. Ilany Kogan writes in her article that “since Briony was not able to give to her sister the “same kind of libidinal gratification” (Kogan, 2014, p.59), she unconsciously decides to eliminate Robbie from Cecilia's life by accusing him of assault, thus becoming the only object of her sister's attention. The ego develops during the second stage in children. Freud defines ego as:

The ego represents what may be called reason and common sense, in contrast to the id, which contains passions. Moreover, the ego seeks to bring the influence of the external world to bear upon the id and its tendencies, and endeavors to substitute the reality principle for the pleasure principle reigns unrestrictedly in the id” (Freud, 1963, p.15).

The ego tries to find the balance between the chaotic id and the ego ideal; there are moments that Briony follows her ego; when she sees Robbie's letter for Cecilia, she reads the letter but does not tell her parents about its content “Briony pushed into Cecilia's hand piece of paper folded twice and then she squealed her brother's name and leaped into his embrace” (McEwan, 2001,77). She realizes that the letter is not for her yet her curiosity leads her to read the letter. Also, she suppresses her id impulses when she witnesses making love between Cecilia and Robbie “Briony moved slowly into their view, stopped by the desk and saw them. She stood there stupidly, staring at them” (96).

Superego is the last stage that develops during the phallic stage of sexual development. It functions as a repressor of the id's impulses and requirements of society. It also works to convince the ego to pay attention to the morals and standards of traditions “the ideal ego answers to everything that is expected of the higher nature of man” (Freud, 1963, p. 27). In Briony's case, she believes that it is her responsibility to preserve the morals of her sister and family from Robbie; she is rude with him during the dinner because she considers him a source of threat to her family. Thus, she avoids Robbie talking with her cousin during the dinner, “Please leave him alone” (McEwan, 2001, p.88). Nevertheless, she is obliged to apologize to Robbie as her mother demands her to apologize to Robbie or leave the dining room. In this scene, Briony's superego is in control of her id impulses because she cannot disobey her mother.

Moreover, during Lola's and Marshal's wedding, Briony follows her superego by not telling the truth not to ruin Lola's life as she did before to Robbie, “Briony had the

chance to purge herself from her mistakes and to release her anguish in the public. There was a chance to proclaim but she remained silent in front of the bride and her family” (220). She believes that proclaiming the truth will ruin the wedding, and not Robbie or Lola will benefit from it. Sigmund Freud writes in his book *The Ego and the Id*, that the superego can evoke in the ego a sense of guilt, that conflict can arise because the ego is the representative of the “external world, of reality” (Freud, 1961, p.26), but the superego is “a representative of the internal world, of the id” (26). At the moment of accusing Robbie of raping Lola, Briony's superego and ego do not function well. She follows her id desires by putting Robbie in jail and separating him from her older sister Cecilia. Briony's conscious mind, including ego and superego, makes her feel guilty for her crime. She tries not to put the whole blame on herself, and her ego tries to maintain a balance. Briony's writing process is considered a sublimation for the wrongs that she did. According to Jacobi, who analyses moments of misreading in *Atonement*, misreading results from interpreting “individual events by oversimplification and analogical extensions” (Jacobi, 2011, p.66). Worthington, too, suggests oversimplification as “Briony 'reads' these events within the terms of the childish understanding that frame, like the window, what she 'sees'” (Worthington, 2013, p.154)

The presence of Emily Tallis is identified with her absence in the novel. She is a mother that withdraws her responsibilities towards her children. Not giving enough attention to the needs of her children can be seen as the main factor behind the peculiar personalities of her children. McEwan tends to justify her behaviors by portraying reasons that make her a failure mother. She is trapped in childhood memories; her family always ignored her due to the presence of her pretentious sister. She states “There were always adults available to encourage this relentless preening”(McEwan, 2001, p.101). Thus, she prefers to stay alone without taking responsibility as she believes her existence does not make a difference in the family or outside. She denies the realities around her using denial defense mechanisms and refuses to acknowledge that her presence in her children's lives matters. Her past experiences continue to exert control over her life and stay in the unconscious part of her mind. She remains voiceless and does not want to explore things that happens within her family especially what her husband does, as narrated in the novel “She did not wish to know why Jack spent so many consecutive nights in London. Rather, she did not wish to be told” (103). She does not want to go out from the comfort zone that she created for herself; finding new things may trigger

anxiety and stress. Therefore, staying in her angle and shielding herself with the positive stuffs that will allow give her the opportunity to leave peacefully.

Robbie, Cecilia, Lola, and Emile go through the same frustration. Robbie finds his missing part in Cecilia. He seduces his id and does not think of the consequences. His passion for Cecilia is compelling; he smells the books Cecilia lent to him earlier and finds pleasure in them. “Willing himself not to, he raised the book to his nostrils and inhaled. Dust, old paper, soap scent on his hands, but nothing of her. How had it crept upon him, this advanced stage of fetishizing the love object?” (58). Robbie finds emotional gap in objects such as the book or letters writes to Cecilia to ask for her forgiveness due to his unappropriated behavior near the fountain. He tinkered with his draft for a further quarter of an hour, then threaded in new sheets and typed up a fair copy. The crucial lines now read: “You would be forgiven for thinking me mad—wandering into your house barefoot or snapping your antique vase. The truth is, I feel rather lightheaded and foolish in your presence, Cee, and I don't think I can blame the heat! Will you forgive me? Robbie, there it was ruined” (59).

In his book entitled *The Unconscious*, Anthony Easthope notes that “ according to Lacan and Freud, an expression of narcissism is being in love since it's the love for self instead of loving the other person, and they consider it as a process of self-deception” (Easthope, 2003, p.66). It would be more accurate to argue that being in love means falling in love with one's image or the ideal ego. Being out of reach, the loved one brings about a desire that cannot be satisfied.

Consequently, the book acts as a fetish to fill the loss of Robbie. The subject has many choices for filling the primordial lack; one of the choices is language. Robbie, who has to return the book to her, labors to fill the gap with letter writing. Briony uses a sublimation defense mechanism for her repressed feeling and decides to become a nurse. She is an example of a typical character who tries to turn repressed feelings on others. Even the purpose of her writings is to get attention from her surroundings. Freud believed that sublimation mechanism is an essential factor to create a healthy humanity development because desires will not stay in the unconscious part of mind, instead he directs his desires into something that is accepted by society and gives comfort. However, even after writing the book and drawing happy endings for the characters, Briony cannot sleep in peace and atone for her crime. Even after realizing her mistake,

Briony was not ready to change her testimony against Robbie. She postponed it during her lifetime and wanted to obtain forgiveness through sublimation. Briony does not even publish the novel while Lola and Marshal are alive which again puts the sincerity of her atonement into irresolution. She describes herself as “weak, stupid, confused, cowardly, evasive. She had hated herself for everything she had been. But she never thought of herself as a liar” (McEwan, 2001, p.229). Moreover, this chance of getting back and proving his innocence starts appearing more real once he learns that Briony is willing to tell the truth and officially admit her false testimony in Robbie's case: “He would be cleared. From the way it looked here, where you could hardly be bothered to lift your feet to step over a dead women's arm, he did not think he would need apologies or tributes. To be cleared would be a pure state. He dreamed of it like a lover, with a simple longing” (155). Robbie's hope to clarify his name fails as Briony does not admit the truth about what she has committed.

2.3. Denial & Identity Crisis

Denial and identity crisis are two different concepts but relevant with each other in *Atonement*. They play significant roles in shaping Briony's personality. She experiences several events that challenges her perception of reality and led her denial mechanism to take control on her. To begin with, denial is one of the essential defense mechanisms in the Freudian psychoanalytic theory. Denial occurs when an individual denies a painful truth or an event that is hard to comprehend. Thus, a person's interior psyche gets damaged when this mechanism does not function well. It makes individuals accept things that give them comfort and start to live in allusions. Denial can be conscious or unconscious. In both situations, the person considers himself successful in repressing or suppressing a problem to avoid suffering. At this stage, denial goes to the level of unconsciousness. When an external factor challenges or disrupts denial, it goes to the conscious level. Individuals should be ready to face the realities and accept them; otherwise, it can cause traumatic or psychological dilemmas. Beginning with Freud, theorists of psychoanalytic, suggest that those people who utilizes denial mechanism tend to allay stress and anxiety in which it contributes to ego's pathological operations and unconscious cathartic activities. In this context, Anna Freud (1961) considered denial a total pre-stage defense, resourcing in the narcissistic phase and progressing into

an entire defense mechanism in adulthood. In this period, children reject all things that are disagreeable with the possibility of continuation of their adulthood. A person can be trapped in various kinds of misconceptions and conflicts due to self-deficiency that might negatively impact self-development.

Ian McEwan presents this mechanism throughout the main character Briony Tails. Briony utilizes denial mechanism to refuse fundamental concepts around her, including her identity and the accuracy of the events around her. She interprets things from the angle she believes in to avoid suffering and negative emotions. Briony, experiences both external and internal struggles. The central conflict can be her struggle with Cecilia and Robbie, while the internal one that she experiences is seeking Atonement throughout interpreting the realities without denying them any longer. Denial and struggles in Briony's life modify the flow of her life's events and leave negative consequences on others around her. Briony is used to live in her imaginary world; she travels between reality and illusion. Further, she finds solace in creating alternative versions of events that align with her desired self-image. Throughout the context of the novel, Briony immerses herself in romantic fairytales. She fabricates a story in her mind that Robbie is bullying Cecilia when she stands by the window and watch Cecilia disrobe in front of Robbie. She does not like the idea of seeing Robbie staring at her sister and considers it a silly act. Briony has the desire to write a story but without a clear idea in her mind. Her thoughts are occupied with illusions and imaginations. Her psychological development is concerned with storytelling despite of the lack of techniques to convey and capture emotions. Nevertheless, the argument between Cecilia and Robbie by the fountain allows Briony to arrange her writing techniques and perhaps giving her an idea to start a new story. In young Briony's belief, entering the arena of adult emotions will precisely assist her in the process of writing. She plunges begins to dramatize the event and plunges herself into whirls of thought When she reads filthy words on Robbie's letter to Cecilia. She allows herself to be impregnated with misconceptions and childish bias. Witnessing this event with the love scene in the library makes Briony develop hatred feelings toward Robbie and wants to punish him, she considers herself in the position of punishing the wrongs. Furthermore, Briony believes in what gives her mind comfort instead of trying to comprehend the real nature of the connection between Cecilia and Robbie. She gives herself the right to put things in order and punish others for actions and behaviors that she does not approve. The idea that

Robbie is dangerous to her sister roots in her mind. Thus, she creates the imaginary version that Robbie hurts Cecilia. In this way, she avoids the idea that Robbie and Cecilia could be in love. Instead of recognizing the truth and rightness, Briony engages herself in self-deception and misconception notions about Robbie. The unconscious part of the mental triggers for making a deadly mistake. She uses the scenes at the fountain Robbie's letter for Cecelia, and witnessing love in the library as excuses to persuade her mind about the aggrieves of Robbie.

Briony satisfies her mind with the idea that Robbie offends Cecilia instead of looking at the subject objectively. Due to some previous actions that Briony does to attract Robbie's attention, as in one of the scenes she draws herself into the water to know if Robbie's will save her or not. It can be said that she has a childhood crush on Robbie. Briony expresses romance through the heroine of the story Arabella, who falls in love with a doctor and marries by the end. She might expect the same ending for her love for Robbie, but he looks at her as a little schoolgirl, "Robbie could not help himself to not laugh as he became a crush of a schoolgirl, what the hell you mean by saying this?" (158). Robbie does not take Briony's words seriously and denies to believe what she conformed. Thus, Briony's mind does not want to believe that Robbie rejected her feelings because of Cecelia, she denies the idea of the existence of a love relationship between Robbie and her sister as it hurts her ego and distracts her mind. Therefore, it would be easier to give her mind what makes it comfortable, and in this way, she avoids her feelings getting hurt. Breznitz notes that "psychotic and neurotic are both forms of unconscious denial in psychoanalytical terms" (Breznitz, 1983, p.13). In Briony's case, she unconsciously denies the affection and passion that Robbie and Cecilia share and allows her conscious mind to control her thoughts. She unconsciously allows her denial mechanism to control her thoughts, and as a result she looks for an opportunity to put the order and punish Robbie. Thus, she accuses him of raping Lola though he is innocence.

As a postmodern novel, in *Atonement*, many truths are not known for readers until the very end of the story. Identity is a central issue in the novel; even the author's identity astonishes the readers. Due to the instability conditions of political and social conditions in the modern period, the concept of identity crisis is one of the principal outstanding themes in modern literature, which sheds light on the instabilities that face the communities' individuals. In *Postmodernity in American and Australian Fiction* J

Kusnir mentions that “postmodern literature reflects on culture, tradition, and identity issues. It portrays the struggles that the modern man takes in order to find his way in the world” (Kusnir, 2011, p.5). Psychologists argue that identity might exist in the non-existence and initiate within the psyche of the individuals. Identity often involves one's emotions, social behaviors, and physical impulses.

McEwan presents Briony with several identities, including a teenager, writer, adult, and an old lady who seeks for Atonement. She modifies her behaviors with each identity that she has. As a teenager, she is ambitious to be known, controlling others' lives as a writer and as atoning seeker as an old lady. Based on Erikson's identity theory, several stages can be observed within Briony's character. The second form of denial that can be observed in Briony's character is that she does not act as a thirteen years old girl. Without being aware, she denies her teenage identity and behaves as an adult who has control over the circumstances around her. This denial causes identity crisis and role confusion mentioned in Erikson's psychosocial development theory. Goleman et al defines denial as “a ubiquitous social and psychological phenomenon” (Goleman et al, 1985, p. 4). Briony's role confusion at this stage of her life is a result of the failures of her early childhood; due to the lack of parental attention a feeling of mistrust and confusion grew in Briony's character. During her teenage years, Briony is at the level of mental and physical development. During the adolescent stage, Briony faces the dilemma of identifying herself within society and her surroundings; she tries to behave like an adult to get appreciation. Masoumi (2014) notes that “the character of Briony confuses the readers, sometimes she shows herself as a teenage girl whose life journey has not started yet and in other times she appears as a grown-up lady who knows her goals in life” (Masoumi, 2014, p. 18). McEwan provides the readers with two versions of Briony which are childhood and maturity. By creating this stage, McEwan validates Erikson's fifth stage of psychosocial identity development which is identity vs. role confusion where individuals experience internal and external struggles including physical and emotional changes. Briony fails to establish an identity for herself and therefore, she starts to have role confusion. Briony's cousins accompany her at home, who is the same age, but she finds them foolish and immature. She sees the world through different lenses. Thus, interpersonal dimensions appear as role confusion and ego identity. She faces identity confusion and tries to find her status in society. She is not sure about the people around her, and her thoughts are not clear. Therefore, she finds

difficulty to cope and faces an interpersonal dilemma. Filimonova observes that ‘‘from her childhood, Briony uses imagination in order to analyze the facts around her and since she is grown up in an adult family, she tends to behave like them’’ (Filimonova, 2014, p. 21).

Briony locks herself in fantasies regarding her future and those around her. She attempts to find an identity as a famous writer through writing several short stories. She is dissolving in an imaginary realm and wants to impose order as she does in her writings. Filimonova outlines that ‘‘failing to distinguish between reality and fiction as well as her naïve childhood imagination led Briony to dilemmas and struggles (20). Kutalkova adds that ‘‘Briony coalited herself with the events in children's stories leads her to misinterpret real life, thus she is not successful in distinguishing the imaginary world from the reality’’ (Kutalkova, 20). Briony wants to achieve ego identity through writing short stories. ‘‘adolescents face complexity in achieving ego identity. However, it must be obtained in order to have healthy personality’’ (Fleming, 2004, p.13). She enjoys writing short stories and creating fictional characters that seduce her ego. Briony is passionate about writing; *The Trails of Arabella*, which she writes to perform for her brother. She writes her story about a foolish affair which indicates that imagination itself is the source of secrets. Her mother and other family members encourage her desire for writing, ironically her writings become a groundwork for the main disaster. Her instinct of storytelling cannot be held back by anyone. She is characterized by obsession with orders, love for writing, and desire for secrets.

McEwan describes Briony’s desire for order in the following words, ‘‘Briony spent two days with organizing her drama. She was missing breakfast and lunches in order to organize tickets, posters, and programs for the performance of her play’’ (McEwan, 2001, p.1). Moreover, Briony is fond of writing and uses real events or characters in her life to portray a more vivid and real image of life. She considers each moment of writing as precious and finds her identity in that imaginary life that she creates within her stories, ‘‘she could design the world in a few pages, writings were a pleasure to her as she has the power to control and design whatever comes to her mind. Each event was significant to her as it allowed her to build stories’’(7). Positive and negative emotions emerge as an individual gets old. In Briony's case, her superego punishes her ego and cannot stop feeling guilty for ruining the life of Cecilia and Robbie. she fails to tell the truth to Cecilia and Robbie; she blames herself for their separation

and their death without reuniting with other again, “Briony’s story was no longer about a prince, castle, or a happy fairy tale. Instead, the story shifted to the tragedy of ordinary people around her. It was about her power over the flaw of her actions and the wrong way of using her power to get everything completely wrong” (McEwan, 2001, p.67).

Nevertheless, she attempts to render her regret to wisdom and fill her psychological needs through writing happy endings for them. She experiences confusion about what she did in the past but never considers herself as a liar, “Briony did not acted out of malice and she did not intend to mislead the events. For a moment the realities were apparent, how strange!” (229). However, whenever Briony sees Marshal and Lola, she realizes the terrible mistake that she committed, she states, “ something heavy was laying on my heart whenever I saw Lola and Marshal together. I was trying to avoid that feeling but I was feeling it” (243). In this regard, Svandova notes that “They were all partners in crimes for reaching their desires. Three persons Briony, Lola, and Paul Marshal were partners in the crime. Paul committed the raping crime, Lola hid the rapist, and Briony lied and accused an innocent man to reach her desires” (Svandova, 2012, p.12). After ruining Robbie's life, Briony looks for forgiveness and Atonement of her guilt. She does this by becoming a nurse and writing a novel; Briony's decision of becoming a nurse is a way to atone for her sins Briony's identity is no longer a thirteen-year innocent girl but a nurse Tallis adult who seeks forgiveness. Briony wants to form a new identity after realizing the damage that she has done. She enters into generativity vs. Stagnation stage of Erikson's theory as she isolates herself from her family and wants to dedicate her entire life to serving people. In Erikson’s perspective, at this stage, individuals become more engaged with their community and make efforts to be productive. Briony want to make good deeds and to help people through her career. She treats injured soldiers from war, hoping to meet Robbie one day. Briony shows generosity to soldiers, because she sees in every wounded soldier Robbie. She makes conversations with them and tries to heal their internal and external wounds, “ a man who was about to die, once asked Briony to sit with him. He asked her if she loves him; she hesitated but agreed to pretend the role of his fiancée. He was a lonely and a lovely boy who had no family” (210). Briony believes that she can get sublimation by working hard and helping wounded soldiers. She dedicates her life to remove unpleasant memories that became like nightmares for her. However, she cannot get over her guilt, “ Briony’s crime was so big that no amount of humility or skydiving nursing would

illuminate her guilt. She was not in a position to be forgiven” (McEwan, 2001, p.192). McEwan portrays Briony in the late stages of her life where she reaches the Eighth stage associated with Erikson's theory which is Integrity vs. despair where people look back at their lives with a sense of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Individuals might feel peace if they have had a proud life or may have regrets if things did not go right. Briony looks back at her life with regret and guilt because Cecilia and Robbie could not have a happy ending as she planned earlier. However, she gives them a happy ending in the novel, “in the last version of my story, my lovers, Cecilia and Robbie will meet in the pavements of South London; they will stare at each other, then I will walk away” (251). Filimonova notes that “Briony might feel a little bit released from the guilt emotions if she provides happy endings for Cecilia and Robbie” (Filimonova, 2014, p.15). Briony is in a despair stage because of the wrong decisions that she has done in her life.

Cecilia is another character who is trapped in identity confusion. After returning from Cambridge, Cecilia is annoyed to do the same routines at home; “Cecilia was almost desperate to have a fine day at home after returning from Cambridge, it made her impatient” (McEwan, 2001, p.15). She calls her family “the family” as the first step of separating herself and creating her voice. Cecilia longs to have intellectual challenges and personal entertainment. Thus, she does not appreciate her new identity of being stuck at home. She wants her life far from home, but she cannot leave her family behind. She faces intense struggle between leaving and staying. Hence Briony Tallis introduces Cecilia in a state of indecisiveness: “Cecilia was not able to stay at home and she did not make any choices” (19).

None of Cecilia's choices is encouraged by her family or society. She dissolves into nothingness due to her disability to dialogize her female identity and accept her ambivalence. Staying or leaving her family will limit her prospects. entirely removing her from her “feminine” responsibilities, all her possibilities of leaving are “equally unpressing, Cecilia's ambivalence is not provided for in either staying or leaving” (21).

Cecilia's mother and father have different point of views of Cecilia. Despite his authority's ideas on feminism, her father has no objection to Cecilia's higher education. Contrary, her mother stands against the idea and finds women's higher education useless. Emily fears Cecilia's ambivalence and Briony growing up, “no one cared if Cecilia left,

no one was able to hold Cecilia'' (17). Upon her return home, Cecilia has a double identity; she is stuck between the old and new selves. She is confused about what version she should identify to get appreciation, especially from her mother. She is caught between her feelings and tries to find a way to escape. Cecilia acquired a new language and behaviors during her staying at Girton college. Cecilia's mother, Emily is not satisfied with the new Cecilia; she refuses to appreciate her when she uses new vocabulary and behaves differently.

Cecilia identifies her character as an educated female who attended Cambridge University. But her mother devalues her daughter believing that she is pretending. "the cozy jargon of Cecilia's Cambridge – the Halls, the Maids' Dancing, the Little-Go" (46). Emily rejects the new Cecilia and denies giving worth to her college days. Cecilia's use of new vocabularies indicates the species social groups that she used to socialize with during her days in university. Emily considers Cecilia's language as inappropriate and contrary to her expectations; in her belief, Cecilia's languages is not suitable to mix with people. she blames her lectures; in Emily's belief, "Cecilia's teachers should give her essential information about the concept of femininity instead of using a useless language"(46). Moreover, Emily classifies Cecilia among arrogant women who have no value for their communities; she has no appreciation for Cecilia's higher education and considers it as inappropriate. Emily asserts that those women who study at universities should not be taken seriously. She shows her posits by describing it as "childish really, at best an innocent lark, like the girls' rowing eight, a little posturing alongside their brothers dressed up in the solemnity of social progress" (46). She does not see any equality between men and women. Cecilia is drawn into motherly identity when she compensates for their mother's absence in Briony's life. "her mother had always lived in an invalid's shadowland, Briony had always required mothering from her older sister, and Leon had always floated free" (70). Despite the distance with her family, she keeps her relationship strong with her family. Her "feminine duties provide Cecilia with a sense of happy satisfaction and purpose: "addressing Briony's problems with kind words and caresses would have restored a sense of control" (32). Despite all the differences, Cecilia remains loyal to her family, as stated in the novel "the new cannot replace the old, and the new version cannot break Cecilia's connection with her family" (102).

Another central character in the novel is Robbie Turner whose background deprives him from reaching his dreams. His efforts to become a doctor can be interpreted as trying to gain what society has denied. He tries to find his identity through becoming a doctor, and his low class status in the community does not have rights for his choices. Moreover, Robbie's choices are limited and controlled by external forces; a university professor chooses even his university study. Thus, he intends to form his identity by himself. He wants to choose a field that he can be productive in and to assert his role in the society. This stage of Robbie's life labeled to Erikson's Generativity vs. stagnation; Robbie wants to be recognized and identified through her career role as a doctor. However, he fails to achieve this goal due to Briony's accusation and spending the rest of his life in jail and war. Robbie as the son of Tallis family worker, is considered inferior to Tallis children, Ian Fraser, in his paper "Class Experience in McEwan's *Atonement* sums it up, "employed as a cleaner after Robbie's father left when he was six" (Fraser, 2013, p. 470). However, Robbie has a material security since Mr. Tallis pays Robbie's education and goes to Cambridge with Cecilia; he is close to upper class people, Fraser implies that "Robbie's closeness with the children of Tallis family allows him to get more absorption into the bourgeois class rather than his middle class life. He almost forgets about his social class and develops the desire to be treated like them" (466). Robbie sees the Tallis children as his siblings except for Cecilia who falls in love with her. Cecilia represents love, wealth, and comfort for Robbie. Cecilia presents beauty and wealth to Robbie. On contrary, Robbie resembles conflict, uncertainty, and the new world order. Robbie is aware of the ideological structure of the society and hence he tries to reject the monological claims on his identity and value. As a student of literature at Cambridge University, Robbie develops skepticism towards individualism and identity subjects, as Finney notes about Robbie that he "absorbed the ideology of his lecturer Frank Raymond Leavis (1895-1978) who taught English literature at Cambridge University from 1927 until 1962" (Finney, 2004, p.73).

In Briony's narration about Robbie, she emphasized how Robbie used to criticize those who attempt to propagate the authoritative words of their ideological monologue. She narrates,

Despite his first, the study of English literature seemed in retrospect an absorbing parlor game, and reading books and having opinions about them, the desirable adjunct to a civilized existence. But it was not the core, whatever Dr Leavis said in his lectures. It was not the necessary priesthood, nor the most vital pursuit of an enquiring mind, nor the first and last

defense against a barbarian horde, any more than the study of painting or music, history or science (McEwan, 2001, p.63).

Briony implies that the imposed manners by society and culture lead to Robbie's critical distance; Robbie is not even interested in the field of English literature that he study's it in college because it was not his choice but has been imposed on him. Möller argues that "Robbie's dismissal of English literature is partly because that it was not his own choice to pursue this field of study" (78), Briony states about Robbie: "at various talks in his final year Robbie had heard a psychoanalyst, a Communist trade union official and a physicist each declare for his field as passionately, as convincingly, as Leavis had for his own" (91).

Moreover, Robbie's wishes and identity are denied. Robbie's career, love, fatherhood, and life are all taken by Briony's accusation of raping Lola. Briony draws his destiny and puts him in jail then becoming a soldier. Robbie's subjectivity and identity is ruined when they send him to prison, his physical and mental tiredness push him into a bad situation or oblivion, "a long steady oceanic swell of exhaustion began to push him under" (McEwan, 2001, p.179). During the war, Robbie's subjectivity changes to basic physical survival. "Briony Tallis modifies the hexameter to symbolize the dissolution of Robbie's consciousness: "he walked across the land until he fell in the ocean" (179). The wording of the hexameter has changed (from came to fell, from sea to ocean) and implies the end of conscious and linear forward movement. Analyzing Cecilia and Robbie's identities in the lens of Erikson's theory, during their love relationship, they are at the sixth stage of human cycle which is intimacy vs. isolation. This stage happened at the early adulthood or when individuals fall in love and become aware of their sexual needs. Cecilia and Robbie are aware of their sexual attraction but feel uncomfortable due to their shared past. When Cecilia and Robbie develop feelings towards each other, they know their former identities of being treated like sister and brother or friends, "Cecilia the daughter of Jack Talis and Robbie the son of Ernest Turner are university partners, childhood friends. They shared tranquil joy and struggled the momentous change they have got. The closeness of a familiar face was not ludicrous; it was wondrous" (95). Thus, accepting the new identity as lovers is not easy to be accepted by themselves. The state of individual subjectivity prevents them from exploring new possibilities for their relationship. The Library is a turning point for their new identities. Cecilia and Robbie put their history, social class, and expectations

outside the library and form the identity of lovers, “their faces and identities become indistinct and unreadable” (16). The darkness of the library dissolves factors that prevent them from being together; they discover their new identity between the books and share an intimate moment before being interrupted by Briony. Briony describes the scene of the library in the following words

Their heads rolled and turned against one another as their kissing became a gnawing. She bit him on the cheek, not quite playfully. He pulled away, then moved back and she bit him hard on his lower lip. He kissed her throat, forcing back her head against the shelves, she pulled his hair and pushed his face down against her breast (93).

Cecilia paves the way for their rebirth into the dialogical individual subjectivity. They can approach each other without any social constraints. They forget their pasts and they dissolve into each other. In the library, they create an imaginary life for themselves without giving a thought of their past, present, future, or those people who might resist their relationship. As a result, Cecilia and Robbie's subjectivities are entirely deconstructed. Outside of time and place, Cecilia and Robbie are unconscious of themselves and only respond to the sensation of instinctive existence. They are not embarrassed of their former selves as they used to be, “embracing all their past identities which thus do no longer provoke a feeling of embarrassment; instead, they feel tranquil” (94). By exploring each other, they rewrite their identity without considering their former background. They experience both syntonic and dystonic side of intimacy vs. isolation cycle. The syntonic side is when they encounter intimate moments together and explore more about each other. On the other hand, the dystonic side starts with Briony's accusation of Robbie. They experience isolation from each other and develop feeling of grief, loneliness, and insecurities. In the real version they never get back together as their condition and death falls them apart.

Lola is another character who denies her teenage identity and wants to be seen as an adult; she has a unique character and trend to development and maturing. She acquires the adult world through her mother's behaviors, yet she has two identity sides childish and grown upside. Lola refers to her younger brothers as the children when states, “I do not want the children to know” (9). There are other moments when she is childish. Lola's identity confusion can be associated with Erikson's sixth stage of adolescence when the teenage faces confusion and wants to be associated with the adult world through love or romance. Her actions can be analyzed in terms of childhood traumas children face when they grow up in an unhealthy environment. These three

children are said to be coming from a completely broken family, a “bitter domestic civil war” (8). According to Erikson’s human cycle of identity formation, as a child, Lola does not complete the early stages successfully due to her parents’ divorce and the internal struggles that she had gone through. She did not gain enough trust of herself and her surroundings. When being raped by Marshall, Lola enters the adult world and persuades herself to love and marry. She stays silent to Briony's false accusation of Robbie. She tries to find her identity throughout becoming Marsha's wife. Briony states “Lola was required only to remain silent about the truth, banish it and forget it entirely, and persuade herself not of some contrary tale, but simply of her uncertainty” (116). By marrying Paul, Lola “saved herself from humiliation by falling in love, or persuading herself she had” (220). Neither she lives her childhood or lives her maturity correctly. She has fears of losing those who belong to her. Marrying her rapist is a sign of facing an entire psychological issue and a rational answer to her parent's divorce. The act of marriage between Lola and Paul prevents Briony from legally setting things right and constitutes a bitter feature of their future together. While Paul and Lola are alive, Briony does not publish her book and waits till their death, which in turn puts the whole story into a contradictory state.

The identity of the author is another crisis of the novel. The novel is narrated from a third-person, but revealing that Briony is the novel's author is not expected. The revelation of the author's identity of *Atonement* astonishes the readers; what the readers thought to be true gets questionable and not reliable. McEwan shifts the onus onto the reader with the ending's revelation. The readers are in the position to judge the narrator as Briony’s confession distorts the reader’s comprehension of the whole narrative. Readers are in a state of irresolution and have to reconsider the events in a new light. The readers are left with no ability to reconcile the various versions they presented. As noted by Wells, *Atonement* and *Saturday* “involve sophisticated narrative techniques that raise questions about the novel's overall moral stance” (40). Briony aims to reveal her identity and the purpose of writing the book to sublimate for the crime that she submitted against Robbie.

As the writer of the book, Briony's attempt might be to persuade the readers to sympathize with her guilt and forgive her for the amount of damage she caused. Through a virtual reconstruction of Cecelia and Robbie’s existence together, Briony completes the readers long-awaited redemption. The process of recalling is a reflection of Briony’s

resistance, despair, and struggle in contemporary subjects. Briony cherishes memory, her stories give the readers illuminations that the past events can be interpreted in new ways despite of their flexibility. These various form of interpretations form a sort of dialogue and consolations between the past experiences and the visions that future holds. McEwan outlines that writing and language are one of the basic functions of individual's self-criticism and will preserve the harmony between the individuals and himself or others in the world. As Todorov maintains "literature is a discourse about human existence that leads to truth and morality" (Todorov,1984, p. 188). McEwan tells the readers though possessing the truth is not easy but they should not stop to pursuit the truth.

Briony writes her last statement with the wish to reunite the lovers together and have a happy ending together, she writes "I will make Robbie and Cecilia to sit by each other's side in the library reading *The Trials of Arabella*. I will invite them to my birthday celebration. I will make all of these if I had had power but as I don't I must sleep now" (McEwan, 2001, p.252). In the book's last section, the readers learn that Briony is suffering from vascular dementia, where she will lose her memory. McEwan mentions that Briony's memory loss may free her feelings of guilt as she never gets the forgiveness of Cecilia and Robbie. Briony says at the end of the novel:

The problem of these fifty-nine years has been this: how can a novelist achieve atonement when, with her absolute power of deciding outcomes, she is also God? There is no one, no entity, or higher form that she can appeal to, or be reconciled with, or forgive her. There is nothing outside her. In her imagination, she has set limits and terms. No atonement for God, or novelists, even if they are atheists. It was always an impossible task, and that was precisely the point. The attempt was all (252).

However, after writing the novel, Briony gets infected with vascular dementia, where she loses her memory and identity once again. This disease terrifies Briony as she loses her capacity for writing and remembering. Here, McEwan portrays an alternative perspective. Implies that forgetting will grant Briony the chance to find tranquility and releases her from the amount of guilt that she experienced in her life. He shows that this disease with the ability that it has in erasing memory, might offer some respite to Briony due to the amount of tragedy that she caused in the novel.

Everything that Briony cherishes her ability to create stories and to remember will be taken away with vascular dementia which is a tragic irony form. This act could be interpreted as a sort of punishment that McEwan imposes on Briony, he takes

everything from his main character Briony similar to Briony's punishment of Robbie and ruining the flow of their lives. McEwan shows his authority and makes a line between reality and fiction. He takes the authority from Briony and she loses the capacity to put things in order once again. At the end of the story, readers are left with confusion and things remain unclear to comprehend. McEwan seems to be interested in the deeper truths that are not clear. Briony states "How could that constitute an ending? What sense of hope or satisfaction could a reader draw from such an account? Who would want to believe that they never met again, never fulfilled their love?" (251). The story's ending remains intriguing and refuses to grant the readers a satisfying closure as Robbie and Cecilia could construct a happy ending for their story. This approach aligns with postmodern elements where writers engage their readers to draw their interpretations depending on their individual experiences. Thus, readers are allowed to interpret in the way that satisfies them and draw their closure.

3. NEVER LET ME GO

3.1. Never Let Me Go

Never Let Me Go is considered as one of the well-known novel written in 2005 by the Japanese- English novelist Kazuo Ishiguro. Ishiguro was born in Nagasaki, Japan in 1954 and came to Britain with his parents at five. Ishiguro wrote six novels: *A Pale View of Hills*, *The Remains of the Day*, *An Artist of the Floating World*, *When we were Orphans*, *Never Let Me Go*, *Nocturnes*, and *The Unconsoled*. He is the Booker Prize winner for his novel *The Remains of the Day* 1989. In his novels, Ishiguro never explicitly states the condition of life but leaves the interpretation for the readers to depict the message. Ishiguro is well-known for his power to capture the endless layers of the human condition realistically. He writes about life, memory and raises questions about human identity.

The events of *Never Let Me Go* occurred in alternative England in 1990. In the novel, the mass-produced human clones provide organs for actual human beings to keep them alive for longer. Ordinary people can extend their living period by using the organs of the clones, while the clones do not have the chance to live more than the period that humans settled for them. Ishiguro presents a dystopian community that focuses on self-expression and an individual's identity. The novel portrays a group called clones who reside in Hailsham School. These children are disconnected from the external world, often forgetting their present and losing their future. Kathy, Ruth, and Tommy are the novel's main characters who seek their identities from the beginning of the novel till the end. They are labeled as mere copies and stripped of their identity. These cloning humans are socially acceptable for donating their organs to real people. Students of this school are considered fortunate to be raised in Hailsham; they cannot leave the place and watch by guardians. In the alternate society of *Never Let Me Go*, the social scheme between ordinary people and the clone children is portrayed through three different societal customs including, childhood normalization, deluded fantasy, and minimum humanity.

During childhood normalization, the abusive treatment of the clones becomes accepted by the clones and the society around them. In Deluded Fantasy, society denies

the clone's fate through illusions that give false hope. At the same time, minimum humanity can be described as the conscious justification to use the Hailsham children to donate their organs for humans. Regarding this concept, Mills observes that ‘Normalization, delusion, and limited humanity facilitate the Racial Contract and its requirement of "a certain schedule of structured blindness and opacities in order to establish and maintain the white polity’’ (Mills,1997, p. 19). Childhood normalization allows instills the acceptance of children being segregated from the rest of society. The children practically understand their task without understanding it emotionally. As Kathy narrates, ‘we were aware that we were not similar to the people outside and our guardians. We also realized that there are donation programs that we must go through. However, we did not comprehend it completely’’(Ishiguro, 2005, p.69). They exploit the children by instilling a sense of pride if they can go through a multiple of organ donations, and highly appreciate donors who can survive multiple donations. In this novel, Ishiguro applies the first-person narrative technique through Kathy’s character to portray the complicated issues that exist in this work. Concerning this narrative technique, the researcher demonstrates various points of view. Mark Jerng (2008) highlights that the lack of identity is an essential issue in Kathy’s character. Thus, the narrative tends to show Kathy’s identity as a clone. While in Robbins’s opinion, the narrative style is a social discourse of the clones in which it reveals a state of inhumanness and cruelty of the authority.

On the other hand, Keith Macdonald (2007) considers the novel to be Kathy’s autobiographical narrative to deploy the traumatic conditions in her life and to show the pain of living in a community governed by humanity's mercilessness. In an interview in 2005, Ishiguro notes that this narrative technique aims to allow the main character to express her fears and assert her predicament. He goes on to mention that Kathy’s narrative sources from her memories, which comes from her consolation. Further, through this masterpiece, Ishiguro paved the way for numerous debates on the subject of identity, the moral aspect of cloning, human rights, violation, and individualism. Thus, various interpretations of the text have been provoked; Matovic outlines, ‘critics analyze a diversity of aspects including trauma, lack of resistance, memory, and identity crisis’’ (Matović, 2017, p.5). Ishiguro presents self-identity as fragile and has the possibility of problems. In his view, Identity can be transformed if certain judgments are imposed on it.

Ishiguro reflects this idea in *Never Let Me Go* by analyzing what makes us human. He echoes the external view of humanity and provides the readers to identify the concepts of humanity. He does this by using the premise of clones presented as being copied from humans, and the extent of their humanity could be clearer. Due to Ishiguro's hybrid cultural background, Identity plays a central role in his works. The Hybrid identity gives Ishiguro an "opportunity to portray broader aspects of emotions, concerns, ethnicity, cultural bonds, class, and morality" (Groes & Lewis, 2011, p. 1). During an interview in 1989, Ishiguro noted that he is a mixture of both the Japanese and British cultural senses and he cannot tie himself to one of them. He describes his identity as a homogenous mixture and highlights that "in the future, there will be a wider variety of people who have mixed racial and cultural backgrounds" (Swift, 1989, p.36). Thus, he highlights this diversity aspect in his novels and leaves his characters beyond racial recognition.

Furthermore, in this novel, Ishiguro makes the readers question the concept of humanity and the world's justice. It forces the readers to reflect on their identity and creating a desire to face the injustice. The main character Kathy H. presents herself and her friends as victims of the atrocious establishment of alternative England. She reveals the terrifying truth of their destiny because of the donation programs and the cruelty of humanity. The clones resemble a distinct social class of people different from the rest of the human community. They present an artificial group of people with different destinies from normal humans. As Matovic notes, "Kathy's narration allows the readers to see the difference between human clones and normal people. She puts everything into a state of irresolution and avoids establishing a boundary between the clones and humans" (Matović, 2011, p. 42). The children are not allowed to leave Hailsham, while the guardians can return to their families and everyday lives after finishing their duties at the school. This distinction results in a considerable gap between clones and humans; the guardians have the right to choose, while the clones are not even allowed to think about having choices. They are unaware of their rights and the structures of normal society and fail to understand their simplest rights including social and economic structures. Failing to understand the structures of human society can be considered a focal reason behind clones' acceptance of what is already settled for them; they have no idea to rebel against the structures created for them.

Since the clones must provide healthy organs to humans, they are forbidden from the most straightforward rights. They are not allowed to smoke or do any harmful thing that puts their health at risk. Ishiguro ironically shows how the doctors care for the clone's health as parents do for their children. In contrast, the motive is to protect humans from taking unhealthy organs. The clone's life is like a business investment by the humans, treated like objects or goods. The clones are not given the choice of their life or even death. Kathy and her friends do not have the opportunity to refuse or ask for chances to extend their lives. They do not have the privilege to ask for it. Ishiguro does not mention the ethics behind this ritual in the novel, and it is considered the right of humans to do what benefits them without considering others' opinions. In addition, through the premise of clones, Ishiguro presents an external view of humanity and identifies the building blocks of human beings. These clones are products of humans, and their infertility differs from normal humans. The world of the clones has been institutionalized and organized since their birth. Ishiguro deepens the reader's minds and makes them question their identity. He also depicts the clones genuine and profound desire to connect themselves to the human institutions which created them and ironically at the same time the same human institutions are the reason of destroying and ostracizing the clones.

3.2. Denial of Existence & Copying Concept

Never Let Me Go presents a denial concept in several aspects. Denial of existence is one of the main aspects that negatively impact the life of the characters. Kathy, Tommy, Ruth, and all other Hailsham children are denied existence and are presented as ordinary people. Their creation aims to give life to everyday people by donating their vital organs to serve humans without considering their emotions and lives. Thus, they look for opportunities to live longer. Furthermore, Ishiguro depicts the role of society in shaping individuals' lives. In this novel, human clones are manipulated by the distinguished group, which is humans. The clones have no right to choose their fate and are denied their fundamental rights. Furthermore, many strategies are used by humans to control the clone's thinking and behaviors. As stated by Upstone: "the clones have no parents or family names, they are only provided with last initials. They are driven from past and future and their lives end in a fixed point" (Upstone, 2016, p. 78). In other

words, they are refused the fundamental aspects of human rights. Ishiguro focuses on 'the clones' instead of "regular people" and portrays the Hailsham children as ordinary people expressing their hopes, grieves, and dreams. However, they are not allowed to pursue their goals due to their early death.

Ishiguro portrays the concept of death in the main characters' lives. The notion of death plays an outstanding role. Ishiguro chooses some terms to refer to death, such as "completion" and "donor". These clones are taught to accept what humans have designed for them; they are not presented with choices or goals. Thus, the clones have no plans or escape or resist the system in Hailsham. They stay resigned to their fate and accept it without objection; the guardians highly organize their lives. The clones consider a donation as a natural act and a part of their duty that they were raised for, as Ruth states: "'during the time that I became a donor, I was already. It sounded good. After all, that is the purpose behind our creation, is not it?'" (Ishiguro, 2005, p.223). Death does not seem so surprising to the clones, and they are confident that after making the third or fourth donation, their lives will be completed as they pass away or fall into a comma. Therefore, donating their organs does not seem to be wired and appears as their only goal in life.

Hailsham can be compared to a prison where children's behaviors and actions are controlled. They are left without having the right to have their dreams, goals or even play outside the fences. As Kathy H mentioned, children are told scary stories about any child who thinks of leaving Hailsham or even crossing the school's fence; she narrates, "'one of the schoolboys asked a question. He asked about the reality of the fences around the school. He asked if they are electrified to avoid people going outside, and then another one showed the strangeness of being able to suicide whenever you want any time someone touches a fence'" (77). Children of Hailsham have no homes or parents of their own. Their teachers, who are called guardians, look after them. The clone status dictates the children's destiny as ordinary people. However, at an early age, they are unaware of how terrifying their lives are and what waits for them after leaving school.

Furthermore, In *Never Let Me Go*, there is no hint that Hailsham School is a part of the most superficial type of denial. It plays the role of interpretive denial; this term is defined by Stanley Cohen as "raw facts where something is not denied directly instead, they give different names or meaning from what appears to others" (Cohen, 2001, p.5).

At Hailsham, children are not fully acknowledged about their destiny. Instead, they are taught words such as donate, guardian, carer, and complete. This idea continues until the children end their time in Hailsham. Thus, Ms. Lucy, one of the guardians, hints at the truth about their future when she tells them;

The problem is that you have not been told about your real status in the world. You do not know things that I know. You might now but none of you comprehend the reality. I am afraid to say, but you cannot have or live as the other people outside. None of you will be actors, having desired career, and none of you will travel or go to America. Instead of doing these stuffs, when you grow up, you will donate your vital organs to save other people's lives and you will not have a life that belong to you. This is the purpose of your creation and your future is already there. Thus, do not make plans or goals as everything is settled. (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 38)

Miss Lucy speaks the truth unvarnished by circumlocution or lies. She acknowledges the facts in an explicit form. Stanley Cohen describes this type of speaking as a form of denial called "Implicatory" where the message is not conveyed directly. Miss Lucy believes that she leads the students to more self-awareness and avoids delusions of having dreams in the future. Hearing this statement terrifies the children and makes them see their proper place in the world as they realize that they are inferior to humans and are created as creatures to give longer lives to humans in order to serve human society. Yet, the children do not resist this fact and accept their fate. Further, Hailsham children are trapped in a deluded fantasy, a form of denial. The clones build hopeful delusion and false hope. The negative aspect of the donation is ignored, and the focus is on the privilege they gain as donors. The children are convinced that they are cultivating the life of humans and accept it without attempts to rebel. By creating these delusions, the clones deny the possibility of choosing a different path; as the novel mentions, "the rule is to not have open discussions about the donation programs" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 84). Kathy presents Madam and her guardians as having a sense of superiority. Despite the children's inferiority, there are times when the guardians are scared of the children. The moment Madam frightened at Hailsham can be considered proof of fear "Madame made us feel different, she made us feel like spiders because of her frightened looks when she saw us every time. She was afraid of us as if she witnessed something scary. She made us feel different" (36). Kathy goes on to further explain that moment by referring, "you can see Madam's reaction in her stiffen, she was acting as if a pair of spiders were attacking and crawling towards her" (243). Here Kathy refers to Tommy and herself as "what" and "who". Madam is a representation of society's eyes who want to have control over the events and use them for their benefit.

Moreover, Madam's fear can be likened to human resistance to the realities despite her superiority over the clones. Julia Kristeva adds to this notion when she observes, "what raises our fears from others is the frightening feeling of finding the otherness or strangeness within ourselves" (qtd in Kata, 2012, p. 420). Madam experiences the same feeling when she meets Kathy and Tommy during their adulthood. Madam does not feel guilt for marginalizing the clones and hiding the truth from them like the rest of the humans. She shows their superiority over the children and presents what they do as a favor when she states, "we created you and sheltered you at Hailsham. We provided the necessities of your childhood and we built your lives. If we did not offer you protection, you would not be here today" (263). Despite denying the clones to have normal lives, Madam asks to be appreciated for what they have done at Hailsham instead of feeling guilty. Gyuris Kata observes that "in *Never Let Me Go*, the idea of asking to be appreciated for the wrong doings is a representation of the humanity's shameful part where they hide it in the dark collective consent" (Kata, 2012, p. 420). Madam's statements raise questions about humanity's aspects and scientific progress's ethics. Humans cross ethical limits and want to design humans to serve their benefit. Ursula K. Heise observes "detractors highlighting the scenario of the dystopian world where they design humans provoke the possibility of manipulating human genetics in the most violent controversies. This will modify sociocultural prejudices into biological realities, this action will degrade the lives of humans to other commodities that can be produced at will" (Heise, 2004, p.144). This scientific progress is manipulative, and a human genetic manipulation is a terrifying act that humiliates humans' lives.

As a result of the denial of existence, the character ends up forming low and pitiful self-images. Their creation process is a fundamental factor that makes Hailsham children inferior to humans. The characters are copied and imitated by normal humans who must conform to the rules of Hailsham unquestionably. Since they are copied from humans, some clones want to imitate and behave like the people outside, just like the television programs they see. As Kathy states, "It's not what people do out there in normal life. It looks daft, the way you copy everything they do". These second-hand gestures and behaviors, akin to the second-hand copies of cassette tapes, toys, and objects they receive from the outside world, are mirrored by that flat, bland, apparently untroubled voice of Kathy" (Ishiguro, 2005. P.63). A critic of Ishiguro's narrative style, Frank Kermode, considers the novel as a "dear-diary prose that makes readers lose their

interest in the story due to the memetic style of Kathy. He believes that the concept of imitation acts as a central role in the novel due to Kathy's repetition of her friend's colloquialism and expressions. He outlines that

If human beings copy each other's behaviors and traits, they will miss the opportunity to find the self and draw their unique style in the world. The clones try to imitate human actions and behaviors. Therefore, the boundary between the clones and humans gets blurred; by doing so there will be no room for contesting (Kermode, 1967, p. 8).

Moreover, imitation is spotted in *Never Let Me Go* from the desperate efforts of human clones to act like natural humans. These clones are artificial humans who are created based on imitating normal humans. In addition, children are not only clones or copies of humans, but their existence is predicted by imitation. The clones have no choice but to conform to the rules of Hailsham unquestionably. Winnicottian is a well-known theorist in the copying field, who districts between the actual and false self. In his theory, the authentic self-sources from illusion or experience provided by the good enough mother, while the false is based on the failures that result from the precocious use of the mind. He observes that 'one's self starts to create a false version of itself and becomes a dominant figure if they continue with imitating others' (1960, p. 147).

Moreover, Imitation makes individuals become like the "other" where they borrow the other's characteristics, traits, and manners. Freud suggests that their identifications, whether consciously or unconsciously, led to building blocks of an individual's identity where they form the ego's character as identification modifies the ego. Its nature is altered by withdrawing or absorbing the "other" into itself. Take the clones as an example of this concept; they attempt to borrow the traits or manners of humans to build their own-self. Nevertheless, Kathy is again the copying concept; she expresses her feelings towards the imitation concept in the following words: "the clones must stop imitating humans and to try to be their own identification, they must create something new that belong to them because the copying is not enough" (Ishiguro, 2005, p.57).

The clones are in instant searches for their origins to discover the kind of life they would have if they were real. In the aspect of originality and selfhood, Kathy narrates, "the other children and I believed we can get a deep insight of ourselves if we saw the person we were copied of. We thought that we would get a clue of what our lives will be" (Ishiguro, 2005, p.95). They look for possibilities and want to get a glimpse of their identity and what their future will look like. Ruth's statement in this

regard proves their production process when she says, “we are nothing but models of trash. Do not go far to look for possibilities instead take a look in the rubbish bins or toilet. You can get an insight of yourself if you look there” (164). This awareness of imitation makes them worthless and inferior to other normal humans. In his essay (1989), Richard Rorty argues that individuals should be aware that taking others' traits or copying their personality is a debt that must be paid. Controversy, individuals should be creative in adding something of their own to make it original and fresh. He notes that “In this way, what we take in of someone – a song, a piece of writing, an analyst's words - needs to be absorbed and remodeled: we weld our theft of otherness, as it were, into the fabric of our subjectivity, in order to create a self that is valid on its terms” (Rorty, 2005, p.9).

Ishiguro needs to provide more information about the identity and origin of the clones and even makes the readers question human identity. Initially, Ishiguro presents the clones as humans who study, make friendships grow up, form relationships, gain experiences, and express emotions. However, readers realize that the characters are not natural and artificial. Thus, the clones experience self-alienation and isolation. In normal humans, identity is formed from elements that are adopted consciously or unconsciously. Riza analyzes the role of imitation in constructing one’s identity as:

“the process of borrowing the characteristics and mannerisms of others. Individuals become like others instead of focusing on their self-progression. In Freud’s perception, this process is identified as conscious and unconscious where the ego forms itself by identifying the ego of others, which will block the construction of self-identity” (Rizq, 2014, p. 528).

In Freud’s concept of identity, the ego is integral to the individual’s psyche. Humans can gain behaviors and personality traits from their peers or role models. In this regard, the novel’s characters often attempt to imitate actions they watch on television or behaviors of ordinary people to appear normal. During childhood, the clones gain knowledge of ordinary people through TV shows, magazines, and their guardians at school. Ishiguro’s purpose is to build a connection between the clones' abnormality and the human being's normality. On this particular matter, veteran’s imitation in the cottage, Kathy recounts, “ At the cottages, incidentally, I noted something about the veteran couples. I noted that there were not behaving like themselves. Instead, they adapted their behaviorism from what they saw on television” (Ishiguro, 2005, p.118). Not only do the veterans copy what they see on television, but Ruth and Tommy end up copying the veterans who also are imitating. The clones attempt to form their communal and personal

identity by imitating the structure of ordinary people. They tend to use the same gestures, ways of interaction, and language as they observe on television or with normal humans outside. They do not try to form something that belongs to them as they believe that will be more appreciated if they act like ordinary people outside.

The clones start to have eager to find the patterns they were created from to establish a solid identity that defines them. However, it seems impossible since they imitate what they see and are driven two times from reality; even the reality they see is fake. They imagine a false reality and are trapped in allusions. Since the clones are following and imitating something not absolute and artificial, they get a further distance to grasp reality and become part of it. At this point, the readers start to question the nature of reality that is presented in the novel. Furthermore, the novel highlights the hyperreal culture due to TV's impact on the evolution of the clone's lives. The clones fail to differentiate between illusion and reality. Loss of the real version is one of the characteristics of hyper-reality. The images and advertisements on TV influence the mind of the clones and lead them to blur the line between right and wrong. The clones are represented as the "other" who are inferior to normal humans. Staszak interprets otherness as "the control of a dominant group in a discursive process. They stigmatize a difference between the self and the other; this will lead to a motive for discrimination" (Staszak, 2008, p.2). Since they have not been raised as ordinary people, the clones appear to have complicated personalities. In other words, the clones do not get the same rights as other people acquire throughout their lifetimes, such as the unusual way of entering the world and the purpose behind their existence of serving normal humans. The reason behind individuals including social groups is that they crave acceptance and support from people's surrounding them. They start to evaluate themselves from the other's point of view and society's standards. In other words, sometimes group identification determines the individual's values. As Turner & Reynolds highlight that "individuals do not have stable personality or characteristics as they alter their individuality according to the social categorization and their comparison to others. Therefore, one's identity varies according to the changes that occurs in their social context" (Turner & Reynolds, 1987, p.409). Art is one of the aspects that create the individuality sense of the clones at Hailsham and appears as a unique identity for each person.

Ishiguro demonstrates that what makes life meaningful is the creation of one's identity through relationships and experiences that is acquired. Thus, suggest that artwork is not enough to present one's identity when Kathy and Tommy are denied to get the deferral. Moreover, Ishiguro warns the readers of the importance of holding to the precious moments and creating the meaning of the events or people that surround them. He stresses that self-identity is evolved through desires, life experiences, dreams, and goals. In *Never Let Me Go*, the clones have intense human identity regardless of their genetic transformation. Like the other utopia, through exploring human nature and examining human behaviors, Ishiguro focuses equally on the relationship between the clones and humans. They start to evaluate themselves from the other's point of view and society's standards.

3.3. Identity Crisis

Never Let Me Go is an intense novel filled with many emotional moments. It is the story of a full-blown up identity crisis. The novel's characters are desperate to understand the purpose of their existence and who they are. Ishiguro portrays a dim reflection of the novel's characters and presents an ambiguous form of their identity. He depicts them as copies of other human beings, turning their existing image shadowy and vague. Hailsham is the only place children have memories with and are connected. They attain a sense of identity through their artwork, treasured collections, and social structures. Kathy, Ruth, and Tommy incessantly search for their existence's purpose and their original human beings. Kathy narrates their story throughout her childhood memories and takes the readers to the moment of the events. The students are the production of humans and technology. Thus, they have no families or blood ties; the guardians of the school take the role of their families. The students undergo three stages of growing up; in each stage, they are attached to something that identifies their identities. During their school days, their identities are tied to a place called Hailsham School. Hailsham appears as a part of the Children's identity; it plays a considerable role in Kathy's memories, and most events are linked to it. They are identified as Hailsham kids who are made to give normal humans longer lives. Thus, their identities are attached to a place. Lappégard Hauge analyzes place-identity as "a concept of self where individuals make incorporation to a place where they have feelings, memories,

interpretations, and conceptions towards a physical setting” (Hauge, 2007, p.5). Kathy’s strong emotional attachment to Hailsham appears in her reaction regarding the closing of Hailsham when she mentions that “It was that exchange when we finally mentioned the closing of Hailsham that suddenly brought us to close again, and we hugged, quite spontaneously, not so much to comfort one another, but as a way of affirming Hailsham, the fact that it was still there in both our memories” (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 142). Since Hailsham no longer exists as a boarding school for clones, she is concerned about the important role of Hailsham as a part of identity for Kathy and other donors and carers. She expresses her concern by observing,

“I mean the clones, all my friends who’d grown up with me will spread in different countries to become donors or carers. We will be separated by we will always stay linked to our place Hailsham” (142). Kathy’s strong confirmation regarding her bond to Hailsham demonstrates her presence and sense of identity. She attempts to be seen and heard throughout reconstructing stories; she aims to prove that she has a place she belongs. She intentionally repeats expressions and addresses of Hailsham. Kathy recalls fragmented parts of the past as she tries to give a meaning to her past life and to make others or readers feel her presence. With giving meaning to her past, she confirms her solid identity to the readers. The children’s purpose is to form identities that belong to their individuality and to be recognized within the social structures. Nevertheless, since a healthy environment does not surround them, establishing healthy identities does not seem to be an easy task.

Hailsham's social environment affects the clones' psychology and leaves various impacts on their individuality. To delve deeper into the social context of identity formation, Social psychology focuses on sociocultural aspects instead of hereditary or biological components. It aims to comprehend how psychosocial norms, such as people’s opinions or society, affect an individual’s goals, feelings, and beliefs. George Herbert Mead addresses that “the interest of social psychology lays in the effect of social groups on individual members and is determined to the individuals experiences” (Mead, 1934, p.1). Thus, a healthy society produces normal humans and properly designs their individuality. Sometimes a misconstrued idea evokes since identity depends on social circumstances. The idea is whether the individuals are responsible for creating themselves or the stereotypical characteristics that are shared with the community. According to Verkutyan, “identity forms as a result of one’s interaction with others; it

is not assertion made by themselves or assignments imposed by others” (Verkuyten, 2004, p. 18). Thus, Hailsham plays a central role in forming the identities of the clones.

Kathy narrates the events from childhood memories that she has. Sigmund Freud discusses the nature of childhood memories and their impact on an adult’s life. In *Work Screen Memories*, Freud notes that there is a paradox of impressions that influences individuals by stating that “ sometimes the outcome comes in the form of a small number of isolated recollections in which they are in enigmatic or dubious importance or its nothing at all. The childhood memories are highly controversial, and individuals might get surprised to find out that the childhood memories are indifferent” (Ishiguro, 2005, p.202). In Kathy’s narration, the aspect of childhood memories is highlighted. She recollects her memories by giving details, including the most trivial of them—she insights into childish arguments, games, and duties that she was responsible for.

Freud discusses two explanations for adults’ selection of specific childhood memories and recalling them. He observes that “ there is a direct connection between a significant physical experience and its retention in memory. The mind recollects what it feels important and forgets whatever is judged to be inessential” (Freud, 1961, p.202). When an individual remembers a childhood memory and recall, it is apparent that it impacts them. Thus, he recalls it during his adulthood; this notion is the same for Kathy. She is trapped in childhood memories that influenced her and other students’ lives. Freud underlined the deceitful essence of memories, which do not precisely evolve but are instead formed later in life, he mentions that “when the memories are aroused, the memories of childhood do not show the memories of the earliest years; instead they show themselves as appeared in the later periods. During this arousal period, historical accuracy and motives result in emerging memory” (209). What influences memories is personal motives; in Kathy’s condition, the motif behind recalling these memories is to seem normal and to express her emotions regarding the accidents that took place in her childhood. She is nostalgic even for people she disliked; an example is her memories of Madam, the unfriendly and rude woman who used to visit Hailsham; Kathy states, “ It’s strange how Madam now looks more intimate to me. She feels more familiar than someone that I already knew. However, we were like hostile strangers over the years” (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 169). Anything that reminds Kathy of Hailsham and her childhood when she was unaware of her future appears precious to her. She believes in creating new memories instead of focusing of what has been lost. For instance, Kathy ends her

search for her missing cassette tape while she visits Norfolk with Ruth and Tommy. Ruth is determined to find her original parent during Norfolk's visit, and Ruth's obsession with that tape grips Tommy. However, Kathy realizes that the tape itself is not essential when she notes " I was delighted to have the tape that you can repeat songs on. Its nostalgic when I contemplate it in Norfolk afternoons, the memories take me back to the Hailsham days" (89). The tape's meaning differs for Tommy; in his belief, finding the original version allows him to sustain a fantasy of recovering the original lost object. While in Kathy's view, the importance of the tape lies in the power of memories and feelings that come within it, even if it is copied. Thus, she considers the tape valuable regardless of the originality of the tape, whether it is the actual one she lost in Hailsham or a copy of it. In Kathy's opinion, the value of the objects lies in how it's used creatively; what matters is her narrative and the memories she creates. Thus, In Kathy's opinion, one's memory is more meaningful and more durable than the events on which the copy is based. Thus, she has a different point of view from one of the donors she takes care of as he states that "Memories, even your most precious ones, fade surprisingly quickly. But I do not go along with that. The memories I value most; I do not ever see them fading. I lost Ruth and Tommy, but I will not lose my memories of them" (p. 262). At this point, Ishiguro, portrays Kathy as someone who tries to learn life lessons from the experiences that she has gone through.

Another element that shapes the identity of the Hailsham characters is their art abilities. Art is the main structure defining the character's abilities to be productive and valuable. In return, succeeding in artwork gives them self-identity and self-worth. This notion presents that humans often try to create self-images through means of creation in other aspects of their lives. Regarding the creativity in making art in Hailsham, John Mullan observes that "so deep these expectations rooted that the students' failures to be explicitly appalled by their fate is something felt as an offense against realism" (Mullan, 105). Therefore, Hailsham students want to progress their talents in artistic works to have their art pieces and be recognized as worthy individuals. Despite being aware of their existence's purpose, the children are looking for gaps to fill to give meaning to their limited period of life. They want to form their identities and gain respect through their abilities to make meaningful pieces and small collections. Kathy states that "regarded at Hailsham, how much you were liked and respected, had to do with how

good you were at creating” (16). They find value in their creativity, whether poetry or paintings.

Furthermore, Students of Hailsham diligently seek to create their pieces for the gallery to establish their individuality and to feel they exist. The students gain appreciation depending on their creativity to be productive in making new items. Tommy constantly struggles as he is not talented enough to create artistic items. He struggles to produce adequate artworks, which results in teasing by his friends. This period of Tommy’s life is labeled with Erikson’s fourth stage of the human cycle, Industry vs. inferiority. During this stage, children learn and master new skills and show their talent to take pride in their work. They try to be successful and achieve accomplishments in order to make others proud of them. Failing to be skillful at this stage develops feelings of inferiority and inadequacy. Tommy fails to be talented in artwork, and his failed attempts to create successful artworks resulted in his isolation and lack of self-confidence. This experience impacts Tommy’s character, and feels inferior for the rest of his life.

Students are recognized and appreciated through their work; they are presented as humans capable of doing valuable things for society. In some conditions where the characters make unique art designs, the guardians compare their abilities to normal humans; as Mrs. Emily outlines, “That was why we collected your art. We selected the best of it and put on special exhibitions. ‘There, look!’, we could say, ‘Look at this art! How dare you claim these children are any less than fully human?’” (175). Miss Emily considers poetry, pictures, or other art stuff like a mirror that represents the children's soul. Therefore, the students find reassurance in their existence by creating personal items that portray pieces of themselves. Kathy recalls this by saying, “maybe we all had little secrets like those little private nooks created out of thin air where we could go off along with our fears and longings” (54). The students are unaware of their existence’s purpose and place at Hailsham. They know the difference between the guardians and themselves but are eager to discover what it is. The distance Madam, the gallery’s Curator, has from students led students to curiosity. Their plan to test Madam’s reaction to their existence in the gallery turns into fear when Madam reacts with horror; Kathy explains her feelings by saying, “The first time you glimpse yourself through the eyes of a person like that, it is a cold moment” (29). After this event, Kathy and other students doubted Everything that seemed concrete. They realize how distinct they are from other

people in the world; Kathy describes this fear as “it’s like walking past a mirror you have walked past every day of your life, and suddenly it shows you something else, something troubling and strange” (36). Kathy’s reaction shows the struggle for self-acceptance and the truths they might face. The student’s excitement for experimenting shifts into fear of discovering something new and redesigning themselves, terrified of their identity’s reality. They know that they are “different from the normal people outside; we perhaps even knew that a long way down the line donations were waiting for us. But we did not know what that meant” (69). However, the students know that they must donate their vital organs when they grow up, but they keep looking at something that makes sense to them. Ishiguro’s use of “completion” is a euphemism for death, and students are often confronted with the reality that by completing their task of donation, their fate will eventually end. After graduation from Hailsham, students can live in cottages to be prepared for the donation process even though they do not feel normal and do not try to escape. They are mentally have been grown up in Hailsham environment that nurtured the acceptance of passivity and naturalized their fate. To support this interpretation, Staszak explains that “Ishiguro treats the clones as the latter. However, their appearance is similar to normal humans, yet they are completely considered as different species. This distinction justifies discrimination about the clones by stigmatizing a difference” (Staszak, 2008, p.2)

After realizing their place in the world, Kathy and her friends want to find or establish a self-attached to themselves. Kathy wants to find her individuality and have an identity of her own. At the novel’s beginning, Kathy introduces herself as a carer “My name is Kathy H. I’m thirty-one years old, and I have been a carer now for over eleven years” (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 3). Kathy is friendly and restricts her emotions for the sake of her friends Ruth and Tommy; she acts passively and does not show her true feelings. Regarding Kathy’s passiveness, De Boever outlines “however, a clear violent authority is not present, Kathy tends to stay passive without showing any resistance to alter her fate and accepts what have been settled for her “ (De Boever, 2013, p.7). In the beginning, Kathy is not keen to explore more about her life since she is aware of her fate. Kathy does not consider herself as someone but identifies herself as an object as the meaning of her existence becomes obvious to her. She sees herself as a creature who has no control over her life. The clone children are aware of their destiny but do not have conversations about it; while they grow up, they start to have more conversations with

different points of view. She denies the process of donation by making jokes about it: ‘‘We still needed to discuss the donations and all that went with them; we still found the whole area awkward. But it became something we made jokes about. I’d say the rule about not discussing the donations openly was still there, as strong as ever. However, now it was okay, almost required, every now and then, to make some jokey allusion to these things that lay in front of us’’ (Ishiguro, 2005, p.83).

On a couple of occasions, Kathy indicates her safety when she denies the donation’’ Maybe once Hailsham was behind us, it was possible, just for that half-year or so, before all the talk of becoming carers, before the driving lessons, all those things, it was possible to forget for whole periods who we really were just for those few months, we somehow managed to live in this cozy state of suspension in which we could ponder our lives without the usual boundaries. (140). Kathy uses her denial defense mechanism to deny the cruel reality that she is created to feel safe and have more hope for the future.

Ishiguro provides some scenes to the reader where he portrays Kathy’s distressed feelings and the struggles that she faces as a clone to assert her identity as a human being, Kathy imagines herself as an ordinary woman and expresses the desire to have a baby when she states ‘‘And what I’d imagine was a woman who had been told she could not have babies, who had wanted them all her life. Then there is a sort of miracle: she has a baby, and she holds this baby very close to her and walks around singing’’(Ishiguro,70). The baby is a metaphor for Kathy’s needs and desires if she was an original woman but could not have any of them because of her clone status. She tries to eliminate their difference in the human being by fantasizing about motherhood. The clones are deprived of building relationships or having children, factors they can identify with. Regarding this concept, Deborah Finkler observes that the ability to reproduce or the maternal body is a dominant discourse among families due to its importance power in organizing the sense of belonging and attachments to others who share ‘‘instrumental, moral and affective codes that embrace feelings of obligations and responsibilities’’ (2010, p.65). As the clones do not have these attachments, they always remain as the other.

Kathy believes that her personality is responsible for her actions, making her explore the causes behind her deeds. ‘‘I get these extreme feelings when I want to have sex. Sometimes it just comes over me, and it’s scary for an hour or two. That is why I started thinking, well, it must come from somewhere. It must be to do with how I am’’

(179). She finds those feelings strange and connects them to her identity. This period of Kathy's life is connected to the intimacy vs. isolation stage in Erikson's theory, where individuals undergo physical changes and become aware of their sexual needs.

As she grows up and becomes more aware, Kathy, just like the other students at Hailsham, wants to find out the origin she was copied from. She believes that by finding that person, she might be able to know more about herself; she notes, "we all of us, to varying degrees, believed that when you saw the person you were copied from, you'd get some insight into who you were deep down, and maybe too, you'd see something of what your life held in store" (137). Kathy starts questioning everything, including her feelings; she considers it a unique feature when she has strong sexual feelings. Thus, she looks at some porn magazines hoping to find her origin and learn more about her identity. The clones connect to role identity since they have no family or history. The only period they separate from others is when they start their role as a carer. Kathy finds herself within the carer role and tries to bring positive impacts. She finds belonging to her job and identifies herself with it; she states, "For the most part being a carer's suited me fine. You could even say it has brought the best out of me" (139). She finds attachment and a sense of satisfaction in her job as a carer. According to Turner, "social roles are social norms specifying appropriate behavior by all group members who find themselves in or are assigned to a given social position or function" (203).

Furthermore, roles can be "actively sought as people seek to improve, develop or reframe their personhood and social roles impact the personality of a person when "the norms, expectations, and meanings associated with certain roles can become internalized into the self-concept shaping a person's sense of self" (Turner & Reynolds, 1987, p.410). Kathy's satisfaction in her job as a carer is labeled to Erikson's seventh stage of the identity formation cycle which is Generativity vs. Stagnation. Kathy becomes more engaged with community and other clones, making her feel productive in her profession as a carer. Further, Kathy is a rational person and manages to control her emotions. Even when Tommy dies from his last donation, Kathy's reaction seems to be quite normal; she notes, "and though the tears rolled down my face, I was not sobbing out of control. I just waited a bit, then turned back to the car, to drive off to wherever it was I was supposed to be" (192). Analyzing the identity crisis of Kathy H. Regarding Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, it becomes evident that Kathy undergoes several stages of identity development. According to Erikson's theory, psychosocial

development ranges from infancy to adulthood, and each stage has its crises. To pass a stage successfully, one must resolve and confront the issues. Individuals gain autonomy and ego integrity if they accomplish stages.

Moreover, Growth is a consecutive process that is affected by experiences and environmental exposure. Thus, recession can occur as individuals move through stages and personality characteristics evolve, including identity, empathy, and intuition. While this maturing cycle may seem basic and easy to pass through, many problems may occur to arrest this development. This is referred to as getting stuck in a stage that prevents people from moving forward to the next phase, causing stagnation and even regression of maturation (Marcia & Josselson, 1976, p. 53). During the first stage of trust and mistrust, Kathy develops confidence and trust despite having no parents. She displays a capacity for tolerance and independence of judgment. Kathy's solid emotional and strong character during her childhood is considered enough to complete the trust vs. mistrust stage, which is fundamental to shaping a healthier character throughout the rest of her life. Kathy's self-righteousness and self-confidence help her have a more sustainable life than her peers. The next stage is adolescence, where children look for the future regarding careers, relationships, and gaining independence. The children of Hailsham do not have choices regarding their future because everything is already settled for them. Kathy stays alone during her transforming period from childhood to adulthood as Ruth and Tommy fall into a relationship and spend their time together. Kathy concentrates on her journey towards self-discovery despite realizing the short period of her life. She is ambitious and tries to find a way to change her destiny. In their late adolescence, Kathy, Ruth, and Tommy are transported to cottages before their donation journey, which is the preparation period for organ donations. While moving to cottages, Kathy and her friends start having dreams they can never have. They try to enjoy the moments they have. However, they have limited time in life.

Kathy is alienated in the cottage as her friends have intimate moments together. Kathy is labeled to Erikson's sixth stage of intimacy vs. isolation in this psychosocial stage. She faces external and internal conflicts. She controls her feelings for Tommy to preserve their friendship with Ruth. Meanwhile, Ruth is jealous of her since she is aware of their mutual feelings. Kathy leaves the cottages to dedicate herself to work and looking after care. Kathy's maturity and rational personality are the main reasons for her

sense of comfort in the late stage of her life. She does not have things to regret. According to Erikson, she completes the last stage successfully.

Contrary to Kathy and Tommy, Ruth has self-confidence and the desire to control her during her childhood. Through the lens of Erikson's theory of identity formation, Ruth can draw a childhood with different traits from her friends. She gained trust during her childhood years and completed the first stage successfully. The first stage is most likely fundamental to creating the future personality. Ruth develops a sense of control and superiority over others during the fourth stage. Ruth desires to control the flow of actions and people around her. She turns the events in a manner that suits her interests. At Hailsham, she controls other children's thoughts and actions by presenting her close relationship with her guardians. This gives her a sense of superiority over the other children, which helps her to develop self-confidence.

During the fifth stage of identity development and After leaving Hailsham, Ruth starts to have identity confusion. She wants to abandon the Hailsham identity and form a new one for herself. Erikson defines identity formation as being both sociocultural and personal, meaning that the values and expressions play a significant role in constructing the self-image. According to Erikson, Jane Kroger states that identity is the sum of an individual's biology, history, and the surrounding cultural context (Erikson, 1968, p.13).

This move is toward gaining independence and individualism. Moreover, Ruth denies being attached only to the clones. Instead, Ruth believes she can be like ordinary people when she starts copying what she sees on television. She gets influenced by the external world and imitates what she sees outside. Here the role of society and its effect on an individual's mind can be seen clearly. Ruth wants to rebel against not being seen and appreciated by others while she forgets that she is copied from other human beings. Imitating the actors on television and copying their acts is Ruth's major step toward inventing a new character for herself. However, this act bothers Kathy, and she considers them fake. "Something Ruth, for all her close study of them, failed to spot- and this was how so many of their mannerisms were copied from the television" (Ishiguro, 82). This quote makes Ruth's imitation of normal humans clear while she follows the rules set for them at Hailsham. Ruth becomes hopeful that she can find her identity through human imitation without being aware that she remains a copy unless she invents something new in herself.

Further, she keeps Tommy as her lover while she is confident that he and Kathy have been in love since childhood. She wants to be recognized as Tommy's lover and spends her time having intimate moments with Tommy in the cottage. She makes Tommy feel worthless if he is not with her to keep Tommy by her side. She considers Tommy worthless when he tries to invent something new and prove his ability to create something new like Kathy. H states, "If Tommy had genuinely tried, she was saying, but he just couldn't 't be very creative, then that was quite all right, he was not to worry about it" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 23). Ruth experiences intimacy and isolation during staying at the cottages. This form of isolation is labeled Erikson's sixth stage of identity development. Despite having intimate moments with Tommy, Ruth feels isolated and soulless. She knows he is in love with Kathy but denies admitting it. This form of denial, as described earlier in psychoanalytic theory, is a form of defense mechanism in which an individual denies the truth to avoid hurting and disappointment. Ruth refuses the truth and denies what is natural around her.

Furthermore, she denies that she is a clone and that her life is limited. The characters want to invent a past of their own by speculating human models which they were copied from and to figure out their potential and the type of life they would have if they were ordinary people. The children are so excited when they hear from a friend that a model of Ruth has been spotted nearby Cromer in Norfolk. They glimpse the woman from the window but soon realize that she is not Ruth's human model, "but now, in the gallery, the woman is too close, much closer than we'd ever really wanted. And the more we heard her and looked at her, the less she seemed like Ruth. It was a feeling that grew among us almost tangibly, and I could tell that Ruth, absorbed in a picture on the other side of the room, was feeling it as much as anyone" (Ishiguro, 2005, p.110).

After being disappointed in finding her original and donating her organs, Ruth starts to accept herself as a clone model. She starts to embrace a new personality where she wants to atone for her behaviors. Ruth feels guilty for separating Kathy and Tommy. This period is referred to as Erikson's last stage of identity development, which is integrity and despair. However, in Erikson's theory, this stage is over 65 years old, but the case is different for Ruth and her friends. They do not live as long as humans, so they experience this stage earlier in life. When she looks back on her days with regret

and anguish, Ruth realizes her mistake. She feels guilty for taking Tommy from Kathy and tries to atone for her sin when she asks Kathy and Tommy to apply for the deferral.

Moreover, after completing her first donation, Ruth wants Kathy and Tommy to have a more extended time together and compensate for what they have lost throughout the years. In this psychosocial stage, Ruth is more mature and embraces her new character without being recognized as Tommy's lover or her original human model. The donation changes Ruth's personality from a selfish clone to someone who wants others' happiness. Ruth's new identity allows her to accept the realities surrounding her. She gives up her dreams and prepares herself to complete the task she was made for. Ruth hopes that Tommy and Kathy's destiny will be different from hers due to the love triangle. Ruth believes that love and art are valuable principles to humans. Therefore, they might be strong factors to be approved by humans as these qualities are really hard to judge, and it's probably impossible to get it right every time" (173). These two qualities are believed to save them from dying and avoid going through organ donations.

Tommy's character is an image of the critical role of the effect of the environment on an individual's development. Due to unresolved issues during his childhood development at Hailsham, the lack of trust further exposes Tommy to identity problems. As noted by Schultz "through the companionship of a caring and loving friend or teacher, childhood mistrust can be modified late in life" (Schultz & Schultz, 2017, p .164). Tommy's lack of trust and confidence during childhood results in his isolation. He refuses to interact with other children and wants to keep a space from others except for Kathy as she tries to get closer to him and give him comfort. Dan McAdams cites Erikson (1959) and observes that "it is of great relevance to the young individual's identity formation be responded to, and be given function and status as a person whose gradual growth and transformation make sense to those who begin to make sense with him" (103). Hailsham's society does not play a positive role in successfully helping Tommy pass this stage and avoiding him from isolation. As Erikson's theory predicts, life might be full of selfishness and distrust. To Erikson, "lifelong underlying weakness of such trust is apparent in adult personalities in whom withdrawal into schizoid and depressive states is habitual" (Erikson, 1968, p. 223).

Moreover, the school stage is crucial since the child develops connections beyond family, including friends and teachers. The child needs to get appreciation,

proper guidance, and praise for their achievements; these supports will enforce and strengthen their self-confidence. A child may be exposed to a sense of inferiority if he is exposed to any deviation from this realm of identity development. Schultz confirms this notion by stating, ‘‘children are likely to progress sensations of inadequacy and inferiority if faced with rejection, scolded, or ridiculed’’ (166).

Tommy faces faults and disparities among other characters. The unconditional love and the lack of human interaction in the Hailsham environment support this notion. Tommy’s lack of control, immature nature, and passive demeanor can be directed to Erikson’s psychosocial theory, where an individual does not ultimately develop a sense of trust. An individual’s development comes from social experiences, and each social interaction plays an outstanding role in establishing one’s ego. Like the other children, Tommy does not have parents or a blood tie. Thus, he does not get enough support to complete his first stage successfully. His isolation results from his lack of self-confidence and the unhealthy environment in Hailsham. What makes Tommy distinct from Ruth and Kathy is his loud expressions of his feelings. He is more straightforward and expresses his doubts and confusions loudly. Tommy uses violence when his peers make fun of his talents. Even later, during his organ donations, Tommy refuses to be shown as a patient during his donation process and rejects the sick identity. Kathy observes that ‘‘Tommy refuses to be stigmatized as a donor-patient and denies his condition of being close to death. Was ‘‘always fully clothed because he didn’t want to ‘be like a patient’’ (Ishiguro, 2005, p.238). This can be referred to as his childhood memories when he experienced a sense of inferiority because of his lack of ability to create artistic works. Thus, he believes that being sick gives him the same inferior image where he cannot be productive and isolated.

Regarding Tommy’s romantic life, he maintains his relationship with Ruth while he has feelings for Kathy. Ruth wants to take power over Tommy even when they are grown up, and she makes fun of him in front of the veterans when she talks about his past at Hailsham. ‘‘What you’ve got to realize is that even though Tommy was at Hailsham, he isn’t like a real Hailsham student. He was left out of everything, and people were always laughing at him. So there’s no point in asking him about anything like this’’ (158). Tommy does not have a voice of his own and allows Ruth to control him. He does not have enough power to break up with Ruth despite not being appreciated by Ruth on occasion. However, he is more comfortable with Kathy and shares secrets with her. He

is interested in finding the reality of Hailsham and starts to remember his odd conversations with Mrs. Lucy in Hailsham. After Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth separate for several years and reunite again, Ishiguro presents a different self-image of Tommy. He portrays himself as having more self-confidence, and he is ready to donate his organs. Modifying Tommy's lack of confidence into a more secure and stable person results from straying far from an unhealthy environment and rebuilding his personality through the experiences he has gained. Here, Ishiguro suggests that a human being's experiences and relationships design one's identity.

Kathy and Tommy believe they can prove their humanity through art; they hope that their intimacy and art can give them extra years to stay together and get a deferral. Tommy states, "Suppose some special arrangement has been made for Hailsham students. Suppose two people say they are truly in love and want extra time to be together. Then you see, Kath, there has to be a way to judge if they're telling the truth. They are not just saying they're in love, just to defer their donations" (119). However, Kathy and Tommy attempt to change their fate; they want to find deferral and stay alive, but their attempt remains inescapable. Ishiguro presents a human's attempt to escape fate by showing Kathy and Tommy's desperate attempts for deferral. They hope that the love between them might change their pre-destiny. At one moment, Kathy feels "relief, gratitude," and "sheer delight" (161). Here, Ishiguro shows love as a part of one's identity, corresponding to Erikson's sixth stage of intimacy vs. Isolation. Kathy & Tommy hope pure love can change their destiny and extend their lives. Nevertheless, this dream falls apart when they look for Mrs. Emily to ask for the deferral. They hope that the art of Hailsham can save the lovers from being united together. However, they realize how their distinction from normal humans. Madam's response to Kathy and Tommy's request is full of skepticism: 'You say you're sure? Sure that you're in love? How can you know it? You think love is so simple? So you are in love. Deeply in love. Is that what you're saying to me?' Her voice sounded almost sarcastic, but then I saw, with a kind of shock, little tears in her eyes as she looked from one to the other of us. (247). She refuses to believe that Tommy and Kathy are in love in an attempt to deny the reality that the clones have similar feelings to humans. Madam cannot accept the mutual qualities between humans and the clones. Nevertheless, her body language contradicts what she believes to be true. Her tears prove her guilt in taking part of

Hailsham's institution of denying the simple rights of the clones. However, she refuses to give them the deferral as she states,

And for the few couples who get disappointed, the rest will never put it to the test anyway. It is something for them to dream about, a little fantasy. What harm is there? But for the two of you, I can see this does not apply. You are serious. You have thought carefully. You have hoped carefully. For students like you, I do feel regret. It gives me no pleasure at all to disappoint you. But there it is (253).

Madam is another character who is labeled with Erikson's last stage of psychosocial development of the human cycle, which is integrity vs. despair. At this period of life, individuals have flashbacks of their previous years and think of all their actions. Kathy and Tommy's visit to apply for the deferral awakens the memories of the old days at Hailsham. Their visit takes her back to the Hailsham days. She feels regretful due to the failure production in her adult years as she was a part of the superior society that dominated those little children and hid the truth about the horror waiting for her later in life. Therefore, she experiences feelings of guilt and despair for how she lived instead of being satisfied with her life decisions.

Being aware of these distinctions distracts the psyche of the clones. It raises insecurity and fear inside them. It drives them to deny who they really are and makes them eager to have human qualities. Thus, Ruth tries to find the original, and Kathy and Tommy ask for the deferral. Kathy and Tommy believe that through having human qualities, they can have a longer life together. The clones are not expected to have emotions, passion, or sentimental feelings. Despite all the doubts and questions, the students have about themselves, they never doubt that they have souls. Thus, Kathy and Tommy are furious when Emily shares the truth. When Miss Emily tells them, "we did it to prove you had souls at all, Kathy answers out of complete shock, "Why did you have to prove a thing like that, Miss Emily? Did someone think we did not have souls?" (174). They are shocked to discover that their identities and their souls are also a matter. They grieve over the denial of their true feelings for each other and the dreams that they would have if they got the deferral. Ishiguro allows Kathy to openly discuss her emotions in the last scene, where Tommy completes his role as a clone. Kathy considers their life as a pile of rubbish as she states "I used to think about the rubbish. I imagined the plastic and old stuffs that lay on the shore lines. I closed my eyes and thought of those rubbishes that we were created from. I imagined Tommy appearing among the trashes. I started to think about all the childhood memories that we lost. I kept staring

and waited so long for something than can calm my burden. Nothing happened, I was sobbing and I had no option just to come back to the car drove off to wherever I was supposed to be” (282). She wishes to find her lost objects among the plastic and rubbish. She wishes that Tommy would appear somewhere and wave at her. Nevertheless, she knows this hope is impossible, so she packs herself and returns to Nortfolk to perfume her clone role.

Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth never relinquish their vague feelings and fragmented self-images. Thus, they need to construct a solid identity of their own. They cannot identify themselves and grasp a coherent sense of self despite the completion task they were created. Nevertheless, since they have no choices except to submit to their destiny, Kathy forms self-identity. She confronts her real self depending on the revulsion and dread presented by the other. Kathy and her friends start to embrace status in the society that has been placed on them and marginalized. They also do their best to complete their assignments as donors or carers. Keith McDonald notes, “in the novel, harvesting the organs have been internally normalized. Even the donors accept it and stay passive to perform their duty as carers and donors” (78).

Despite the cruelty of humans and adverse feelings given to the clones, the clones strive to fit in and fulfill the purpose of their existence. As Kathy states in the final statement of the novel, “I just waited a bit, then turned back to the car, to drive off to wherever it was I was supposed to be” (Ishiguro, 192). Kathy accepts the death of Ruth and Tommy and stays alone to complete the rest of her journey but keeps them alive in her memories. Here, Ishiguro aims to liken the condition of the clones to the human beings who stay silent about the oppression against them. He aims to awaken the readers to revolt against dark rules that have been settled for them and ask for their rights. The aim for the clone’s life remains unfulfilled and without completion. Since the clones are considered inferior to humans, their death is distinct from humans. The term “completion” refers to the clone’s death, where the clones will reach their final destination. Contrary to humans who believe that they have immortal souls and that their souls will be reborn again after their death. Thus, the fear of death is less in humans compared to the clones who will not be reborn again. During the novel’s narration, it appears that Kathy is talking to someone or another carer without getting any response to their story. She hopes to be heard and send her message to humans, hoping they can understand their suffering and the purpose behind their existence.

4. MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN

4.1. Salman Rushdie and *Midnight's Children*

Salman Rushdie is a well-known Indo- British American novelist, screenwriter, and essayist of the modern time. He is born in 1947 in Mumbai, India. Rushdie is famous for his bold speeches, identity, and politics. His literary works present various aspects of Indian society and the issues of the Indian community due to a diverse range of religions, cultures, and traditions. His well-known novels are *Grimus* (1975), *Midnight's Children* (1981), and *The Satanic Verses* (1988), which resulted in anger in the Muslim world. Salman Rushdie grasped various experiences and knowledge because of moving from one country to another and experiencing diverse traditions. Rushdie incorporates these diversities in his novels, especially the journey of seeking an identity. Rushdie is a cloven writer who is produced by migration. In his works, he addresses both worlds, the East which is the world of his mother country and the West which is his adopted country, belonging wholly to neither one nor the other.

In his writings, Salman Rushdie mingles the two worlds- India and England. Thus, he sheds light on diverse concepts of the Indian tradition in their struggle with the Western tradition. He reflects on issues such as identity crisis and efforts to seek the self. He incorporates the protagonist's Indian culture, political condition, and isolation within his works. Despite being Indian, he is comfortable in a foreign environment; similar to his characters, Rushdie is not fit into a single frame of mind. Nayantra Sahgal describes Salman Rushdie as the " Schizophrenic author" She explains the state of Schizophrenia as " feelings and state of mind that is firmly rooted in particular subsoil but above ground has a more fluid identity that does not fit comfortably into any single mold" (Sahgal, 2015, p.200).

Furthermore, Rushdie's novels examine the philosophical importance of ideals and contemplate the question of identity. He presents characters who are connected but physically separated. Despite their separation, they share an identity. In Rushdie's novels, identity is not presented as a unitary entity but rather a fragment, fluid and not stable, not continuous or coherent but a hybrid, not single but multiple. He elaborates on migrant identities and the struggles that the character's encounter.

In his essay *Imaginary Homelands*, Rushdie talks about migrant identities by stating, ‘‘migrant identity is at once partial and plural. Sometimes they experience the feeling of straddling between culture and at other times they are stuck between two stools. Nevertheless, the ambiguous shifting of the ground is not considered as an infertile zone for the writer’s occupation’’ (Rushdie, 2012, p.15). Rushdie has a unique vantage point of view to navigate and explore the complexities of human experiences. Being positioned on the borderline of different identities and cultures allowed Rushdie to enrich his writing and draw from multiple cultural perspectives. As a diasporic writer, Salman Rushdie has experienced various displacements throughout his life because he was born in a land governed by British colonialism. The word Hybridity plays an essential role in Rushdie's fiction. In his book *Salman Rushdie: Contemporary World Writers*, Andrew Teverson, writes ‘‘Rushdie portrays intensified hybridization in his novels. He offers the impact of the British colonialization on Indian culture both in India and in England where may Indian’s immigrated to it’’ (Teverson, 2011, p. 128).

Moreover, Rushdie is well known for his instilled values considered illogical or bare by the Eastern world. Therefore, he is exiled and estranged from the world of the Eastern world of devoted belief systems and traditions in addition to the Western world and its persistent modern values. Thus, he was distracted by the themes of alienation from the modern world and exile from the world of trust and convention. Therefore, these are central themes of his writings, particularly *Midnight's Children*. Further, Rushdie's background is the main reason his works' issues, such as belongings, identity crisis, cultural conflicts, nationality, and alienation, are central themes. He considers himself accountable for speaking on behalf of his nation and people who have gone under the same circumstances. He believes that people of the modern period live in alienation and exile. Alienation can be described as the systemic result of living in a socially stratified society; a person gets alienated when he is a mechanical part of a social class. In this regard, Karamcheti outlines that ‘‘ Rushdie is very informative about the tradition of the East and has a good comprehension about the West. Thus, his identity is the discourse’’ (Karamcheti, 1986, p.82).

Midnight's Children is Rushdie's second novel which was published in 1981. The novel received extensive critical approbation and won the year's Booker Prize. In this novel, Salman Rushdie artfully provides the readers with plenty of historical references and cultural contexts, making this novel one of the predominant literary works of

postcolonial literature. He ingeniously shows his ability to fictionalize history and myth. Nancy E. Batty outlines, "if history is composed of fiction, then fiction can be composed of history" (Batty, 1987, p.41). The novel delves deep into the past through the vantage point of the present. The protagonist, Saleem Sinai, scribbles and narrates his story to Padma and his patient listener. The novel is considered autobiographical since Rushdie expresses past events of his life through Saleem Sinai's voice. In this regard, Maurois notes that "when a novelist deals with the past of his own people or community, he has to assume the role of a biographer" (39).

Midnight's Children raises questions regarding colonial control in Indian society and the various institutions that separate the hierarchical powers and cultural patterns that threaten the survival of India. Rushdie describes a horrifying vision of those patterns accountable for destroying India's future and cultural roots. The historical period from 1915 to 1979 is inextricably interwoven by representing the events of Saleem and his family's lives. Significant dates in India's history coincide with the novel's major events, such as India's independence and the conflicts between Pakistan and Bangladesh. Saleem is a symbol of a developing nation after independence eve, and he defines himself as "handcuffed to history" (Rushdie, 1981, 2). Saleem reflects India's politics and geography; his face symbolizes the map of India. Moreover, this novel picture a society where all lines that separate good from wrong and good from evil have been blotted out. Here fruitful and fortuitous interactions between self and society are impossible. The world of *Midnight's Children* is governed by fragmentation, and all social cohesion has gone amid frightening antagonism and aggressive self-seeking. The novel's structure is complex, allusive, symbolic, and inclusive dense. Multiple shifting shapes of people and identities are depicted at the stage where the two main characters, Saleem and Shiva become indistinguishable. Nationalities and national frontiers get blurred, and there need to be more mixed identities.

In this novel, Rushdie invents a narrative technique and a heady mix of history to explore issues related to the postcolonial identity of those Indians who were born at that time. In the text, Rushdie presents an India that resonates with a substitute version of narrative and history. He does this by mocking the utopian dreams of freedom and a conservative comprehension of post-British India. The creation of this condition is similar to Saleem's confusion with his presence at a time when the nation is fragile. He believes that the sequence of events is not in favor of India. As he mentions, "I cannot

say what the actual sequence of events might have been; in my India, Gandhi will continue to die at the wrong time. Am I so far gone, in my desperate need for meaning, that I'm prepared to distort everything – to rewrite the whole history of my times purely in order to place myself in a central role?" (163). The story of *Midnight's Children* spectacularly connects symbols, motifs, names, and elements connected to Hindu, Islamic, Cristian faiths, Brahmanical. Some parts of the story are written in an oral and mythic style. In others, overtly religious imagery, rebirth, anti-religious narrative, notions of transcendence and eschatology are deftly wielded to add involvedness and intricacy to the ostensibly anti-religious narrative. Miller outlines "as an autobiographical novel, *Midnight's Children* attempt to recapture India to retell the experiences of Indian individuals and to give meaning to history" (Miller, 2004, p. 42).

4.2. Fragmented identities

In the present day, the identity crisis has become a significant issue many people suffer from. In *Identity and Difference*, Woodward explains that "identity derive from multiple sources in the contemporary world. It originates from society, community, religion, gender, and nationality. Fragmented identities occurs as these factors conflict with each other" (Woodward, 2010, p.1). Individuals try to find an identity that helps their personal growth and gain self-recognition. Many writers attempt to highlight the issue of identity crisis in their works. Salman Rushdie is not an exception; where he reflects on matters related to identity and explores identity concepts. He does this by inventing characters that reveal this aspect through their actions. They represent various psychological layers of human beings and the mechanisms responsible for their behaviors. This novel portrays identity through multiple elements, such as religion, culture, history, language, personality traits, gender, and nationality.

In his chronicle novels, Salman Rushdie spots the issues and finds solutions. He also portrays the conflicts over languages, religion, and geographical regions. In *Midnight's Children*, identity is presented as one of the main themes the characters suffer from. Identity is portrayed as fragmented, fractured, and confused. Also, identity issues are transformed from generation to generation, starting from grandfather to grandchildren. Furthermore, in this novel, psychoanalysis and fragments of Indians are represented, and several aspects have been shown due to India's variety. These groups

have their own culture and traditions, resulting in consonant divisions. Thus, Rushdie expresses overlapping mythologies and harsh realities of Indians. He presents an old and new version of India through his tremendous skill at creating a regional atmosphere. Saleem is a reflection of India's culturalism and various characterization. Rushdie states: "Dear Baby Saleem, My belated congratulations on the happy accident of your moment of birth! You are the newest bearer of that ancient face of India which is also eternally young. We shall be watching over your life with the closest attention; it will be, in a sense, the mirror of our own" (121). Saleem is confronted with a fragmented identity from birth; he undergoes states of instability and insecurities. In Saleem's version of Indian history, he illustrates the details of his life to the readers; he shows his life cycle from his birth on August 15th, 1947, when India gained independence, to his early adulthood. However, his life is less than tranquil since his destiny is tied to the developing Indian nation, which is newly founded according to the independence agreement. Although it has a history of thousands of years, colonialism has suppressed it. Thus, Saleem undergoes crucial social and historical moments in this ambiguous environment.

Moreover, in this fictional art, Salman Rushdie deals with the search for the self and brings back various memories of a fractured nation. Saleem Sinai, the main character, reflects the Indian nation and the issues that followed by the partition from British forces. The *Midnight's Children* refers to Rushdie's concern with the text and the children born on the eve of independence. In *Rewriting History and Identity: The Reinvention of Myth, Epic, and Allegory in Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children*, Michael Reder points out, "Rushdie uses the narration of Saleem's character to create his own history" (Reder, 1999, p.225). In the story, Rushdie depicts the lives of three Indian generations focusing on the themes of displacement, identity crisis, and magic realism. Identity crises and repressed emotions play a significant role in shaping the personality of the characters. Saleem Sinai narrates several stories, such as Muslim League activities, Riots, and the Pakistan war. He belongs to a Muslim family where his voice is marginalized and he has a fragmented identity. Saleem was born on the eve of independence when India got independence from Britain. Regarding his birth, Saleem states,

Once upon a time, I was born in Bombay city. But let me not skip the date and place: The Nursing Home of Doctor Narlikar is my birth place on 15th August, 1947. Time is also an important figure in my birth, well let me tell: I was born on the stroke of midnight to be more

specific. I arrived to the world with India's arrival at independence (Rushdie, 1981, p.3).

He confronts unjust treatment since his birth at the hospital, where the nurse replaces him with Shiva. Saleem is given life and an identity that does not belong to him. He has a hybrid identity of East and West, having two mothers and several fathers, yet he does not belong to any of them, as he states, "more than all the other children, I have had more mothers" (243). Saleem is separated from his biological parents in the early stages of his life and the nurse who switched him at birth Mary Pereira takes care of him. She protects Saleem and nurtures him. A sense of trust develops in Saleem in this initial environment. However, discovering the truth about his parentage creates a sense of mistrust in Saleem's character. These insecurities and instabilities impact Saleem's personality; failing at this stage impacts Saleem's identity formation cycle that Erikson proposes in psychosocial development theory.

On the other hand, Salman Rushdie portrays India's state of psychodynamics; he portrays India as narcissistic and fetishistic. Saleem and the other children born in the first hour of independence have magical powers that make them different from others. At the age of nine, Saleem finds the power of being telepathic and hearing other people's voices. At age ten, he starts to communicate with 581 children, survivors of 1001 born at the Great Midnight. These are the midnight children, who "through some freak of biology or perhaps, owing to some preternatural power of moment" (1981, 234). All the midnight children are gifted with unique talents that function as a separate line from others. Various discussions occur in their conferences, including religion, class, and democracy. The midnight's children have supernatural powers that differentiate them from others. Regarding this concept, Saleem talks about the multicultural and multi-power children among the midnight's children.

In their conference, midnight's children discuss various issues, interventions, and matters related to colonialism. As Lila Gandhi mentions, "the conferences of midnight's children are determined as political zone where agendas of anti-colonial begins" (Gandhi, 1998, p.131). Midnight's children start quarrels and begin to separate. They separate themselves according to their class, race, and religion. They begin to repeat the history of their ancestors and fail to be united. This repetition of history confirms that Saleem and the other children are handcuffed to history. The Indian's collective sense of

identity started to vanish as India was further divided during China's attempt to take a portion of India.

Saleem Sinai, the novel's protagonist, is depicted as an Individual who looks for India's stability and individual acceptance of each other despite their different backgrounds. He begs the children to stay united when he tells them, "you must not allow social class, money, or people to separate you" (Rushdie, 1981, p.254). Saleem mentions Bhabha's notion of the "third principle" to save them from partition. On the contrary, Shiva tries to separate midnight's children and pull them apart. Shiva believes that "there is only right and left, poverty and money, and the third principle does not exist" (253). This mirrors Shiva as anti-collectivism and the nature of the self is a quarrel between binaries. Nevertheless, Saleem has a sense of superiority over the other midnight children, and he refers to some children as "little more than circus freak" (199). This feeling of superiority is similar to colonialism superiority, which indicates the impact of colonialism on the characteristics of Indian individuals. Saleem, along with Shiva compensated for leading the group. Shiva is gifted with the power of war and breaking things with his knees, "two of the biggest knees the world has ever seen" (220). In contrast, Saleem has the gift of telepathy. Rushdie gives this power to Saleem, hoping that this power will lead to peace and unify India after gaining independence. Saleem is gifted with the power to peer into other people's thoughts and minds. He communicates with the other children who were born on the same night. In this community, he explores India's many faces and its people's suffering. He meets various kinds of people including men and women who come from different backgrounds, religions, and culture. Regarding the aspect of presenting identity in Rushdie's works, Hogan outlines that "Rushdie puts the inadequacy of categorical identities to the forefront due to the existence of dichotomies of marginality in the young Indian nation" (Hogan, 2001, p.527). Saleem calls their meetings the parliament of half-growth brats. Since his childhood Saleem has had hallucinations and hears sounds of children and realizes that it's the sound of the other children who are similar to him; he meets them by calling them. Others consider him Saleem and make fun of his physical shape. Saleem smells love, poverty, danger, and things others cannot smell. On the contrary, Shiva is aggressive, threatening people to squeeze them between his knees, and running a gang group. Shiva does not accept to be the second option and suggests to Saleem to "joint

bosses of this gang” (220). Shiva insists on taking the boss position within the group, but he turns against Saleem when the children decide to follow Saleem.

Due to his physical shape, Saleem feels inferior to the rest of his family. In psychosocial development theory, childhood experiences have a crucial role in designing the future personality, as outlined in Erikson's theory “childhood experiences have a vital role in forming the adulthood identity” (Erikson, 1968. P.223). The child starts to increase his contact beyond the limit of parents and family to include peers. The child's personality will develop if he gets proper guidance and pride. On the contrary, any deviation from this construct of identity development will expose individuals to a sense of inferiority. Regarding this point, Schultz and Shultz note, “children are likely to evolve feelings of inadequacy and inferiority if rejected, scolded, or ridiculed” (2017, p.166). At this point, Saleem develops a sense of inferiority in his personality, which is labeled with Erik Erikson's third stage of psychosocial development, which is Industry vs. inferiority. He does not take pride or support for his actions. Instead, his family makes fun of him and does not appreciate his efforts to be a successful child. Thus, this inferiority feeling affects him, and he fails to gain self-confidence in his later stages of identity development. Saleem develops a dysfunction in his personality and starts to deny the actual events around him. He fails to gain accomplishments and self-pride as his surroundings restrict his abilities. Saleem grows up thinking that he is the son of Amina and Ahmed before discovering that his father is a poor singer called Wee Willie Winkie. He is switched at his birth by the midwife Mary Pereira. Thus, he lives another's life and becomes Sina's offspring. Saleem becomes more eager to gather his fragmented identity when he finds the truth about his birth parents. He continuously searches for his identity and stays passive for a long time. After facing the reality that he is different and subliming his feelings, he attempts to build his identity by himself and determine his destiny

Rushdie explains that highlighting the freedom aspects in India was his primary purpose in writing the novel, “Freedom is a magical moment, and here is the potential of that freedom” (7). Saleem embodies his generation and the magical powers people obtained after independence. Rushdie also portrays his voice through Saleem's character. In an interview, he states, “ Saleem is given certain aspects of my childhood. He goes to my school and lives in my house. His friends are similar to my friends at school” (6).

Furthermore, Rushdie depicts the layers of the human psyche through his characters; Saleem faces anxiety and stress; his defense mechanisms do not function well. When he hears the sounds of children inside his head, he loses his temper and represses his fearful feelings. On the other hand, Shiva the other child who has been switched with Saleem and given a life of poverty, develops hatred towards Saleem. Shiva develops a Projection mechanism, projects his hatred to Bavarti, and kills her during his mission to kill the midnight children considered a threat to the country. As a result of these negative feelings, the characters continuously struggle to find who they are. Saleem confronts this by stating, ‘I, Saleem Sinai, later variously called Snot nose, Stain face, Buddha and even Piece-of-the-Moon, had become heavily embroiled in Fate -at the best of times a dangerous sort of involvement’’(3).

Saleem starts the quest for the events through the political history of India. India undertook several wars in the thirty years following the independence; three wars with Pakistan over Kashmir and the creation of independent Bangladesh. Saleem struggles to define his identity. Having several parents does not allow Saleem to have a stable identity. He launches out for the purpose of existence. He is preoccupied with a quest for his belonging and wants to gain an insight into the meaning of his life. He declares that ‘I must work fast, faster than Scheherazade, if I am to end up meaning-yes, meaning-something. I admit it: above all things, I fear absurdity’’ (2). He fears the absurdity of his life; thus, he tries to find something that can take away his fears.

Saleem's fragmented identity resembles India's fragmented identity as India fails to reunite its diverse nations. Like Saleem, India experiences double parentage due to colonial and native forces forming the country. The interaction between the self and society is highlighted in the novel. Their interaction results in tensions and conflicts over getting a united identity. It has to be mentioned that Saleem's identity crisis starts from his birthdate on the eve of the great divide between India and the colonial. His career and life illustrate various aspects of great India. Saleem lives in unstable conditions; even his family's name is unreal. He narrates how his family name 'Sinai' contains elements 'Sin the moon" Sinai refers to Ibn Sina, Sufi adept, and Sin of the moon refers to the ancient God of Hadramaut. Saleem reflects many aspects of India and presents various individuals. Forces beyond his control flatten him; he admits to developing schizophrenia symptoms. He says ‘I confess that I have had various self-versions lately. I have been a basketed ghost, Buddha, nation saver, and problem solver. Overall, I have

not been myself” (520). Saleem is not obsessed with the meaning of life; when he discovers his real roots, he is afraid that his existence is wrong and everything turns out to be utterly useless. At this point, Saleem develops a sense of confusion about his personality, which is labeled with Erik Erikson's fifth stage of psychosocial development, which is identity vs. role confusion that starts in the early periods of teenage years. The uncertainties regarding his birth parents contribute significantly to developing role confusion issues in his character. Thus he fails to complete the identity formation cycle of this period successfully.

Saleem’s variegated experiences leave him in confusion about being good. Saleem neither comprehends a pearl of philosophical wisdom nor finds a solution for his problems. Thus, he experiences alienation. This confusion is the besetting sin of Saleem's sensibility and conduct. He admits “I am not in a position to judge and I am ready to distort everything. I am desperate to find the meaning of my life”(198). Since Saleem is a typical rootless person, he realizes his discordances, misfortunes, problems, and plights. This is how he looks at himself finally: “my memories are going and will be swallowed by the darkness. I cut myself apart and fail to agree even with myself. I crack myself and argue like a wild fellow” (503). He reaches the peak of self-alienation. In varying degrees, Rushdie's alienated characters convey a sense of unhappy frustration, which results mainly from their social status. Rushdie ruthlessly presents the character's psychological traumas and social tragedy, mixing irony and satire with competence.

India's political condition runs parallel to Saleem's identity. The conflicts leave an influence on Saleem's personality and crack his personality. He tends to establish his identity regardless of the upside downs in his life. He is impacted by the struggles that take place, even before his birthdate. He confirms this when he states “I am the sum total of everything that went before me, of all I have been seen done, of everything done to me. I am everyone whose being in the world was affected by mine” (379). Rushdie beautifully portrays Saleem's personality through his physical appearance. He presents his face as having something mysterious; he confides, “my large moon face was too large: too perfectly round” (169). Saleem regards himself as a mixture of many factors. He experiences the quest for self and a sense of alienation. His inner thoughts depict how the self and the other are related in an exceptionally hybrid society. Bounce observes that “in *Midnight’s Children*, hybridity plays an essential role as it combines a variety of characteristics and elements. Moreover, Bonus mentions that in the novel

“Rushdie deploys “humor which allows the exploration of post colonialism and the history of India” (Bonus, 2009. P.45).

The characters confront institutions, persons, and relationships of a degenerated and decayed social order. After the independence from British Imperialism, the Indian community was divided into two groups with different visions. The first group was trying to rebirth the traditional cultural heritages and the second was attempting to live with the new cultural manners which were born due to the British Imperialism. Therefore, the new India had dual identities, like Saleem's character.

At this point, society and self are working cross purposes. Entangled identities surround the characters of the novel. Saleem is not the only one suffering from an identity crisis; the Indian nation suffers the same. The women are not allowed to speak or present themselves to others. Dr. Adam, Saleem's grandfather, falls in love with his wife during giving her treatments and seeing her only behind perforated curtains. The names of the female characters are in a constant state of change. Their names shift forever when they get married. They are stripped of their names and identities by the male characters and the Indian patriarchal society. When Mumtaz, Saleem's mother, marries Saleem's father, he asks her “change your name; time for a fresh start and throws Mumtaz from the window. I will choose you a new name” (Rushdie, 1981, p.68). Thus, her name shifts to Amina Sinai. The same thing happens to Parvati- the witch, when she marries Saleem. He states, “Pavarti acquired a name that I gave her, out of repository of my dreams, becoming Layla night” (477).

The women characters have no option but to accept what has been imposed on them by their husbands and community. They follow the male desire and alter their names, past lives, and identities. Adam Aziz demands that Naseem Aziz to change her way of speaking, acting, and behaving like the modern women that he used to know in Germany. He expects her to no longer wear Purdah, not to cover her body. Naseem does not have the choice even to wear what makes her comfortable; she rejects the idea of wearing other clothes, which makes Aziz furious, “Aziz drags all his wife's purdah-veils from her suitcase, flings them into a wastepaper basket and sets fire to them”(32). The male characters and the patriarchal society in the novel ask the women to change their living style and follow their men's desires, even if that makes them feel unsafe. Naseem is forced to obey her husband and society; she builds a metaphorical fortress to

look like both a traditional Indian woman and a Western one. However, Saleem shows pity for his grandfather for choosing to marry a woman without seeing her face instead of feeling pity for his grandmother. He outlines that ‘’ he made a mistake of loving Naseem in fragments’’ (39). As a male from a patriarchal society, Saleem does not feel the internal and external struggles that his grandmother experienced during her life with her family and husband. In his narration, Saleem depicts women as objects in terms of their identities, such as sexual and maternal, instead of showing them as humans who have feelings. Rushdie presents developments over time where the women characters have more freedom in their choices. Jamila, Saleem’s sister, has the freedom to become a singer. However, like the previous women's generation, her face remains invisible to her audience. The audience only hears her voice without seeing her appearance. These women are stripped from their identities which results in psychological issues.

Adam Azizi, Saleem's grandfather, is another character who suffers from an identity crisis. He has gained various experiences in Germany during his medical studies. Therefore, he finds it challenging to adapt to the Indian culture after living in a Western country. He is not just estranged from Indian society and its institutions but even estranged from himself. He does not agree with the tradition or religion of Kashmir. He gives up his Muslim religious identity due to a nose accident while praying. He swears not to pray again and blames religion for his condition. As Saleem narrates:

In the early spring of 1915 in one Kashmiri morning, while my grandfather Adam Aziz attempting to pray, his nose hit the frost-hardened tussock and wounded his nose. On the prayer mat, he saw three drops of blood before his eyes plopping out of his left nostril. He saw tears come from his eyes and he swore to not pray again and to not kiss the earth for any man or God (4)

Adam Aziz acquired Western characteristics during his stay in Germany. He is depicted as an individual who has doubts about religion and faith. He believes that religion separates the Indian nation instead of uniting them. Adam's identity confusion and beliefs of religion generate from two sources. The first one is the impact of British colonialism on India, while the second one is living in a Western country that is different from Indian society. In other words, Adam does not have to belong to India or Germany. These factors result in Adam's self-confusion; as Sheoran declares, ‘’ once societies and individuals become subjects of colonialization, they get severe confusion in confronting their genuine identity’’(Sheoran, 2014, p.13).

As an Indian individual, Adam considers himself inferior to the colonizers and Germans during his staying there. This feeling of inferiority passes from one generation to another. Thus, it can be referred that colonialism is one of the primary reasons for the character's identity confusion. Adam fails to take a side; he cannot present his Western evolutionary notions, either being a version of his ancestor's ideas. Therefore, he reflects on modern India's struggle due to the constant British colonialization. Adam passes his struggles and difficulties to Saleem including his faith in religion. Saleem does not believe in God and fails to take a side in choosing religion.

Adam continues his journey toward self-discovery. Thus, he moves to Amritsar City with his wife, Naseem, hoping that he will have a modern life. He wants to live in a place with various facilities similar to what he experienced in Germany. However, Aziz is not comfortable in staying in India, as Saleem notes "Indian people participated in several wars for British forces and many of them have traveled the world with the British. A lot of these people are tainted by abroad that will be difficult to persuade them to return to the old world" (Rushdie, 1981, p.27). This notion presents the enormous impact of British colonialism. It shows how British colonialism cracked the Indian identities where individuals are not sure about their Indian identity. This notion is reflected when Adam thinks he is "Kashmiri and not Indian" (34). Later Adam moved to Agra in 1942. Despite his confusion, Adam is still optimistic about defining his identity and characteristics. Therefore, he supports Main Abdullah, a Hummingbird constructing a religious-controlled state. As an Indian politician, Main Abdullah aimed to create a new version of Islam to stand against the traditional one. He looks for something that can assist him in determining something that he belongs to. Adam wants to find hope and a new life with Main Abdulla's movement. Adam's participation in the independence movement and Saleem's involvement in political activism parallels the Generativity vs. Stagnation stage of identity formation, where individuals contribute to be productive for their community. Here, society plays a significant role in defining their identity. He fails to define himself as a Muslim, Hindu, or Kashmiri and is confused about declaring his identity. The hole he writes on his chest as an angry reaction against God after his son's death becomes a permanent mark. When he reflects on this mark, Aziz notes, "I started off as a Kashmiri and not much of a Muslim. Then I got a bruise on the chest that turned me into an Indian"(47).

At last, he wants to say that this mark is sealed him as an Indian. He delivers the message that he has found his identity as an Indian. These incidents align with Erikson's notion of the impact of external factors, culture, and society in shaping the individual's identities. The Indian tradition, politics, and culture influence the character's sense of self and play vital roles in creating fragmented identities due to the complexity of their experiences.

Shiva is another character struggling with an identity crisis, replaced with Saleem on their birth. He lives instead of Saleem and has a family that is not his. As a gang leader, Shiva tries to obtain power and control his surroundings, hoping he will be satisfied. He succeeds in becoming the favorite general of prime minister Indira Gandhi.

4.3. Saleem's Identity Transformation

In order to find his real identity, Saleem has to take a difficult journey. What makes his journey harder is having several mothers and fathers; he is unfamiliar with his ancestors and the voices in his head. His ancestors have various points of view and come from different backgrounds, which leave their impact on his characteristics. For instance, his grandfather Adam Aziz doubts religion; his father absorbed neo-colonialism while he stayed in Mathew's mansions, and the sense of colonialism of his biological father. He is tied to the history of his family and India. He is bound to destinies and full of history; he states that

I have begun to crack all over like an old jug-that my poor body, singular, unlovely, buffeted by too much history, subjected to drainage above and drainage below, mutilated by doors, brained by spittoons, has started coming apart at the seams'' (1981, p.31). He shows that he has an unstable personality and fragmented identities. He mirrors this when he states ''eventually crumble into six hundred and thirty million particles of anonymous, and necessarily oblivious dust (31).

Saleem acquires other people's languages, behaviors, and thoughts. He learns multiple languages and hears various voices, making him fail to understand his voice. He cannot differentiate his need and thoughts, making it quite hard to find his voice. He learns the languages of Marchers in Bombay who ask for India's division. He also learns the language of New Delhi, Calcutta, and Cape Comorin. Rushdie presents India as a cracked country despite the different colors that exist there. Saleem hopes to unite these

fragmented pieces of the country and create a space where Indians embrace each other. He tries to do this through their midnight children's conference.

The culture of the Midnight Children is different since they all come from different backgrounds. Therefore, Saleem passes across different cultures, places, and people, which affects his identity, and he is affected by all these varieties. At the beginning of the text, Saleem starts his journey to discover himself. He is in a consonant search for his real identity since his birth is intertwined with the nation's birth. As mentioned in the novel regarding Saleem's identity, "Saleem's destiny is indissolubly chained to the history of India and he suffers from the pangs of identity since the event of his birth" (9). Saleem is bestowed with the most significant power among the other midnight children, therefore he declares himself as the leading voice and their leader. Saleem narrated the events from his point of view, and authenticity is beyond the scope; readers follow his perspective "Reality is a question of perspective" (165). Saleem seeks answers regarding his twisted individual fate by identifying himself as the bearer of the nation's destiny.

Saleem playfully preserves and pickles the stories from the beginning to the end. He searches for the meaning of his and others' lives; as Karamchettii comments, Saleem is not merely "obsessed by beginnings but also by how the stories would come to an end" (Karamchetti, 1986, p. 81). As a postmodern person, Saleem looks for facts and his authority over the flow of events. However, his life has no facts since his birth, as Woods suggests, "As one born to poverty and elevated to a life of abundance owing to the crime of Mary Pereira, Saleem who should have led the life of Shiva and vice-versa, also pokes fun at the so-called "hierarchical distinction among low and high cultures" (Woods, 2010, p. 75). Saleem comprehends the term of his identity as the one that he acquired, not through his original one; he considers that his name is an integral part of his identity, as he states, "individuals are victims of their titles and our fate is determined by our names. We live in a place where our names have more meanings than the West, and are still more than mere sounds, we are also victims of our titles" (Rushdie, 1981, p.304).

The body of Saleem is cracked and leaks from these cracks, similar to India's porous history. From the beginning, he tells us about his disintegration: "I mean quite simply that I have begun to crack all over like an old jug—.my poor body, singular,

unlovely, buffeted by too much history, subjected to drainage above and drainage below, mutilated by doors, brained by spittoons, has started falling apart at the seams. In short, I am literally disintegrating, slowly for the moment, although there are signs of an acceleration” (1981, p.37). Saleem's suffering is connected not only to his pangs of identity but to his physical appearance. His body is tattered, withered, and brittle similar to his fragile identity. Saleem's body embodies the cracks and leaks of India as a result of post-colonialism. The Indian nation suffered from pangs of existence and identity due to the consequence events such as the communal riots of the 1940s, the language marches of the 1950s, the Indo-Pak war in 1965, and the emergency rule in 1975. He states, “I will have many answers if I ask myself who am I? well my answer will be I am everyone. I am everyone who lived in the past or anyone who comes after me. I affect everything in the world and if I did not exist nothing will happen ” (383).

While Saleem suffers from the fragility of the identities he has generated for himself, he is also aware that a storied existence can regenerate his “crumbling, over-used body” (9). But he constantly denies this and instead chooses to believe that Ahmed and Amina are still his parents (118). He is lost and frustrated with his real belonging. No one seems to help Saleem even Ahmed and Amina. They send him to live with Hanif and Mary, which makes his case of defining more complex. He describes his feeling as “involuntary Kolynos Kid, squeezing crises and transformations out of a bottomless tube” (232). He confirms his loss of identity in the world, and the sense of isolation takes control of his life. He undergoes a state of transformation from "being" to "becoming" which parallels Old India's transformation to New India. This period of Saleem's life is connected to Erikson's fifth stage of psychosocial development, which is identity vs. role confusion. Erikson (1968) considered adolescence a transitional period of development following childhood and leading into adulthood. The sociologist Peter Wagner elaborates on Erikson's theory. He explains that the definition of personal identity communicates several messages. Firstly, identity is highly subjective and can be acquired through self-reflexive experience. Secondly, personal identity is used to progress a continued existence despite faults and breaks in an individual's life. Thirdly, individuals' minds attempt to generate a coherent view of self, for instance, “tries to identify past events as part of its own identity” (Wagner, 45).

When Saleem is forced to leave India and move to Pakistan, he loses his telepathy with the Midnight's Children, and he cannot hear the other children. During his arrival

in Pakistan, the country has severe issues with India over religion. As a Muslim country, Pakistan fights against the secular system of India. Saleem is a foreigner in Pakistan and confronts problems. However, he is a Muslim. Here Rushdie shows that Saleem's Indian roots are more substantial than his Muslim roots. After his nose surgery in Karachi, Saleem gets a clear nose which makes him completely lose his telepathy. Instead of telepathy power, he develops to smell emotions. Now, Saleem has "the powers of sniffing out the truth" (305).

Saleem is uncomfortable in Karachi and misses his birthplace Bombay; in this new place, he feels "hopeless, having grown too fast. Aunt Alia's house is in a minaret's accusing shadow" (306). To Saleem, everything about Muslim Pakistan screams "submission," a stark contrast to the "nonconformity of Bombay" In the new city, Saleem experiences loneliness and homelessness; he does not have anything to belong. Here, he realizes how his Indian identity matters to him to define his personality. Since Saleem lost the power of telepathy, he can now hear his voice and necessities. He starts to gain more knowledge about his personality and explore more about his character. Saleem experiences shock, isolation, and conflict in Pakistan when Saleem loses his family in the war. He struggles to return home but is not allowed to enter. He is stuck in a place that does not belong to India or Pakistan. This parallels his identity issue, where he is stuck in his mind, not knowing his mind and failing to get his identity. During the Indo-Pakistani war of 1965, Saleem goes through a significant crisis as he loses his family in the bombardment and is rejected by his singer-sister Jamila. He is out of his memories and finds himself enlisted in a particular unit of the Pakistani army.

After the bombardment and losing his memory, Saleem states, "I am stripped from my personality. I have no memory of time; I am someone without having past or present. I have no love or feelings. I'm empty and free as all the Saleems go pouring out of me" (343). After five years of the catastrophic incident, Rushdie Shows Saleem in a particular Canine Unit for Tracking and Intelligence Activities within the Pakistani army. Saleem is numbed and does not have any purpose in life. He cannot remember his goals, dreams, and purpose of living. Saleem enters into a state of amnesia, where he loses his memory. He does not recognize himself and fails to understand where he is from. Amnesia can be described as memory deficiency resulting from brain damage, psychological trauma, or a disease. An infected person with Amnesia loses his memory which can be either partially or wholly due to the extent of damage to the brain. An

individual cannot retrieve information that was acquired earlier in his life. Memory loss changes from one person to another. In some cases, memories can be restored, while in other conditions, it can extend back decades. As he cannot recognize that he is from Indian roots, they send him to a Pakistani camp in the Murre Hills to participate in the fight against Kashmir, and Saleem is forced to fight against the place where he was born.

As Saleem becomes a Pakistani soldier and no longer remembers who he is, he also loses his morals. He no longer thinks of creating peace and a space where all people are united despite their background differences. He leads a troop towards the Bangladesh city, Dakka, where they burn soldiers without hesitation or regret. Saleem becomes aggressive and cannot tolerate it. Ten million Bangladeshi refugees pour over into India to keep their lives safe, which is “the biggest migration in the history of the human race” (354). To track the enemy, Saleem leads his unit toward the Sundarbans, a dense and large jungle of Bangladesh. Saleem no longer has human morals, and he fights for no reason. He belongs to a nation that creates chaos and confusion. They use him as an object to fight against humanity and cause devastation. These are all a result of his memory loss and identity crisis.

His feelings have vanished, and he follows the instruction of the Pakistani officials. Saleem's friends have the same problematic chaos. They are forced to fight and kill other people. As a result of their troubled subconscious, Saleem and his other soldier friends undergoes nightmare visions. This troubled subconscious is a result of their traumatic memories of military actions and social, economic, and cultural backgrounds shaped by the postcolonial period's fluxes. Furthermore, Saleem ends up in Sundarbans, a large forest in Bangladesh and India. The place is very dense and pre-historic. Saleem's health condition gets very critical when a snake bites him. Thus, he stays comatose for a few days. His friends believe that Saleem will be unable to survive and lose his life without realizing himself. Luckily, Saleem survives and restores his memory. He realizes who he is and remembers his Indian roots.

As a result of the snake bite, Saleem can restore his memories. Saleem's quest for his existence in the mangrove forest shows the importance of the place-based identity, and the connection with this place allows Saleem to remember his past life. On a different level, this return to the land may be interpreted as closing the gap between

favoring the displacement on the part of postcolonial theory and giving "priority to the literature of place" (Nixon, 2005, p. 235). In this new environment of Sundarbans, Saleem is released from the history he was attached. The Sundarbans, with their fauna and flora, show a very flexible environment for the protagonist to experience purification from all the mistakes that he has made in his past life. Sundarbans becomes a place where Saleem recollects his memories. Besides, Saleem ends up creating meaning in his life. This new place can be regarded as a rebirth for Saleem. Saleem is not affected by history or political impact; he is reclaiming his identity here. Cohen notes that "individuals can create their identities and meaning in life through the manifestation of the social process and culture of a place" (qtd in. Viang, Zakariya, 711).

Sundarbans has a specific geographical position which plays a crucial role in shaping and rain foresting Saleem's identity. It addresses recognition as a significant bioregion. Gary Snyder addresses that "one can realize their part in a whole throughout understanding the spirit of a place. If they can define themselves in a part of the place, then they know their place in the world" (Snyder, 1990, p.40). Saleem attempts to regain his memories and senses that he lost. He tends to use the land to restore his identity and memories. He finds comfort in Sundarbans and he feels that he is a part of it. He discovers a strong connection with the land and immerses himself in the beauty of the land, the energy of the land infuses him and he starts to gain a deeper insight of himself.

Moreover, after Saleem suffers from numbness and memory loss, Sundarbans can be projected as a compartment in life stages that Saleem has to go through. However, Sundarbans do not offer an easy way for Saleem to acquire his identity due to his guilt of the crimes he committed unconsciously. Neil Ten Kortenaar comments on this journey into the rainforests: The culmination of the amnesia is the journey to the Sundarbans, a figurative descent into Hell. The Sundarbans, a jungle area in the Ganges delta, belong to a time before earth and sea are divided, to the "primeval world" from which selves and nations emerge, before mirrors, "before clock towers" and time, before words. (Kortenaar, 1995, p. 220- 221). Among these visions, which are both nostalgic and nightmarish, Saleem is the one who is the least affected; however, he will connect to the land, restoring his memory and sense of self. In Saleem's case, the revelation occurs through a serpent that bites him from his heel as he sits under a tree. The snakebite, which makes him comatose for a few days, will restore his memories and

sense of history while his friends wait for him to die of the snake poison. As Saleem's memory is restored,

His words flow so freely that they seem to be an aspect of the monsoon. The child soldiers listened, spellbound, to the stories issuing from his mouth, beginning with birth at midnight and continuing unstoppably, because he was reclaiming everything, all lost histories, all the various complex processes that go to make a man” (Rushdie. 1981, P.364-365).

In this novel, dislocation plays a central role in the lives of Saleem's family. The term "Dislocation" is the movement of an individual or group from one place to another, whether volunteered or forced. Saleem's restoration of his memories indicates the importance of the land where the snake bit him. His land helps Saleem to restore his history. He gains back his sense of feelings and identity. He starts to feel guilty for being a part of killing people and separating families from each other because this act is contrary to his morals. He starts to hear “the lamentations of families from whose bosom they had torn what once, they had termed "undesirable elements” (365). In order to prevent these noises, they plug their ears with "the mud of the dream forest, which no doubt also contained the concealed translucency of jungle-insects and the devilry of bright orange bird-droppings" (366).

Regarding Saleem's effort to find his identity, In Interpretation of Otherness, Giles Gunn notes that “to explore the possibilities of the self-progression and change, the modern man tend to be views in the encounter with the otherness” (Slovic, 352). In this case, Saleem chooses the Sundarbans as his version of otherness to find himself. The main result of Saleem's otherness Is that since his birth, he has been leading a life that was not his. After being switched by Mary Pereira, Saleem belonged to a place and a family that rejected him after finding the truth. Another aspect of otherness comes from an individual born in Postcolonial India and the conflicts he takes with his family due to religion. He remembers all these events in the Sundarbans and goes through a purification process. He is purified from his traumatic past and starts to understand his identity. Sundarbans land provides Saleem with the meanings that he was looking for.

As another compartment in Saleem's life, he has to reclaim his identity during his time in the Sundarbans. Michael Reder emphasizes that “ form individual’s perspective, Saleem forms a completely different history that undercuts the past that often comes before the individual’s experience who are the natural habitant of a place” (Reder, 1999. P.226). Saleem decides to make himself free from the history that he is tied to. Upon his return to India, Saleem falls in love with Payati, who has a connection

with Shiva and is pregnant with his child. Shiva takes Payati while she is Saleem's wife. By juxtaposing this, Rushdie presents the aggressive and ruthless of Shiva with Saleem's impotence of sexuality. Saleem represents the minorities' humiliation by the Hindu majority of India. At the same time, Shiva is an example of Hindu sectarianism, which is accountable for the deteriorating graves of the minorities of India. Rushdie illustrates that Shiva's character is an obstacle and threat to the growth of multiculturalism in India. This obstacle goes against Rushdie or Saleem's ideals of a pluralistic identity and communities of India. Adam Senai is Shiva's real son and the grandson of Adam Aziz. The line of the actual family goes back on track. Rushdie provides the readers with the opportunity to see the full circle of the family including Adam's journey in Kashmir to Shiva and Saleem's adventures in Bombay, "the great-grandson is connected to his grand grandfather and yet no one can claim who they should be or where they will belong to" (84).

Saleem knows that Adam is not his real son. Thus he compares the little Adam to "elephant-headed Ganesh" (500). Adam has enormous ears, a characteristic that makes him different from others. Rushdie's use of Ganesh suggests a prosperous beginning for the family, and he gives little Adam extreme power. To comment on this potential talent of little Adam, Saleem outlines: "We, the children of Independence, rushed wildly and too fast into our future; he, Emergency-born, will be more cautious, biding his time; but when he acts, he will be impossible to resist"(507).

Furthermore, the newborn child portrays Saleem's hopes or dreams and Shiva's realistic point of view of hardships in India's future. In this stage, Saleem starts to have a complete sense of self and history and feels more mature by exploring various cultural identities. He overcomes the ambiguities of his personality that he lost in the postcolonial world. This period of Saleem's life is considered as a turning point as he begins to gain a deeper comprehension of his own identity and history, which in turn contributes to his personal growth and involvement. He succeeds in reconciling with the conflicts and ambiguous impacts of post colonialism on his identity.

Saleem presents hope for those individuals who are lost in the world. He overcomes all the misfortunes and difficulties. He reconciles with himself and his environment. Saleem's journey can be seen as a metaphor for those individuals who feel

disconnected and lost in the world. Throughout the struggles and conflicts, Saleem finds inner peace and reconciles with his environment.

Moreover, Saleem Sinai's identity and life are compartmentalized throughout the novel. During each compartment, Saleem falls apart and gathers himself once again. India's unstable political and social condition impacts Saleem's identity confusion, to which he claims that his destiny is attached to the history of India. Thus, reclaiming one's identity is closely related to one's circumstances and community in this novel. Erik Erikson believed it is hard to understand one's individuality without his or her social context, as he states, "society and individuals are intricately woven. They are dynamic and are in consonant changes" (Erikson, 1968, p.114). At this point, Saleem is reconciling with himself and Indian society. He grasps a new meaning for his identity and looks back at all the obstacles he has gone through to make his life meaningful. This stage of Saleem's maturity is labeled as the last stage of Erikson's theory, the integrity vs. despair where individuals flashback about the situations that they have been through. Saleem gains a sense of integrity and is fulfilled with whom he became.

He overcomes the self-struggles that he went through. He grasps a better meaning of his surroundings. He also experiences intimacy, where he is more honest with himself and his surroundings. He is close to a not biologically his child and embraces him as his child. He has a more developed personality since he is satisfied with his personality and understands himself better. One must accept inevitable ruptures and discontinuities to have a coherent identity. Thus, personal identity must be considered a perpetual process of negotiations with one's environment and self.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the denial defense mechanism and the concept of identity crisis in three novels, namely *Atonement* by the British novelist Ian McEwan, *Never Let Me Go* by the Japanese-British writer Kazuo Ishiguro, and *Midnight's Children* by the Indian-American novelist Salman Rushdie by using Sigmund Freud's denial mechanism to elaborate on the psychological aspects and Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory to analyze the concept of an identity crisis. This study shows that these novels portray different layers of human psychology and how these psychological instabilities impact the main characters' lives and decisions.

Moreover, this dissertation was mainly based on the denial defense mechanism as a part of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory in analyzing the human mind. In addition to the psychosocial development theory by the German psychologist Erik Erikson that highlights the concept of identity formation. The denial mechanism is part of humans' defense mechanism to protect their minds from external forces. According to Freud, individuals use denial when they refuse to acknowledge a reality their mind refuses to believe. Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, analyzes denial as a psychological defense mechanism employed by the ego to cope with anxiety, distressing feelings, thoughts, or information. In Freud's theory, denial negates or distorts reality to alleviate psychological discomfort. The person refuses to acknowledge the existence of an inevitable reality that contradicts their desires or beliefs. Individuals can create a protective barrier against unpleasant thoughts or experiences and a temporary illusion through denial.

Furthermore, denial can be both conscious and unconscious. Individuals are aware of their negation of inevitable reality when the denial is conscious. In contrast, in the unconscious denial, individuals genuinely believe in the distorted condition they created for themselves, or they might not be aware of the healthy function of their defense mechanisms. Other psychologist researchers were interested in exploring more about the denial mechanism. The researcher used the second approach in this study is the psychosocial development theory by the German psychologist Erik Erikson to delve into identity crisis issues and better understand the characters' characteristics. In this theory, Erikson highlights eight stages contributing to an individual's identity formation. In this theory, Erikson analyzes how the individual's interaction shapes their identities.

In Erikson's terms, individuals should successfully navigate these stages to develop a healthy identity. Erikson proposes that internal and external factors influence the formation of people's identities. Internal factors such as temperament, personal characteristics, and cognitive abilities, and external factors such as culture, social interactions, and social expectations shape one's identity. Erikson believes individuals continuously face crisis and go through different stages; completing these stages successfully allow individuals to have a stable identity. On the contrary, any distraction in these stages will lead to failing a unified identity. The stages span from early childhood to old age, namely trust vs. mistrust, Autonomy vs. Shame and doubt, initiative vs. Guilt, Industry vs. Inferiority, Identity vs. Role confusion, Intimacy vs. Role confusion, Generativity vs. Stagnation, and Integrity Vs. Despair. A successful resolution of the challenges in each stage help in the development of a cohesive sense of self. When individuals fail to complete these stages, they have an identity crisis. Thus, individuals need to have the ability to overcome these issues in order to have a better self-understanding.

Identity crisis happens as a result of individuals' conflict between their self and their society when they fail to draw a clear definition of who they are. They cannot clearly define their personality, values, and roles in the community. Identity crises are often prevalent in significant life transitions such as adolescence and young adulthood or when they face a sudden life change. During this crisis, individuals must redefine themselves to establish a sense of identity that aligns with their beliefs. Failing to redefine the self will lead to psychological issues within themselves and their surroundings. Family, friends, and society significantly impact identity crises; individuals need assistance from all of those aspects to be able to design their personality. In the postmodern period, psychological issues and identity crises have become the central issues writers shed light on. Writers contribute to the ongoing discourse on identity by addressing these topics. They help individuals and society to gain a better comprehension of the complexities of personal and social identities. They use literature to focus on these issues, hoping to help individuals gain self-confidence in defining themselves.

Ian McEwan, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Salman Rushdie, three postmodern novelists, shed light on the concept of fragmented identities, identity issues, and psychological issues in the modern world. In their writings, they share similar concepts to tackle human

chaos and the difficulties that individuals experience. Ian McEwan highlights the complexity of the human mind and its negative impacts on the psychology of individuals. He shares this message throughout his main character Briony Tallis, to educate his readers to solve psychological issues before causing tragic incidents. Kazuo Ishiguro, on the other hand, creates a world where an imaginary world where his main characters are torn between the produced clones and original humans. Through imagery, symbolism, and characterization Ishiguro highlights that human beings and the clones are torn between the search for their identities. The clones share the quest for self in a dystopian community where traditional human institutions already settle their future. Salman Rushdie portrays the identity of a nation through his main character Saleem Sinai. He delves deep into exploring how individuals negotiate and construct their sense of self after colonialization and analyzing the complexities of postcolonial identity. Through the lens of Saleem's story, Rushdie illuminates how identity is shaped by factors such as culture, history, and politics. These novelists employ different styles, storytelling techniques, and their underlying message of addressing individual difficulties and human chaos. They explore the influence of external and internal factors, including societal constructs, historical legacies, and psychological complexities of the human condition.

In *Atonement*, Ian McEwan draws a combination of the classic and modern world. He analyzes layers of the human psyche and the identity crisis that face the main characters. He explores the impact of the mind's dysfunction on individuals and those who surround them. Briony Tallis, the main character, has internal insecurities and struggles. She wants to be the center of attraction but fails to do so. Thus, her mind starts to function differently, and her wrong decisions cause tragic events in the novel. To analyze the dysfunction of Briony's mind and the identity issues the characters face, this study examined the layers of the character's psyche and the issues they struggle with. Lack of attention, childhood memories, class, and societal norms majorly shape the characters' personality. Briony's faulty accusation of Robbie causes tragic incidents in the novel. She believes in what comforts her mind and interprets what proves her correct. She utilizes the denial defense mechanism, part of Freud's psychoanalytic theory, to protect her mind from negative thoughts. According to some events in the novel, Briony has a childhood crush on Robbie, while Robbie finds her feelings ridiculous. Thus, her mind cannot process that Robbie loves her older sister Cecilia and causes pain. She

builds a fake image in her mind that Robbie is bullying Cecilia and hurting her. This thought comforts her more than admitting that Robbie loves Cecilia. Therefore, her psychological mind comes up with accusing Robbie of raping Lola. However, Robbie is not the one who raped Lola and spends his years in prison, paying for a crime he did not commit. Once Briony grows up, her mind starts to remind her of the false accusation that she made, and she starts to feel guilty. These insecurities pave the way for identity issues and more instabilities in Briony's character. Therefore, she starts to atone for her sin when she chooses to work as a nurse and help soldiers like Robbie, in addition to writing the novel to pay for her sin.

Briony experiences all the identity formation stages that Erikson focuses on in his psychosocial development theory. This research tackled Briony's stages from childhood to old age. Due to the lack of attention in her family, Briony fails to have a healthy childhood and build self-confidence. The failure of their childhood period impacts her adolescence and adulthood. In her adolescence period, she makes terrible decisions and causes tragic consequences. In her adulthood, she makes an effort to compensate for the damages she has caused. In her old age, she looks back in despair, which is labeled Erikson's last stage of identity formation, where individuals make flashbacks of what they have done throughout their lives. Briony reveals her identity as the novel's writer and wants to reunite Cecilia and Robbie to give them a happy ending, contrary to what happened in real life. The novel goes into a state of irresolution and leaves the readers questioning the reliability of the narration. Briony's identity as the novel's writer causes a crisis among the readers since they fail to differentiate reality from fiction.

Cecilia and Robbie are other characters who face identity and psychological issues. Cecilia as, a grown woman who studied at Cambridge, does not feel comfortable when she gets back home. She has nostalgia for the old days, while her mother, Emily, rejects the new Cecilia and criticizes her behaviors and even her language. Emily considers Cecilia useless to society; in her belief, what makes a woman valuable is having a husband and children, not her education. This causes distraction to Cecilia's identity and puts her in a continuous struggle with herself. Thus, she tries to compensate for these insecurities in Robbie. On the other hand, Robbie wants to find his own identity. Robbie as the son of the servant family of the Talis family wants to form something new for himself. He wants to erase the feelings of inferiority to Tali's family

and sees himself as suitable for Cecilia. On one side, he wants to be independent; on the other, he wants to be a part of the Talis family through his love triangle with Cecilia. Cecilia and Robbie are identified with Erikson's sixth stage of intimacy vs. isolation. They know each other's feelings, but factors such as class and shared past in Cambridge confuse and isolate them. But they form new identities in the library when they make love. They want to be defined as each other's lovers and form new denials. However, this new identity does not take long. Briony ruins this identity and separates them because of her lie accusation of Robbie. They are left with despair and hopelessness. In an attempt to atone for her sin and satisfy the readers, Briony gives happy endings for Cecilia and Robbie. However, they both died without reuniting with each other. These contradictions put the story's reliability into question and a blurring between reality and fiction.

Never Let Me Go reveals the cruelty of human beings in suppressing the human clones. Kazuo Ishiguro portrays the concept of identity crisis and the denial of existence. In the novel, the clone children are the product of mass and science to serve humanity. Normal humans deny the existence of the clones and use them for donation programs without considering the clone's emotions. Ishiguro reflects on the negative impacts of technology on the human mind, and the readers start to question their human identity. The social environment leaves negative psychological issues on the clone children.

The clones are denied simple rights, including decision makings, career, or any goals. They are used as objects without purpose beyond their designated role. They have no purpose in life and obey the rules imposed on them. The main characters, Kathy, Ruth, and Tommy, are victims of human society. They face internal and external conflict within themselves and each other. This denial of rights leads to a profound identity crisis among the clones. Internal conflicts happen as they grapple with the limitations placed on them. Kathy tries to maintain a logical and rational perspective; meanwhile, Ruth often prioritizes her interests and desires over others. Kathy is against Ruth's idea of imitating human behaviors on television because they are driven two times from reality. Instead, Kathy wants to make meaning and memories from their current personality. The guardians value the clone children depending on the artworks that they produce and their ability to organ donation during their adulthood. However, Ishiguro shows that human identity will be created through experiences and relationships, not through artworks.

The clones stay voiceless without attempting to escape or rebel against the system. They believe they must serve humanity as they have been told as children. Once they grow up into adolescence and early adulthood, they have desires and passions. Thus, they start having identity issues and want to find the original human they were copied from. Among the other characters, Ruth is pretty desperate to find something that can contribute to establishing her own identity. Ruth has a sense of superiority over the others and keeps Tommy as her lover despite realizing that he loves Kathy. She weakens Tommy to keep him by her side and share intimate moments while staying in the cottages. Despite having these intimate moments, Ruth feels soulless and isolated and tries to find her original human model. At this stage, Ruth's condition is labeled with Erikson's sixth stage of psychosocial development theory which is Intimacy Vs isolation. Ruth feels isolated as she is aware that she is controlling Tommy. She tries to find a solution that makes her comfortable. Therefore, Ruth starts to accept her role as a clone and identifies herself as a human clone. In addition, she breaks up with Tommy and attempts to reunite Kathy with Tommy. She wants to atone for her guilt by telling Kathy and Tommy about a deferral that can extend their lives. This stage of Ruth's life is labeled Erikson's last stage of identity development, which is integrity vs. despair when individuals look back at the decisions they made in their past lives. At this stage, Ruth is more mature and embraces her clone identity.

Kathy's character displays independence of judgment and a capacity for tolerance. She is ambitious to create new meanings rather than looking for something that might not exist. Kathy completes the identity stages of her childhood successfully despite having no parents. Therefore, she has a more stable personality than the other children. During their adolescence, Kathy is alienated in the cottages and focuses on her journey for self-discovery. Kathy is labeled to Erikson's sixth stage at the cottages, where she experiences intimacy vs. isolation. She controls her feelings for Tommy; she faces internal and external conflicts. Through Tommy's character, Ishiguro shows the image of the critical role of the environment on individuals.

Tommy has identity issues due to unresolved issues in his childhood and the lack of confidence experiences. He fails to complete his childhood period successfully, which in turn affects his later childhood. Tommy faces disparities and faults in his character when grows up. The Hailsham memories hang him, and he fails to identify himself. This proves Erikson's notion of the impact of society and the environment on human identity.

His psychological layers do not function well and remain tied to his past. Once Kathy and Tommy discover the deferral program hoping that their love can save their soul. However, they get disappointed and lose hope when the Madam tells them that even the soul is doubtful. They might even have no soul to be saved. They are furious, disappointed, and hopeless about everything they thought existed. The characters never get rid of vague feelings regarding their identities. They have to give up and embrace the clone's identity that has been given to them. Throughout this story, Ishiguro depicts the cruelty of human beings and the way that they use power. He deploys clone characters to depict humans' identity issues and psychological problems. He shows the impact of the environment, societal norms, science, and culture on people's lives and their contribution to constructing individuals' personalities and characteristics.

Salman Rushdie as an Indian-British writer has grasped much knowledge on diversity due to his multicultural roots and moving from one place to another. In *Midnight's Children*, he sheds light on the differences between Indian and Western culture. Salman Rushdie reflects on identity issues and seeking the self. He shows fragmented identities through his main character Saleem Sinai and his family members. He portrays identity as fluid, fragmented, and not stable.

Moreover, Rushdie depicts the impact of colonialism and the institutions that aim at splitting Indian society. He shows the negative impacts of these institutions on the psychology of Indian individuals. The identity issues are transformed from generation to generation, from grandparents to grandchildren. The main character Saleem Sinai is presented as a supernatural character born at the midnight of Indian independence in 1947. Rushdie gives supernatural powers to all the children who are born at the Stork of Independence night. He aims to show the blessing that freedom provides to individuals. These midnight children have different ideas and hold meetings now and then.

Saleem's fragmented identity sources from the moment he is born when the nurse replaces him with Shiva. Saleem does not belong anywhere, and he is given a name, family, and life that does not belong to him. He lives with several voices in his head as he has the power to hear other people's thoughts. He fails to differentiate his voice and needs. Sometimes his family considers him crazy, and other times people make fun of his physical shape. He is entangled in a complex condition with no place to belong. Rushdie presents the good side of India through Saleem and the aggressive part through

Shiva, the child who is switched at birth with Saleem. These two main characters struggle over the power to lead the midnight children group. Rushdie reflects on the amount of suffering that Indians went through. Saleem's instability continues as they send him to Pakistan, where he loses his family and memory due to a bombardment. He loses his power of hearing people and starts to have the power of smell. The loss of memory turns Saleem into a savage who kills people without giving a thought. All these struggles shatter Saleem's psychological mind and create an unstable identity. These events align with Erikson's psychosocial development of the impacts of political and social context on human identity. The political issues affect Saleem's identity construction and cause role confusion. Saleem starts to hear his voice when he restores memory in the Sundarbans area, which belongs to India. He gets his feelings and memories back in his motherland. Here, Rushdie reflects on the importance of one's homeland in creating their personality. It also goes in parallel with Erikson's notion about the critical role of the environment in human psychology and its contribution to building individual characteristics. Thus, upon his return to India, he starts his steps towards starting a new identity and life. Rushdie presents hope through Saleem's character as he overcomes all his difficulties and misfortunes. He gathers himself after every fall and compartment.

In *Midnight's Children*, Saleem is not the only character facing fragmented identities. Salman Rushdie reflects on Western ideologies and their impact on creating identity issues. Adam Aziz, Saleem's grandfather, fails to draw a definition for his characteristics, including religion, social norms, and identity. Abdulaziz adapts Western norms while studying medicine in Germany. Thus, he faces several struggles upon his return to India. He suffers from cultural adaptation, which causes role confusion in his personality. Culture is not the only struggle that Aziz faces, and religion is another part that confuses him. He believes that religion splits Indian nations instead of uniting them. After moving from one place to another, holding different views regarding religion, politics, and culture, Adam realizes that what constructs his identity is being Indian. Therefore, he starts to embrace his Indian identity.

The voiceless women characters in the novel are another aspect that Rushdie sheds light on. By portraying three different generations of women, Rushdie shows the suffering of Indian women and their search for their fundamental rights. The first women generation is not allowed to be seen by strangers. Adam meets his future wife, Naseem,

behind the curtains when he goes to her house to treat her for disease. He falls in love with her without seeing her face. Women of the old generation do not have the right to choose, speak, or reject. They have to obey the traditional rules in order to not cause shame for their families. Therefore, they do not have their identities, and everything is settled for them. The patriarchal Indian society affects the process of identity construction, which aligns with Erikson's statement that it is not easy to understand individuals without considering their social context. The women characters are used as objects to satisfy the needs of their society.

Briony in *Atonement*, Kathy H in *Never Let Me Go*, and Saleem in *Midnight's Children* find self-reconciliation in their unique ways. Briony's seeking for Atonement through writing and realizing her mistake present the maturity of Briony's psychological mind. McEwan provides her with the disease of forgetting memories to find peace after her journey of Atonement. Kathy H accepts her identity as a clone and continues her journey as a donor. Saleem forms his identity and finds his voice. He gathers himself and overcomes all the conflicts that he goes through, presenting hope for those individuals who lost hope in the modern world.

There are similarities and differences between the protagonists of the novels. The similarity can be depicted between Briony's character in *Atonement* and Ruth's character in *Never Let Me Go* in trying to atone for their wrong decisions. Ishiguro presents the maturity of Ruth's psychological mind from a selfish person who prioritizes her desire to an individual who admits her mistake of separating Kathy H and Tommy. Ruth shows her Atonement and asks for forgiveness when she wants to gather Kathy and Tommy through a deferral program that she heard to let them have the opportunity to extend their lives. In *Atonement*, Briony is seeking forgiveness for her sin when she dedicates her life to serve injured soldiers of war and attempting to give a happy ending for Cecilia and Robbie. However, Briony's and Kathy's attempts to reunite lovers fail as death is a barrier. Furthermore, Cecilia and Adam Abdulaziz share similarities in their environmental adaptation conflicts as they return home after their studies. Cecilia feels desperate when she comes home from Cambridge as she faces difficulty in dealing with her mother, who does not appreciate Cecilia's education. Likewise, Cecilia, Adam struggles with the Indian community with his Western ideologies. He finds difficulty in expressing himself in terms of religion, politics, and traditional ideas. All these factors led to Adam's identity confusion.

In Conclusion, these novelists assist the readers in resolving internal and external issues that contribute to developing a healthy personality. Thus, this research aimed at tackling the various challenges individuals encounter, often leaving them in chaos, despair, and overwhelmed. It helps readers to enhance their comprehension of the dynamics of their communities as well as their actions and behaviors. In addition, the research highlights the significance of exploring one's true purpose in life and self-reflection. Readers are encouraged to better understand their identities and embark on a journey of self-discovery which establishes a healthier existence. Moreover, by engaging *Atonement*, *Never Let Me Go*, and *Midnight's Children*, this study investigates humans' psychological defense mechanisms to process and cope with their daily actions. It focuses on the impact of these psychological mechanisms on functioning constructively and healthily. While the difference can be depicted between Briony and Kathy in terms of controlling the events as the novel's narrator. Briony controls the flow of the actions around her and wants to act like a God in punishing others and putting things in order. Contrary, Kathy in *Never Let Me Go* is a more rational person despite being a clone. She wants things to be organized and to provide a safe environment for herself and her clone friends. Saleem in *Midnight's Children* has a sense of superiority similar to British colonialism, proving the British forces' impact on the Indian mindset even after India gains independence from Britain. All the protagonists in *Atonement*, *Never Let Me Go*, and *Midnight's Children* are considered unreliable narrators. Briony turns to have Alzheimer's by the end of the novel, Kathy is not a real human being, and Saleem is a delusional person. These inadequacies of the characters make their narration into a state of resolution similar to what happens in the modern world.

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