

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Trauma can be experienced by anyone who has experienced or witnessed a single or repeated traumatic event. As defined by Friedman, “Trauma is currently defined as a catastrophic event (or series of events) in which individuals have been exposed to situations in which they were personally threatened or witnessed death, physical harm, or sexual violence.” (2015: 2). Trauma is one of the main factors that can trigger Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, which will hereafter be referred to as PTSD. According to Friedman, “PTSD is a disorder in which a person experiences trauma-related symptoms or impairments in everyday functioning that last for at least a month and sometimes for life.” (2015: 2). In everyday life, events such as traffic accidents, natural disasters, physical violence, sudden loss of loved ones, and life-threatening incidents can leave a deep psychological impact. Those who experience PTSD often find it difficult to return to normal activities, as memories of the traumatic event can suddenly resurface, accompanied by intense emotional reactions. Some common symptoms that mark the development of PTSD in a person are nightmares, headaches, flashbacks, and sleep disturbances.

Literature often adopts various things in real life into written form so readers can relate to its content. For instance, PTSD is not only a concern in psychology and psychiatry, but has also been widely implemented in literary works, especially novels. As in Danielle Steel’s *Nine Lives*, the author incorporates elements of PTSD into the novel. This novel focuses on the life story of a woman named Mary

Margaret Kelly, or known as Maggie in the novel. Maggie loses her father, a daredevil pilot, to a plane crash when she is nine years old. The trauma of loss makes her grow into a cautious woman who stays away from anything risky. Maggie goes on to live a stable and secure life with Brad, the man who becomes her husband. However, fate makes Maggie face the loss of her loved one once again. Her husband died in a plane crash. The trauma of repeated loss further led to the development of PTSD in Maggie.

This study selects *Nine Lives* by Danielle Steel because it explicitly describes a character's traumatic experience that later develops into PTSD, so this novel is relevant to the central topic of this study. This study fills a void in literary studies by offering an in-depth analysis of the PTSD experienced by Maggie's character in the novel. Utilizing the PTSD theories of Herman (2015) and the American Psychiatric Association (2022), this study aims to examine how Maggie experiences the symptoms, the causes, and the effects of PTSD in the selected book. This study is expected to contribute to studies combining literature and psychology, especially in understanding how trauma is depicted and affects characters in fiction.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What are the symptoms of PTSD that Maggie experiences in Danielle Steel's *Nine Lives*?
2. What are the causes of PTSD that Maggie experiences in Danielle Steel's *Nine Lives*?
3. What are the effects of PTSD that Maggie experiences in Danielle Steel's *Nine Lives*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the symptoms of PTSD experienced by Maggie in Danielle Steel's *Nine Lives*.
2. To describe the causes of PTSD experienced by Maggie in Danielle Steel's *Nine Lives*.
3. To explain the effects of PTSD experienced by Maggie in Danielle Steel's *Nine Lives*.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the intrinsic elements and Maggie's post-traumatic stress disorder in Danielle Steel's *Nine Lives*. The intrinsic elements examine the characters, characterization, settings, and conflicts. The characters include Maggie, Kevin, and Tommy. Meanwhile, the post-traumatic stress disorder explores the symptoms, causes, and effects of Maggie's PTSD in the novel through a psychological approach using Judith Herman and the American Psychiatric Association's theory. The PTSD Maggie experiences in Danielle Steel's *Nine Lives* is the result of traumatic experiences, as evidenced by the symptoms she exhibits, the underlying causes, and the impact on her life and relationships with others.

1.5 Previous Studies

This study only found seven previous studies that discuss the same object as this study, *Nine Lives* by Danielle Steel. First, Barb (2021) writes a book review in his article entitled *Nine Lives by Danielle Steel – a Review*. Through the review, he gives a synopsis of the novel and mentions Maggie as a woman who has always been cautious and is torn between fear and bravery, or love and safety.

The second previous study is a book review called *New Release Book Review: Nine Lives by Danielle Steel* by Barrett (2021). He says the novel has a strong female protagonist, a second-chance romance, internal problems, tragedy, and life disappointment. Moreover, he also says that the protagonist's problems lie in her heart, hopes, cautions, advice, and second thoughts that overwhelm her emotions.

Next, a business analyst, Rajiv (2021), creates a book review entitled *Nine Lives by Danielle Steel*. In the article, he provides a synopsis of the book and explains that Maggie is portrayed as a pleasant character with interesting emotional conflicts, while Paul comes across as a dynamic, adventure-seeking figure.

Michelle Cronauer (2021) also states her opinion about the book in a video that she uploaded on YouTube. In her video entitled *DANIELLE STEEL | NINE LIVES | BOOK REVIEW*, she states that Maggie is a female lead who is deeply imprinted in her head. She also states that reading the novel made her sympathize with the feelings of joy and sorrow experienced by the female and male leads.

Later, a YouTube account called Book Reviews by Namsu (2021) released a review of Danielle Steel's *Nine Lives*. In his video entitled *Nine Lives Review*, he explains that the book sometimes has repetitive things and stiff characters.

Jathan Fink (2022) further publishes a book review titled *Danielle Steel Considers If Love Is Worth the Risk in 'Nine Lives' [REVIEW]*, where he describes Maggie as a woman trying to find the balance between taking risks and being as safe as possible for herself and her child. He also emphasizes that the drastic change

in her mother's behavior after her husband or Maggie's father died is a spontaneous reaction that is completely human and very realistic.

The last previous study is a YouTube video by Kimberly (2022) entitled *Kimberly Reviews Nine Lives by Danielle Steel*. In the video, she provides a synopsis of the novel and mentions that Maggie's mother convinced Maggie to leave her boyfriend, who was considered a daredevil.

The previous studies have a lot of differences from this study. The previous studies are book reviews focusing on intrinsic elements such as Maggie and Paul's characters and *Nine Lives*' themes. On the other hand, this study not only focuses on the intrinsic elements but also Maggie's post-traumatic stress disorder. The intrinsic elements include Maggie, Kevin, and Tommy's characters, characterization, settings, and conflicts. Meanwhile, Maggie's post-traumatic stress disorder includes the symptoms, the causes, and the effects of Maggie's PTSD in the novel.

1.6 Writing Organization

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes the Background of the Study, Research Questions, Objectives of the Study, Scope of the Study, Previous Studies, and Writing Organization.

CHAPTER II: THEORY AND METHOD

This chapter consists of the Theoretical Framework and the Research Method, the theories and methods that are used to analyse the object of this study, *Nine Lives* by Danielle Steel. The theoretical framework is divided

into Intrinsic Elements and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. The intrinsic elements include Characters, Characterization, Settings, and Conflicts, whereas the post-traumatic stress disorder includes the Symptoms of PTSD, the Causes of PTSD, and the Effects of PTSD. The research method is divided into Data and Data Source, Method of Collecting Data, and Method of Analysing Data.

CHAPTER III: MAGGIE'S POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

This chapter analyses Danielle Steel's *Nine Lives* using the theories mentioned earlier. The discussion examines the intrinsic elements and Maggie's post-traumatic stress disorder in the novel. The intrinsic elements explore characters, characterization, settings, and conflicts that are divided into internal and external conflicts. Meanwhile, the post-traumatic stress disorder explores the symptoms, causes, and effects of Maggie's PTSD.

CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION

This chapter includes the conclusions from the key points of the analysis of *Nine Lives* by Danielle Steel.

REFERENCES