

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Humans are social creatures with feelings and emotions that can change at any time according to what is happening in their lives. William James in *The Emotions*, states emotions originate from physiological reactions to external stimuli. (1922: 20). These external experiences influence changes in a person's emotions. Through emotions, people gain better control over their feelings and improve their ability to navigate social and personal interactions. All humans experience happiness, sadness, fear, disgust, anger, and surprise. These basic emotions play an important role in how humans live their lives, influencing how they interact with others in their daily lives and make decisions about what to do.

One of the emotions that may occur is grief. John W. Santrock, in his book *Life-Span Development*, stated that grief is not a simple emotional state but rather a complex, developing process with various components (2010: 681). The process involves experiencing a range of emotions such as emotional reactions, cognitive adjustments, behavioural changes, and personal growth. The various components are not only about grief but also involve trauma, guilt, confusion, anger, and personal growth after going through the process. The grieving process is sometimes confusing and makes the feelings of mourning emotions that are not easy to control. It is possible that grief can be a significant source of stress and chaos in life. The theme of grief is often found in scientific and fictional writing. Since grief is a

universal experience that many humans feel, literature serves as a medium for expressing emotions, understanding oneself, and sharing grief with others.

The novel *The Hate U Give*, written by Angie Thomas, is a literary work that explores the theme of sadness or grief. Angie Thomas is an American author best known for her debut novel, *The Hate U Give*. Born and raised in Jackson, Mississippi, she is inspired by her experiences growing up in a predominantly Black neighbourhood and attending a predominantly White, upper-class private school. The 480-page novel is published on 28 February 2017. The novel was a commercial success, ranking first on The New York Times young adult bestseller list. In its larger context, the story is about injustice, identity, friendship, and the power of individuals to make change. The story begins with the main character, Starr Carter, who is only sixteen. Starr has a background of living in a Black American neighbourhood, yet she attends a private school where most of the students are White. Her life goes well, although when she is with the White community, Starr has to change her personality to be accepted in the White community. Even so, Starr is surrounded by a family that loves and supports each other.

In one part, Starr and her friend, Kenya, attend a party in her neighbourhood. At the party, Starr meets her childhood friend, Khalil Harris, whom she has not seen for a long time. Suddenly, gunshots erupt from a gang, causing chaos at the party. Starr and Khalil leave the place by car. On the way, Officer Brian, a White police officer, stops their car for a traffic check. The officer instructs Khalil not to move and searches him. However, when the police are caught off guard, Khalil opens the door and checks Starr. Suddenly, Officer Brian immediately shoots Khalil because

he thinks Khalil is going to take a gun from the car. After the brutal shooting incident, Starr faces an internal conflict about whether she should testify about what she sees and the risks she might face if she reveals the truth or stays silent and lets the incident pass.

*The Hate U Give* has many common ideas that are highly relevant, touch on many important topics in contemporary society, and take the reader on an emotional and reflective journey about justice, identity, and social change. Through her novel, Angie Thomas wants to illustrate how American institutions, especially the American police force, are unfair in treating the American people. They always see the Black community as a rebellious group and the source of society's problems. Social incidents like this will certainly affect the mental state of the person who is the object. Due to Khalil's death, Starr experiences deep grief that affects her mental state. Starr's identity change is not an easy journey. She experiences many challenges before she finally accepts the circumstances. Her grief progresses through several stages, shaping her personal growth and influencing her daily life.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The problems in this research focus on the main character in Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give*, Starr Carter.

1. What are the causes of the stages of grief experienced by Starr as the main character in the novel *The Hate U Give*?
2. What are the stages of grief experienced by Starr as the main character in

her struggle to survive in the novel *The Hate U Give*?

3. What are the effects of the stages of grief experienced by Starr as the main character in the novel *The Hate U Give*?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

Being connected with the research problems above, the objectives of this research are:

1. To Find out the causes of grief experienced by Starr as the main character in the novel *The Hate U Give*.
2. To know the stages of grief experienced by Starr as the main character in her struggle to survive in the novel *The Hate U Give*.
3. To know the effects of grief experienced by Starr as the main character in the novel *The Hate U Give*.

### **1.4 Previous Studies**

To identify the subject of study that has been conducted, the following previous studies of Angie Thomas's novel *The Hate U Give* serve as references and comparisons.

The first previous study is a research thesis by Suryaningrum Ayu Irawati (2018), entitled "The Struggle of Black People to Avoid Stereotypes in Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give*." This study examines how racism appears in the novel *The Hate That U Give*. The author focuses on analyzing the influence of racial discrimination and the struggle of Black communities against racism and

stereotypes perpetuated by national institutions such as the American government and police.

The second study is a journal article by Nursaamah Lubis and Robby Satria published (2021), entitled "Hierarchy of Needs in Angie Thomas's Novel *The Hate U Give*: Abraham Maslow." This analysis applies a psychological approach, exploring the hierarchy of needs experienced by the novel's characters, including physiological needs, safety, love or belonging, esteem, and self-actualization.

The third study is a journal article by Ola R Naji and Nawal F. Abbas. (2022), entitled "Self-Society Conflict in Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give*: A Critical Discourse Analysis." The authors focus on the social conflict depicted in *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas, which reflects similar struggles in many countries. This study investigates how community self-conflict unfolds by analyzing the discursive strategies used to create positive or negative representations of society. The author finds that rhetorical devices play a significant role in the critical discourse analysis applied by the novel's characters to assert their political, economic, and social influence.

The fourth study is a journal article by Ni Wayan Yunitri, I Made Rajeg, and Sang Ayu Isnu Maharani. (2019), entitled "Racism in The Novel *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas." This analysis uses an extrinsic sociological approach, exploring five extrinsic elements proposed by Wellek and Warren: biography, psychology, social conditions, ideas, and other art forms. The study finds that racism in America is realistically portrayed in the novel, reflecting historical events.

The fifth study is a journal article by Ima Sustika Dewi, Ni Made Widisanti Swetasurya and Ade S. Natawiria. (2021), entitled “The Resistance of The Main Character Against Racism in The Novel *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas.” The authors focus on how racism, rooted in stereotypes, persists today. They analyze how the characters experience and resist racism, including its form and impact on racial injustice in contemporary society.

The sixth study is a journal article by Jeksen Fillan Nani, Olga Rorintulus, and Jenie Posumah. (2023) entitled “Millennial Movement in Angie Thomas’ *The Hate U Give*.” This study examines the role of the millennial generation in the *Black Lives Matter* movement. The authors find that millennials play a crucial role by participating in protests, and social actions, and using social media to fight social inequality, injustice, and discrimination against Khalil and other Black individuals.

The seventh study is a thesis by Santi Prastiwi Komariyah. (2020), entitled “Discrimination Experienced by African Americans in Novel *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas.” This research applies Newman’s theory of five types of discrimination and examines the ways characters resist discrimination using a sociological approach. The author identifies four types of discrimination and four responses to combat it.

The eighth study is a thesis by Khafidaturrafi’ah. (2023), entitled “The Social Action of Starr Carter in *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas.” This research examines how Starr goes through her social action using the theory of Max Weber social action theory. The author identifies the types of social action in Starr Carter and the impact to Starr.

The ninth study is a journal article by Nur Ajeng Syahputri. (2023), entitled “Human Rights in the Novel *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas.” This research explains how the human rights principles in the novel. The author finds that the human rights principles are violated such as universality and inability, participation and inclusion, indivisibility, accountability, and rule, lastly equality and non-discrimination.

The last study is research by Osmama Amjid, Farman Khan, and Nazir Muhammad. (2022), entitled “The Stereotypical Racial Discursive Representation of Blacks: A Critical Discourse Analysis of *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas.” This study has pointed to discursive and ideological strategies as represented tools and whites’ ideas about the differences between black and white races.

These previous studies examine *The Hate U Give* from various perspectives, including racial struggle, the hierarchy of needs, self-society conflict, racism, the millennial movement, and discrimination. However, none of these studies specifically explore the psychological condition of the main character, Starr Carter. Therefore, this research focuses on analyzing the stages of grief that Starr experiences throughout the novel.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

Literature consists of two important parts: intrinsic and extrinsic elements. This research focuses on intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the novel *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas (2017). The intrinsic elements analyze the character and characterization, conflict, and setting. To analyze Starr’s grief, this study borrows from the psychological approach to Elizabeth Kübler-Ross and David Kessler’s

theory of the five stages of grief. Grief plays a crucial role in shaping Starr's character, as she undergoes a profound transformation before and after grieving Khalil's death, evolving from a hesitant and fearful girl into a courageous individual who finds her voice and stands up against injustice.

## **1.6 Organization of the Writing**

This research is organized into four chapters, each with its subchapter. The structure of this thesis is as follows:

1. Chapter 1 (Introduction): This chapter contains the background of the study, research question, research objectives, previous studies, scope of the study, and organization of the thesis writing.
2. Chapter 2 (Theoretical Framework and Research Method): This chapter contains two points: the theoretical framework and the research method. The theoretical framework covers both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. The intrinsic aspects include character and characterization, setting, and conflict. The extrinsic aspect explores the theory of the stages of grief, which serves as the basis for analyzing the main character's emotional development in the novel *The Hate U Give*. The research method section outlines the research approach and data collection method.
3. Chapter 3 (Discussion): This chapter is divided into intrinsic aspects and extrinsic aspects. The intrinsic aspects examine the novel's characters, characterization, setting, and conflict. The extrinsic aspects focus on the stages of grief, as reflected in *The Hate U Give*. The analysis explores how the main character, Starr, experiences the stages of grief: denial, anger,

bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

4. Chapter 4 (Conclusion): This chapter summarizes the findings and analysis from the previous chapter.