



UNVEILING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL DYNAMICS OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN "OPPENHEIMER" MOVIE

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ABSTRACT

The movie is one of the most popular forms of literary media, and film is a tool that can be used to analyze the psychology of the characters in it. This research aims to examine the psychological conditions, such as stress and pressure from the World War II situation, and how the responsibility for the development of the atomic bomb can affect Oppenheimer's thoughts, emotions, and decisions. One of the most impactful films in the history of psychology is Oppenheimer, directed by Christopher Nolan, known for its intricate storytelling and stunning cinematography. The movie is known for exploring the life and work of J. Robert Oppenheimer, an American physicist who played a pivotal role in the development of the atomic bomb during World War II. The writers used a qualitative descriptive method and Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory to analyze the main character's psychology in the film. As a result of this research, the writer found several psychological conditions, such as stress/depression, anxiety, resilience, and euphoria. Based on several movie scenes, the psychological factors that influence the main character's actions are Desire and Moral. These two factors are very influential and contradictory in the actions taken by Oppenheimer throughout the movie.

Keywords: Psychological dynamic, The main character, Oppenheimer, Movie

ABSTRAK

Film merupakan salah satu bentuk media sastra paling populer, dan film merupakan alat yang dapat digunakan untuk menganalisis psikologi tokoh-tokoh di dalamnya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kondisi psikologis, seperti stres dan tekanan dari situasi Perang Dunia II, dan bagaimana tanggung jawab atas pengembangan bom atom dapat memengaruhi pikiran, emosi, dan keputusan Oppenheimer. Salah satu film paling berdampak dalam sejarah psikologi adalah Oppenheimer, yang disutradarai oleh Christopher Nolan, yang dikenal karena penceritaannya yang rumit dan sinematografi yang memukau. Film ini dikenal karena mengeksplorasi kehidupan dan karya J. Robert Oppenheimer, seorang fisikawan Amerika yang memainkan peran penting dalam pengembangan bom atom selama Perang Dunia II. Penulis menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dan teori psikoanalisis Sigmund Freud untuk menganalisis psikologi tokoh utama dalam film tersebut. Sebagai hasil dari penelitian ini, penulis menemukan beberapa kondisi psikologis seperti stres/depresi, kecemasan, resiliensi, euforia. Berdasarkan beberapa adegan film, terlihat bahwa faktor psikologis yang memengaruhi tindakan tokoh utama adalah Hasrat dan Moral. Kedua faktor ini sangat berpengaruh dan saling bertentangan dalam tindakan yang dilakukan Oppenheimer sepanjang film.

Kata kunci: Dinamika, Psikologis, Tokoh Utama, Oppenheimer, Film.

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INTRODUCTION

Literature is one of the ways in which humans express themselves in life that broadly refers to written or audio and visual works, especially those considered to have artistic or intellectual value. According to Goodman (in Endaswara, 2013) Literature includes the writing experimented result within language form to produce creative images or ideas that involve the readers' imagination deliberately and creatively. It can be said that the presence of literary works in the midst of human civilization has been accepted as a socio-cultural reality. Nowadays, the literary works such as; novel, drama, poetry, short story or movie are believed to be able to "humanize" humans. This is also means that literature can make humans understand and live the essence of humanity (Fitriyah, 2021).

To summarize the statement above, literature is described as written materials used as sources of information in various educational and professional settings within language form itself. Moreover, literature encompasses not only written texts but also audiovisual materials such as films, recordings, books, journals, novels, and other informative artifacts.

One of the most impactful films on psychological history is Oppenheimer that directed by Christopher Nolan, known for his intricate storytelling and visually stunning cinematography. The film is expected to explore the life and work of J. Robert Oppenheimer, the American physicist who played a pivotal role in the development of the atomic bomb during World War II. Oppenheimer's story is one of complexity, as he grappled with the moral implications of his scientific discoveries and the devastating impact they would have on humanity.

Oppenheimer's personal life was also full of conflict and complexity. He had complicated relationships with his family, especially with his authoritarian father and his sister who was involved in controversial political activities. He also had complicated relationships with his colleagues at the Manhattan Project, some of whom doubted his political loyalties. The psychological story of J. Robert Oppenheimer is a fascinating reflection of how external and internal pressures can affect a person's thoughts, feelings and actions. It is a powerful example of the complexity of human psychology and how historical context can shape a person's thinking and behaviour.

The writers analyse focuses on the psychoanalysis aspect of the main character in the film. According to Freud (in Ardiansyah et al., 2022) psychoanalysis is a pioneering psychological theory and therapeutic method that seeks to explore the unconscious mind's influence on human behaviour. It possesses that individual's thoughts, feelings, and actions are often determined by unconscious motives and conflicts stemming from early childhood experiences. Through techniques such as free association, dream analysis, and transference, psychoanalysis aims to bring these unconscious processes to light, therefore helping individuals gain insight into their behaviour and address unresolved issues. While controversial and evolving, psychoanalysis has had a

profound impact on psychology, influencing not only therapeutic practices but also our understanding of human development, personality, and mental health.

Therefore, the relation of psychoanalysis and the psychology condition of J. Robert Oppenheimer is the reason why the writers chose this title. In order to limit the focus of this research, the writer intends to discuss the main issues through the following questions, namely: What is the psychological condition portrayed in the Oppenheimer Movie? And What are psychological factors that are highlighted in the film contribute to J. Robert Oppenheimer's decision making and actions as depicted in the film?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The psychoanalysis theory used here is the theory proposed by Sigmund Freud. Based on Freud's personality theory saw the psyche structured into three parts (i.e., tripartite), the id, ego and superego, all developing at different stages in our lives (Fitriani, 2019). They interact together to create a behavior and have a powerful influence to the individual personality. According to Freud (1921) that human have to interact to produce behavior and have a strong influence on one's personality. Sigmund Freud's theory proves the connection between psychology and literature." This means that personality can show how the behavior of an individual can be related to the mind and psychology of one individual. There are three fundamental principles in Freud's theory: the constancy principle, the pleasure principle, and the reality principle. Which included in Id, Ego, Superego and Ideal Self (Ardiansyah et al., 2022).

Moreover, according to Al Areqih (2022), psychoanalytic criticism explores human behavior in depth, revealing hidden anxieties, desires, and inner conflicts. Another research is conducted by Gonibala & Mariana (2022), they examines five short stories from James Joyce's "Dubliners", highlighting the presence of Freud theory of ego, and superego in the characters. These characters exhibit various desires, such as seeking adventure, confessing love, leaving home, craving freedom from marriage, and pursuing wealth. Some characters act on these desires without considering moral or societal norms, while others balance their desires with moral considerations, reflecting the interplay between the ego and superego.

For the same topic, Khafidah el. al., (2023) conducted the research shows that the main character is represented by negative thoughts and temperament, the ego is represented by the ability to be realistic in dealing with various problems faced, and the superego is represented by feelings of guilt. Referring to Carl Gustav Jung's psychoanalytic theory. The research provides deep insight into the personality structure and psychological dynamics of the main character in the movie.

Meanwhile, according to Dyer in Martins (2023) they define that "The psychology of literature offers a comprehensive theory of how people re-create their literary experiences, revealing the essential nature of the literary experience and its impact on individuals." It means that the psychology in literature explores how individuals interpret and engage with literary works such as novels, poems, and movies.

According to Freud in Fitriyah & Anindya (2024) our personality is shaped by three interacting components: (1) Id – the primitive part of the mind, driven by instincts and the pleasure principle (for example: "*I want it now*"). (2) Ego – the rational part, working on the reality principle (balances the id's desires with reality's limits). (3) Superego – our moral conscience, shaped by societal and parental standards (for example: "*You shouldn't do that*"). These three are often in conflict, creating tension and anxiety.

Film is one of the most popular form media of literature, and has various ways (Wedhowerti, 2024). A film that is mainly based on a true story is usually adapted from events that have generated widespread discussion or from a tragedy that has deeply affected the public (Atmantika et al., 2022) Moreover, Martins et. al., (2023) defines that movie is a place to present issues of philosophy and moral life in the form of a narrative that the audience can identify with. So, movie is a cornerstone of modern entertainment and art that hold a special place in the hearts of people worldwide. They offer a window into different worlds, cultures, and experiences, allowing audiences to escape reality and immerse themselves in compelling stories. Further, movies also have the power to evoke a wide range of emotions, from laughter and joy to sadness and fear, creating a unique and memorable experience for viewers.

Films frequently delve into the complexities of the human mind, depicting various psychological phenomena, disorders, and theories. Khafidoh et.al., (2023) states that human beings can rapidly understand new fictional characters in movies by inferring their mental states from previously seen movies. It means that through the portrayal of characters thoughts, emotions, and behaviours, films can offer insights into the human condition, illuminating universal truths about our fears, desires, and motivations. Moreover, movies often use psychological concepts to craft compelling narratives and character arcs, creating relatable and empathetic experiences for audiences. In film, there exists a kind of living unconscious. The nuanced aspects of disturbed personalities can be portrayed, and conflicts between characters can be intensified through cinematography, allowing viewers to feel the power and allure of pain within human relationships (Pederson, 2019).

Although "Oppenheimer" movie has gained widespread attention and has been discussed from historical, political, and cinematic perspectives by critics and scholars, there is still a noticeable lack of academic research that deeply examines the psychological dimensions of the main character. Most existing analyses focus on the film's historical accuracy, scientific achievements, political controversies, or its cinematic techniques such as narrative structure and visual storytelling. However, very few studies specifically explore how the film portrays Oppenheimer's inner psychological conflicts — especially concerning guilt, moral responsibility, self-identity, and the emotional burden of scientific power. This gap indicates the need for a psychological literary analysis that investigates how the film represents the complex mental struggles of an individual who is caught between ambition and ethical consequences. Therefore, this research aims to fill that gap by offering a focused psychological analysis of Oppenheimer's character, providing deeper insight that has not been extensively discussed in previous studies.

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, the research enriches the field of literary and film analysis by offering deeper insights into how psychological theory can be applied to examine character development and internal conflicts in biographical films. It also contributes to the study of psychological criticism by highlighting the representation of guilt, moral responsibility, and identity crisis within a historical figure's narrative. Practically, this study may serve as a useful reference for students, researchers, and educators who are interested in exploring the intersection between psychology and literature or film. Furthermore, it can help viewers develop a more critical understanding of how cinema reflects the complex moral and psychological struggles faced by individuals in real-world historical contexts.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the writers used the descriptive qualitative method which is a research method that was conducted to interpret and describe in agreement with the reality (Emzir, 2009). According to Aspers & Corte (2019) qualitative research is an iterative process in which improved understanding to the scientific community is achieved by making new significant distinctions resulting from getting closer to the phenomenon studied. Based on the statements above, qualitative research is a method that creates new research with significant differences from previous research relating to similar phenomena. Hence, the author decided to use this method in accordance to finishing this research. The writer also uses psychological approach based on the theory of Sigmund Freud's theory of literary psychology. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory is a general theory that includes the theory of dream interpretation.

The data collection includes the method or the writer way to collect the data. In this study, the data collection technique used by the writer is the documentation technique.

a. Primary Source

The primary source of the research object is directly in the film to be researched; the writer will take the psychological issues in the film "Oppenheimer" and then the writer will analyze and process them into research that will be researched.

b. Secondary Source

Secondary sources are the result of using other sources that are not direct and are documents related to the topic of the research that are being conducted regarding psychology and psychoanalysis. The secondary sources of this research are books, the internet. Other sources of information related to the topic of the research.

For data analysis procedures, the writers conduct some analysis of the data that has been taken and then will be analyzed and processed for the benefit of the research. The analysis technique is carried out through the following steps:

- a. The writers watch "Oppenheimer" movie.
- b. The writers read all of the "Oppenheimer" transcript dialogue

- c. The writers classify and identify the dialogue or scenes that related to psychological activities/issues
- d. The writers analyze the finding
- e. Discuss the result
- f. Conclude

FINDING

In this discussion, the psychological dynamics of the main character in the film will be explained through Sigmund Freud psychoanalysis theory and data collection from watching the movie *Oppenheimer*. The data to be analyzed are the scenes or moments and dialogues in the movie script that indicates the psychological changes of the main character in the movie.

1. Portrayed of Psychological Condition in the *Oppenheimer* Movie

According to Freud & Hall (1921) psychoanalysis theory, Freud proposed that the mind is structured into three parts: the id which contains primal desires and drives, ego which mediates between the id and the external world and the superego, which embodies internalized societal norms and morals. The *Oppenheimer* movies show a lot of psychological issues demonstrated by the main character J. Robert Oppenheimer himself. This would be explained through the following data.

a. Stress/Depression

Data 1



Figure 1. Oppenheimer Homesick in His House (Performed at: 00:03:29-00:03:54)

At the beginning of the scene, we can immediately see the psychological condition of the main character who is homesick because he is studying at Cambridge university. We can see from the dialog and the scene that the protagonist is also under great stress there. There are no friends, no family, just him studying in a place far from his hometown America. In the situation of homesickness this relate to the "id" that may be driving Oppenheimer desire for comfort, familiarity, and emotional support from home and this led into depression. Depression is a psychiatric disorder causing prolonged feelings of sadness, emptiness, or hopelessness, and a loss of interest in activities once enjoyed (Tarzian, Ndrio, & Fakoya, 2023). This urge for quick respite

from the agony and loneliness of being away from home exemplifies the "id" at work, as it seeks to meet these basic emotional demands.

Another examples can be found as follows.

Data 2



Figure 2. Oppenheimer struggling in the class lab (Performed at: 00:4:03-00:04:27)

In this scene, we can see that Oppenheimer is having difficulty in carrying out his duties as a student in a lab, although there is no dialog in the scene, but from it we can understand that Oppenheimer is having difficulty due to his psychological condition which is being disturbed because with intense academic pressure and feelings of isolation with his studies and his struggle to fit in socially and intellectually reveal his early psychological stress.

From here we can conclude from the scene depicted, it shows that this is one of the initial symptoms of the psychological changes of Oppenheimer himself where he feels anxiety and struggle because of his feelings of isolation with his studies. Another example are follows.

Data 3

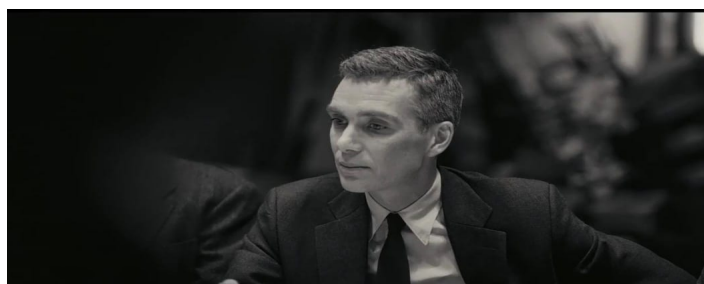


Figure 3. Oppenheimer suspecting a spy on the project (Performed at: 01:07:15 - 01:07:25)

Supporting dialog:

Strauss : *And if the Russians know about it already from a spy at Los Alamos, then we've got to get going*

Oppenheimer: *There's no proof there was a spy at Los Alamos*

In this scene, Oppenheimer is seen being interrogated by Strauss because he is suspected of being a Russian spy who participated in the atomic bomb project. But on the one hand, Oppenheimer did not know that Hans was a Russian spy because he thought it was impossible.

But Strauss showed strong evidence that Hans was actually a Russian spy in disguise and that made Oppenheimer stressed and disappointed when he found out about it.

This indicates a psychological condition of the main character when he is faced with unexpected problems that make the main character experience disappointment and stress when knowing things that are actually impossible to happen. Stress is a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation, and can negatively impact a person's health.(Florensa, Juniarta, & Purimahua, 2022).

b. Anxiety

Data 4

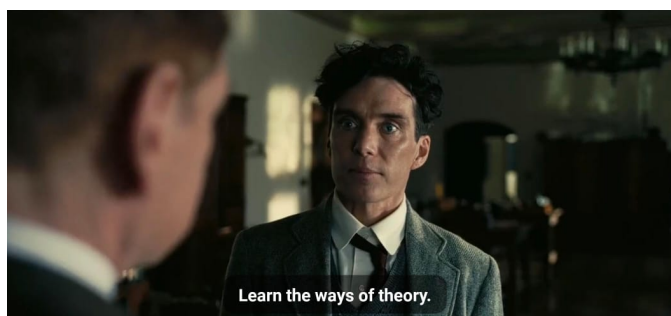


Figure 4. Niels Bohr asking Oppenheimer to study in German (Performed at: 00:06:31-00:07:06)

Supporting dialog:

Niels Bohr: *"Why ask again?"*

Oppenheimer: *"Hadr't Like Your Answer"*

Niels Bohr: *"Go somewhere they let you think"*

Niels Bohr: *"Get to Germany. Study under Max Born, Learn the ways of Theory"*

This scene is a flashback when Oppenheimer was still in Cambridge and in this scene, we see Oppenheimer meeting his lecturer Niels Bohr who is talking to Patrick, they are discussing about Oppenheimer expressed his dissatisfaction with Niels Bohr's answer in the previous class and from there Niels gave Oppenheimer advice to go to study in Germany to continue his studies.

Based on the scene, we can see that Oppenheimer is not satisfied with the answer from his mentor and wants to continue his study further by following his mentor's advice to go to Germany. This shows a form of "Id" in Freud's psychoanalysis theory regarding Oppenheimer's dissatisfaction and his unexpressed anxiety to fulfil his dreams. Anxiety is a feeling of unease, such as worry or fear, and is a natural reaction to situations we find threatening or difficult (Niaz, Stanikzai, & Sahibzada, 2019).

Another examples can be found as follows.

Data 5

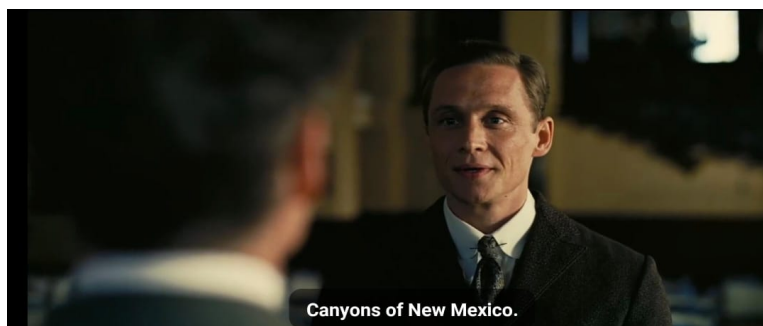


Figure 5. Oppenheimer meet Heisenberg in German (Performed at: 00:15:53-00:16:20)

Supporting dialog:

Oppenheimer: *"I have to get back to America"*

Heisenberg: *"Why? There's no one there taking quantum mechanics seriously"*

Oppenheimer: *"That's exactly why, that's the America I miss right now"*

Heisenberg: *"Then it's best you get home, cowboys."*

This time the scene takes place in Germany where Oppenheimer meets Heisenberg for the first time to help him return to America. Because Oppenheimer was still a little homesick and afraid of the German regime that haunted the Jews. And also, he wanted to teach quantum physics in his home country in order to build a better physics education because he's dissatisfied by the American physics education.

From this scene we can conclude that Oppenheimer's psychological condition is not so good and rather volatile than he feels anxiety because he lives in a regime that hates Jews and feels homesick at the same time but still dares to appear in public. This is related to the "Ego" where Oppenheimer knows very well what actions he will take towards others. Another finding as follows.

Data 6

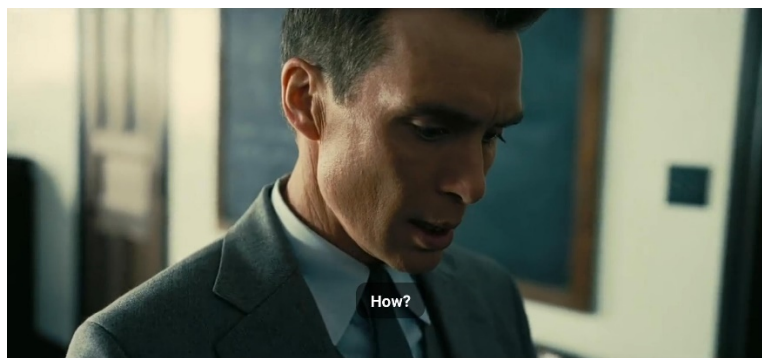


Figure 6. Oppenheimer Seeing the Newspaper (Performed at: 00:27:49-00:28:46)

Supporting dialog:

Alvarez: *"They've done it. They've done it, Hahn and Strassmann in Germany. They split the uranium nucleus, how?"*

Oppenheimer: *"Bombarded it with neutrons, it's not possible" *Continues to prove it with his theories that it can't be done*

Lawrence: *"It's just one problem, next door, Alvarez did it, theory will only take you so far"*

In this scene Oppenheimer sees a news in the newspaper stating that Hahn and Strassman in Germany have succeeded in separating the uranium nucleus or what can be called an atom. They did it by bombarding the atom with neutrons. Oppenheimer was shocked and tried to prove it with his theory but he thought it was impossible. From there he felt that his theory was not satisfactory enough because Alvarez managed to reproduce it in the next room. Another example as follows.

Data 7

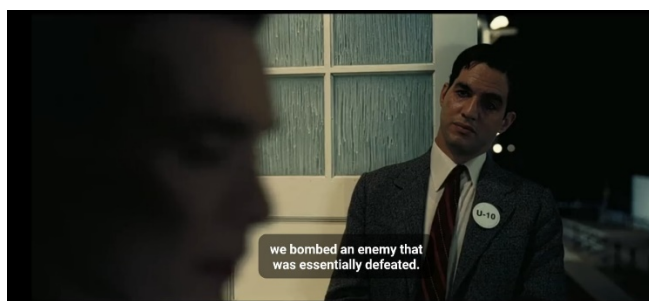


Figure 7. Oppenheimer talking with Teller about a Physicist (Performed at: 02:17:53-02:18:19)

Supporting dialog:

Teller: *"Did you read this crap in the papers? A British physicist is saying the atomic bombings were not the last act of World War II, but the first act of this cold war with Russia"*

Oppie: *"Which psychists?"*

Teller: *"I think you know him, Patrick Blackett"*

In this scene we see Teller approaching Oppenheimer to tell him something, he said there was a physicist who said that the making and dropping of the atomic bomb was not the end of World War II, he said that this was actually the beginning of the cold war with Russia. Hearing that, Oppenheimer asked who the physicist was and the teller replied that maybe Oppenheimer knew him the physicist was named Patrick Blackett. From there he learned that he was Oppenheimer former teacher at Cambridge University. He felt disappointed by the news he heard because at that time he himself told her to study quantum physics because of his dissatisfaction with the answers from his lecturer. Dissatisfaction-related emotions like regret, disappointment, and anger can impact electoral behavior, with different emotions having distinct consequences.

c. Resilience

Data 8



Figure 8. Oppenheimer lecturing physics in class (Performed at: 00:13:22-00:13:58)

This scene is set in the Netherlands, where Oppenheimer is now a physics teacher after studying in Germany for many years, a journey that was so long that he could become a physics teacher in front of so many students from a university in the Netherlands. In this scene we can see that the psychological condition of Oppenheimer is starting to improve from before he was affected by depression and homesick because he was far from his home. But now he is slowly getting up to teach at a university. This shows his resilience in dealing with problems. Dissatisfaction is a related emotions like regret, disappointment, and anger can impact electoral behavior, with different emotions having distinct consequences (Tarzian et al., 2023).

Data 9

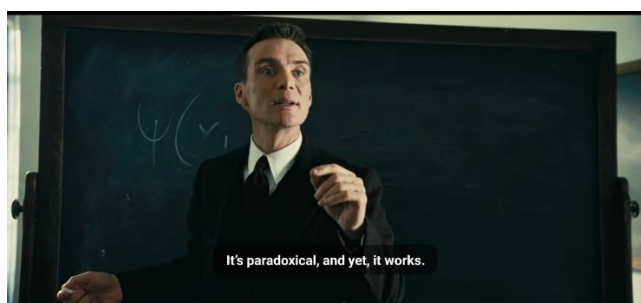


Figure 9. Oppenheimer start a class of quantum physics (Performed at: 00:17:53-00:18:40)

In this scene shows his return to his hometown of America and then Oppenheimer immediately opened a class at a university in America and became a lecturer of quantum physics, which when the class first started Oppenheimer only had one student, Lomenitz, who then grew into many because of their curiosity with quantum physics.

From the scene above, we can conclude that when Oppenheimer returned to America, his psychological condition became better than before, where he is now free from homesickness and excessive worry when in a foreign country. This is also related to the "superego" where

Oppenheimer now feels satisfaction for teaching quantum physics in his home country. Another finding can be found in:

Data 10



Figure 10. Oppenheimer speaking in front of theorist (Performed at: 01:35:37-01:36:04)

Supporting dialog:

Oppie: *"We're theorist, yes? We imagine a future, and our imaginings horrify us and they won't understand it until they've used it. When the world learns the terrible secret of Los Alamos, our work here will ensure a peace mankind has never seen"*

In this scene Oppenheimer came to a forum filled with many theorists who were questioning the morals of humanity for wanting to drop atomic bombs on Japan, Oppenheimer then came to talk about it where he felt this was well planned and for the safety of humanity in the future. Likewise, people will not care about what they have done because it has been replaced with world peace that they have never seen before.

From the dialog and scene, we can conclude that this scene is strongly related to the strong "Ego" function where Oppenheimer dares to take unusual actions and is able to balance the situation and utilize effective strategies to maintain the challenge of psychological conditions in the face of difficulties.

Data 11



Figure 11. Oppenheimer Giving Speeches About Atomic Bomb (Performed at: 02:18:49-02:19:15)

Oppie: *"I hope in years to come, you'll look back on your work with pride, if atomic weapons to be added to the arsenals of warring world, then the day will come when people curse Los Alamos."*

In this scene, Oppenheimer gives speeches about the atomic bomb project that has been successfully implemented with the dropping of two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but on the other hand there is a moral protest that makes Los Alamos residents and Oppenheimer himself feels bad because of many casualties caused by their atomic bombs. However, here Oppenheimer encourages the workers who have succeeded in providing peace to the world, which the workers themselves should be proud of.

d. Euphoria

Data 12



Figure 12. Oppenheimer meet his first lover Jean (Performed at: 00:22:47-00:23:05)

Supporting dialogue

Oppie: *"I like a little wiggle room; do you always toe the party line?"*

Jean: *"I like a wiggle room too."*

In this scene we see Oppenheimer first meet his first love with a woman named Jean Tatlock, they meet at a party containing members of the American Communist Party and Chevalier introduces them there. Feeling the same interest in physics, they quickly got to know each other without further ado. Oppenheimer began to feel the vibrations of love and pleasure within himself when he was around Jean.

From there we can conclude that the psychological conditions that occur in Oppenheimer's body are more inclined towards love and pleasure. Love is a form of emotion containing attraction, sexual desire, and attention to someone, with components like intimacy, passion, and commitment (Tampubolon & Arianto, 2022). This relates to the pleasure principle within the "Id" as it involves the basic need for physical and emotional connection.

Data 13



Figure 13. Oppenheimer Celebrating the Success of the Detonation Performed at: 01:59:29-01:59:53

This scene shows Oppenheimer's celebrating his success after detonating his first atomic bomb in the previous test session. Although there is no dialog, the euphoria and pleasure are clearly depicted through the scene. This shows the connection with the Id, Ego, and superego at once where the Id drives the source of happiness obtained and the ego adjusts to the existing reality, namely his success in the atomic bomb test, and the superego that gives him a sense of satisfaction because the efforts he has been working on have paid off.

Data 14



Figure 14. Oppenheimer getting achievement as "Father of Atomic Bomb" (Performed at 02:52:13-02:52:48)

Frank: *"You Happy, I'm Happy."*

This scene shows an old Oppenheimer at a congress of physicists where he is honored as the father of the atomic bomb. He gives speeches there and he also has his brother Frank who he hasn't seen for a long time. Here he feels happy because he has passed a period that was so dark for him where at that time, he had to live his day with guilt for making an atomic bomb that caused many casualties. But now he has let it all go and is living the day as usual again.

In this scene we can see that Id acts as the driver of the source of happiness in Oppenheimer even though he is actually not okay. And this is also related to the "superego" where he feels satisfied and happy to have been named the father of the atomic bomb.

2. Psychological Factors that influence Oppenheimer's decision making

Here the writers will analyze the scenes related to the influence of psychological conditions that affect the decision making of J. Robert Oppenheimer in the film. The writers try to relate Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory into the analysis which is Id, Ego, and Superego. The data to be analyzed can be in the form of scenes or dialogues which will be presented as follows.

a. Id: Primal Drives and Desire

Data 15

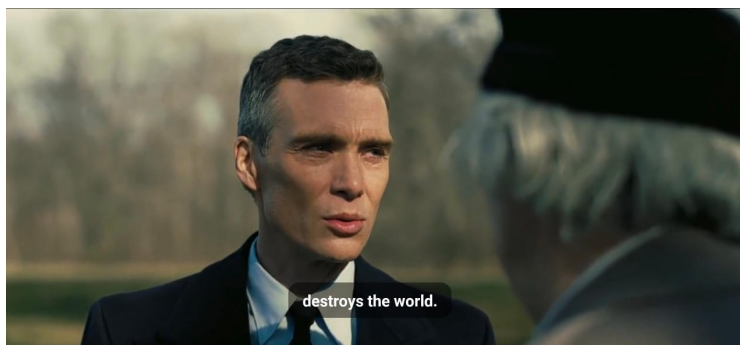


Figure 15. Oppenheimer discussing with Einstein (Performed at: 00:54:47-00:55:18)

Supporting dialogue

Oppie : *"When we detonate an atomic device, we might start a chain reaction that destroys the world."*

Einstein : *"So here we are, hmm?"*

In this scene, Oppenheimer is seen talking about chain reaction or can be called a bomb to Einstein, who thinks this discovery can destroy the world because the explosive power produced is likely to be so powerful that it can damage the earth's atmosphere. From the scene we can conclude that the "id" influence is in Oppenheimer fascination with the immense power of the atomic bomb. This primal drive for discovery and the inherent thrill of creating something unprecedented can be seen as an expression of the "id" desire for achievement and recognition.

Data 16

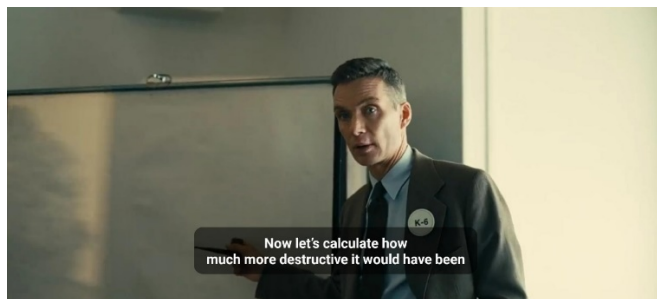


Figure 16. Oppenheimer explaining about the nuclear reaction (Performed at: 01:01:19-01:01:26)

Supporting dialog:

Oppie: *"Now let's calculate how much more destructive it would have been if it were a nuclear and not a chemical, reaction. Expressing power in terms of tons of TNT."*

In this scene Oppenheimer is explaining the history of the explosion of a ship containing ammunition and then the explosion turned into a chemical reaction, here Oppenheimer shows how if a nuclear reaction explodes, it might produce a force equivalent to tons of TNT. This scene shows Oppenheimer relentless drive to achieve scientific breakthroughs, such as the development of the atomic bomb it reflects the "id" influence. The "id" represents primal desires and instincts, driving him towards significant achievements without initially considering the ethical implications.

b. Ego: Reality and Practically

Data 17



Figure 17. Oppenheimer meeting with officials (Performed at: 01:40:09-01:40:43)

In this scene, Oppenheimer is seen discussing with military and other officials about his atomic bomb. During the discussion, he discusses the technical challenges, timelines, and strategic objectives while addressing concerns and negotiating practicalities. This scene demonstrates the "ego" role in mediating between Oppenheimer scientific ambitions "id" and the practical, strategic, and ethical considerations imposed by military and political leaders. The "ego" navigates the balance between internal desires and external demands.

c. Superego: Moral and Ethical Considerations

Data 18

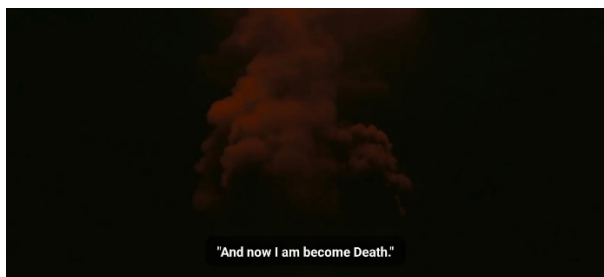


Figure 18. Oppenheimer witnessing the Trinity detonation test (Performed at: 01:57:12-01:57:43)

Supporting dialogue

Oppie: *"And now I am become Death. The destroyer of worlds."*

In this scene, Oppenheimer witnesses the process of the bomb trinity detonation test. After witnessing the successful detonation of the first atomic bomb at the Trinity test site, Oppenheimer is seen reflecting on the power and destruction he has unleashed. The famous quote attributed to him, "Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds", encapsulates his immediate realization of the bomb's destructive potential. This moment symbolizes the activation of his superego. The quote reflects his deep internal conflict and the moral weight of his actions.

Data 19



**Figure 19. Oppenheimer heard the news of the bombing on Hiroshima
(Performed at: 02:03:21-02:03:54)**

Supporting dialogue

Truman: *"Sixteen hours ago, an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima and destroyed its usefulness to the enemy."*

In this scene, Oppenheimer hears the news that the bomb has been successfully dropped on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The scenes show him in a state of shock and remorse, contemplating the massive loss of life and suffering caused by the bombs. The "superego" punitive role becomes prominent here. Oppenheimer guilt and moral questioning indicate the internalized societal and ethical standards judging his actions. His facial expressions, body language, and dialogue all convey deep remorse and ethical conflict.

These two scenes highlight the intense psychological dynamics between the id, ego, and superego in Oppenheimer's psyche. Initially motivated by the "id" desire for scientific progress and the ego practical reasons, the superego eventually exerts its authority, causing intense remorse and moral turmoil. The activation of the superego indicates Oppenheimer internalization of societal and ethical standards, which results in a deep sense of responsibility and guilt for the repercussions of his actions.

DISCUSSION

J. Robert Oppenheimer life and actions are significantly influenced by his intense desire for scientific discovery, his subsequent depression following the realization of the bomb's destructive power, and his deep sense of responsibility for the consequences of his work. His passion for physics drives him to explore nuclear fission and contribute to groundbreaking scientific advancements. However, after the successful creation of the Trinity bomb, he experiences profound depression, troubled by the potential future destruction and ethical implications of his creation. Moreover, Oppenheimer's sense of responsibility manifests in his efforts to grapple with the guilt and moral weight of his actions, showing his commitment to bearing the consequences of the powerful weapon he helped create and the lives it impacted.

In this film, there are intense psychological dynamics between the id, ego, and superego in Oppenheimer's psyche. Initially motivated by the "id" desire for scientific progress and the ego practical reasons, the superego eventually exerts its authority, causing intense remorse and moral turmoil. The activation of the superego indicates Oppenheimer internalization of societal and ethical standards, which results in a deep sense of responsibility and guilt for the repercussions of his actions.

From there we can conclude that the psychological conditions that occur in Oppenheimer's body are more inclined towards love and pleasure. Love is a form of emotion containing attraction, sexual desire, and attention to someone, with components like intimacy, passion, and commitment (Mahmud, 2019). This relates to the pleasure principle within the "Id" as it involves the basic need for physical and emotional connection.

The film "Oppenheimer" teach us the importance of taking responsibility for your actions. Throughout the movie, Oppenheimer deals with the massive fallout from creating the atomic bomb, and you can see how heavily it weighs on him. The scenes after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are especially powerful, showing his deep sense of guilt and moral conflict. It's a reminder that when you have the power to make big changes, you also have to face the consequences and own up to them.

Another lesson we can take from the film is the value of ethical thinking and having the guts to stand up for what's right. After the war, Oppenheimer pushes hard for nuclear disarmament and better control over nuclear technology, showing his commitment to doing what he believes is ethically correct. He doesn't back down, even when he's up against powerful political and military figures. The movie highlights how important it is to constantly think about the moral implications

of your work and to have the courage to fight for those principles, no matter how tough the opposition is.

CONCLUSION

After analysing several scenes that show the psychological condition of J. Robert Oppenheimer, the writers found several psychological conditions related to the theory put forward by Sigmund Freud. These include, stress or depression, anxiety, resilience and euphoria. It is all related to Freud's principles where the writer finds that this film emphasizes aspects of psychological pressure that can be seen from various scenes such as the beginning of his learning the theory of quantum and until he was told to make an atomic bomb which was very stressful for him. However, this movie also shows how his psychological condition after achieving achievements and successfully overcoming various problems he faced where Oppenheimer felt mixed emotions after facing long problems. This also shows his psychological dynamics throughout the movie.

Then, the writers also find several psychological factors that influence the decision making of the main character in the film, along with Freud's theory of Id, Ego, and superego, here the writer finds several factors that dominate in influencing Oppenheimer's actions, which are "Desire" and "Moral", these two factors are very influential in the actions taken by Oppenheimer throughout the film. Where he has the desire to make new discoveries in the world of physics but is often restrained by his morals in the process of making bombs and projects carried out.

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