

## Conflict and Overprotective Mother Towards Her Daughter in *Regretting You* Novel by Colleen Hoover

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this study is to analyze both the illustration and the effect of two personal matters within a family. Those two things aforementioned are the conflict and overprotective attitude of a mother toward her daughter portrayed in the novel. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method which has the main source, that is Regretting You novel. The writer conducts this study by adapting or referring from the grand theory underlying topic area of conflict and overprotective matter. Thus, the theories being used in this study is taken from several experts; they are: Kenney's theory of conflict classification, Harlina's theory of parental overprotectiveness, and Syamsu's theory of the effect of parental overprotectiveness on their children. The results or findings of this study are that: (1) There are two types of conflict experienced by the characters within the novel, they are called as the internal conflict and external conflict. (2) There are four characteristics of the overprotective attitude possessed by the mother character in this novel, they are as follows: giving excessive protection, excessive control, monitoring children's movements, and giving punishment. (3) There are four effects experienced by the female character in the novel referring to the result of a mother's overprotective attitude, they are as the followings: aggressive and spiteful, escape from reality, unable to control emotion, and lying habit.*

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### Introduction

Literature is one of the subdivisions in exploring English as the language. Literary work can be defined as writing a value as work of art like fiction, poetry, novel, and criticism that are recognizing as having important and permanent artistic value (Carter, 2019), (Witthome 2014), (Widyaningrum 2021). Shortly stated out, literature is a writing that has artistic value. As being mentioned previously that, literary works have many forms, one of them is novel.

It is known from Eshkuvatovna (2022) and Prawinanto Prasetyo (2019), novel is really popular with people of all age, mostly for teens and young adults. Generally, novel is referred as a work in which a person pours all ideas, imaginations that are in his thoughts and feelings into writing. As Rahmawati (2013) has declared, novels are relatively new among other literary works, until now novels still have a special place for some people. This statement means, novel is a relatively new literary work that is the creative work of an artist and is infused with thoughts and feelings.

Philips (2019) implied that, within a novel has the characteristic features: (a) being a verbal object, (b) being written, for the most part, in prose, (c) having at least  $m$  words, where  $m$  is a number in the 30.000-word range, (d) being intended by its author(s) to tell a fictional story, and realizing this intention at least to some extent. It can be shortened that, novel is a literary work that is being written mostly in poem, has the average word range of 30.000, and intended as a fictional story by its authors. Jankowiak (2021) and Muhammad Taufik

(2015) tell that, for most readers within those age group, fiction novel becomes the preferred genre. Fiction novels are really broad and full of variety, they provide an escape from reality and is interesting for teens and young adults.

About novel, the writers have decided to select *Regretting You* novel by Colleen Hoover. Briefly pointing out, the novel is about Morgan Grant, a mother, who has a teenager-daughter, Clara, who are experiencing the usual issues that are commonly has to be faced by mothers and daughters. Morgan does not want Clara to be harmed and will do everything in her power to stop her daughter from doing the same mistakes that she did when Morgan was younger. Morgan portrayed an overprotective mother that willing to do everything in her power to protect Clara from the harsh truth about her father. Thus, Morgan can fall into the overprotective parent type because she tries to control Clara's life too much in fear of her daughter well-being.

The topic portrayed in the novel conveys about conflict and overprotectiveness behavior of a mother towards her daughter. Mothers are usually the parent figure who are the closest and has the strongest connection with their child, especially in a mother and child bond. Despite that, mothers could have several parenting style and methods that cannot be accepted by their own child, creating clash between them, and in turn creating a conflict between them.

Conflict is something that occurs between an individual and another individual or another group. As the point of view of Behfar et al., (2019) conducts that, a serious disagreement or argument, typically a protracted one. While overprotectiveness behavior is a behavior that can is typically done by someone of a higher authority to their close ones, and that may cause something negative to the person who are overprotected Bruysters (2019). Furthermore, while conflict is unavoidable, it can be managed. As Etkin & Bowker, (2019) said, conflict will always exist on an individual and organizational. Thence, conflict is an unavoidable thing that will exist on an individual and organizational level, but still manageable if being handled properly.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Literature**

From the statement from Langer (2020), he share that, literature embodies a language's or people's culture and heritage. Though many have attempted to describe the term, it is apparent that the acknowledged meaning of literature is continuously shifting and evolving.

On the other hand Balibar & Macherey (2021), literature is portrayed by the writer's own writing style. It can also be portrayed by the expression of the characters in it. The examples of literature are drama, short story, novel, and many other literary works. Furthermore, as referring to Searle (2019) literary works attempt to portray human life, not only in relation to other human beings, but also its relation to itself through the relationship of inner events. On the other hand, literary works tell the audiences about the character's story. Drama, short stories, and novels, are examples of literature. The stories of the characters are told to readers through literary works. Each literary work has its own unique qualities, just like every human being does, but it also has something in common with other works of art.

### **Conflict**

As being quoted from Nelde (2019), conflict in literature refers to the opposing forces or individuals who provide the dramatic events of a narrative. Conflict also refers to the conflicts involving a pair of opposing parties that fictional characters may encounter.

Conflict is an effective story device. It is crucial for the creation of the narrative and the characters.

The next elaborates according to Galtung (2019) that conflicts, both in the real life and in literary work, have an influence on the character's behavior. From those descriptions provided, the writer assumes that whenever a conflict arises, it will affect all those around it. Just like in a real world, a war between countries can affect all countries in the world. Getting affected by a conflict is just like a getting a reaction after doing an action

Likewise, based on what Hay & Ross (2020) stated out, conflict can be defined as a clash between individuals arising out of a difference in thought process, attitudes, understanding, interests, requirement and even sometimes perceptions. It can be concluded that conflict is something that happen because there is a disagreement between one people or more.

In summary, it implies that conflict arises whenever there is a difference of opinion between one or more parties. A mental battle brought on by opposing or incompatible wants, urges, wishes, or demands might also be described as conflict. Every time a dispute emerges, individuals in its immediate vicinity will be impacted, just as how an action will cause a reaction.

### **Overprotective**

There are several styles of parenting that parents may implement in their families. One common of parenting style in today's society is overprotective parenting, which provides children with excessive protection. These actions make it harder for youngsters to make decisions about their future (Spokas & Heimberg, 2021). Overprotective parents are frequently active in their children's life. They also relentlessly supervise all aspects of their children's life as well as in most occasion, intervene on their children's behalf.

The main idea of overprotective parenting, has several components that are: excessively taking care of children, concern about the safety of children, concern about kid's health, concern about the child's failure Baumrind in Bowker & Rebecca G. Etkin, (2019). This indicates that Baumrind found overprotective parenting is equal to extreme concern. Just a little activity can cause the parents to worry about their child. It may seem harmless to the parents but it will someday affect how the children live when the time comes to leave the house to be independent.

Overprotective parenting is a propensity when parents overprotect their children by offering protection against physical and psychological pain and harm (Hamilton, 2019). According to that statement, overprotective parent views the world as an unsafe place for their children. They don't want anything bad happen to them both physically and psychologically so they will try to protect their children from almost everything.

In conclusion, overprotective parent prevents their children from making their own place out of concern that they would lose control over their children. The parent stops their children from having any important learning experiences while continuing to encourage a sense of dependence. They try to control their children's conduct and upbringing, remove any obstacles, and lessen the unexpected experiences of daily life.

### **Novel**

Shroder (2018) defines, novel is one of literary works that best known in society as it offers various genre that could suit people in different age group. Novel is also a work of imagination that explores or conveys the feelings of humans more deeply in the format of an extensive fictional narrative. Authors utilize novels to express rich stories concerning the state of humanity in various kinds of styles and genres.

Additionally Trilling (2018) assumes, novels have many constructive values including hard work in living life, social care for fellow humans, and communicating. The value of character education is manifested in every occurrence of the characters told in the novel. It implies that novels have a long and illustrious history that has been molded by formal norms, innovation, and historical and social factors. Authors utilize novels to express stories regarding the state of humanity in a variety of styles and genres.

Besides, novel is a work in which a person pours all ideas, imaginations that are in his thoughts and feelings into writing (Polster, 2019). This suggest that literature created from the imagination, not presented as fact, though it may be based on a true story or situation in a written form of a book.

To conclude, novels focus on describing the unique experiences of its characters in order to paint a richer, more nuanced picture of both them and the society in which they inhabit. Novels often address inner thoughts and feelings as well as complicated, sometimes opposing concepts or ideals, more so than other previous literary genres. Novel is the creative work that depicts human existence in a society in a way that society may appreciate, comprehend, and employ. The enjoyment of reading the stories is equally as personally revealing as the stories themselves

### **Method**

The research method used in this paper is descriptive qualitative, which means a type of qualitative research that explores the characteristics of a phenomenon, rather than explaining the underlying causes or mechanisms. So, it investigates the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials and many more related to the topic (Mohajan & Mohajan, 2022). Furthermore, the purpose of qualitative research focused on promoting a deep understanding of a particular phenomenon such, environment, a process, or even belief. In this case, the writer collected, analyzed, and interpreted the data and then described it.

This method is chosen because descriptive qualitative is the best option for research concerned with a single research object. This research uses a single research object, which is the novel written by Colleen Hoover, *Regretting You*. Thus, this method is chosen. The result of this study will be described descriptively, using words to present the results as detailed as possible, because the novel also uses word as the tool to express ideas and messages to the audience. The writer also uses psychoanalysis as a method, to determine what is happening in the character's mind and to explain and justify their actions to the reader, in order to provide clarity for the readers.

### **Result and Discussion**

In the *Regretting You* novel by Colleen Hoover, it analyzes the conflict that happened between mother (Morgan) and daughter (Clara) along with the overprotectiveness possessed by the mother toward her daughter. The first point that is being analyzed is about the internal conflict that happens in *Regretting You* novel.

#### **Data 1. Internal Conflicts Analysis in *Regretting You* Novel**

Internal conflict happened when there is a struggling within one's mind. The overthinking and the struggle of one has in their own mind is what lead to internal conflict. Here is the internal conflict in *Regretting You* novel that will be analyzed from the two main characters from the novel. Those two characters are Morgan (the mother) and Clara (the daughter), who takes turn from Clara to Morgan back and forth.

A. Morgan - Page 11

*I wonder if humans are the only living creatures that ever feel hollow inside. I don't understand how my body can be full of everything bodies are full of—bones and muscles and blood and organs—yet my chest sometimes feels vacant, as if someone could scream into my mouth and it would echo inside of me. I've been feeling this way for a few weeks now. I was hoping it would pass because I'm beginning to worry about what's causing this emptiness.*

(Hoover, 2019, p.11)

From that quotation, it can be inferred that Morgan is having an internal conflict with her own mind. Morgan is feeling the emptiness inside her despite having the perfect boyfriend (Chris) and her loving little sister Jenny who always made her day. She is wondering what is missing even when she is supposed to be happy enough with her life right now by having two wonderful humans being who could always make her smile.

B. Jonah.

*Sometimes when we're alone, he looks at me in a way that makes me feel empty when he looks away. It's a feeling I've never gotten when Chris looks at me. This realization scares me to death.*

(Hoover, 2019, p.19)

This quotation it can be inferred that Morgan secretly find herself attracted to Jonah. The way Jonah makes her feel is different with the way she feels for Chris even though Chris is her boyfriend. This feeling makes Morgan really scare. She doesn't want to admit that she is attracted to Jonah. That is why she tries really hard to make the feeling she has for Jonah go away. Because she does not want it become reality and ruin her current relationship she has with Chris.

C. Clara

*For the past five days since Jonah's mother showed up at my school to take me to the hospital, it feels like I've been inside a snow globe that someone shook up, then dropped. I feel like the contents of my life have shattered, and fragments of me have spilled out all over someone's dusty hardwood floor. I feel irreparably broken.*

(Hoover, 2019, p.74)

It can be seen that Clara is having an internal conflict. The news about her father and her aunt sudden death has put her whole life upside down. Chris and Jenny are the most person she loved the most, even more than she loves her mother. She just couldn't believe that is she forced to continue living without the presence of those two. At first, she just wishes that this is all only a dream where she can be up anytime and find her dad and her aunt smiling to her, that they both are okay. After sometime, she has to accept that the reality is that she will never get a chance to see them or talk to them ever again. She just feels broken hearted. She does not know if she can be functioning alright again.

## Data 2. External Conflict Analysis in *Regretting You* Novel

### **A. Morgan**

Page 123

*“You have officially lost your mind,” Clara says. “I’d be better off as a homeless runaway.” I push at the door, holding it open with my hand. If she really thinks it’s so bad, being here with me.... “Run away, then, Clara,” I say flatly. She shakes her head, as if I’m the disappointing one, then walks back to her bedroom. “That’s not the way to the front door!” I yell.*

(Hoover, 2019, p.123)

Morgan shocks upon finding her mom swinging a hammer through their kitchen door until it makes quite a big hole. Clara thinks that Morgan has finally snapped after enduring all the pain she felt after a sudden loss of losing two most important people in her life. But, ever since their relationship is gone bad lately, Clara just could not give her mom a comforting emotional support, and instead she says something harsh to her mom by saying that her mother is crazy and that she better off living somewhere else rather than living with a crazy overprotective mom. Then to add the fuel to the fire, Morgan challenge her by yelling that she has to run away as far as she can. This surely will make their already bad relationship into a war.

### **B. Jonah**

Page 143

*Jonah sighed heavily and then whispered, “I’m worried we got it wrong.” His statement made my breath hitch. I didn’t ask him what we might have gotten wrong because I was too scared of his answer. I was scared he was going to say we weren’t with the person we were meant to be with. Of course, he could have been about to say anything, but that’s where my mind went, because why else did he look at me the way he looked at me sometimes? I tried to ignore it because Jonah and I had never been romantic in any sense. But we had a connection—one Chris and I didn’t even have.*

(Hoover, 2019, p.143)

Morgan sees a flashback. She remembers about the old days when the four of them (Morgan, Jenny, Chris, and Jonah) go to a lake. At that time, Morgan is left alone with Jonah and they are having a serious conversation. Jonah finally put up a courage to confront Morgan about their true feelings. Jonah wants Morgan to finally be brave and acknowledge the fact that they both fall in love with each other and that they shouldn’t be with the wrong partner. Instead of be true to her feeling, Morgan let Jonah down by in the end revealing that she is pregnant with Chris’s baby to stop Jonah for having any thought that they should be together.

### **C. Miller**

Page 158

*I raise an eyebrow in warning. I hope you aren’t about to tell me how to raise my daughter. Miller takes a sudden small step back. His eyes dart from me to Jonah. He looks uncomfortable when he says, “Um. No, ma’am? I’m just....” He points at the desk I’m sitting in. “You’re in my seat.”*

(Hoover, 2019, p.158)

Morgan sees Miller is looking at her like he wants to say something to hear. She thinks that Miller is there to talk to her not to put pressure on Clara like what she did before in the hallway. Then, before Miller could say anything, Morgan coldly tells Miller to not crossed the line and just do not meddle in their business as Clara is her only child so, it all depends on Morgan what she could do to her. Miller then, answer politely that Morgan is misunderstand him, and that he just wants to sit in his chair since class is about to start.

### **Data 3. Overprotective Analysis in *Regretting You* Novel**

#### **A. Morgan is to provide excessive protection**

Page 45-46

*“There’s no loop, and there’s nothing wrong with him,” Clara assures him. “It’s just my parents, being overprotective as usual.” She’s right. My mother didn’t shelter me as a child in any sense, which is part of the reason I ended up pregnant with Clara at seventeen. Because of that, Chris and I take it overboard with Clara sometimes. We admit that. But Clara is our only child, and we don’t want her to end up in a situation like we did.*

(Hoover, 2019, p.45-46)

At this point, Clara claims that her parents are being overprotective as usual. Deep down, Morgan admits that she is being overly protective to Clara because she is her only child. She becomes her everything when she born into family. Then after that, she always tries to provide Clara’s with excessive amount of protection. The biggest reason as to why she does all of that is because she does not want Clara ended up in the same situation as she did a situation where she doesn’t really have that much choice left and has to focus on raising a child in such early age.

#### **B. Morgan and the Excessive control**

Page 91

*I nod, but I disagree with him. A free pass would be appropriate for something milder than doing drugs. It’s more appropriate for something like breaking curfew. I can’t just let it slide that she left Chris’s funeral to get high. Not to mention she was with the one guy her father told her not to spend time with. If I let either of those things slide, what will that leniency lead to?*

(Hoover, 2019, p.91)

This is taken from Morgan’s point of view. Jonah gives Morgan advice to gives Clara a free pass for her rebellious attitude this week, since Clara must be still in shock losing her dad and Jenny at the same time. However, Morgan disagrees with him. She has to control her by giving a stricter rule to follow and harsher punishment if she does not follow her rules. Because the last time she is too lenient to Clara, she ends up doing drugs with Miller

#### **C. Clara is to monitor children’s movement**

Page 124

*If she’s not demanding to know where I am and who I’m with or sniffing me for signs of drug use, she’s moping around the house, knocking random holes in the door.*

(Hoover, 2019, p.124)

As being seen from Clara's point of view, this passage shows how her mom is monitoring her every movement. Her mom needs to know where she is almost at all time. Her mom also needs to know with who she is spending time with. Moreover, after her mom finds out that Clara is doing drugs, she always tries to smells Clara every time Clara back home after going somewhere, to make sure if she smells like weed or not. Though the truth is Clara only ever doing drugs once and she even stops halfway

#### **d. Clara is to give a punishment**

Page 94

*Miller shoots me a small smile and stops cleaning when he sees me. I'm suddenly more nervous than I anticipated I'd be. He presses his palms onto the counter and leans forward as I approach him. "I figured you'd be grounded." I shrug. "I am. She took my phone and banished me to my bedroom." I look at the menu over his head. "I escaped."*

(Hoover, 2019, p.94)

Clara is grounded from her phone and even from her own living room after her mom snaps. Then, out of stress, Clara decided to escape from the house and driving her car to see Miller. Miller is surprised by Clara's visit because as far as he knows, Clara is still grounded and won't be able to leave the house except for school. This shown how Clara's life becomes more miserable after her dad's death. Now, her mom thinks that the absence of her dad should be compensate by her being more controlling than before. Even the punishment she gives is starting to gets unbelievable.

### **Data 4. Effect of Overprotective Mother towards Her Daughter**

#### **A. Clara is aggressive and spiteful**

Page 155

*"Clara." I yank my arm from her hand. I spin and take a lunging step toward her. "Thank you, Mom. Thank you for taking one of the things I loved the most about my aunt and ruining it for me!" I really want to call her a bitch, but I don't want to make her angry. I want to make her feel guilty. I want her to feel as guilty as I've felt since the accident.*

(Hoover, 2019, p.155)

This taken from Clara's point of view. Morgan finally tells Clara the truth that all this time, the advice that she thinks coming from Jenny is actually advices that comes directly from her own mom. Clara thinks that Jenny is the one who help her with all her problems but, the truth is that it was always her mother that knows what is best for her. But, Morgan timing of letting out the truth is not right. Clara is becoming angrier than before upon knowing the truth. She despises her mom so badly, because she thinks that her mom is trying to take all the glory and taken away the precious relationship, she has with Jenny by revealing the truth.

#### **B. Clara escapes form reality**

Page 76



*I'm not doing well. Not at all. I want to tell him that, but the only thing that comes out of my mouth is, "I don't want to be here." I'm not asking him to take me anywhere. I'm just being honest about what I'm feeling this very moment. But he nudges his head toward the parking lot. "Then let's go."*

(Hoover, 2019, p.76)

Clara escapes from her father's funeral since the guilty feeling she has is unbearable. She needs to get away as far away as possible to all the pain she feels inside. She still can believe that her dad and aunt were dead. On top of that, she is the reason they both died. Miller that comes to the funeral to check on her ends up become her savior who help her run away from the terrible reality.

### **C. Clara is unable to control the emotion Page 207-208**

*.....I try to get all my tears out before he shows up. Surprisingly, there aren't that many. I'm too angry to cry, I think. I didn't know I was capable of reaching this level of anger, but I've reached it, and there might even be room for more anger. Who knows? Guess I'll see what I'm really capable of when my mother and I come face to face tomorrow.*

(Hoover, 2019, p.207-208)

Clara is having mental breakdown after finding out about her mom and Jonah's affair. She becomes unable to control her emotion. One minute she cries a river. Then, the other minute she feels like she is going to explode out of anger. If only, her relationship with her mom is not bad the past few weeks, she could just confront her mom and demands the explanation right away. Nevertheless, the problem is that her relationship has gone so bad after her mom being overly protective and banned her from so many things. So, now as a result, she just can find an answer for this kind of incident and the emotion she feels just bottled up inside her.

### **Conclusion**

In the *Regretting You* novel by Colleen Hoover, there are two kinds of conflicts that happened between mother (Morgan) and daughter (Clara) along with the overprotectiveness possessed by the mother toward her daughter. They are internal conflict and external conflict. The conflict that happens between mother and daughter is categorized into external conflict. It happens when Morgan and Clara are having a dispute and different opinion with each other. The second point that is being analyzed is the overprotectiveness that the mother possessed toward her daughter in *Regretting You* novel. The characteristics of overprotectiveness that Morgan possessed toward her daughter Clara are; provide excessive protection, excessive control, monitoring children's movement, and giving punishment. Then, the third point that is being analyzed is the effect of overprotective mother towards her daughter in *Regretting You* novel. There are several negative effects that could happen to a child when her mother possessed overprotectiveness. The effects are; aggressive and spiteful, escape from reality, unable to control emotion, and lying habit.

The writers hopes that this paper could help raising an awareness about conflict that could be happen between mother and daughter when the mother portrayed an overprotectiveness towards her daughter. This kind of parenting style in which a parents possessed an overly protectiveness toward their children, could bring a negative effect to the children if the parent doesn't try to put themselves in their children's place and try to be more

understanding especially if their children are in their teenager phase. As for the next researcher who wants to use *Regretting You* novel as the object of the study, there are still some issues that could be analyzed. Since *Regretting You* is a novel that contains a complex portrayal of a life that is destroyed by a tragedy, it will be a good choice for an object of a study. But, if the next researcher doesn't want to use the same novel, but still want to raise awareness about overprotective parenting style theme, they could find other resources that is published more recently.

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