Volume 4 Number 2 (2026)
July-December 2026
Page: 2544-2549

EDUJAVARE: International Journal of Educational Research
ISSN: 3031-2884
https://edujavare.com/index.php/edujavare
DOI: 10.70610/edujavare.2311

Factors Causing Inner Conflict in the Main Characters of Dilan 1990 and Milea

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Article history Submitted: 2026/11/10; Revised: 2026/11/24; Accepted: 2026/11/28

Abstract

This study examines the factors that cause inner conflict in the main characters in Pidi Baiq's novels Dilan 1990 and Milea. The study uses a qualitative descriptive method with a literary psychology perspective. Data were collected through reading and note-taking techniques and analyzed using content analysis. The findings identify two principal factors causing inner conflict: misunderstanding and resistance. Internal factors include ego, anxiety about others, pride, and heightened emotional responses when making decisions. External factors include social relationships, Dilan's position as a combat commander in a motorcycle gang, disagreements, and acts of resistance that develop into physical confrontation. The analysis also identifies repression, projection, rationalization, and sublimation as responses to psychological pressure. Overall, ego dominates the problems experienced by the main character. The findings illustrate how personal emotions and the surrounding social environment interact in producing inner conflict.

Keywords Inner conflict; Literary psychology; Novel; Psychoanalysis; Sociological approach

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INTRODUCTION

Literary works represent human experiences, social relationships, and psychological tensions through imaginative language. Among literary forms, novels provide extended narratives that allow readers to follow characters' actions, thoughts, and emotions. A novel's effectiveness is closely related to the author's ability to develop characters and construct events through which readers can understand the conflicts presented in the story.

Conflict is an important element in the development of a fictional plot. Through conflict, an author presents problems that influence characters' decisions and relationships. Conflict may occur between individuals or within an individual. Inner

conflict is particularly significant because it reveals tension between desires, personal principles, emotions, and external demands. A character's psychological condition can therefore be examined through the choices made and responses shown when facing difficult situations.

Pidi Baiq's Dilan 1990 and Milea portray the experiences of young people, particularly the relationship between Dilan and Milea during their school years in Bandung. Dilan is depicted as a decisive young man who cares for his mother and younger sibling. However, his involvement in a motorcycle gang and his position as its combat commander become sources of tension. Milea dislikes fighting and wants Dilan to leave the gang. Their different views, together with conflicts involving friends, create pressure on their relationship and emotional experiences.

This study focuses on the factors that cause inner conflict in the main character in Dilan 1990 and Milea. The analysis is limited to the main character's inner conflict and considers the social relationships represented in the novels. It is expected to broaden readers' understanding of literary psychology and provide a reference for subsequent studies of psychological conflict in fiction.

Literature is an imaginative work that uses language as its medium and aesthetic expression as one of its defining characteristics. Kurniawan (2012) emphasizes the imaginative and aesthetic dimensions of literary works, while Ratna (2015) explains that literary research commonly draws on established theories that are adapted to the characteristics of the object being studied. In this study, literature is understood as a fictional representation of human life through which experiences and events can be presented to readers.

A novel is a long prose narrative that presents a sequence of events in the lives of individuals and the people around them, while emphasizing the characters' traits and behavior. Faruk (2017) relates the novel to the representation of life as a totality, while the discussion cited by Nurhuda et al. (2017) highlights the relationship between literary works and their sociocultural background. Thus, a novel may represent social reality, although the reality depicted is shaped by the author's perspective.

Characters are figures presented in narrative or dramatic works and interpreted by readers through their speech and actions. Characterization refers to the way an author presents a character's traits, beliefs, habits, and outlook. Conflict is an essential element in the development of a fictional plot. As discussed by Nurgiyantoro in Adeani and Ristiana (2017), the form and quality of conflict influence the development and appeal of a narrative. Stanson, as cited in Adeani and Ristiana (2017), distinguishes

external conflict from internal conflict. Internal conflict takes place within a character, whereas external conflict occurs between a character and forces outside the self.

Literary sociology examines the relationship between literature and society, including the social institutions, processes, and cultural conditions represented in a work. Faruk, as discussed in Karna (2013), describes approaches that consider the author's social context and literature as a reflection of society. Such reflection is not a direct reproduction of social reality because it is shaped by the author's worldview. In Dilan 1990 and Milea, the school environment, friendships, motorcycle-gang membership, and romantic relationship provide the social context in which the characters' conflicts develop.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method with a pragmatic orientation and a literary psychology perspective. Qualitative research attends to natural data and interprets the data in relation to their context. Ratna (2015) notes that literary research may involve the author, the author's social environment, and broader cultural elements. The primary data sources are Pidi Baiq's novels Dilan 1990 and Milea.

Data were collected through reading and note-taking. The reading technique was used to read and understand the narrative, including words and sentences that describe the main character's psychological experiences. The note-taking technique was used to record passages relevant to inner conflict and its causes. The recorded data were then classified according to the factors underlying the conflict and the forms of response shown by the character.

The data were analyzed using content analysis. This technique was selected because the research examines the content and meaning represented in the text. The analysis involved identifying relevant passages, grouping them into thematic categories, interpreting their meaning in the context of the narrative, and drawing conclusions about the internal and external factors that contribute to inner conflict.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The reading of Dilan 1990 and Milea indicates two principal factors that cause inner conflict in the main character: misunderstanding and resistance. These factors are connected to internal conditions, such as ego, anxiety, pride, and emotional responses, as well as external conditions, including social relationships and the character's position in the motorcycle gang.

1. Misunderstanding

The first factor is misunderstanding between the characters. The internal dimension includes the tendency to prioritize ego, anxiety about another person's circumstances, and pride in front of others. The external dimension is related to Dilan's position as a combat commander, which creates an expectation that he must maintain authority and prestige among the gang members. These conditions complicate the character's response to the conflict with Milea.

One episode describes Dilan's confusion after Milea slaps him and declares that their relationship is over. Dilan does not immediately understand what has happened and is unsure how to respond. He asks Milea why she has made that decision, but she tells him to work it out for himself. The episode illustrates a breakdown in communication: the relationship ends without Dilan feeling that he has had an opportunity to explain his position. His silence and confusion indicate the pressure produced by the disagreement.

This conflict is not only a disagreement between two individuals. It also reflects the characters' different expectations and their difficulty in communicating those expectations. Dilan's ego and concern for his standing contribute to his inability to respond openly, while Milea's decision intensifies the emotional tension.

2. Resistance

The second factor is resistance, particularly resistance expressed through retaliation and physical confrontation. The novel describes an incident in which Anhar slaps Dilan. Dilan attempts to retaliate, but his action does not reach Anhar and instead hits a door. The incident shows how external aggression can trigger an emotional response and deepen the conflict.

The narrative also presents Milea's disappointment with Dilan and his friends. After leaving Bi Eem's food stall with Piyan, Milea asks where Dilan is and tries to hold back her tears. Her reaction indicates emotional distress and disappointment in the people close to her. The conflict therefore affects not only Dilan but also the people involved in his social and personal relationships.

A further confrontation occurs at school when Dilan fights Anhar. Students gather around the basketball court, and teachers intervene to stop the fight. This event disrupts the school environment and draws other students into the incident as spectators. From a sociological perspective, the scene illustrates how conflict between individuals can affect a wider social setting. Dilan's anger and involvement in violence are presented as behavior that should not be imitated, even though the narrative also describes positive aspects of his character, including his academic ability.

3. Responses to Inner Conflict

The research material identifies four mechanisms associated with the character's response to inner conflict: repression, projection, rationalization, and sublimation. Repression is described in relation to suppressing or resisting an uncomfortable feeling. Projection is associated in the source analysis with the decision to end the romantic relationship. Rationalization appears in the decision by Dilan and Milea to continue their lives separately. Sublimation is interpreted as withdrawing from communication and closing oneself off. These categories indicate attempts to manage psychological pressure, although the narrative also shows that unresolved tension can continue to affect relationships.

Discussion

The findings show that inner conflict in the novels develops through the interaction of internal and external factors. Internal factors include ego, anxiety, pride, and heightened emotion when making decisions. External factors arise from the social environment, disagreement with other people, the expectations attached to Dilan's position in the motorcycle gang, and disappointment in close friends. The two dimensions are interconnected: social events generate emotional pressure, while the character's internal responses influence how those events develop.

The conflict between Dilan and Milea demonstrates that differences in values and expectations can weaken communication. Milea objects to fighting and wants Dilan to leave the motorcycle gang, whereas Dilan remains committed to his position. Their disagreement is intensified by gang-related confrontations and by the reactions of their friends. The school fight further demonstrates that personal conflict may extend into a collective environment and disturb the wider school community.

The analysis also indicates the dominance of ego in the problems experienced by the main character. Ego is reflected in the desire to maintain status, the difficulty of accepting another person's decision, and the tendency to respond emotionally. The character's attempts to suppress, redirect, or justify these feelings suggest efforts to protect the self from psychological pressure. However, these responses do not necessarily resolve the underlying disagreement. The findings therefore emphasize the importance of communication and emotional control in the representation of interpersonal conflict.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the factors causing inner conflict in the main character in Pidi Baiq's Dilan 1990 and Milea can be grouped into two main categories: misunderstanding and resistance. Misunderstanding is associated with ego, anxiety, pride, differences in expectations, and ineffective communication. Resistance is reflected

in retaliation and physical confrontation, particularly in conflicts involving Dilan and Anhar.

The causes of inner conflict include internal factors originating within the character and external factors arising from the social environment. The internal factors include emotional intensity and the tendency to prioritize ego when making decisions. The external factors include unsupportive social relationships, disagreement with friends, and disappointment toward people close to the character. The analysis also identifies repression, projection, rationalization, and sublimation as responses to psychological pressure. Overall, ego is a dominant element in the conflicts examined.

Further research may examine other psychological dimensions of the characters or compare the representation of inner conflict across additional works by Pidi Baiq. Future studies may also use different theoretical perspectives to deepen the analysis of the relationship between individual psychology and the social environment.

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