CONFLICT AND PERSONALITY OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN KIM YONG-HOON'S *MASK GIRL*: A PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the conflict and personality of the main character, Kim Mo-mi, in the Korean drama *Mask Girl* directed by Kim Yong-Hoon. By employing qualitative methodology, the research investigates the internal and external conflicts faced by the main character through 30 pieces of dialogue from the script. Using theories by Kenney (1966) and McCrae & Costa (2005), the study categorizes these conflicts and analyzes Kim Mo-mi's personality traits. The findings reveal significant internal conflicts arising from her self-perception and external conflicts involving her relationships with others. The study concludes that these conflicts significantly influence Kim Mo-mi's personality, highlighting the importance of psychological analysis in literary works.

Keywords: *Conflict, Korean Drama, Main Character, Mask Girl, Personality*

INTRODUCTION

Literary Psychology is pivotal in analyzing literary works from a psychological perspective, considering the author's, character's, and reader's viewpoints (Ratna, 2011). This approach underscores the interconnectedness between literature and psychology, fostering a field that emphasizes the relevance and role of psychological studies in understanding literary texts. Drama, as a literary genre, portrays real-life scenarios, characters, and human behavior through role-playing and dialogue (Rustamov, Mamatkulov, & Matov, 2021). (Kozloff, 2000) highlights that dialogue in drama serves various functions, including establishing settings and characters, conveying story events, and revealing characters' emotions and conflicts. Well-crafted dialogue advances the plot and provides insights into characters' inner workings.

Korean dramas have gained significant global prominence, becoming a widely embraced cultural and literary from (Sahida, 2016). These dramas, whether fictional or non-fictional, depict South Korean life and Culture (Yong-Ho, 2019). "*Mask Girl*," directed

by Kim Yong-Hoon, is a notable example that has sparked considerable debate. This suspenseful drama, based on a controversial webtoon, explores themes of appearance-based biases and social issues within the South Korean context. It quickly garnered attention on Netflix, securing the second spot in global rankings shortly after its release, with millions of views and viewing hours.

Numerous studies have explored conflict and personality in literary works. For instance, Nulralim and Halim (2023) examined internal and external conflicts in the movie "Coco," revealing significant character development through these conflicts. Maku, Jayantini, and Juniartha (2022) identified various conflict management strategies in "Acts of Vengeance," highlighting internal and external conflicts. Nur'Aini, Kurniawati, & Yuliasari (2021) analyzed conflicts and personality in "Me Before You," using Freud's personality theory to explore the main character's psychological dimensions.

This study diverges from previous research by focusing on the intersection of conflict and personality in the Korean drama "Mask Girl." Specifically, it examines the conflicts faced by the main character, Kim Mo-mi, and how these conflicts influence her personality. Preliminary data indicate that Kim Mo-mi faces significant internal and external conflicts, including self-image issues and societal pressures. The objectives of the study are to identify the conflicts faced by the main character, analyze her personality, and explore how these conflicts impact her personality. This study focuses on the main character, Kim Mo-mi, utilizing dialogue and narrative analysis, and employs conflict theory by William Kenney (1966) and personality theory by McCrae & Costa (2005).

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design to analyze the dialogue and narrative elements of *Mask Girl*. By focusing on the main character's interactions and self-reflections, the research aims to uncover the psychological aspects of her personality and conflicts. The primary data source is the script of *Mask Girl*, specifically 30 pieces of dialogue involving the main character, Kim Mo-mi.

Data is collected through content analysis of the script, focusing on dialogue that reveals the character's internal and external conflicts. The analysis is conducted using Kenney's conflict theory and McCrae & Costa's personality theory. The conflicts are

categorized, and the personality traits are identified and analyzed in relation to the conflicts faced by the character.

RESULTS

1. **The Conflicts Faced by The Main Character in *Mask Girl***

This research identified three of these conflict types within the dialogues of the drama. Specifically, based on Kenney's theory, Man against Himself occurs 3 times, Man against Man occurs 4 times, and Man against Nature appears in dialogue segments 3 times.

Table 1. Conflict of Kim Mo-mi

No	Dialogue	Type
	Internal Conflict	
1	Kim Mo-mi: *I've always wondered how is it possible that my mom is pretty, but I'm not.*	Man against Himself
2	Kim Mo-mi: *Die. Die, Mo-mi Kim. Just die. You deserve to die! [sobs]*	Man against Himself
3	Kim Mo-mi: *No, I can't just leave. How can I...*	Man against Himself
	External Conflict	
4	Kim Mo-mi: *You did it. You touched my butt, you jerk.*	Man against Man
5	Kim Mo-mi: *You bastard! You little pervert!*	Man against Man
6	Kim Mo-mi: *You Fucking bastard! You fucking lied about coming from America, didn't you? You son of a bitch!*	Man against Man
7	Kim Mo-mi: *Get lost, you stalker, before I kill you.*	Man against Man
8	Kim Mo-mi: *It ends right here.*	Man against Man
9	Kim Mo-mi: *How can I just "move on"? This bastard touched me, I swear. I can't move on.*	Man against Environment
10	Kim Mo-mi: *They picked a fight with me first.*	Man against Environment

	The chief of wardens: *Make up reasons to*	
11	*hold her for as long as I say. How about*	Man against Environment
	"causing a disturbance" or "threatening	
	officers"?	

2. The Personality of The Main Character is Realised in *Mask Girl*

McCrae and Costa's personality trait theory, widely recognized as the five-factor model, delineates personality into five dimensions: Neuroticism, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Extraversion. Among these personality types, three were identified within 19 dialogues analyzed in this study. Specifically, Neuroticism, exhibited by the main character, was observed 8 times throughout the drama. Additionally, Agreeableness, another personality trait attributed to the main character, manifested 8 times. Lastly, Extraversion was evident in 3 instances.

Table 2. Personality of Kim Mo-mi

No	Dialogue	Type
1	Kim Mo-mi: *This is all because of A-reum. That deceitful bitch. If it hadn't been for her.*	Neuroticism
2	Kim Mo-mi: *That's not true at all! Leading a double life? They have a kid? That's ridiculous.*	Neuroticism
3	Kim Mo-mi: *You did it. You touched my butt, you jerk.*	Neuroticism
4	Kim Mo-mi: *You fucking bastard! You fucking lied about coming from America, didn't you? You son of a bitch!*	Neuroticism
5	Kim Mo-mi: *Get lost, you stalker, before I kill you.*	Neuroticism
6	Kim Mo-mi: *You'll think differently once you see my face.*	Neuroticism
7	Kim Mo-mi: *No, I can't just leave. How can I...*	Neuroticism
8	Kim Mo-mi: *I can't let that woman leave! Let go! She can't leave.*	Neuroticism
9	Kim Mo-mi: *Don't worry, guys. Stuff like that doesn't hurt me.*	Agreeableness
10	Kim Mo-mi: *Oh don't beat yourself up about, uh, Mr. Park yelling at you.*	Agreeableness
11	Kim Mo-mi: *Well, I really wanna give it to you.*	Agreeableness
12	Kim Mo-mi: *I'm gonna have it.*	Agreeableness
13	Kim Mo-mi: *Even if the baby's ugly, I'm gonna tell them they're pretty.*	Agreeableness

14	Kim Mo-mi: *If it's possible, I would like to give one of my kidneys to your daughter.*	Agreeableness
15	Kim Mo-mi: *Could we, maybe, if you don't mind, share a taxi?*	Agreeableness
16	Kim Mo-mi: *Yeah. Ma'am, um, do you think, maybe I could get, you know, some... pictures of Mi-mo going to school?*	Agreeableness
17	Kim Mo-mi: *Wow, Once Upon A Prince! Thank you for the 5,000 hearts!*	Extraversion
18	Kim Mo-mi: *Guys, you do know that I'll always be yours, right? I'm never gonna leave you!*	Extraversion
19	Kim Mo-mi: *You should get a neck lift for your sagging skin, old-timer. And if you get your under-eye fat removed, you'll look much younger. A minor nose job might also be useful, I think.*	Extraversion

3. The Effect of Personality on The Conflict of The Main Character in *Mask Girl*

Conflict affects the personality of the main character because it creates intense challenges and uncertainties for the main character. Conflict serves as catalysts that provoke emotional responses such as neuroticism in the form of anger or worry. Conflict also encourages the main character to adapt so that he has to act kind and polite in the form of Agreeableness. Not only that, the main character is also required to act friendly as an Extraversion personality due to the conflicts he goes through. These conflicts include facing harassment, dealing with the aftermath of murder, undergoing identity struggles, and navigating complex relationships.

DISCUSSION

To draw comparisons, previous studies on the same topic were selected to examine similarities and differences between this research and other relevant studies. Utama, Suastini, & Permana (2023) explored Conflict Analysis Faced By Main Character In The Movie Fast & Furious: Hobbs & Shaw. Their findings indicated that the main character dealt primarily with Man against Man conflict, similar to the focus of this research. However, unlike this study, they identified all types of conflict, whereas this research, based on Kenney's theory, only three out of four types were found.

Another study with topic personality revealed by Bit, Gemilang, and Prastanti (2022) entitled An Analysis of Zach Sobiech's Personality as the main character in Clouds

Movie. The research focuses on Zach Sobiech's personality as portrayed in the film "Clouds." They use the same McCrae and Costa FFM model as this study. It identifies four primary personality traits exhibited by Zach: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and agreeableness. The main character of the movie tends to show extraversion, which differs from this research, neuroticism and extraversion are the dominant personality shown by Kim Mo-mi as the main character in *Mask Girl*.

The study that discussed both topics, conflict and personality, was revealed by Rusminiati, and Suastini, (2023) with the title The Main Character's Conflict and Personality Analysis in "Encanto" Movie. The research uses Kenney's theory to explore conflict, same as this research. Meanwhile, for personality, the researcher chose to use Freud's theory which consists of three personalities, Id, Ego, and Superego. In contrast to this research, to reveal the personality, the researcher used McCrae and Costa which have five dimensions of personality they are Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism.

From discussion above, it can be seen that research exploring the relationship between conflict and the personality of main characters reveals that adversity serves as a transformative force in narratives. These conflict not only propel the storyline but also deepen our understanding of the characters' motivations, strengths, and vulnerabilities. Thus, the exploration of conflict and personality underscores how fictional challenges reflect and shape human complexities, offering profound insights into the human experience across diverse narratives.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis of the research findings and the discussion in the previous chapter, several conclusions were drawn. The main character in the drama "Mask Girl" faces four types of conflict according to Kenney's theory, with four instances of Man against Man (external conflict), four instances of Man against Himself (internal conflict), and three instances of Man against Environment (external conflict). From a personality perspective, the main character exhibits traits aligned with McCrae and Costa's theory, showing neuroticism and agreeableness eight times each, and extraversion in three dialogues. The conflict affects the main character's personality by provoking emotional

responses and necessitating adaptation, thereby not only presenting problems but also forcing the character to react and adapt to changes in the story.

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