

## **WILL TRAYNOR'S EUTHANASIA DECISION-MAKING IN JOJO MOYES'S *ME BEFORE YOU***

**Utin Istiana Malinda, Emilia Tetty Harjani, Ontje Helena Manurung**

Sekolah Tinggi Bahasa Asing LIA Yogyakarta

Email: anamalinda27@gmail.com, emiliaharjani123@gmail.com, ontje6771@gmail.com

### **ABSTRACT**

This research analyzes Will Traynor's decision-making regarding euthanasia in the novel *Me Before You* by Jojo Moyes. The objective of the study is to elaborate on the process of decision-making of having euthanasia by Will Traynor and the factors that influenced Will Traynor in making the euthanasia decision. The study employs library research to get the data and applies the objective approach by Abrams, Condorcet's general theory of the stages of the decision process, and Cindy Dietrich's types of factors that affect the decision-making process to analyze the data. The result of the research shows that the decision-making process of Will Traynor has three stages: The first stage, personal examination, is Will Traynor convinces that he is incurable, refuses people's opinion, and believes that ending his life is the best choice; the second stage, general examination, is Will starts to take others' perspectives into account which leads him to explore alternatives that is option of suicide and delaying his decision to undergo euthanasia; the last stage is the actual choice that is having euthanasia in Dignitas, Swiss. The factors that influence Will Traynor in making decisions are experience - an accident that caused Will to have cervical neck injuries; the cognitive bias - Will constantly feels that his life is defined by pain and shame for being dependent on others; the escalation of commitments - making sacrifices by living together with his parents for six months and giving up his love on Louisa; the individual differences are Will's age and socioeconomic status; and the personal relevance is Will convinces that euthanasia is the right choice to end his sufferings.

Keywords: decision making, euthanasia, process, factors.

### **INTRODUCTION**

A novel can be examined from various perspectives, including intrinsic elements such as plot, theme, point of view, setting, characters, and characterization. To gain a deeper understanding of literary works like novels, it is essential for readers to comprehend the

characters within the story. Characters play a crucial role in the structure of a novel. According to Abrams in his book *A Glossary of Literary Terms*:

Characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as possessing particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it—the dialogue—and from what they do—the action. The grounds in the characters' temperament, desires, and moral nature for their speech and actions are called their motivation" (2015, p.20).

Thus, the characters in the novel are made by the author to have a complexity like the real people in reality. The writers of this article stand as the representatives of people who live in reality and study the characters in the literary world through literary work.

People make decisions about many things; they make political decisions, financial decisions, and personal decisions, including medical choices, romantic decisions, and career decisions. Decision-making can be regarded as a problem-solving activity that ends with a solution that can make satisfaction. People make decisions for the sake of themselves and for the sake of people they care about. It means that people's decisions are different from each other based on their background and some factors in their lives. Some choices are simple and seem straightforward forward while others are complex and need a multi-step approach. The complexities of the choices depend on how crucial the problem is and how the solution affects many aspects of life.

Human's process of making decisions happens inside their mind. It is a process that always occurs when someone has many options to solve problems. Wang and Ruhe conveyed that

"decision-making is one of the basic cognitive processes of human behaviors by which a preferred option or a course of actions is chosen from among a set of alternatives based on certain criteria. Decision theories are widely applied in many disciplines encompassing cognitive informatics, computer science, management science, economics, sociology, psychology, political science, and statistics" (p.1).

After the decision is made, the action follows. Yet, decisions that involve the life and death of a person is a hard and complicated one. The decision that involves life and death can be about personal medication act or maintaining the health of a person. One of the

medication acts that lead someone to take his life is euthanasia. "Euthanasia is the act of deliberately ending a person's life to relieve suffering. There are two kinds of euthanasia: voluntary euthanasia – where a person makes a conscious decision to die and asks for help to do so and non-voluntary euthanasia – where a person is unable to give their consent (for example, because they're in a coma) and another person takes the decision on their behalf, perhaps because the ill person previously expressed a wish for their life to be ended in such circumstances" (NHS, p. 1).

Euthanasia for humans is still an illegal method in some countries due to the way the process is conducted. However, in animal medication, euthanasia is a necessary method to reduce occupancy in the animal shelter by euthanizing unwanted animals. People assume that euthanasia for humans is no different from murder because the way this method is like taking someone's life by force. Yet, to some people with terminal illnesses, this kind of method is necessary.

One of the authors of a novel regarding euthanasia is Pauline Sara Jo Moyes, known professionally as Jojo Moyes. Jojo Moyes is a British novelist born on 4 August 1969 in London. She has been writing novels since 2002. She is one of only a few authors to have won twice the Romantic Novel of The Year Award by the Romantic Novelists Association. *Me Before You* was one of her novels published in 2012 and a year later, this novel was adapted to be filmed (Kiddle, p. 1). *Me Before You* is a novel about Louisa Clark, one of the main characters in this novel. She is a girl who works as Will Traynor's caretaker. Will Traynor is a man who used to be a successful businessman until he had an accident that made him a quadriplegic. Quadriplegia or Tetraplegia is a cervical (neck) injury that usually results in limb paralysis. He gets quadriplegia C5/6, which means his lower body from the stomach and also his arms to his hands are paralyzed. His finger can move and his ability to see, speak, and hear is completely normal. Louisa tries to cheer him up and helps him become a motivated person. It is all because Will is planning to get euthanized in Dignitas, a Swiss-based assisted suicide organization. After all, he knows that his condition will not get better. At first, he wants to attempt suicide by hurting his wrist but that action makes his parents paranoid and stressed. Therefore, he agrees with them that he will give 6 months of his life for his parents to live with him, and at the end of the agreement, his parents have to accept his decision to end his life with euthanasia in Dignitas.

This article elaborates on the process and factors that influenced Will Traynor in deciding to have euthanasia by applying the Objective approach. According to Abrams,

“Objective criticism deals with a work of literature as something which stands free from what is often called “extrinsic” relations to the poet, or the audience, or the envioning world. Instead, it describes the literary product as a self-sufficient and autonomous object, or else a world-in-itself, which is to be contemplated as its end, and to be analyzed and judged solely by “intrinsic” criteria such as its complexity, coherence, equilibrium, integrity, and the interrelations of its component elements” (2013, p. 52).

In elaborating on the decision-making process, the writers apply Condorce’s stages of a decision process which covers three stages: examination of the various aspects of the issue and the consequences of different ways, problem clarification, and making actual choices (Hansson, p. 9). Cindy Dietrich’s types of factors are used to examine the factors in the decision-making process which include past experiences, a variety of cognitive biases, an escalation of commitment and sunk outcomes, individual differences, including age and socioeconomic status, and a belief in personal relevance (Dietrich, p.1).

Some previous researches make contribution to the process of writing this article. The research entitled “Better Dead than Disabled: Analysis of *Me Before You*” by Brisa Mendez helps the writers to understand more about the messages of the story regarding disability and masculinity. A research on suicidal decision entitled “Will Traynor’s Suicidal Decision as Depicted in Novel *Me Before You* by Jojo Moyes” has deepened the writers’ knowledge and new insights into Will Traynor’s internal and external conflicts as well as the reasons why Will Traynor decides to have a suicide, euthanasia.

## **METHOD**

### **Data Collection**

The novel used in this study is *Me Before You* by Jojo Moyes, published in 2012. The primary data are obtained by a close reading of the narrative, with particular attention to the protagonist’s character development, dialogue, and narrative structure. The secondary sources, such as articles on decision-making and various literary analyses, are explored to provide the main character's process and factors in deciding to have euthanasia.

### **Data Analysis**

The method of data analysis applied in this study is descriptive analysis in which the process of organizing and analyzing the data is arranged systematically. Firstly, the writers obtained the conversations (between and within the characters – Louisa Clark, Will Traynor, Camilla Traynor, Stephen Traynor, Josie Clark, etc), thoughts, deeds, and

the narration of the settings or atmosphere in the story. Then using Condorcet's stages of a decision process, the writers extracted the process in Will Traynor's decision-making to have euthanasia, followed by elaborating the factors that influence the process of making decision using Cindy Dietrich's types of factors, and finally concluded the analysis.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Will Traynor's Life Before the Accident**

Will Traynor is a rich man who lives in glamour. He used to work as a businessman in central London and lives with his girlfriend in a prestigious flat. Will is also the only son of the Traynor family, a famous family who has lived in the Stortfold Castle for generations. That is why he is not only rich but also has a high status in society since he was born ((Moyes, pp. 88-89). He is fond of extreme activities like climbing mountains and hanging over ravines. At the age of 35, Will has gone around the world and visited some extreme places to satisfy his passion for adrenaline junkies.

"I climbed Mount Kilimanjaro when I hit thirty. That was pretty incredible. – It was beautiful. The roof of Africa, they call it. When you're up there, it's like you can see to the end of the world." Will was silent for a moment.

"So where else have you liked?"

"Trou d'Eau Douce bay, Mauritius. Lovely people, beautiful beaches, and great diving. Um...Tsavo National Park, Kenya, all red earth and wild animals. Yosemite. That's California. Rock faces so tall your brain can't quite process the scale of them." (Moyes, 2012, p. 454)

Will Traynor is known as a busy man for he dedicates his life mostly to his job. This causes him to never leave his phone away from him and barely off in every situation, even when he is with his ex-girlfriend, Alicia (Moyes, pp. 88-89). Will's life before the accident is described as independent with a perfect life for having a balanced portion between his jobs, passions, and also love. The only problem is his relationship with his parents is not close since a teenager and it becomes worse when he moves out of the house.

### **The Process of Will Traynor's Decision Making to have euthanasia**

Will's process of decision-making to have euthanasia starts when he gets an accident that causes him to get cervical injuries that cause him to become quadriplegic C5/6. Will's decision-making process is divided into three stages; Will's personal examination, Will's general examination, and Will's actual choice.

**Will's Personal Examination.** Will personal examination of making a decision starts when he realizes his body condition which is quadriplegia never gets better. At the beginning of Will's decision-making process, he only examines his decision with his personal opinion and point of view. He only sees the various acceptable options from his point of view and the consequences for him without considering other people's opinions. The result of his personal examination is he decides to have euthanasia to end his life.

Will's personal examination for having euthanasia as his decision is first shown when he tells his decision to his mother, Camilla: "I don't want to live like this, Mother. This is not the life I chose. There is no prospect of my recovery, hence it is a perfectly reasonable request to ask to end it in a manner I see fit" (Moyes, 2012, p. 255). Will directly tells his mother what he wants based on his point of view. He is not asking for permission from his mother, he only tells his mother about it. He thinks that the euthanasia method is the most suitable for him in such a condition.

Will's body is explained by Will himself to Louisa Clark when they are having a conversation at the beach of Mauritius Island. The conversation situation starts with Louisa as the main point of view:

"...And if you do love me, Clark, as you say you do, the thing that would make me happier than anything is if you would come with me.'

My head whipped back.

'What?'

'It's not going to get any better than this. The odds are I'm only going to get increasingly unwell and my life, reduced as it is, is going to get smaller. The doctors have said as much. There are a host of conditions encroaching on me. I can feel it. I don't want to be in pain anymore, or trapped in this thing, or dependent on everyone, or afraid. So I'm asking you – if you feel the things you say you feel – then do it. Be with me. Give me the end I'm hoping for.'"  
(Moyes, 2012, p.753)

When Louisa is confessing to Will, instead of accepting her affection, he responds Louisa's confession by telling her about his feelings for not wanting to live as a quadriplegic who suffers several pains.

In the same situation where Will and Louisa are having a conversation at the beach, Will shows that he is not looking at the bigger picture about his decision to have euthanasia and that is one of the proofs that he only uses his personal examination when

he makes the euthanasia decision at the beginning. The dialogues start when Louisa tries to embrace Will after she confesses to him:

"If you think it's too weird with me being employed by you, then I'll leave and I'll work somewhere else. I wanted to tell you – I've applied for a college course. I've done loads of research on the internet, talking to other quads and careers of quads, and I have learned so much, so much about how to make this work. So I can do that, and just be with you. You see? I've thought of everything, and researched everything. This is how I am now. This is your fault. You changed me.' I was half laughing. 'You've turned me into my sister. But with better dress sense.'

He had closed his eyes. I placed both my hands around his, lifted his knuckles to my mouth, and I kissed them. I felt his skin against mine, and knew as I had never known anything that I could not let him go.

'What do you say?' I whispered. I could have looked into his eyes forever.

He said it so quietly, that for a minute I could not be sure I had heard him correctly. 'What?'

'No, Clark.'

'No?'

'I'm sorry. It's not enough.'

I lowered his hand. 'I don't understand.'

He waited before he spoke, as if he were struggling, for once, to find the right words. 'It's not enough for me. This – my world – even with you in it. And believe me, Clark, my whole life has changed for the better since you came.

But it's not enough for me. It's not the life I want.'" (Moyes, 2012, p. 749)

Will realizes that when he and Louisa live together, their life is much better than before he met Louisa. Yet, Will does not deny that his quadriplegia as an incurable illness still exists in his body. Even though he knows that maybe the presence of Louisa next to him as his lover makes his life easier and happier, his mind refuses to think that way.

**Will's General Examination.** In this stage, other opinion starts to influence Will's decision-making process on euthanasia. After hearing others' viewpoints, Will's beliefs are challenged, leading him to explore a range of new options he hadn't previously thought of. The person, who gives an opinion to Will about euthanasia, is Will's mother. The following dialogues are where Will's mother, Camilla, is the main point of view:



“When Will first told me what he wanted, he had to tell me twice, as I was quite sure I could not have heard him correctly the first time. I stayed quite calm when I realized what it was he was proposing, and then I told him he was being ridiculous and I walked straight out of the room. He refused to let it go. Being Will, he always had to have the last word. He repeated his request every time I went in to see him until I almost had to persuade myself to go in each day.” (Moyes, 2012, p. 254)

Camilla rejects his proposal of euthanasia even though Will asks her more than once. Will is trying to convince his mother by always asking her about his wish whenever his mother sees him.

Soon after many rejections, Will becomes desperate and depressed. In such a state, he becomes unstable and commits suicide. This is where the rejection of Will's mother and his wish to die contradict and make him consider another option to solve the contradiction problem. He decides to commit suicide. There is a situation where Will commits suicide after his mother rejects his euthanasia decision. The narration below is where Camilla as the main point of view describes Will's act of committing suicide:

“—and then on 22 January, a day when I was stuck in court with a relentless roll call of shoplifters and uninsured drivers, of weeping angry ex-partners, Steven walked into the annex and found our son almost unconscious, his head lolling by his armrest, a sea of dark, sticky blood pooling around his wheels. He had located a rusty nail, barely half an inch emerging from some hurriedly finished woodwork in the back lobby, and, pressing his wrist against it, had reversed backward and forwards until his flesh was sliced to ribbons. I can not to this day imagine the determination that kept him going, even though he must have been half delirious from the pain. The doctors said he was less than twenty minutes from death.” (Moyes, 2012, p. 257)

The rejection of Will's mother is considered as the other's opinion as the general examination and influences Will's process of decision to have euthanasia. Will's act to commit suicide is how he solves the contradiction problem between other's opinions towards his decision.

After Will commits suicide, his parents finally accept his decision to have euthanasia because his parents think that he may try to do suicide by himself again. The next dialogue is when Will's mother, Camilla's point of view is projected:



"He didn't understand, you see. He hadn't worked it out yet. That Will would try again. That our lives would have to be spent in a state of constant vigilance, waiting for the next time, waiting to see what horror he would inflict upon himself. We would have to see the world through his eyes – the potential poisons, the sharp objects, the inventiveness with which he could finish the job that damned motorcyclist had started. Our lives had to shrink to fit around the potential for that one act. And he had the advantage – he had nothing else to think about, you see?

Two weeks later, I told Will, 'Yes.'

Of course, I did.

What else could I have done?" (Moyes, 2012, p. 259)

Camilla knows that Will will commit another suicide by himself if his wish to do euthanasia is not accepted by her. Camilla is left with no alternative but to agree to his wish.

**Will's Actual Choice.** After Will Traynor goes through two steps of examination for his decision-making, he reaches the last step of the decision-making, the actual choice. Because Will tries to commit suicide, his parents finally accept his decision to have euthanasia yet as their compensation, they want Will to live with them for another six months before he takes the euthanasia. He decides to postpone his plan and to pick 13 August to be the day he takes euthanasia. Will explains to Louisa about the procedure for taking the euthanasia that he goes through:

"I'm sorry. I don't mean it to sound blunt. But I haven't got the luxury of time."

"Wha– what? Why, are you booked in? Is there some appointment you're afraid of missing?"

I could see people at the hotel stopping, perhaps hearing our raised voices, but I didn't care.

"Yes," Will said, after a pause. "Yes, there is. I've had the consultations. The clinic agreed that I am a suitable case for them. And my parents agreed to the thirteenth of August. We're due to fly out the day before." (Moyes, 2012, p. 754)

Will already made some consultations with doctors in Dignitas, the clinic which provides euthanasia treatment in Swiss; so that he can have the euthanasia just like what he decides. With his parent's agreement and the agreement of the doctors, nothing can stop him from taking this decision.

There are also Will's statements that his final decision is to take euthanasia. The following dialogues are the dialogues where Will asks Louisa to accompany him when he will have euthanasia:

"I had begun to cry. 'Please, Will. Please don't say this. Just give me a chance. Give us a chance.'"

"Sshhh. Just listen. You, of all people. Listen to what I'm saying. This...tonight...is the most wonderful thing you could have done for me. What you have told me, what you have done in bringing me here...knowing that, somehow, from that complete arse I was at the start of this, you managed to salvage something to love is astonishing to me. But –"I felt his fingers close on mine – I need it to end here. No more chair. No more pneumonia. No more burning limbs. No more pain and tiredness and waking up every morning already wishing it was over. When we get back, I am still going to go to Switzerland. And if you do love me, Clark, as you say you do, the thing that would make me happier than anything is if you would come with me." (Moyes, 2012, p. 752)

Will does not want to continue being a burden on Louisa and his family, and he believes euthanasia is the most dignified choice. He emphasizes that while he deeply cares for Louisa, he cannot continue living in his current state and wants to die on his own terms. He also appeals to Louisa's feelings, asking her to respect his decision and even suggesting that if she truly loves him, she should support him in his choice, including accompanying him to Dignitas in Switzerland for the procedure.

### **The Factors that Influence Will's Decision-Making**

**Will's Past Experience.** Past experience is when someone makes a decision in the past that leads him or her to face the consequences of his or her decision and it can affect his or her future decision. Will's past decision experience that can affect his decision especially on his euthanasia decision can be seen before he gets the accident:

"He shoulders his way into his leather jacket. 'What's it like out there, Mick?' 'Terrible. Raining cats and dogs.'

Will stops. 'Really? Not weather for the bike?'

Mick shakes his head. 'No, sir. Not unless you've got an inflatable attachment. Or a death wish.'

Will stares at his bike, then peels himself out of his leathers. No matter what Lissa thinks, he is not a man who believes in taking unnecessary risks. He unlocks the top box of his bike and places the leathers inside, locking it and throwing the keys at Mick, who catches them neatly with one hand. 'Stick those through my door, will you?'

'No problem. You want me to call a taxi for you?'

'No. No point both of us getting wet.'" (Moyes, 2012, p. 13)

The conversations are between Will and the security in his apartment on the day he got into the accident. Will decided not to ride his bike because he thought that it was dangerous to ride a motorbike in that weather. Soon after he decided to walk instead of riding his motorbike, he got into an accident when he crossed the road which changed his life forever.

Will's experience decision is not directly about a decision of euthanasia, but it affects him on how he has to make a decision. It makes him consider many things before he decide it, especially a decision that involves life and death.

**Will's Cognitive Bias.** Cognitive biases are thinking patterns that someone has based on their previous knowledge and also their observation and generalization. This thinking pattern may lead someone to have a narrow-minded way of thinking and deny the facts or information. It can also be considered as past experience. Cognitive bias is not solely influenced by personal experiences, but also by how a person uses their prior knowledge to interpret information, which can lead to biased thought patterns and potential misjudgments

Will's cognitive biases are shaped by his observation of how his life has been going, especially after the accident. He sees his future as a series of limitations and struggles. Will's decision-making regarding euthanasia is influenced by his biased mind, as he tends to focus more on his perceived suffering rather than potential for improvement or hope. His tendency to interpret his situation through a lens of pessimism leads him to overlook alternative perspectives. This reinforces his belief in the finality of his decision, as he clings to his prejudice that living under these conditions is not worth it.

After the accident, Will's life changes upside down. He cannot fulfill his desire as an adrenaline junky anymore as well as his passion for working as a businessman. The quadriplegia takes everything from him and makes him think that he is not the same Will Traynor. It makes Will pessimistic showing no interest in living a life and only wanting to

end his life. Below are the dialogues between Will and Louisa Clark when he explains to Louisa how he loved his life before the accident:

“The thing is, I get that this could be a good life. I get that with you around, perhaps it could even be a very good life. But it’s not my life. I am not the same as these people you speak to. It’s nothing like the life I want. Not even close.” His voice was halting, broken. His expression frightened me.

I swallowed, shaking my head. “You...you once told me that the night in the maze didn’t have to be the thing that defined me. You said I could choose what it was that defined me. Well, you don’t have to let that...that chair define you.”

“But it does define me, Clark. You don’t know me, not really. You never saw me before this thing. I loved my life, Clark. Really loved it. I loved my job, my travels, the things I was. I loved being a physical person. I liked riding my motorbike, hurling myself off buildings. I liked crushing people in business deals. I liked having sex. Lots of sex. I led a big life.” His voice had lifted now. “I am not designed to exist in this thing – and yet for all intents and purposes, it is now the thing that defines me. It is the only thing that defines me.” (Moyes, 2012, pp. 749-750)

Will had a perfect life as a man could ever have. Being a successful and rich man made him able to do many things just the way he wanted. And yet that is the only reason why he feels so lost after he got the accident and is unable to do many things, even simple activities.

There are also some statements from Will that he wishes to be somewhere else in the world being ‘himself’ who is healthy, not being trapped in a wheelchair. It can be seen when Will and Louisa have a conversation about going to Paris with Louisa.

“You don’t get it, Clark. I don’t want to go there in this – this thing.’ He gestured at the chair, his voice dropping. ‘I want to be in Paris as me, the old me. I want to sit in a chair, leaning back, my favorite clothes on, with pretty French girls who pass by giving me the eye just as they would any other man sitting there. Not looking away hurriedly when they realize I’m a man in an overgrown bloody pram.”

“But we could try,” I ventured. “It needn’t be –“

“No. No, we couldn’t. Because at the moment I can shut my eyes and know exactly how it feels to be in the Rue des Francs Bourgeois, cigarette in hand, clementine juice in a tall, cold glass in front of me, the smell of someone’s

steak frites cooking, the sound of a moped in the distance. I know every sensation of it.”

He swallowed. “The day we go and I’m in this bloody contraption, all those memories, those sensations will be wiped out, erased by the struggle to get behind the table, up and down Parisian curbs, the taxi drivers who refuse to take us, and the wheelchair bloody power pack that wouldn’t charge in a French socket. Okay?” (Moyes, 2012, pp. 449-450)

Will wants to be a healthy person like he was before. When Louisa asks him to go to Paris and experience many things like what Will had before, he refuses it because when they go together as they are now, he will be not the same man as he was before. Will realizes that in such conditions, he will never have the same feeling as before and he may get worst treatment from the people.

Will’s cognitive biases are shaped by how his previous knowledge makes misjudgments about his perspectives to the reality he deals with right now. He only sees the negative side of the situations and conditions he has right now as a disabled person and thinks that being a person like that is shameful and useless. He may not yet even consider other possibilities that not all people see and treat him negatively.

**Will’s Escalation of Commitment.** Will’s escalation of commitment is when Will already sacrifices something to get what he wants; he will be willing to sacrifice much more until he gets his goal done. By deciding to take euthanasia, Will sacrifices not only his time but also his feelings and love towards Louisa. He sacrifices his time and love in his commitment to euthanasia.

After he decides to have euthanasia, he prepares everything by having a consultation with the doctors in dignitas and trying to get his parent's agreement. Will has faith that his decision will never be distracted by others' opinions even though when he meets Louisa and has a doubt for still taking euthanasia, he still keeps his commitment. The dialogues below shows how Louisa argues against Will’s decision.

“I don’t believe this.”

“Louisa –“

“I thought...I thought I was changing your mind.”

He tilted his head sideways and gazed at me. His voice was soft, his eyes gentle. “Louisa, nothing was ever going to change my mind. I promised my

parents six months, and that's what I've given them. You have made that time more precious than you can imagine." (Moyes, 2012, p. 754)

Will is taking his decision seriously to the point where he has prepared everything since six months ago. He uses his six-month time to prepare many things, such as leaving wills, and also living together with his family even though he can have euthanasia sooner, and yet he waits. He completely understands that his decision hurts everyone, especially Lou. That is why he knows that his decision to take euthanasia has to be made.

Will's feelings towards Louisa are also the things that he has to sacrifice in his commitment to euthanasia. At the beginning of the novel, he never thinks that he will love Louisa as he is now.

"You don't know that, Clark. You have no idea how this would play out. You have no idea how you're going to feel even six months from now. And I don't want to look at you every day, to see you naked, to watch you wandering around the annexe in your crazy dresses and not...not be able to do what I want with you. Oh, Clark, if you had any idea what I want to do to you right now. And I...I can't live with that knowledge. I can't. It's not who I am. I can't be the kind of man who just...accepts.' He glanced down at his chair, his voice breaking. 'I will never accept this.' I had begun to cry.

'Please, Will. Please don't say this. Just give me a chance. Give us a chance.' 'Sshhh. Just listen. You, of all people. Listen to what I'm saying. This...tonight...is the most wonderful thing you could have done for me. What you have told me, what you have done in bringing me here...knowing that, somehow, from that complete arse I was at the start of this, you managed to salvage something to love is astonishing to me. But –' I felt his fingers close on mine '– I need it to end here. No more chairs. No more pneumonia. No more burning limbs. No more pain and tiredness and waking up every morning already wishing it was over. When we get back, I am still going to go to Switzerland. And if you do love me, Clark, as you say you do, the thing that would make me happier than anything is if you would come with me." (Moyes, 2012, pp. 751-752)

Will tells Louisa how much he wants to hold her and do many things with her as he looks at her beside him every day. He is very pleasant to have Louisa who has brightened his life for the last six months to the point where he will never expect to feel that way anymore as a disabled person. Will does not deny the feeling he has for Louisa and yet he still

thinks that it is not enough to only dream he could live together with Louisa as a normal couple. It is all because he never considers himself a normal person who will never have that kind of luxury of living life as a normal couple as he had before.

**Will's Individual Differences.** Another factor that influences a person's decision-making is individual differences. The first individual difference of Will is Will's age. In the following dialogue is where Will has a conversation with his mother, Camilla after he and Louisa spend the night in the hotel after the wedding party of Will's ex-girlfriend and Lou gets drunk:

"They finally got back from the wedding around lunchtime the following day and Mrs Traynor was so mad she could barely even speak.

'You could have rung,' she said.

'I must have called or texted you both eighteen times. It was only when I managed to call the Dewars' house and somebody told me "the man in the wheelchair" had gone to a hotel that I could be sure you hadn't both had some terrible accident on the motorway.'

"The man in the wheelchair". Nice,' Will observed.

But you could see he wasn't bothered. He was all loose and relaxed, carried his hangover with humor, even though I had the feeling he was in some pain. It was only when his mum started to have a go at Louisa that he stopped smiling. He jumped in and said that if she had anything to say she should say it to him, as he had decided to stay overnight, and Louisa had gone along with it.

'And as far as I can see, Mother, as a 35-yearold man I'm not strictly answerable to anybody when it comes to choosing to spend a night at a hotel. Even to my parents.' (Moyes, 2012, pp. 621-622)

Will is aware that he is already an adult man who does not necessarily have to ask for permission from his mother to spend the night. He qualifies as an adult who has the right to make decisions by himself. Will's response to his mother's anger shows his desire to assert his autonomy. Despite his condition, he firmly maintains that, as an adult, he is not beholden to his parent's expectations or judgments, particularly regarding personal decisions like where to stay. Will is 35 years old, an adult man who has the right as an individual to make decisions. He is not a 12-year-old boy that can be considered a child who is still under his parent's care and has to obey his parent and ask permission before



he does something. Will has the right to decide what he wants to do with his life. In this case, he decides to do euthanasia as a way to end his life.

Another Will's individual difference that affects his euthanasia decision-making is his socioeconomic status. His socioeconomic status influences him to defend his decision to take euthanasia and persuade his parent to accept it. In the novel, there is a monologue in Camilla's mind when she is thinking about his son after Will tells her that he wants to have euthanasia. The monologue is:

“When Will first told me what he wanted, he had to tell me twice, as I was quite sure I could not have heard him correctly the first time. He refused to let it go. Being Will, he always had to have the last word. He repeated his request every time I went in to see him until I almost had to persuade myself to go in each day. I don't want to live like this, Mother. This is not the life I chose. There is no prospect of my recovery, hence it is a perfectly reasonable request to ask to end it in a manner I see fit. I heard him and could well imagine what he had been like in those business meetings, the career that had made him rich and arrogant. He was a man who was used to being heard, after all.” (Moyes, 2012, p. 255)

Will asks Camilla's agreement several times for euthanasia and Camilla knows that her son is used to being heard by the people around him because of Will's position in work and society. This factor makes him to be so persistent in persuading others to accept his decision, in this case, the decision to take euthanasia. His socioeconomic status influences him to stick with his decision because he used to be at the top level of society where his words are absolute and have to be accepted by other people.

**Will's Belief in Personal Relevance.** Belief in personal relevance is a state when someone believes that his or her decision is important, they will make the decision. Will believes in his own ability that he can make a decision and believes that his decision to have euthanasia is important. Will Traynor is very sure that his illness cannot be cured; even the improvement is so little.

In the beginning of the novel, Louisa has a conversation with Nathan; Will's nurse; about how Will does the rehabilitation with Nathan and how Will still has the determination to get cured.

“Does he do this stuff for you? The physio stuff? He doesn't seem to want to do anything that I suggest.”

Nathan wrinkled his nose. 'He does it, but I don't think his heart's in it. When I first came, he was pretty determined. He'd come pretty far in rehab, but after a year with no improvement, I think he found it pretty tough to keep believing it was worth it.' (Moyes, 2012, p. 64)

In the first year of following the medication, Will still has faith in getting better with his illness, and yet he finally stops trying every medication and rehabilitation when he realizes it does not work. That is one of the reasons that influenced Will to decide to have euthanasia. Will's determination to get cured in the past is known by his parent, when Will's mother, Camilla, tells Will's sister, Georgina, when they have a conversation in their house about Will's condition.

"There must be something they can do. Some medical advances. Can't you take him to America? Things are always improving in America.'

'Your father keeps a very close eye on all the developments. But no, darling, there is nothing...concrete.'

'He's so...different now. It's like he's determined not to see the good in anything.'

'He's been like that since the start, George. I think it's just that you didn't see him apart from when you flew home. Back then, I think he was still...determined. Back then, he was sure that something would change.'

(Moyes, 2012, p. 239)

Will initially holds onto the hope that his illness will improve, but after years of taking medications, he comes to the painful realization that his condition will never get better, leading him to become more pessimistic.

Will firmly believes that euthanasia is the only solution to free him from his suffering. To him, it is a much more bearable end than living with the illness until the end or taking his own life. It can be seen in the novel when Will argues with Louisa because she forces him not to take euthanasia:

"Sshhh. Just listen. You, of all people. Listen to what I'm saying. This...tonight...is the most wonderful thing you could have done for me. What you have told me, what you have done in bringing me here...knowing that, somehow, from that complete arse I was at the start of this, you managed to salvage something to love is astonishing to me. But –'

I felt his fingers close on mine.

‘– I need it to end here. No more chair. No more pneumonia. No more burning limbs. No more pain and tiredness and waking up every morning already wishing it was over. When we get back, I am still going to go to Switzerland. It’s not going to get any better than this. The odds are I’m only going to get increasingly unwell and my life, reduced as it is, is going to get smaller. The doctors have said as much. There are a host of conditions encroaching on me. I can feel it. I don’t want to be in pain any more, or trapped in this thing, or dependent on everyone, or afraid. So I’m asking you – if you feel the things you say you feel – then do it. Be with me. Give me the end I’m hoping for.’ (Moyes, 2012, pp. 752-753)

Will does not want to live in constant pain until the inevitable end of his illness. He knows that his condition will get worse and gives him complication that leads him to death eventually. He prefers on taking euthanasia, so his death will be fast and painless.

Although he tries to commit suicide by hurting his wrist as the alternative option, it is all because his main intention to die with dignity is being rejected by his parents and he cannot do anything with it. Will knows that his decision of euthanasia is very important to be done. He knows that his quadriplegia makes everything fall out of place, especially his life and his family. The quotation below shows Will’s feelings on having quadriplegia to Louisa.

“I get really, really scared of how this is going to go.” He let that settle in the air between us, and then, in a low, calm voice, he carried on. “I know most people think living like me is about the worst thing that could happen. But it could get worse. I could end up not being able to breathe by myself, and not being able to talk. I could get circulatory problems that mean my limbs have to be amputated. I could be hospitalized indefinitely. This isn’t much of a life, Clark. But when I think about how much worse it could get – some nights I lie in my bed and I can’t actually breathe.” He swallowed.

“And you know what? Nobody wants to hear that stuff. Nobody wants you to talk about being afraid, or in pain, or being scared of dying through some stupid, random infection. Nobody wants to know how it feels to know you will never have sex again, never eat food you’ve made with your own hands again, and never hold your child. Nobody wants to know that sometimes I feel so claustrophobic, being in this chair, I just want to scream like a madman at the thought of spending another day in it. My mother is hanging on by a thread and

can't forgive me for still loving my father. My sister resents me for the fact that yet again I have overshadowed her – and because my injuries mean she can't properly hate me, like she has since we were children. My father just wants it all to go away. Ultimately, they want to look on the bright side. They need me to look on the bright side.” (Moyes, 2012, pp. 572-573).

Will is showing his deep sense of fear, frustration, and isolation as he reflects on the severity of his condition and the potential for it to worsen. He will never be ready to manage his emotional and physical burdens; he is overwhelmed with a future filled with suffering. Will knows that he is incurable, but his family insists him to be optimistic, and Will realizes this demands Will's family sacrifice of many things for him to be better. Fearing the burden he places on his family, he decides that ending his life would be the most selfless choice

Will's decision to choose euthanasia is not straightforward easy. It is influenced by multiple and complicated factors, such as cognitive biases, individual differences, and the emotional weight of the decision. His cognitive biases, shaped by his negative perceptions of his disability, limit his ability to see alternative possibilities, while his personal circumstances, including his age and socioeconomic background, further contribute to his belief in the importance of his choice. Will is resolute in his choice of euthanasia.

## CONCLUSION

The novel *Me Before You* by Jojo Moyes provides sufficient evidence of the decision making process and the factors that affect that process, except the factor in individual differences, which is, cognitive abilities, seen through the narration and the dialogues between and within the characters – Louisa Clark, Will Traynor, Camilla Traynor, Stephen Traynor, Josie Clark, etc), thoughts, and deeds.

Will Traynor's process of euthanasia decision making, examined using Condorcet's perception on the decision making process, shows that Will's personal examination, the first stage, is Will Traynor finds that he will never be cured and refuses all people's opinion (Louisa's and his parents') and believes that ending his life is the best choice. The second stage is Will's general examination. Will starts to considers other's opinions which leads him to alternative options that is trying to commit suicide and postponing the date of taking the euthanasia. The third stage is Will Traynor's actual choice to have euthanasia in Dignitas, Swiss.

There are five factors that influence Will in making his decision to have euthanasia which are his past experience, cognitive biases, escalation of commitments, individual differences, and belief in personal relevance. Will's past experience happened on the day he got an accident and caused him have cervical neck injuries that changed his life forever. He has to think more than just simply decides euthanasia because it involves his life and death. The second factor, Will's cognitive biases, is Will always thinks that his life is full of pain and shameful for being dependent to others. The third is Will's escalation of commitment. By making the euthanasia decision, Will makes lots of sacrifices that is to live together with his parents for six months and to give up on his love to Louisa. Will's individual differences are his age and socioeconomic status. Will has reached the age of adulthood and has the right to decide what he wants to do with his life. Being a successful business man and lives in a high status of society make Will easy to get what he wants. This factor makes him so persistent to persuade others to accept his decision, in this case, the decision to take euthanasia. And the last factor is Will's belief in personal relevance. Will realizes that he is incurable and his decision is very important for his life because he does not want to live as a disabled person for the rest of his life and euthanasia is the only solution to him.

## REFERENCES

- Abrams, M.H. and Harpham, Geoffrey Galt. (2005). *Glossary Literary Terms*. Eleventh Edition. Boston: Cengage Learning. Retrieved on 14 February 2025 from <https://teachmint.storage.googleapis.com/public/1555219026/StudyMaterial/c6d151a6-d161-4bab-8552-06337a1ddec1.pdf>
- Dietrich, Cindy. (2010). Decision Making: Factors that Influence Decision Making, Heuristics Used, and Decision Outcomes. *Inquiries Journal: Social Science, Arts & Humanities*. 2010, Vol. 2 No. 02. pp. 1-3. Retrieved on 20 February 2016 from <http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/180/decision-making-factors-that-influence-decision-making-heuristics-used-and-decision-outcomes>
- Hansson, Sven Ove. (2005). *Decision Theory: A Brief Introduction*. Stockholm: Department of Philosophy and the History of Technology Royal Institute of Technology (KTH).
- Kiddle. (2025). Jojo Moyes facts for kids - Kids Encyclopedia Facts. Retrieved on 14 February 2025 from [https://kids.kiddle.co/Jojo\\_Moyes](https://kids.kiddle.co/Jojo_Moyes)

- Mendez, Brisa. (2019). Better Dead than Disabled: Analysis of *Me Before You*. Interdisciplinary Journal of Student Research and Scholarship. Volume 3 | Issue 1 Article 3. pp. 1-21. Retrieved on 14 February 2025 from <https://digitalcommons.tacoma.uw.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1044&context=access>
- Moyes, Jojo. (2012). *Me Before You*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Mustofa, Lody Kristiyawan and Jumino. (2021). Will Traynor's Suicidal Decision as Depicted in Novel *Me Before You* by Jojo Moyes. *Culturalistics: Journal of Cultural, Literary, and Linguistic Studies*, [5] (3), pp. 65-71. Retrieved on 14 February 2025 from <http://ejournal.undip.ac.id/index.php/culturalistics>
- NHS. (2023). Euthanasia and assisted suicide. Retrieved on 13 February 2025 from <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/euthanasia-and-assisted-suicide/>
- Wang, Yingxu and Guenter Ruhe. (2010). The Cognitive Process of Decision Making. *Int'l Journal of Cognitive Informatics and Natural Intelligence*, 1(2), pp. 73-85. Retrieved on February 12, 2025 from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314477928\\_The\\_Cognitive\\_Process\\_of\\_Decision\\_Making](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314477928_The_Cognitive_Process_of_Decision_Making)