

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of The Study

According to Erik Erikson, the German-American developmental psychologist, “In the social jungle of human existence, there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity”. The concept of identity is related to the human experience, as the absence of self-identity can lead to a sense of disconnect from the context of human existence; in addition to the importance of having an identity, we also as humans need a home we can stop by, feel the warmth and also get a sense of love, as expressed by John Berger (1984), the house is the foundation of family ethics a dining its quality without a home we will not feel comfort and warmth.

A family makes a house a home that any material possessions in the world can have, but it means nothing if they have no one to share it with. The home offers people a place to care for the people who matter most to them. This is the place for funny stories, great stories to tell, or unforgettable memories together, and home is more than just a place; it is the feeling of contentment and happiness they share with loved ones. Home means that whatever they are going through, no matter how hard life is, there is always someone who cares for them. People know a place is home when they feel comfortable enough to present their true selves because they know they are guaranteed acceptance. It's a paradise for them, and they can do whatever they want and not be judged later.

However, it is different from the definition of homeless; a person feels uncomfortable with his own family, as is usually the case for people who define home as a place to go home and tell stories and feel comfortable with their own family. The concept of home is gaining more and more attention in the modern world. Like Vycinus, there are those who mourn the passing of a time when a deep bond with his homeland was inevitable. Some work to reproduce, invent, package, and sell images of Himat for an increasingly nostalgic audience who may share this sense of loss and explore the meaning of this intangible and challenging concept.

Apart from leaving and finding a new home before experiencing homelessness, their identities are largely restricted by their lives. Individuals experiencing homelessness may have been subjected to domestic violence, faced challenges in maintaining relationships, or encountered familial rejection due to their identity, resulting in family anxiety and ultimately leading to their current state of homelessness (Donovan, Heaphy, and Weeks, 2004; Valentine et al., 2003).

According to Aoki (2008), persons who are homeless typically lack a fixed address. According to other research, persons who are homeless sleep, eat, work, and do everyday activities in public places, and poverty is caused by a lack of family contact, despair, and isolation issues (Pérez-Bermudez, 2009). According to this study's authors (Greif et al., 2008), independent homeless people who lack access to land and live on the streets are described as such. Street children are described and defined in a wide variety of ways by researchers; in affluent Nordic nations, they are referred to as homeless (Raikhola, 2015).

Fatima Farheen Mirza's book *A Place for Us* was released in New York on 12 June 2018. This novel has a backward and forward storyline that tells the story of an Indian American family who immigrated to America. This family does not get along because of identity conflicts and homelessness that occur in the family. Layla and Rafiq are a couple arranged by their parents; Rafiq has a very good and hardworking job, and the Rafiq family is respectable. After marriage, they immigrated to America. They have three children named Hadia, Amar, and Huda, who gathered in their hometown of California to celebrate the wedding of their eldest daughter, Hadia. Amar returns to their home in America for the first time after being away for three years.

Back to their past stories, at school, Hadia was a smart child, but Amar was not smart, so his father often compared those who caused problems, Rafiq, as a father, asked Amar to be good at school and even at home, Amar always made mistakes that made his father angry, in his father's eyes, Amar is always wrong because he is a naughty, stubborn child and Amar at school always makes trouble, so his parents are always called to school by his teacher. Therefore, since childhood they have been taught to comply with Rafiq's prohibitions, starting from going home from

school, having to go straight home, not being able to participate in school activities, not being able to go to friend birthday parties, and not being allowed to stay at other people's homes. They are only allowed to join the existing religious community around their residence. While eating together at a family party, Amar starts to like Amira who is the younger sister of his best friend, Abbas. And then Amar and Amira are dating their parents don't know about it, one day Amar's mother comes into the room and sees Amira's photo in the drawer; his mother scolds Amar and immediately goes to Amira's house to tell Amira's mother.

Through this novel *A Place for Us*, the writer will discuss the depiction of the identity of the main character of the novel and the writer will also discuss homelessness that is felt by Amar Besides that his sisters also feel that as a result of his father's very strict attitude, his children hate him and Amar chooses left his home because Amar felt that he was not considered, did not get love, and did not get the freedom to do what he wanted tell anyone about it.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Statements that can be formulated in this study are:

1. How is the life of Amar's family in the novel?
2. How is homelessness experienced by Amar portrayed in the novel?
3. How does Amar deal with his identity problem in the novel?

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

This research proposal attempts to answer the following questions:

1. To find a portrait of Amar's family life in the novel.
2. To find how homelessness Amar is described in the novel.
3. To find out how Amar overcomes his identity problem in the novel.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The writer conducted this research to better understand and provide views on the meaning of homelessness and identity through the novel *A Place for Us*. The writer also hopes that after reading this research, the reader can understand the contents of the research that the writer conveys through this novel.

#### **1.5 Methodology of the Study**

Steps are taken to discuss the formulation of the problem in this *skripsi*. The writer uses qualitative methods and produces descriptive data to understand the homelessness and identity experienced by Amar in the novel, with reading and selecting texts that contain a description of Amar's family religion, culture, life, and school. To identify based on its type in the concept of homelessness, the writer uses the theory of Somerville (1992) and Watson and Austerberry (1986) which covers physiological (lack of comfort and warmth), emotional (lack of love or joy), territorial aspects (lack of privacy), and spiritual (lack of expectations or goals). The writer identifies each type and provides evidence that Amar deals with his identity problem starting from Amar at school, leaving his house, and returning home at the time of his sister's wedding.

#### **1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The writer will limit the discussion in this novel with the main objective of the writer is to discuss homelessness and identity experienced by Amar in the novel *A Place for Us*. To help analyze Amar the writer uses the theory of homelessness and identity by providing an overview of experienced homelessness, feeling a loss of identity and Amar accepting identity in his family.

#### **1.7 Status of the Study**

The previous studies that have conducted this novel are Mr. Ramchanso A.S. and Mr. Hungpungwo R. Z, who published *Feminist Discourse on Mirza's A Place for Us* on 18 July 2022. They analyzed the novel from the princess' point of view and showed the clash of her life and desires with patriarchal family arrangements, the servitude of household chores, and the further expectations of a Muslim girl like their mother, Layla, and their extraordinary intellect and intelligence. In this

analysis, the writer needs to analyze this novel on a different topic that has never been analyzed before. The writer will discuss how Amar's identity is related to homelessness and how Amar finds his identity in Fatima Farheen Mirza's novel *A Place for Us*.

### **1.8 Organization of the Study**

Chapter I Introduction. This aims to provide an understanding of this research, which can help the writer understand the background and purpose of choosing this topic before entering the discussion. This chapter consists of several sections, such as research background, problem formulation, research objectives, research significance, research methodology, research scope and limitations, research status, and research organization.

Chapter II Review of Related Literature. Focusing on a review of related literature that aims to explain research theories and concepts as a guideline for proceeding to the next chapter. This chapter discusses the novel and the writer explains the definition of identity and the cultural differences between India and America.

Chapter III contains findings and discussions. This chapter will be the core of this research because it will explain all the problems the writer found in this novel related to the chosen topic. The writer will be able to link every problem in the novel with the theory used by the writer to complete the purpose of this research.

Chapter IV Conclusion. The writer will conclude all parts of this research to narrow and explain the findings obtained from this research.