

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the study

Immigrants are perpetrators of immigration, the meaning of immigration itself is the movement of people from one nation-state to another country, where they are not a citizen (Marta & Fatma 2019). Immigration refers to movement to permanent residence. Likewise migration, the crossing of community traffic flows international relations between countries is increasing. As a result, immigrants and their generations face a dilemma between maintaining and practicing their ancestral culture and the culture of the new country. This reflects the assertion that descendants of diaspora movements created by colonialism develop their own distinctive cultures, preserving and often extending and developing their original cultures (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin 2007). Individuals will always recognize and adapt to the new social and cultural environment when they experience the displacement process. Each individual will always recognize and adapt to the new social and cultural environment when they experience the displacement process.

Korean immigrants in the United States are often faced with various issues that affect their lives in a foreign land. One such issue is the issue of cultural integration. Although they try to maintain their Korean cultural identity, Korean immigrants often face pressure to adapt to a different American culture. This can create an internal conflict between maintaining their cultural roots and trying to succeed in a pluralistic American society. Another issue faced by Korean immigrants is discrimination and stereotyping. Like many other immigrant groups, Korean immigrants also often experience discrimination based on their race and origin. Stereotypes about Asian immigrants, such as the perception that they are “foreigners” or “don't fit in” with American culture, can exacerbate their social and economic experiences in America. Last but not least, Korean immigrants are also often faced with economic challenges. Many of them come to America with dreams of improving their lives financially, but the reality is often not as rosy. Difficulties in finding suitable jobs, language barriers, and the high cost of living in America

can be a heavy burden for Korean immigrants. Therefore, economic issues are often a major concern for the Korean immigrant community in America.

Studies on the life struggles of immigrants show that they often face complex and diverse challenges in adjusting to a new life in a foreign country. These studies highlight not only the economic, but also the social, psychological and cultural aspects that affect immigrants' lives. For example, according to (Luthra & Waldinger 2020) immigrants often face difficulties in finding jobs that match their skills and education in the destination country. This can result in a decline in social and economic status, and increase the level of psychological stress they experience. Emphasizes that Social and cultural aspects are also a challenge for immigrants by (Zhou & Bankston 1998). They have to adjust to new cultural norms, a different language, and a value system that may conflict with the one they brought from their home country. This acculturation process can affect their mental health and worsen their overall level of well-being. Economic challenges are also made clear in a study by (Portes & Rumbaut 2014), who point out that immigrants often find themselves under significant economic pressure in receiving countries. They may experience difficulties in securing well-paying jobs, meeting basic daily needs, or accessing proper healthcare. These factors can contribute to the level of economic and social instability within immigrant communities.

*Minari* is a movie that follows the journey of a Korean immigrant family who moved to the United States in the 1980s. Led by Jacob and Monica Yi, the couple decided to leave urban life in California and embark on a new adventure in rural Arkansas with dreams of becoming farmers. They brought with them their two children, Anne, who was bright and feisty, and David, who had heart problems. Upon arriving in Arkansas, the Yi family found great challenges in adjusting to the new environment. They were given a modest residence far from the amenities of the city, creating a sense of isolation and hardship for Monica who felt lonely. However, Jacob remains determined to realize his dream of becoming a farmer, buying a plot of land and starting to grow minari, a Korean specialty crop, as a side business. Jacob works hard in the fields, Monica tries to keep the family stable and faces difficulties in managing daily life, compounded by worries about David's

fragile health. Anne, who is smart and resilient, becomes the link between the outside world and family life at home, trying to find her way between two different cultures. Conflict arises when their grandmother, Soonja, comes to live with them.

Although her arrival adds color and cheer to the household, the generation and cultural differences cause friction between Monica and Soonja. However, through the struggles and hardships they experience together, the Yi family gradually learns about the meaning of family, hope, and courage in the face of the challenges of living in a foreign land. Full of warmth and simplicity, *Minari* presents a heartfelt story of love, resilience, and courage in pursuing dreams in America. In the movie “*Minari*,” the characteristics of Korean immigrants and their customs are clearly reflected through the Yi family. First of all, we see that the Yi family strongly preserves Korean cultural traditions and values. They maintain customs such as cooking Korean food, praying, and celebrating Korean cultural festivals such as Chinese New Year with vigor. This reflects their desire to maintain their cultural roots in the midst of a different environment. In addition, the Yi family also exhibits the spirit of hard work and resilience typical of many Korean immigrants. Father Jacob diligently tried to establish his farming business, facing challenges such as hard soil and unpredictable weather with great perseverance. This spirit reflects their desire to achieve success and financial stability in the new land.

*Minari* showcases the struggles and successes of an Asian immigrant family who came to America. The movie itself is based on the director's life living on a vegetable farm in rural Arkansas. The film has won many awards for its realistic portrayal of the struggles of an Asian family. At the 2021 Academy Awards, the movie was nominated for six Oscars and won one. More Asians won Oscars this year than in previous years, and *Minari* is one of the contributing factors. With the rampant violence occurring across America against Asian Americans of the Pacific (AAPIs), this movie is especially important and relevant today. This movie is a source of pride for many AAPIs, and is one that they can support and cheer for. *Minari* represents the lives of many Asian immigrants, and tells the stories of their struggles as immigrants without abandoning their culture.

This film is interesting and the research is interested in analyzing the struggles of Korean immigrant families in Arkansas, America. The researcher will discuss the background of the characters and how these characters survive, which is depicted by adapting to being immigrants.

### **1.2. Statements of the Problem**

- 1 What is the background of the Yi family as Korean immigrants depicted in the Film?
- 2 How are the Yi Family's life struggles as Korean immigrants depicted in the film?
- 3 How does the Yi Family survive as Korean immigrants in America?

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

1. To find out how the background depicts the Yi family's life as immigrant family.
2. To describe how the struggles of the Korean immigrant family are depicted in the film.
3. To find out how the Korean immigrant family survives in America.

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

This study is hope to give the readers' better understanding of the portrayal of Korean immigrants' life in America. Besides, the writer hopes that the results of this research can help readers get to know Korean immigrants' life struggles and the way they survive in the new place.

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

The current writer employs qualitative descriptive research, aimed at providing an overview, description, and analysis of the issues faced by the characters in the film *Minari*. This research aims to depict the struggles of life and how the characters confront various challenges as immigrants. The data analysis method involves initially watching the film repeatedly, reading its synopsis, and viewing reviews about *Minari*. Following this, the writer selects the research topic,

gathers and compiles data on the main characters for analysis, and examines how these characters behave as immigrants using theories of life struggles, literary theory, and social theory.

### **1.6. Scope and Limitation of the Study**

The focus of this research is to analyze the theme of the life struggle as Korean immigrants in Arkansas, America, represented by Yi Family consisting of Jacob as father, Monica as mother, David and Anne as children, and Soonja as grandmother. This research is also limited by the use of some theories, such as intrinsic elements of movie and the relation between literature and society.

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

Previous research was conducted by Anggun Inggit Larasti (2015) with the research title "AN ANALYSIS OF STRUGGLE OF LIFE IN "BETWEEN THE WORLD AND ME" NOVEL BY TANEHISI COATES". Anggun's research focuses on describing and interpreting the struggle against bad things due to racism in the data source, namely the novel "Between The World and Me" by Tahenisi Coates. This research focuses on the struggles of immigrants in facing the challenges of life in other countries.

The second research was conducted by (Geraldus Bataha, Tini Moge & Imelda Lolowang 2021) with the research title "LIFE STRUGGLE AS REFLECTED IN RALSTON'S BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE". Bataha, Moge & Lolowang's research focuses on interpreting the adventure struggle of Ralston's near-death experience while climbing alone in Blue John Canyon in Utah and the efforts he makes to survive in the setting of Ralston's adventures in the American West. This research focuses on the struggles of immigrants in facing the challenges of life in other countries.

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

Chapter 1 Introduction. This chapter explains the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the

research methodology, the scope and limitations of the study, the status of the study, and the organization of the study.

Chapter 2 Review of Related Literature. This chapter explains the approach and the theory that the writer uses in the study.

Chapter 3 Analysis and Discussion. This chapter explains the findings and also explanation on why the novel is analyzed with the theory.

Chapter 4 Conclusion. This chapter explains the results of the study and also the suggestion and recommendation from the writer who wants to do a study with the same topic.

