AN ANALYSIS OF RUKMANI’S PERSONAL STRUGGLE
FOR HER LIFE AS REVEALED
IN KAMALA MARKANDAYA’S NECTAR IN A SIEVE

A SARJANA PENDIDIKAN THESIS

Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
to Obtain the Sarjana Pendidikan Degree
in English Language Education

By
Agatha Dwi Lestari
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ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND ARTS EDUCATION
FACULTY OF TEACHERS TRAINING AND EDUCATION
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STATEMENT OF WORK'S ORIGINALITY

I honestly declare that this thesis, which I have written, does not contain the work or parts of the work of other people, except those cited in the quotations and the references, as a scientific paper should.

Yogyakarta, 6 September 2016
The Author

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Agatha Dwi Lestari
ABSTRACT

Lestari, Agatha Dwi. (2016). An Analysis of Rukmani’s Personal Struggle for Her Life as Revealed in Kamala Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve*. English Language Education Study Program, Department of Language and Arts Education, Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Yogyakarta, Sanata Dharma University.

This study discusses Kamala Markandaya’s novel, *Nectar in a Sieve*. *Nectar in a Sieve* is a story about a woman who struggles for life and has to try to survive with her family. Her strength in facing her life is full of surprising events. Thus, this is an interesting story since it presents support, moral value, and reflection to the readers.

There are two problems formulated in this study: (1) How is Rukmani described in *Nectar in a Sieve*? and (2) Why does Rukmani struggle for her life as depicted in *Nectar in a Sieve*?

The method employed in this study is library research. The researcher uses a novel as primary data, printed books of literature, articles, journals, and some on-line references. The research uses psychological approach since the aim of this study is to analyze the main character.

Based on the analysis, there are two points that can be concluded. First, the description of Rukmani. From the analysis, the character of Rukmani is revealed as patient, hard working, smart and brave. Second, Rukmani’s struggle for her life. The reasons of her struggle are family financial condition and her family members’ life. Rukmani has to survive by working hard for her family, asking Kenny to help Ira’s infertility and going to the town to find some help. Finally, Rukmani can survive and overcome her problems.

Keywords: struggle, character, *Nectar in a Sieve*, life.
ABSTRAK


Skripsi ini membahas novel karangan Kamala Markandaya, Nectar in a Sieve. Nectar in a Sieve merupakan sebuah cerita tentang seorang wanita yang berjuang dalam hidup dan dia harus berusaha untuk bertahan hidup dengan keluarganya. Kekuatkannya dalam menghadapi hidup penuh dengan hal-hal yang tidak terduga. Oleh karena itu, novel ini merupakan sebuah cerita yang menarik karena memberikan dukungan, nilai moral, dan refleksi bagi pembaca.

Terdapat dua permasalahan dalam skripsi ini (1) Bagaimana Rukmani digambarkan dalam novel Nectar in a Sieve? dan (2) Mengapa Rukmani berjuang dalam hidupnya seperti dilukiskan dalam novel Nectar in a Sieve.


Kata kunci: struggle, character, Nectar in a Sieve, life.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into five parts. The first is background of the study. This part describes the topic of the discussion and the reason for choosing the novel. The second is problem formulation. This states the two research questions. The third is the objectives of the study. This part mentions the aims of the study. The fourth is the benefits of the study. It explains the advantages of the study for the readers and the future researchers. The last part is the definition of term. It discusses the definition of the important terms or keywords of the study to avoid misunderstanding.

A. Background of the Study

Everyone in the world always hopes and wishes for happiness in their life. Happiness becomes a precious thing for people’s life. However, life is not always the same as what people hope. In life people face a lot of various feelings and problems. These problems appear in family life, jobs, friends, and another aspect of life. Although people have already made huge and great plans to have a good life, there will be problems and those ruin the plans in an unpredictable way.

In every single day, problems come in human life. Although the problems might be hard and difficult for them to deal with but they have to continue their life to become better. As human beings, people must move on until they achieve what they want, because if there is a will, there will be a way out. Therefore, what
people have to do is struggling to deal with the problems and difficulties. They must try to realize their dreams into reality. To win and get happiness, people have to struggle and survive in their life.

There are a lot of literary works that depict human life experiences as described above. Those works can be songs, dramas, poems and novels. The major aim of literary works, as we know, is to entertain as well as to educate people who read it (Davina, 2014, p.1). When someone reads a novel, he/she can explore the content of the novel by her/his own feeling and perception, because it presents a story of human life itself. According to Abrams and Harpham (2012), novel as one of literature products, is a great kind of writing texts which have certain qualities that contain some elements such as character, conflict, plot, and symbol (p. 252). Besides, Abrams (1981) states “Literature is an imitation or reflection or representation of the world and human life” (p. 36). Thus, it can be considered as a portrait of human life. It also represents human experiences and teaches life values to the readers. The readers can feel and experience in many different ways when reading it. They can cry, laugh, and also feel various feelings while reading the novel.

Accordingly through reading a novel, people also learn moral values that educate them how to solve problem or how to struggle in life. People will seek the relationship between the situation in the novel and the situation in their lives. As many authors write and tell stories about life in their novel, this will give a value, strength, and reflection of the meaning of life to the readers to educate them. Of
course, there are many kinds of themes in literary works. Some of novels tell about struggle in people’s life.

Struggle means requiring a great effort to achieve a goal or task (McKenchie 1989, p. 367). People will do anything and keep struggling to solve the problems and accomplish something they want in life. Struggle can be interpreted as a human’s strategy to cover them from any problem in life. People will seek for ways or strategies to solve the problems. People will find any ideas to solve the problems in life by struggling, although it might be difficult or hard for them.

One of woman novelists from India who portrays about a woman’s struggle experience is Kamala Markandaya. She talks about life and how human survives in her novel. One of her novels which tells about this is *Nectar in a Sieve*. It describes about human experiences that can happen to everyone in this world. Kamala Markandaya describes about a woman who struggles for her life and environment so that she becomes better.

Rukmani, the main character in Kamala Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve*, is a young married woman, and lives in poverty. She is also the narrator of the story. Everything in her life becomes worse than before when a tannery is built in her village. Her house is destroyed by heavy rain and her family starts on the verge of starvation. She decides to leave her village to the city to look for her son but she fails. Rukmani’s struggle in her bad condition is amazing. She pushes her efforts to survive in her life and family no matter what happens.
This novel also portrays how hard life is and shows that life has many obstacles. However, Rukmani’s soul and spirit are inspiring. Rukmani has faith to make his family reunited again. This novel also presents other life values that people need to live in this world. That is why, this novel is worth to discuss.

B. Problem Formulation

In analyzing the novel, the researcher formulates two problems related to the topic of the study. The research questions are formulated as follows:

1. How is Rukmani described in *Nectar in a Sieve*?
2. Why does Rukmani struggle for her life as depicted in *Nectar in a Sieve*?

C. The Objectives of the Study

This study has two objectives. The first objective is to find out the characteristics of Rukmani, the major character as revealed in the novel. The second is to analyze and to find out Rukmani’s struggle for her life as seen in Kamala Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve* and to find out the reasons why Rukmani struggles for her life and how Rukmani manages to survive.

D. Benefits of the Study

This study would be beneficial for everyone who reads it. There are two advantages of this study. The first is for the readers, especially students in the English Language Education Study Program. They can deepen their
understanding and broaden their knowledge about life through a literary work. The students may learn how to struggle in life through literary works. It also presents new vocabulary terms about literary works. The second advantage is for the future researchers who intend to conduct a study on the same novel. Hopefully, the study will provide important information on Kamala Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve*. This study can be used as a reference for their studies. Through reading and analyzing the novel, the researcher can see how hard life is, but as a human we cannot give up easily. We have to struggle until we achieve what we want.

### E. Definition of Terms

To avoid misunderstanding about the concept of the thesis, here are some important definitions of terms used in this study.

1. **Struggle**

   According to McKenchie (1989), struggle is a task or a goal that requires great effort to accomplish or achieve (p. 367). In this study, struggle refers to every human effort in facing life problems to achieve a goal in her life. Rukmani has some problems during her life. She struggles to survive and solve her problems.

2. **Character**

   In a literary work, a character has an important role, especially in a novel. To present the story lively, a character in a novel must be like actual human beings. Kennedy and Gioia (2010) state that a character is an imagined human
being who capitalizes in a story (p. 77). The characters in a novel must be described in some ways through dialogues, times and places. In a literary work, the characters are the people who are presented in a dramatic or narrative work who are interpreted by the readers from what they say and what they said. This character can be easily remembered by the readers (Abrams and Harpham, 2012: 46).
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter consists of three sections. The first section presents a review of related theories which reveals the approach of the study, theory of character, characterization, struggle for life, theory of motivation, and hierarchy of needs. The second section is criticism of the study. It provides some criticisms about Kamala Markandaya’s work. The last section is theoretical framework which states a brief summary of how the theories are applied in this study.

A. Review of Related Theories

1. Psychological Approach

Psychological approach is an approach which uses psychological side to analyze the character’s characteristics. In this study, the psychological approach is used to analyze deeply the main character’s characteristics and its development.

The focus of psychological approach is to identify any aspects of psychology to underlay one element of literary work. According to Rohrberger and Woods (1971), psychological approach assimilates efforts to situate and demonstrate certain recurrent patterns. This approach is widely recognized that the literary work form is a reference beyond itself, and it is fundamentally symbolic (p.13). This theory of psychology is applied for an approach to analyze the character’s behavior, struggle and personality pattern that can be related to the psychology of human being.
The psychology approach assimilates efforts and demonstrates a recurrent pattern. This approach also accommodates a better and deeper understanding in analyzing the character’s behavior, struggle and personality. In this study, the psychological approach will be applied to analyze how things or people influence personality development of the main character.

2. Character

In literary work, characters have an important role, especially in a novel. To present the story lively, character in a novel must be like actual human beings in order to make a good story.

a. Definition of Character

Character is one important element in a story. A story commonly focuses on the main problem faced by a character. Robert and Jacobs (1989) say that a character is a portrait of a human being, with the well and bad behavior (p. 49). In a literary work, characters are the people who are presented in a dramatic or narrative work who are interpreted by the readers from what they say. Characters can be easily remembered by the readers. Deeply, Abrams and Harpham (2012) in their book *A Glossary of Literary Terms* define meaning of characters as “The persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the readers as possessing moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it—the dialogue—and what from they do—the action” (p. 46).

Considering the explanation above, a character in a literary work is a person who has an identity that it can be seen from what her or she says. A
character, then, is approximately an imagined human being who capitalizes in a story. Sometimes, in a good literary work, character will change and develop in a situation (Kennedy & Gioia, 2010: 78).

b. Kinds of Character

Forster (1974) in *Aspects of the Novel* divides types of character into two, flat character and round character. Flat character is usually built around a single idea. It is usually simple and can be looked by a certain aspect. A flat character is usually the minor character in a story. Round character is rather complex than flat character (pp. 46-53). It can be observed by many-angles. This is used to make a surprise to the readers in various ways.

In addition, Henkle (1977) also divides character into two kinds. The first is major character. He says “the major character in the novel perform a key structural function: upon them we built expectation and desires, in which, in modification, shift or establish our value” (p. 92). The major character takes a big role in expressing and dramatizing of human value from the novel. The second is secondary character. Its function is to establish the context of the novel (pp. 94-95). A secondary character helps the readers to understand the major character and the story.

3. Characterization

Understanding the theory of characterization is considered as an essential way in analyzing a character in the novel. This part contains of the definition of characterization and the methods of characterization. Rohrberger and Woods (1971) explain that characterization is a process by which an author crates a
character (p. 20). The creation of the character can be seen by direct meaning that describes physical appearance. It also can be described by using dramatic means and place the character in situations to show what the character is.

For a deeper understanding to the ways of characterization, Murphy (1972) in *Understanding Unseens* divides it into nine parts. They are personal description, character as seen by another, speech, past life, conversational of others, reactions, direct comment, thoughts, and mannerisms (pp. 161-173). This is a short explanation of the nine ways of characterization:

a. **Personal Description**

An author can describe the character from the appearances literally and the author gives description of the character.

b. **Character as seen by another**

The author uses the description about the character from others opinion. The readers can know the character by emerging other characters’ opinion about the character. By knowing opinions of another, the readers will get a reflected image or portrayal of the character itself.

c. **Speech**

Through the speech the author gives the readers insight that the readers are able to understand the character deeply from the character’s speech or what the character says. The speech can be from a character speaks and the conversation from another.
d. Past life

The author guides the readers to find events or memories in the past by giving a clue to shape the character. The clue can be seen from the author’s direct comment, the character’s thought and the conversation between the character and others.

e. Conversation of others

The author gives the readers some clues through the conversation to know about the characters.

f. Reactions

How the character reacts to some events or situation can give the readers some points. The character’s reaction in facing some events or situation can be the way to find out his character. The author gives clue in that way.

g. Direct Comment

Giving direct comment on the character, the author helps the readers to describe the character easily. The author will give description or comment on a character directly in the story.

h. Thought

The author gives the readers insight of what the character thinks about to guide them know the characteristics.

i. Mannerism

Character’s mannerism and habits help the readers about the character by the author’s description.
4. **Theory of Psychology**

This section is divided into two parts. The first part is the theory of motivation. The second part is the explanation of Hierarchy of Needs.

a. **Motivation**

This part will discuss the theory of motivation and is divided into two. The first part is the definition of motivation. The second part is the types of motivation.

1) **Definition of Motivation**

Motivation is the need or reason for doing something. Deeply, Petri (1980) in her book *Motivation, Theory and Research* defines motivation as:

> The concept we use when we describe the forces acting on or within an organism to initiate and direct behavior. The concept of motivation is also used to explain differences in the intensity of behavior. More intense behaviors are considered to be the result of higher levels of motivation (pp. 3-4).

Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that motivation is an action from inside of human being that forces them to do some behavior more intense. Motivation is also part of human being’s behavior.

Some experts have proposed that motivation is the result of physical needs, such as food, water, sex, avoidance of pain, and so on. Motivation makes people keep struggling and keep them focus. They avoid themselves from failure and losing their way to gain the goal. Motivation also leads people to action of a specific behavior that supports people in process to achieve their goal in life (Petri, 1980: 4).

Beck (1978) states that motivation is generally considered to be some kind of shifting, various and dynamic activity that emerges in a human being’s
life. Motivation leads people to doing something in certain strategies to achieve what they want and gives influences on someone’s behavior in her/his life. Consequently, being motivated, people will keep struggling in completing their goal in life. Motivation refers to factors within an individual person that active, maintain, and direct behavior toward a certain goal in life (p. 9).

2) Types of Motivation

There are two types of motivation as explained by Huffman, Vernoy, and Vernoy (2000). They are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (p. 377). Intrinsic motivation is the person’s goal and a desire to act for his own purpose. This motivation comes from someone’s pleasure. He or she will do something that he or she likes to do. While extrinsic motivation is a desire to act as a result of external rewards. It means that he/she does something to get reward and also get satisfaction. She/he does something because she/he should do it not because he/she loves it.

b. Hierarchy of Needs

A person must satisfy and fulfill many needs, such as money, hunger, thirst, to survive, although at birth he is unable to satisfy these needs without any helps. There are many reasons that cause people to organize a certain action during their life. Maslow (1968) says that people conduct actions and efforts to satisfy their needs.

Maslow’s classic conception of hierarchy of human needs is one of the earliest examples of a motivational hierarchy that attempted to specify universal
sources of human motivation. He originally described into five needs. Each need can be thought as motivating a particular class of behaviors, the goal of which needs fulfillment.

Based on Maslow’s theory as quoted in Franken (2002), there are five human basic needs. They are physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs (p.15). He states that these five needs are connected to each other. He argues that the lowest needs have to be fulfilled first before the higher-level needs of the hierarchy are fulfilled. If people have fulfilled the lowest needs, they will moving forward to higher steps of needs.

Below is the brief explanation of hierarchy of needs:

1) Physiological Needs

The physiological needs can be divided into two categories. The first concerns survival needs, which must be satisfied or the body processes stop and life ceases. Survival needs include those produced by hunger, thirst, pain avoidance and fatigue. The second category is about stimulation needs, which do not appear necessary for personal survival. The stimulation needs includes the needs for sex, activity exploration, and manipulation.

2) Safety Needs

Everyone needs to feel safe from anything such as harm, as meeting with physical violence, having things he values but taken away, or losing the care of parents or protectors. People need to be out of danger. Yet, people with physiological and safety need sometimes will fulfill needs higher on the hierarchy in preference to those level.
3) Belongingness and Love Needs

Occupying the third level of the hierarchy, includes people’s desires for love, intimacy, and attachment to others through family, friendship, and other community relationship. These needs appear when the previous needs, physiological, and safety needs have elaborated.

4) Esteem Needs

After the belongingness and love needs are satisfied, people will try to get the higher needs. They will try to get the esteem needs. The esteem needs include the desire for strength, for achievement and for confidence in the face of world. These needs used to positive self-regard and for approval, respect, and positive regards from others.

5) Self-Actualization Needs

Self-actualizing individuals fully express and realize their emotional and intellectual potentials to become healthy and fully functioning. This need makes maximum use of abilities and develops talents and potentialities. Self-actualization needs are the highest needs among the five of hierarchy of needs.

The five basic needs above are very important. What makes every person satisfied is different and it depends on that person. Each person has also different goals in his life, so that their feeling and the way they fulfill their needs is also different.
5. Struggle for Life

In human life, problems will always appear. They can be serious or just simple. They might be very complicated or even very easy. When people try to solve the problems, they have to struggle to solve the problems. Struggle can be one of the reasons why people want to maintain their life.

Weiner (1980) says that people use strategies to cope with the stresses and problems in life rationally (p. 250). They implement best strategies to achieve what they want. Their best implement can be called struggle. Every human realizes that he has to struggle because he will be satisfied by his struggle. Deeply, struggle for life is important to obtain the goal in life and solve problems of life.

Struggle comes from a component part of personality. According to Freud, there are three component parts of personality (as cited in Weiner, 1980). They are the id, the ego and super-ego (pp. 14-16). They are not parts of the person that can be found in somewhere in the brain or in the body. Moreover, they are constructed and represent interacting and hypothetical structures. The id as explained by Freud is the first system within the human being. It is related to the biological side in a heritance of sexual and aggressive drives. The id is also the reservoir of all psychological energy and it functions to characterize primary process thinking. The id services the pleasure principles. After the id, the second component is the ego. The ego is governed by the reality principle rather than the pleasure principle. The ego serves the id near to the demands of reality. However, not all people realize all aspects of the ego functioning. The last component is the super-ego. Freud says that the super-ego has two main functions. The first function is to
reward individuals for accepting moral behavior. The second function is to remind bad action or immoral behavior.

B. Criticism

*Nectar in a Sieve* is an interesting novel. Therefore, it challenges critics to discuss about it. The novel presents the readers knowledge to deal with serious problem during life. It portrays people’s daily life when they face problem and do not know what they have to do. The novel also teaches the readers not to give up easily and keep struggling when troubles come in life and family. The same opinion can be seen in Rohtak’s from Maharshi Dayanand University New Delhi India, that there has been a struggle for happiness in the lives of the Indian farmers through ages. *Nectar in a Sieve* tells about the heroine woman who struggle for her family (Rohtak, 2002). Meanwhile Hoosain from University of North Carolina says that *Nectar in a Sieve* is a novel about a traditional culture and a burgeoning industrial and it touches on several important social phenomena.

The interesting part of the novel also comes from the main character, Rukmani. Mount (2011) states that Rukmani is the heroine and forced onto the threshold of a rapidly changing India by the centralization of power. She can survive in pain and maintain the dignity of women in that era. The novel is set in an unnamed village in rural India. The villagers live in simple mud huts with thatch roofs and are largely subsistence farmers. They enjoy no modern conveniences. However, the arrival of the tannery in the village disrupts the quiet village life.
C. Theoretical Framework

This study discusses Rukmani’s personal struggle for her better life as revealed in Kamala Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve*. There are two problems in the study. The first is to describe the main character, Rukmani. The second is to analyze how Rukmani’s struggles for her life in the novel. In order to answer those two problems, there are some theories that applied in this study. All of the theories are useful and important to analyze the problems that can be found in the novel.

First, the researcher uses psychological approach that supports the study. This approach is used to analyze the main character’s psychological aspect. It is used to identify personality, thought, and behavior of the main character. Second, theories of character and characterization are applied to answer the first problem, which is how the main character is described in the novel or her characteristics. The researcher chose to employ Murphy’s theory of characterization to reveal Rukmani’s characteristics. Murphy’s theory consists of nine ways to know someone’s characteristics, namely personal description, character as seen by another, speech, past life, conversational of others, reactions, direct comment, thoughts, and mannerisms. However, there are only four ways which can be applied in this study. The characteristics of Rukmani are analyzed by using personal description, reaction, speech, and character as seen by another.

The second problem of the study is why Rukmani struggles for her life as seen in Kamala Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve*. The researcher uses theory of motivation and hierarchy of needs of Maslow. The theories are applied to analyze
the human motivation and human needs which emerge in the main character. Deeply, to investigate the struggle of Rukmani, the researcher also uses theory of struggle in life from Weiner.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter consists of three parts. They are the object of the study, the approach and the method of the study. The first part is object of the study. This part describes the novel and the focus of the study which is related to the primary data of the study. The second part is the approach of the study. This part discusses the use of critical approach in analyzing the novel. The third part is the method of the study. This part explains the procedures in analyzing the novel.

A. Object of the Study

The object of the study is a novel entitled Nectar in a Sieve by Kamala Markandaya. This novel consists of 190 pages and is divided in 30 chapters. It was published in 1954 by The New American Library. Nectar in a Sieve tells a story of an Indian woman, named Rukmani.

This novel tells about the struggles which the main character Rukmani faces, especially about poverty and her family members’ life. Rukmani is a young married woman, lives in poverty and she is also the narrator of the story. Everything in her life gets worse when a tannery is built in her village. When her house is destroyed by heavy rain and her family is on the verge of starvation. She leaves her village to the city to look for her son but fails. She pushes her efforts to survive in life and family no matter what happens. The novel portrays some
problems that emerge in the Indian society as they deal with the changing of time or modernity.

B. Approach of the Study

To study the novel, the psychological approach is used. This is used in order to have a better understanding of a work of literature. The psychological approach is applied because it focuses on the psychological side of human life. It also uses to identify the main character’s personality, thought, and behavior pattern. Psychology is the scientific study of how people behave, think and feel. This is the reason why the researcher uses the psychological approach to find out how Rukmani’s personality is depicted in the novel toward her thoughts and actions.

Deeply, the psychological approach is applied to identify how Rukmani, the main character of the novel keeps survive and struggles in bad condition in her family and life. It is also used to know what aspects influence her behavior to struggle for a better life.

C. Method of the Study

In analyzing the study, the researcher conducted a library study. Library study is defined as the systematic study and investigation of some aspects of library and information science where conclusions are based on the analysis of data collected in accordance with pre-established research designs and methodologies. The main technique of the study was by reading the novel and
taking important notes, which would give advantages in analyzing the novel. The primary source was the novel, *Nectar in a Sieve*. Whereas the secondary sources were books the researcher collected related to encourage the analysis such as theory of character and characterization, theory of struggle in life and other resources accessed from the internet.

There were some procedures taken in conducting this study. The first step, was by reading the novel several times in order to get deep understanding the novel. Second, the researcher found the topic to analyze and also formulated the two problems to be answered. Then, the researcher found some references related to the study. Fourth, the researcher did the analysis based on some references. Lastly, the researcher draw conclusion and also gave some suggestions for the future researchers and suggestions for the readers. The researcher also provides some implications especially for students in the English Language Education Study Program. The students can learn in how to struggle in life through reading the novel. It also provided new vocabulary items about literary works.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part is the explanation of the description of Rukmani. The second part tells the causes and the struggles for life of Rukmani.

A. The Description of Rukmani

Character is the most considerable aspect in the novel. In reading a novel, the readers usually focus on the character that appears and becomes the center of the story. In the Nectar in a Sieve, the major character in the novel is Rukmani, and she becomes the narrator in the novel. Rukmani does not only from the beginning to the end of the story but also becomes the center of the story. The secondary characters of that novel are Nathan (Rukmani’s husband), Kenny (a village doctor), Old Granny (a seller of fruits and vegetables), Kunthi (a woman prostitute), Kali (a village woman), Biswas (a money lender who Rukmani reluctantly goes to), Puli (a young cunning boy who Rukmani and Nathan adopt, very clever), Ira (a young marriage woman but cannot bear until Rukmani takes her to Kenny; Rukmani’s daughter), Arjun (Rukmani’s first son who works in the tannery) and, Thambi (Rukmani’s second son, also employee at the tannery), Murugan (Rukmani’s third son, abandons his family, a servant in the city), Raja (Rukmani’s fourth son, killed by the tanner and a frail boy), Selvam (Rukmani’s fifth son, the most educated person in Rukmani’s family and Kuti (Rukmani’s
last child, dies of starvation). Secondary character is a character that emerges in a certain setting or only becomes supporting character in a story.

According to Henkle (1977), there are two types of character, a major character and secondary character (pp. 92-95). The major character is a character that becomes the most important character. The major character takes most attention from the readers and becomes the center of the story. This character is observed most frequently in the story.

Rukmani is categorized as a round character. Rukmani’s character is round because her character changes across the problems which emerge into her life and she has motivation to struggle. According to Forster (1974), round character is a complex character. It can be observed from many angles. The character changes from the beginning until the end of the story. She becomes the centre of the story.

In order to analyze Rukmani’s characteristics, Murphy’s characterization theory is employed. However, not all nine ways of characterization are used. Only personal description, reaction, speech, and thoughts are applied to analyze the characteristics of Rukmani. In the novel, Rukmani is characterized as a patient, hard working, smart and brave woman.

1. **Patient**

Rukmani starts to be patient when she is forced by her parents to get married at a young age. Rukmani is still happy and receives that condition although she is married to a poor tenant farmer. She has to live in a small house with two little rooms and in a bad financial condition. (p. 10)
Rukmani forces herself to be patient in this condition. She decides to stay with her husband and enjoys her new married life. She does not ask more and complaint to her husband, although she feels sad. She keeps her feeling out of her husband.

“It will be better when it is finished,” he said.
I nodded; I wanted to cry. This mud hut, nothing but mud and thatch, was my home. My knees gave .................
Nathan’s face filled with concern as he came to hold me.
“It is nothing,” I said. “I am tired-no more. I will be all right in a minute. (p.10)

Rukmani also has sons. One of them is Raja who works in a tannery. Unfortunately, Raja dies because of an accident. One day, some people from the tannery come to Rukmani’s house to tell that her son died at work. At first, Rukmani does not believe that Raja dies because of an accident. She suspects that Raja was killed by them. Rukmani thinks they might kill or blame Raja but one of them convinces that Raja dies because of an accident and he tells the chronology of the accident. In the end, Rukmani believes and accepts this, the fact that her son has passed away.

“Did I not tell you there would be no trouble? You always fear the worst. I told you they would be reasonable.”
The other did not look triumphant; if anything, he seemed to have shrunk a little, he avoided looking at time at me altogether, he glanced at me quickly, once, and in that brief moment I saw that his eyes were grieving.
“You should not care,” I said very softly to him alone, “It does not matter.” (p.96)

Based on the conversation above, it can be seen that Rukmani tries to be patient in that condition. She forces herself to accept the fact that her son, Raja dies. She says very softly to the men that it does not matter. She does not get angry or complain to them. (p.97)
Rukmani’s daughter, Ira, is a single mother for her child. After she divorces with her husband, Ira comes back to Rukmani’s house. Their economic condition becomes very bad when the tannery comes in their village. Ira has to fulfill her son’s need, her name is Kali. She does not have any job and she cannot ask her parents to help her because she knows that they have their own financial problems. Because of the condition, she decides to become a prostitute. It is hard for Rukmani to see her beloved daughter to become a prostitute. She and her husband always try to help Ira to come out from that situation, but they fail to help Ira. As the result, Ira is pregnant and bears a baby. As a mother, Rukmani tries to accept the condition that her daughter bears a baby of an unknown man. She patiently takes care of Ira’s baby and nurses him softly after he is born.

I did not want his mother to see: I washed him slowly, and massaged oil into his body, hoping to mitigate the whiteness of it, hoping to give colour to his skin ...................... I swaddled him carefully before I gave him to her hoping-still hoping-that she would not notice. (p. 119)

Based on Rukmani’s behavior above, it shows that she still accepts Ira as her daughter and Ira’s baby as her grandchild. Rukmani takes care of her grandchild and hopes that one day Ira will realize that what she does is wrong. She is not angry at Ira because of the baby.

Kunthi is a woman who lives beside Rukmani’s house. She is Rukmani’s neighbor. She is also a woman prostitute. She has two children but no one knows the fathers of her children. She has not married yet. Everyday, she comes to Rukmani’s house asking food to feed her children when Nathan is not at home. Rukmani becomes curious of Kunthi because she always comes home when Nathan goes. She asks Kunthi about it. The fact is very surprising. Nathan is the
father of Kunthi’s son. As a patient person, she tries not to strike or crumble at Nathan.

Disbelief first; disillusionment; anger, reproach, pain. To find out, after so many years, in such a cruel way. ... He had known her not once but twice; he had gone back to give her a second son. And between, how many times, I thought, bleak of spirit, while her husband in his impotence and I in my innocence did nothing.

At last I made an effort and roused myself...
"It is as you say a long time ago," I said wearily. "That she is evil and powerful I know myself. Let it rest" (p. 139).

Rukmani accepts the fact that her beloved husband, Nathan has other children from another woman. At first she does not believe that. She also feels pain and sad to realize that Nathan did that in the past. Nathan never says about his past life before. However, she keeps her household united by being patient.

2. Hard Working

In this novel, Rukmani is described as a hard working wife. She is willing to accept challenges in order to meet her family’s needs. She harvests around her house to bring food to her family. At first, she plants pumpkin, beans, sweet potatoes, brinjals and chilies around her home. She spends her time on the crops. Moreover her husband praises what she does. She carefully keeps watering and takes care of the plants in everyday.

“After that, ten times more zealous, I planted beans and sweet potatoes, brinjals and chilies, and they all ........................................, so that we ate even better than we had done before.” (p. 14)

Based on the speech of Rukmani above, it can be seen that she improves her family condition by planting crops and serving foods. As a mother, she works hard to feed them.
In the past, Rukmani spends her leisure time to learn writing with her father. Her father teaches her how to read and write. He teaches his six children, including Rukmani because he wants all of his children to be people who have high social class and good knowledge.

“Practice hard,” he would say, watching me busy with slate and pencil. “For who knows what dowry there will be for you when you are ready!” And I, with only the thistledown of childish care upon me, would listen lightly and take up my pencil again. (p. 16)

The dialogue above shows that Rukmani has been trained to work hard by her father. She was forced by her father to practice reading and writing because he wanted all of her children to have high social class and knowledge in the future. Consequently, Rukmani keeps herself working hard until she has married. She still practices reading and writing to her children. Actually her mother does not agree if her daughter learns about that. She thinks that it will be good when a girl has many of sons and has a husband. Rukmani’s mother thinks that becoming a good wife is only cleaning house and feeding children. However, her father has better thought than her mother. He thinks that a girl needs education to educate her children later.

Rukmani and Nathan go to city to find her son, Murugan. Murugan is one of Rukmani’s sons who works in the city. They want to find Murugan because they think he will help them come out from poverty. Murugan lives far away from their village to work. Rukmani and Nathan go to there by bullock cart. They do not have money. They only bring some view bundle of food. The city where Murugan lives is about fifteen miles from their village. After a few days later, their food runs out. They begin starving because they do not have food, money or
anything to sell. Then one day, Rukmani thinks to set herself to be a reader of letter like in most villages and cities. A reader of letter is a person who has a skill to read a letter. At that time in India, usually a reader of letter stays in a crowded place like market and road.

But how? We have no money. My husband can till and sow and reap with skill, but here there is no land. ...................... Only money can make the rope stretch.

Then one day I thought I would set myself up as a reader of letters such as there are in most villages, and surely also in cities. (p. 168)

As a woman, Rukmani tries to work hard for her husband to survive in her bad situation. She realizes that without money, they cannot survive. Fortunately, she already has knowledge in reading and writing, so that she can apply for a job and become a reader of letter.

All that day and many following, I sat by the side of the road leading to the bazaar calling to those who passed, adding to the general clamour. ...........

By the end of the day my voice was hoarse: my mouth tasted of the dust that each passing pair of feet raised, my hair was full of it. I had earned two annas, and I spent it on a rice cake for us to eat in the morning. (p. 169)

Through the reaction, it can be seen that Rukmani has no money and starts to be a letter reader. It shows that she is a hard working person. For many days, she sits by the side of the road to sell her skill although her voice becomes sore and her body becomes dirty. It is hard for her to sell a skill and become a reader of letter in that city. She has to scream along day to notice people who pass her in the road. Finally, she can get food for both of them.
3. **Smart**

As a mother, Rukmani wants her children to have a good knowledge in reading and writing. At home, Rukmani practices reading and writing when she has free time. Besides, her father teaches her about it when she is a child. “As for my children, it is for them that I practice writing and reading, so that I can teach them when the time is ripe.” (p. 17)

Rukmani wants her children to have a better future. She does not want her children to get difficulties when the time and situation become worse. She also says that she will teach her children and practice harder than ever lest her fingers should lose their skill.

Another event also shows that Rukmani is a smart woman. It happens when Nathan sees Rukmani practicing writing. He expresses his wife’s characteristic on it. He is really proud of having a smart wife like Rukmani.

Nathan used to come and sit beside me when I was writing. The first time he came to see what I was up to, he sat in silence with his brows drawn together and meeting; and when he came back his face was clear. “It is well,” he said, stroking my hair. “You are clever, Ruku, as I have said before. (p. 17)

Based on Nathan’s opinion, Rukmani is a clever woman and wife for her children. Nathan sees Rukmani as a clever woman since they live together. When she is a child, Rukmani is taught by her father to read and write. She also hopes that she will teach them too the same as what her father does to herself.

For a long time, Rukmani’s village has no rainfall and many crops fail. There are no vegetables, vines, and rice that can be harvested. There is no reaping time and Rukmani cannot sell anything to Old Granny to buy food and
grain for her family. She does not want her husband and all of her six children to get hungry. As a smart mother, for long time before, she has keep some of food for preparation if the condition gets worse.

At last no option but to draw upon my secret hoard: a small stock of rice, ten olllocks in all, shielded from every temptation to sell or barter, kept even when the need to ................. Then I divided it into several equal portion, each of the portion as little as would suffice for one day, so that for nearly a month we would not starve. (p. 84)

It can be seen that she is a smart mother for her family. She prepares well to avoid starvation for her husband and her children. She can avoid the temptation to sell the food stock. She is also smart in dividing and measuring the food into several same portions, so that she and her family do not get hungry for a month.

4. **Brave**

Rukmani and her family live in a small village where the soil is very rich and is not yielding before. Rukmani and her family harvest the crops in a garden in the village. When a modern tenant comes in her village, Rukmani shows her disagreement about the tannery.

“Nevertheless,” said Nathan, “they will be back; for you may be sure they did not take so much trouble only to leave a shell in our midst. Therefore it is well to accept these things.

“Never, never.” I cried.

“They may live in our midst but I can never accept them, for they lay their hands upon us and we are all turned from tilling to barter, and board our silver since we cannot spend it, and see our children go without the food that their children gorge, and it is only in the hope that one day things will be as they were that we have done these things. Now that they have gone let us forget them and return to our ways.” (p. 70)

From Rukmani and Nathan’s conversation above, it can be seen that she really disagrees with the coming of the tannery in her village, although her husband agrees with it. Rukmani is brave enough to show her disagreement by saying it.
She worries that their children do not have food later if the village is controlled by the tenant.

It is true, then, that the tannery gives bad impact to the village where Rukmani lives but many villagers do not know what really happens. Many of them believe that their village will become a city and their economics will arise because of the tenancy. Rukmani tries to convince them, but many of them do not believe in her. They think that Rukmani is stupid because she does not want modernity in that village.

One day, Rukmani comes to Kenny’s workplace for asking help for her daughter, Ira, who cannot bear as Rukmani is experienced in the past. There are many people who come and already wait to see Kenny to ask his help. Rukmani also waits for Kenny since in the early morning until night. Unfortunately, Kenny decides to stop the service because it is already night and he looks so tired.

Rukmani tries to stop Kenny and ask him bravely.

“I said no more tonight. Did you not hear me? Do you think I am made of iron?”
“I waited all day,” I gasped. “I must see you. My husband will be back soon and then I cannot come.”
…..”It is for my daughter I come,” I said. “She cannot bear, she is as I was.”
“You will be a mother even before she is,” he replied with a glimmer of a smile, “for it seems you have no difficulty.”
“It is so,” I said. “I would it were otherwise and she in my condition, for she is much afflicted since her husband has no use for her.” (p. 63)

The conversation between Rukmani and Kenny above clearly shows that Rukmani bravely stops Kenny who decides to stop his service because he is already tired. Actually her husband does not permit Rukmani to see Kenny. It is because Rukmani wants to help her child Ira who cannot bear for few years after having
married. She forces herself to ask for help to Kenny. Kenny is a village doctor; he also helps Rukmani when she can not have child in the past.

One day, Sivaji comes to Rukmani’s house. Sivaji is the owner of Rukmani’s land that she rents. He asks for payment of the land that Rukmani and her husband rent. At that time, Rukmani and Nathan do not have money at all because their harvest fails and there is no rain and the river is dry. It is the worst period of them. Sivaji threatens them to give the land to another family if they cannot make payment. Bravely, Rukmani asks for an additional time until the next crop then she will pay for him. However, Sivaji does not accept her request and forces them to pay the half of the payment if they still want to live in that land. Rukmani and her husband perforce to sell something which they have to make the payment. Then, Rukmani brings two shirts of her sons, two beautiful saris, and her husband’s dhoti to sell to Biswas. It is a little bit hard for Biswas to buy those stuffs from Rukmani because almost all people do not buy clothes during financial crisis. Persistently, Rukmantis tries to convince Biswas for buying her stuffs (pp. 76-79).

After debating and discussing, the negotiation has been made. Finally, Biswas buys what Rukmani sells because he also wants to help her family. In the middle of their conversation, Biswas gives comment on Rukmani.

“As no doubt you can,” I said with contempt, and then an inspiration came to me and I went on: “Unless you pay a fair price I shall take these saris elsewhere. There is the Muslim wife of a tannery official whom I know, and she will buy from me as she has done before.”

“Indeed,” he said, a little disconcerted. “Well, Rukmani, since we have done business for a long time, and because you are a woman of spirit whom I have long admired, I will give you thirty rupees. Nobody could be fairer. (p. 79)
The conversation above clearly shows that Biswas gives comment to Rukmani that she is a woman that full of spirit. Spirit can be categorized as the part of brave. Rukmani’s bravery also appears when she asks Sivaji to give her additional time to pay the land. As a woman, she does not want to depend on her husband, Nathan. She forces herself to be brave in any situation.

B. Rukmani’s Struggle for her Life

Everyone has their own problem. It can be simple or complicated. Every human has various goals in his or her life. Petri (1980) says that people motivate themselves to achieve their goals during their life. During this struggling time, people will do their best effort to solve the problems and survive in their life.

People will react differently and try to change when they face problems in their lives. They make best strategies to deal with those problems. Based on Weiner (1980) people will use strategies with the stresses and problems in life rationally. In Nectar in a Sieve, the major character Rukmani struggles to survive in her life. Along her life, Rukmani struggles for many things like poverty and starvation, the death of her son and her beloved husband, and her daughter, Ira who gets married with a man that Old Granny recommends. Unfortunately, after she marries for many years she cannot give a child to her husband. Ira’s husband threatens her if she cannot give him a child, he will divorce her. As a mother, Rukmani has a strong desire to help her daughter. She comes to Kenny and asks for help for Ira bravely.
Moreover, a tannery is built in her village which changes Rukmani’s life. Her food is not in her garden and everything becomes worse. Rukmani’s family financial condition causes her to struggle. Rukmani is a smart mother, so she keeps some food stock to keep her family from starvation. She is also a hard working person. She plants crops to feed her family. Rukmani’s family members’ life is unpredictable. In the story, one of her son, Raja, dies in a tannery where he works. Rukmani also loses her beloved husband, Nathan. He dies because of an illness. The novel tells Rukmani’s struggle and how she survives during her life. As a mother, she has to face many things in order to survive.

1. The Causes of Rukmani’s Struggle

Rukmani is a woman who comes from poor family. Then, she is forced to marry with a poor farmer by her parents. In her journey to survive in life she has to face problems. Weiner (1980) says that people use strategies to cope with problems and stresses in life rationally and they put best strategies to dealing with the problems. Therefore, Rukmani realizes that she has to deal with every problem. Moreover, her motivation to survive in her life makes Rukmani use her effort to keep her hope of life. According to Beck (1978), motivation commands people to do something in best strategies to achieve what they want and give influences for someone’s behavior in her or his life. That is why, Rukmani wants to survive especially when she has to deal with her family financial problem and her family members’ life.
a. **Family Financial Condition**

Rukmani, as the major character in the novel, comes from a poor family who lives in a rural area. Her father is a village headman and her mother is a housewife who does not have any education background. In hard times, Rukmani is married to a tenant farmer named Nathan. Then, she moves with her husband but still lives in poverty.

I got out of the cart, stiff and with a cramp in one leg. We went in: two rooms, one a sort of storehouse for grain, the other for everything else. A third had been begun but was unfinished, the mud walls were not more than half a foot high (p. 10).

It can be seen that Rukmani lives in a small house that only has two rooms. The walls are made from the mud. She has to move far away from her home. Rukmani lives in a small village. As described before, Nathan is a tenant farmer, who is very poor.

When a tannery starts to be built in her village, all become much worse. She loses the land where she farms. She no longer sells various vegetables to Old Granny. She cannot give milk to her children, like she does before because she does not have money.

“The boy is long past weaning,” he said frowning. “Why do you force it?”

“We had to sell our goat,” I said. I can no longer to buy milk, but while my son is young and needs it I will give it to him (p. 78).

Based on the conversation above, Rukmani’s son has to stop feeding on his mother’s milk. Before the tannery comes, Rukmani gives her son goat milk that she has. But, she has to sell her goats because she does not have money after she loses her land. This condition shows clearly that her family’ financial condition is getting worse after the tannery is built.
As it is described before, Rukmani and her family rent a land for their living since they marry. Every month, they have to pay the rent to Sivaji, the owner’s land. During the bad period that is caused by the tannery, Rukmani cannot earn money by herself again. Her husband also loses his job. They actually do not have any money, whereas it is the time for them to pay rent to Sivaji.

During the journey to find her son in the town, someone informs them that Murugan does not stay in the town anymore. He moves to another city that no one knows the location. Rukmani and Nathan have no food but they have to survive for many days. They start to beg and sleep in the yard.

Each night was a struggle, more fierce now that we were daily engaged in it. I saw, night after night, what I had not observed before. And when the crowd had dispersed, to sleep, to beg, to scavenge, in the cool of the night and early dawn we sat in the quiet courtyards... (pp. 167-168).

Based on the narration above, it can be seen that Rukmani and her husband are homeless and she starts begging on the yards. She has to beg for money and food for her husband and herself. This financial condition causes Rukmani to struggle for life.

b. Her Family Members’ Life

Ira is Rukmani’s first child. She marries to a young man. Although their marriage is above fifteen years, Ira does not bear a child for her husband (p. 39). Her husband complains to Ira and Rukmani about it. He threatens her that he will leave her soon and find another woman. This is the same problem of Rukmani that she could not bear a boy in her early married life with Nathan. At that time, Rukmani asks help from Kenny. Kenny is a village doctor that comes from another country.
One of Rukmani’s sons, Murugan, lives in the town with his wife. They have not seen Murugan’s wife and they have not known her. Rukmani and Nathan decide to find Murugan. She wants to meet Murugan’s family and she hopes that Murugan will help them to overcome their family problem (pp. 131-132). It is not easy for Rukmani to survive with her husband in the town, where her son lives. She has to face a lot of problems at that time.

Rukmani’s husband, Nathan, is getting older. He also has an illness. In the town, Rukmani has to take care of her husband. She earns money to buy food for him. It is not easy for Rukmani to find a job in the town. At first she becomes a reader of letter and she also works in a breaking stones. One day, Rukmani decides to go home with Nathan by carrying some foods and money that she has. Unluckily, in the middle of her journey, Nathan collapses. He dies in Rukmani’s arms in monsoon rain (pp. 182-185).

2. Rukmani’s Struggles

As a mother, Rukmani has to struggle to fulfill her belongingness and love needs, the third level of Maslow’s theory about human basic needs. She needs love from her family. It includes her husband and her children. She wants her family to be happy and survive during bad condition. She wants to live with all her children and to fulfill their needs always. In this story, there are some ways she does. The first is nurturing her children and suffering from her life events.

a. Working Hard for Her Family

Rukmani and her family live in a village, where the soil is very prosperous and rich. This leads her to be a farmer, to serve food and earn money for her
family although her husband also works. She works very hard and diligent. She enjoys to be a farmer. In early days of Rukmani’s and Nathan’s married lives, as a hardworking woman, Rukmani learns how to milk the goat, how to plant seed, how to churn butter from milk, and how to blanch rice. Beck (1978) says that motivation refers to factors within an individual person that active, maintain, and direct behavior toward a certain goal in life. At that time, earning money is the biggest motivation for Rukmani since she has to support her family financial condition. Here, one of Rukmani’s component parts of personality that is the ego. Referring to Freud’s theory, the function of the ego is demanding of reality. It is controlled by the reality principle rather than pleasure. Rukmani realizes the reality that she has to earn food and money for her family.

As a tenant farmer, Rukmani’s husband, Nathan cannot earn a lot of money. He is very poor. His money is used to rent the land to work for. To help her husband, as a hard working mother, Rukmani plants various vegetables and other crops. Those crops are to feed her six children and her husband. In the harvest time, she also sells some of her crops to Old Granny.

……. Once a week I would cut and pack our garden produce, selecting the best and leaving the spoilt or bruised vegetables for ourselves, cover the basket with leaves and set off her the village. Old Granny was always glad to buy from me, and at first I would make straight for the corner of the street where she sat with her gunny sack spread before her. The old lady would pick out the purple of brinjals and yellow pumpkins, the shiny green and red chilies, feeling them her wrinkled fingers and complementing me on their size (p. 26).

Because of her ability, Rukmani does everything she can do to help her husband earn money by planting crops. Rukmani should feed her six children everyday. By
doing it, she can feed her children and get money by selling some vegetables to Old Granny.

In the early times of her marriage, she plants various vegetables and crops by herself. She always wants to fulfill her family’s needs so they will grow up to become healthy and strong adults. She sells some vegetables to Old Granny and uses the money to buy some cloth for her children (p. 67).

As a smart mother, she knows how to write and read. She has a better knowledge than other women in her village. She teaches her sons. One of her sons Selvam becomes the best educated child. He also becomes Kenny’s assistant.

It was true. Selvam had been cast in the same mould as his brothers. He quickly learned what I had to teach and had progressed from there by his own efforts and enthusiasm. He wrote and read as I had once day, avidly with pleasure (p. 114).

Rukmani always teaches her children about goodness and knowledge. Rukmani does not only know about reading and writing, but also has knowledge of crops and seasons (p. 113). As a result, her son, Selvam becomes a hard-working and conscientious child. Rukmani succeeds in educating Selvam to be good person and useful for others. Selvam helps his family to get money.

b. Asking Kenny to Help Ira’s Infertility

Rukmani has one daughter named Ira. Ira has a problem about infertility. Having been married for fifteen years, she has not born a child. Her husband complains about it to Rukmani. He says that he will leave Ira if she cannot give him a child. As a mother, Rukmani does not want Ira to divorce her husband. She tries to ask Kenny to help Ira who for this. She believes that Kenny will help them. One day, she comes to Kenny’s workplace. Actually, her husband Nathan
does not permit Rukmani and Ira to meet Kenny. He thinks that Kenny is a foreigner for them.

“One of my husband’s male relatives had died and he had to attend the funeral. When he had gone I took the opportunity of going to see Kenny. I had not done so before because I was sure Nathan would not like his wife and his daughter going to a white man, a foreigner. And if he did not, the one chance Ira had would be lost, and this made it the more important that he should not know” (p. 62).

Based on the Rukmani’s speech above, it can be said that Rukmani comes to Kenny without her husband’s knowledge. She worries about Ira if she cannot bear a child. She fights for her daughter fertility by asking for help to Kenny, a village doctor. This is one of the causes of her struggles.

When Rukmani comes to Kenny’s workplace, there are many people who already wait to see Kenny. Rukmani also waits for him from early morning until the night. Unfortunately, Kenny decides to stop the service because it is already night and he feels tired. As a brave woman, Rukmani urges Kenny and asks him to help Ira’s infertility bravely (p 63). She struggles for her lovely daughter who cannot bear by asking Kenny. As the result, Kenny agrees to help Ira.

c. Going to the Town to Find Some Help

It is told that Rukmani’s family faces problems since the beginning until the end of the story. Rukmani lives in poverty with her six children and a husband. She has to feed them every day. Because of her patience, Rukmani tries to accept the condition. She struggles from her early married life but she does not complain to her husband. Since the tannery comes, Rukmani has to manage her household. She gives her food for her children. There is no harvest time at that time. Their crops fail and rain does not fall for a long time.
When Rukmani and her family do not have anything to live, she decides to find her son Murugan. She thinks that Murugan will help them to face her family problem. She goes to town with Nathan to find him. The city is far away from their home. They ride a bullock and only bring a small bundle of food. In a half of their journey, they lack of food. This event shows the physiological needs of Rukmani. Based on Murphy’s theory that the physiological needs includes feeling of hunger and pain. The long road causes a serious shortage to them. Then, they stop in a temple to rest after long journey (pp. 141-149). They rest one night there but thieves steal their bundles and all their money. Rukmani faces this problem by become a reader of letter. She earns money to buy food for herself and for her husband.

Rukmani’s desire to meet with her son is a part of belongingness and love needs. According to Maslow, these needs are people desire’s to love and attach to others through family. They hope Murugan will help them. It is not easy to find where her son lives in the big city. Rukmani and her husband have to ask many people to find it.

“Are you bound for the temple too?”
“Yes, we hope to shelter there for the night”.
“Are you going to settle in this city?”
“Yes, our son lives here. He is married and we are to stay with him. His name is Murugan,” we said eagerly. “Maybe you have heard of him?”
“No, no,” they shook their heads indulgently. “Ah well, it is a big city” (p. 146).

Based on the conversation above, Rukmani should rest in a temple for a night because she has no place to sleep during her finding Murugan. She asks a person
in the temple about Murugan. Unfortunately, the person does not know the name of Murugan in there because he thinks that the city is too big.

Another day, Rukmani meets with a beggar boy, his name is Puli. She hopes that the boy knows Koil Street, where her son lives. Her husband, Nathan also recommends Rukmani to ask that boy because he thinks that the boy looks quick and has curious eyes.

“Tell me, my son, do you know where Koil Street is?”
“Koil Street? There are three or four. Which one do you seek?”

“...That I can well believe. We are looking for my son who is named Murugan, and he works with one Birla, who is a doctor.”
“I do not know of Murugan,” the boy said frankly. “but everyone knows Birla. I will take you there myself”
“I have less than you,” Nathan sighed. “I can give you nothing.”
“Oh,” the boy said, disappointed, his voice falling away (pp. 155-156).

The conversation above shows that finding Murugan is not easy. Even it is hard, Rukmani keeps asking people about Murugan. Because of Rukmani and her husband do not have money, the boy looks disappointed and leaves them away.

During the journey, they feel very tired and lost in the big city. They stop to rest, and by the time they have strength enough to travel again. When night comes, they go to a temple for shelter and food. Rukmani tries to pray on her family left behind. In the sharing food moment from the temple, Rukmani tries to collect some food for her and Nathan. People need to satisfy their psychological needs. Referring to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, the highest of all basic needs are needs for physiological. Rukmani’s need for food and shelter is physiological needs. Maslow explains that physiological needs must be satisfied first. After eating, she realizes that someone has been taking their bundles. They begin to
search for their bundles but fail (pp. 167-168). In this emergency situation, Rukmani’s safety needs emerge. She wants to be secured by trying to find her bundles although fails. At that time, they really do not have anything. They cannot survive if they do not eat. Rukmani feels sad and hopeless. However, Nathan supports her to be strong and accepts the condition. Rukmani becomes stronger than before. She wants to survive with her husband. Nathan’s support is part of the ego in Freud’s theory. His support becomes psychological energy for Rukmani to process her way of thinking. Then, she decides to become a letter reader in the crowded place to earn money for eat.

All that day and many following, I sat by the side of the road leading to the bazaar calling to those who passed, adding to the general clamor. Men hurrying by stopped to start inquisitively before moving on, idlers food or sat around lazily indulging their curiosity. Youths sauntered by insolent of eye and manner, speaking loudly and with exaggerated clearness to each other that I might hear (p.169).

During the time of finding her son, Murugan, she becomes a reader of letter by sitting a long day of the road. She sells her reading skill to earn money. The city is very crowded. She can earn money to survive with her husband.

After a few days, Rukmani and Nathan can find where her Murugan lives but they only meet Murugan’s wife and child. She informs that Murugan leaves them and he does not return again. Knowing that condition, Rukmani decides to collect more money to rent a cart to take them back to the village. Unluckily, she finds Nathan collapsed in the street. Nathan dies in Rukmani’s arms after reminding her of their happiness together.

After Nathan’s death, Rukmani comes back to her village and introduces Puli to Ira and Selvam as her son. Rukmani says that they have adopted Puli while
they are away. Ira and Selvam welcome Puli as their new family member and they live together.

It can be said that Rukmani manages to survive because she has a strong motivation for her family. She works hard to fulfill her family’s needs. She can survive during her bad condition in her life although it is not easy for her. Her patience, smartness, and bravery make Rukmani survives. She can also overcome her problems that occur during her life. Rukmani basic needs such as physiological needs, safety needs, and belongingness and love needs emerge. She fulfills her physiological needs by planting crops and working hard. The safety needs emerge when she tries to find her money and bundles food that has been taking by someone. Rukmani’s desire to find her son, Murugan, shows belongingness and love needs. Her ego functions are seen when Rukmani struggles. The reality in her life demands her to struggle.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter is divided into three parts. There are conclusions, implications, and suggestions. The first part begins the conclusion of the analysis and the answer of the problems formulation. The second part presents the implications of the study. The last part presents the suggestions for future researchers who want to conduct on Kamala Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve*.

A. Conclusions

Based on the analysis, Rukmani is the major character in the novel. She is the focus of attention from the beginning until the end of the story. She is also described as patient, hard working, smart and brave person. All those descriptions can be seen from the personal description, character as seen by another, speech, and direct comment as stated in Murphy’s characterization theory. Even though she lives in poverty with his husband Rukmani is still patient. She accepts all conditions she has. Rukmani is a hard working mother. She plants crops to feed her children and her husband appropriately. She has a desire for working for her family’s needs. Rukmani is also known as a smart woman since she has not married. She practices and teaches her children to write and read. Moreover, Rukmani is known as a brave woman. She braves to ask Kenny’s help for her daughter Ira, who cannot bear a child although her husband does not permit her to
meet Kenny. She has a strong desire to help her daughter’s infertility. She also shows by showing her disagreement of the tannery.

The causes of her struggle are her family financial condition and her family life events. Her family financial condition makes Rukmani should work hard by planting and selling vegetables to earn money and feed her family members. Another cause is her family life events. When her family starts in starvation, she should fight everything to survive. As a mother, she should help her daughter Ira to come out from her problem. Rukmani should also find her son in the city to help them in poverty and starvation. All of these problems make Rukmani struggle for life and also motivates her to become a good mother for her family. Rukmani wants her family to survive and live better from the bad condition.

B. Implications

Kamala Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve* is an interesting novel. This novel is worth discussing in the Prose class. The lecturer can use this as a teaching and learning material. Besides motivating the students to love reading, the students can also obtain life values by reading *Nectar in a Sieve* novel. The novel is a portrayal of real life experiences. The novel provides so many life values and insights. Students can broaden their knowledge and deepen understanding about life. The novel also can help students in dealing with real life and solving problems that emerge. The students may learn how to struggle in life through
literary work. The novel also serves new vocabulary terms about literary work so students can enrich their vocabulary skill.

C. Suggestions

*Nectar in a Sieve* by Kamala Markandaya is an interesting novel because it is a kind of novel which tells about the struggle of human’s life. It tells human’s experiences that can happen to everyone in the world. The novel teaches people to be strong and it also can be a life reflection for them. That is why, the writer recommends the novel to future researchers to analyze the novel.

The novel is not only a right choice as a reading book but also an appropriate novel to study since there are some interesting aspects of studying. For the future researchers who intend to conduct a study on this novel, there are some points that can be discussed as the object of the study. The future researchers may analyze how the setting of time, place, and environment influence the major character’s personality as seen in Kamala Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve*.

Talking about the character, the future researchers can analyze the other characters and how the other characters influence the main character struggle for life as seen in Kamala Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve*. They also can analyze one of the main characters’s self motivations.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX 1

BIOGRAPHY OF KAMALA MARKANDAYA

Born Kamala Purnaiya in 1924 in Chimakurti, a small southern village in India, Kamala Markandaya learned traditional Hindu culture and values. She was raised Brahman. Between the years of 1940-1947, Markandaya was a student at the University of Madras, where she studied history. While studying at the University, she worked as a journalist, writing short fiction stories. In 1948 Markandaya decided to further pursue her dream of becoming a writer by moving to London, where she met her husband Bertrand Taylor, a native Englishman. Markandaya and Taylor had one daughter, Kim Oliver, who currently resides in England. In her lifetime, Kamala Markandaya published ten novels, all dealing with post-colonial themes in modern India. She is most famous for her novel Nectar in a Sieve, which was her third novel written, but the first novel published. Nectar in a Sieve became a bestseller in March, 1955, earning her over $100,000 in prizes. Some of her other novels include: A Silence of Desire, Some Inner Fury, A Handful of Rice, Possession, The Coffer Dams, The Nowhere Man, Two Virgins, Pleasure City, and The Golden Honeycomb.
Kamala Markandaya is respected by many for her outspoken voice among the Indian people and has often been credited by many for bringing recognition to Indian literature. Charles Larson of American University in Washington wrote, “Most Americans’ perception of India came through Kamala Markandaya; she helped forge the image of India for American readers in schools and book clubs.” After Markandaya’s husband died in 1986, she made frequent trips to India, where she continued to write. On May 16, 2004 Kamala Markandaya died in London at the age of 79 due to kidney failure. Although she is no longer alive, her voice will always be heard through her novels. She will continue to raise awareness about India and teach others in the West about a culture otherwise largely unfamiliar. Through her novels, Markandaya brings to light the complication of post-colonial and traditional Indian social hierarchy as well as the implications prevalent within both systems. These themes are most noticeable in her novel A Silence of Desire, where she addresses the issues of social classes of India and the controversies surrounding this social hierarchy.

Markandaya’s best-known work, Nectar in a Sieve, is a heart wrenching tale that depicts the hardships and joys of a woman’s life in rural India. The story follows the life of a girl, Rukmani, throughout her whole life and all that she witnesses growing up in a changing India. Rukmani marries at thirteen to a man she has never met before and moves far from her family to the country. There she has many children whom she and her husband struggle to feed when drought strikes and numerous crop cycles are destroyed. Rukmani witnesses the impact that post-colonial influences have on India when a tannery is built in their village.
and changes their life drastically. She watches her children struggle to survive on what little food they have and her infant baby eventually dies of starvation. Her daughter, rejected by her husband for being unable to bear a child, resorts to prostitution to help supplement the family. Finally, Rukmani and her husband leave their village for the city, only to find more depravity and hardship.

In all of Kamala Markandaya’s works, a common theme of social distinctions and the differences between people living in poverty and wealth, as well as the difficulties each class undergoes is prevalent. Markandaya is an evolutionary and a great preceptor of the environment surrounding her as she thinks ahead to environmental and societal problems that globalization and development bring. In some ways, Markandaya was Rachel Carson of India-calling out before we reach a point that is beyond going back.

Taken from
https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/166264/Markandaya
APPENDIX 2

SUMMARY OF NECTAR IN A SIEVE

Nectar in a Sieve tells the story of Rukmani, a young married woman from a poor family who lives in a rural village in India. She is an educated daughter of a village headman. Rukmani is forced by her parents to married with a tenant farmer, Nathan. Within a year Rukmani has a beautiful daughter, Ira. Rukmani is a hard working woman. She harvests well every day. After some years, Rukmani has a trouble that she cannot produce a son for Nathan. Then, she asks for help to Kenny, a village doctor. Kenny treats her infertility without Nathan’s knowledge. By time goes, she bears five sons. The problem comes again in her family. They have a little less food to eat. However, Rukmani keeps harvesting and manages her family needs well.

A few years later, a tannery is built in her village. The unpleasant event comes to Rukmani’s village. Everything changes become worse. Two of Rukmani’s sons go to work there. They have a purpose to help their family...
financial although Rukmani does not permit them to work there. Unfortunately, Raja, one of her sons is killed by the tannery.

Rukmani’s daughter, Ira, is married to a young man. After several years married, Ira’s husband returns Ira to her family because she cannot bear. Again Rukmani turns to meet Kenny to treat her daughter’s infertility without Nathan’s knowledge. At that time, the village does not rain. The crops fail and Rukmani’s family once again goes hungry. They sell most of they have to pay half to the landowner for their rent.

Kenny returns after long time absences and builds a hospital in Rukmani’s village. He offers to train Selvam, one of Rukmani’s sons, as his assistant. Selvam has better knowledge and the most educated child Rukmani has. Ira has an albino baby conceived in prostitution. However, Rukmani still accepts it and she takes care of her grandchild. A neighborhood wife, Kunthi, confess to Rukmani that Nathan fathered her two sons. Rukmani learns the truth and forgives Nathan.

Rukmani’s family experiences the greatest loss when their land has been sold to the tannery. Rukmani and Nathan must leave their home soon. Then, they decide to find their son, Murugan in the city to asking help. Rukmani leaves Ira and her grandchild under Selvam’s care.

When Nathan and Rukmani try to find Murugan in the city, some thieves steal their bundles of food and their money. A street boy named Puli helps them to find Kenny’s friend. Unfortunately, Kenny’s friend informs that Murugan has not
worked in the city. They only meet with Murugan’s wife and his starving boy. Rukmani realizes that they cannot depend on Murugan’s wife.

Rukmani and Nathan hope of home but have nothing to make the trip. Rukmani tries to get work as a letter reader but it only enough to buy rice cakes for her husband and herself. Puli takes them to a stone quarry where there is better paying work. Puli is a kind boy. He helps Rukmani to break stones. After several days, Rukmani can buy extra food and toys for her husband and Nathan. When she returns to the temple, Nathan is ill. However, he still continues his work during monsoon rains.

One evening, after she gets paid, Rukmani has a plan for a cart to take them home. Unluckily, she finds Nathan collapsed in the street. Kind strangers help to carry him to the temple. Nathan dies in Rukmani’s arms after reminding her of their happiness together. After Nathan’s death, Rukmani comes back to her home and introduces Puli to Ira and Selvam as her son. Rukmani says that Nathan and her adopted Puli while they were away. Ira and Selvam welcome Puli as their new family member. They show both hope and compassion.