CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHOD

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Intrinsic Elements

This part of the research thesis focuses on the exploration of intrinsic elements which serve as the foundation for the discussion that follows. These elements include character, characterization, and conflict, each of which plays an important role in shaping the narrative and moving the plot forward. The writer collects the explanations from Ferdinal *et al*. in their book entitled *Introduction to Literary Studies* (2020), Baldick in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (2001), and Schirova in *How To Analyze Fiction* (2006) to give precise and understandable definitions as well as to make sure the analysis is based on established literary theory. These intrinsic elements will later be analyzed in depth in the discussion part and provide insight into how they contribute to the overall development of the narrative.

2.1.1.1 Character

Characters are one of the most crucial elements in a narrative as they are the "actors in the story that causes the story to move from one activity to another" (Ferdinal *et al*., 2020:66). They serve as the core of a narrative by shaping the progression through their decisions, motivations, and interactions. Without characters,

a story lacks movement, as they provide the emotional and psychological depth necessary for readers to engage with the plot.

According to Forster in Ferdinal *et al*., (2020:66), characters in a narrative can be broadly categorized as either round or flat.

1. Round Character

Forster in Ferdinal *et al.* said "the round characters play an essential role, sometimes the lead roles in stories. They are complex, dimensional, and well-developed. The stories are about them; therefore, pages of writing will be about them." Moreover, they also resemble real human beings in their unpredictability, which gives them a sense of "life within the pages of a book" (2020:66).

2. Flat Character

Flat characters, on the other hand, are the "stereotypical figure easily recognized by readers, such as the mad leader or the evil woman" (Forster in Ferdinal *et al.*, 2020:66). They may not grow or change, but they serve important functions, such as supporting the plot, offering contrast, or highlighting traits of round characters.

2.1.1.2 Characterization

In the field of literature, the study of character is always inseparable from the discussions on how the character is characterized. Baldick defines characterization as "the representation of persons in narrative and dramatic works" (2001:37). This can be done directly, by explicitly describing the character's traits, or indirectly, through

actions, speech, thoughts, and interactions with others. Characterization also serves as an important tool to reveal a character's internal psychological state. For example, a character's consistent actions or dialogue can illustrate their struggle with self-doubt or their ability to form meaningful relationships. In this way, characterization provides insight into a character's psychological depth and shows their inner thoughts through textual evidence.

According to the explanation from Baldick (2001), the process of characterization can be divided into two types:

1. Direct Characterization

Direct characterization explicitly describes a character's traits. This information is often provided by the narrator, another character, or the characters themselves. Baldick further explains direct characterization as "the method like the attribution of qualities in description or commentary" (2001:37).

2. Indirect Characterization

Indirect characterization, on the other hand, is conveyed through a character's actions, thoughts, appearance, interactions with other characters, and responses to situations. This method is "inviting readers to infer qualities from characters' actions, speech, or appearance" (Baldick, 2001:37).

Based on these types, people may refer to direct characterization as explicit characterization and indirect characterization as implicit characterization. While explicit characterization provides clear and immediate insight into a character,

implicit characterization creates depth by allowing readers to interpret and analyze a character's personality based on their behavior and interactions.

2.1.1.3. Conflict

A conflict is a fundamental element in the narrative, as it creates tension, drives the plot forward, and allows characters to experience personal growth. Ferdinal *et al.* further explain "conflict is the struggle between two things, for which the main character has a conflict with the main character's adversary" (2020:65). Without conflict, a story would lack direction, and characters would have little motivation to act or develop.

The conflict is categorized into two primary types:

1. Internal Conflict

An internal conflict is "within the mind of characters" (Schirova, 2006:11). This type of conflict often involves clashing desires, moral dilemmas, or emotional turmoil that a character must navigate. This type of conflict plays a significant role in character development, as it challenges individuals to make difficult choices that shape their identity and growth.

2. External Conflict

An external conflict is "between characters, between groups in society, between a character and the society or between a character and the forces of nature" (Schirova, 2006:11). This type of conflict often serve as obstacles which test the round character's resilience and determination.

2.1.2 Extrinsic Elements

In this part of research thesis, the writer will uncover the definition and in-depth explanation about Erikson's psychosocial development, specifically on the factors, resolutions, and stages based on his book titled *Childhood and Society* (1993) followed by an article that discusses further explanation about this framework titled Erikson's *Stages of Development: A Closer Look at the Eight of Psychosocial Stages* written by Cherry (2024).

2.1.2.1 Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Development

Erik H. Erikson's psychosocial development focuses on the influence of society and culture. He emphasizes that development continues throughout the lifespan and is shaped by ongoing interactions between internal and external influences. As he states, "the human being, at all times, from the first kick in utero to the last breath, is organized into groupings of geographic and historical coherence: family, class, community, nation" (Erikson, 1993:30). This highlights Erikson's belief that human personality is not formed in isolation, but shaped through constant interaction with the social environment across the entire lifespan. These social structures: family, community, and broader cultural systems, serve as contexts in which individuals experience and resolve psychological challenges at each developmental stage.

2.1.2.1.1 The Stages of Psychosocial Development

Erikson's psychosocial development theory outlines human growth as a lifelong process structured into eight sequential stages. These stages are:

1. Trust *vs*. Mistrust (Infancy, 0-1 years)

In this stage, infants learn to trust their caregivers when their basic needs are consistently met. Erikson describes the successful resolution of this stage as a sense of "basic trust" (Erikson, 1993:222). According to Cherry (2024), trust forms the foundation for future emotional security, while lack of it may result in fear and belief that the world is unreliable.

2. Autonomy *vs*. Shame and Doubt (Early Childhood, 1-3 years)

Toddlers begin to assert independence and develop a sense of control. Erikson states that "a sense of autonomy is sharpened by the child's ability to make decisions and carry them out" (Erikson, 1993:226). As Cherry (2024) also explains, when supported, children gain confidence in their ability to act independently; if criticized or overly controlled, they may develop feelings of shame and doubt.

3. Initiative *vs*. Guilt (Play Age, 3-6 years)

Children initiate activities and assert control through play. Erikson explains initiative as "undertaking, planning, and attacking a task" (Erikson, 1993:229). If given freedom, children develop initiative; if restricted, they may experience guilt about their desires and ambitions (Cherry, 2024).

4. Industry *vs*. Inferiority (School Age, 6-12 years)

Children work to develop competence and are eager to learn and accomplish tasks. Erikson notes they want "to learn how to make things, how to use tools" (Erikson, 1993:232). When encouraged, children feel industrious; if not, they may feel inferior and doubt their abilities (Cherry, 2024).

5.   Identity *vs*. Role Confusion (Adolescence, 12-18 years)

This stage is a turning point where adolescents explore their values and goals to form a personal identity. Erikson defines identity as "the accrued confidence that one's ability to maintain inner sameness and continuity... is matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others" (Erikson, 1993:234). In simpler terms, identity is a stable sense of who a person is, both internally and socially.

According to Cherry (2024), role confusion occurs when adolescents are uncertain about their identity and future roles. While it is normal to have multiple roles (e.g., student, friend, teacher), confusion arises when individuals struggle to integrate those roles into a cohesive self-concept. This may lead to insecurity, instability, and difficulty making life decisions.

6.   Intimacy *vs*. Isolation (Young Adulthood, 18-40 years)

In this stage, individuals form emotionally close relationships. Erikson describes intimacy as "the ability to fuse your identity with somebody else's without fear" (Erikson, 1993:237). Cherry (2024) further explains that true intimacy requires a strong sense of self; without it, people may fear vulnerability.

Isolation, as Erikson states, is "the avoidance of close relationships... because of a fear of ego loss" (Erikson, 1993:237). People who cannot connect emotionally may become isolated, withdrawn, and lonely.

7.   Generativity *vs*. Stagnation (Adulthood, 40-65 years)

Individuals strive to contribute to society and nurture the next generation. Erikson defines generativity as "primarily the concern in establishing and guiding the next generation" (Erikson, 1993:240). Cherry (2024) also notes that success leads to a sense of usefulness, while failure can lead to stagnation and self-absorption.

8.   Integrity *vs*. Despair (Maturity, 65+ years)

In this final stage, individuals reflect on their lives. Erikson describes integrity as "the acceptance of one's one and only life cycle" (Erikson, 1993:241). Cherry (2024) further explains that people who feel proud of their achievements experience integrity, while those who feel regret or unfulfilled may fall into despair.

2.1.2.1.2 The Factors of Psychosocial Development

According to Erikson, each stage of psychosocial development is characterized by specific psychosocial conflicts that must be resolved to ensure healthy development. Malone *et al.* in Cherry (2024) explains that each stage in psychosocial development is built from the previous stages and paves the way for next stages of development. This statement shows that each developmental stage is deeply connected. A person's ability to resolve a conflict in one stage directly influences their capacity to face challenges in the following stage.

The main factors that influence a person's psychosocial development are the resolutions of earlier stages; whether those conflicts are resolved or not, as Erikson states "the strength acquired in the successful resolution of each stage serves as a foundation for the next" (1993:243). This suggests that the ability to successfully face a psychosocial conflict in one stage determines how well a person is equipped to face the conflict in the next stage. Conversely, if earlier stages are unresolved, individuals may carry psychological difficulties, such as inferiority or role confusion, into future stages, which later will disrupt their development.

As this research thesis specifically examines the fifth stage (Identity *vs.* Role Confusion) and sixth stage (Intimacy *vs.* Isolation), the possible influencing factors for each stage are outlined below.

Possible factors in identity against role confusion stage are:

1.   Industry, a positive resolution of stage 4, which can support a strong sense of competence and readiness to explore identity (Erikson, 1993:232).

2.   Inferiority, a negative resolution of stage 4, which may cause feelings of self-doubt that hinder identity formation (Erikson, 1993:232).

Possible factors in intimacy against isolation stage are:

1.   Identity, a positive resolution of stage 5, which provides the emotional foundation to build meaningful relationships (Erikson, 1993:234)

2.   Role confusion, a negative resolution of stage 5, which may result in uncertainty and difficulty forming close emotional connections (Erikson, 1993:234).

2.1.2.1.3 The Resolutions of Psychosocial Development

The resolution of each psychosocial stage, on the other hand, determines whether individuals develop psychological strengths or face emotional difficulties. Cherry explains "if a person responds negatively to the crisis in stage 5, it can lead to role confusion," and she also adds, "people who are not successful in stage 6 can feel alone and isolated" (2024). These statements show that each stage offers two possible resolutions: a successful resolution that leads to psychological strengths, or a failed resolution that results in emotional challenges. In this research thesis that focuses on the fifth and sixth stages of psychosocial development, the possible resolutions for each stage are discussed below.

Possible resolutions in identity against role confusion are:

1.   Identity, the positive resolution, in which an individual develops a stable and coherent sense of self (Erikson, 1993:234).

2.   Role confusion, the negative resolution, marked by uncertainty about one's goals, values, and self-concept (Erikson, 1993:234).

Possible resolutions in intimacy against isolation are:

1.   Intimacy, the positive resolution, which reflects the ability to form close, committed relationships with others or with oneself (Erikson, 1993:237).

2.   Isolation, the negative resolution, characterized by emotional withdrawal, fear of closeness, or inability to connect with others (Erikson, 1993:237).

2.2. Research Method

2.2.1. Research Approach

This research thesis uses a psychological approach to examine the psychological elements of the character Nina Riva in Taylor Jenkins Reid's *Malibu Rising*. Semi (2013:45) defines this approach as a literature criticism approach which stresses on psychological aspects that exist in literature work. This research thesis uses Erik Erikson's psychosocial development framework as the main framework, which frames the analysis of Nina's psychological growth by emphasizing the critical conflicts that shape her identity and relationships.

2.2.2. Method of Data Collection

The method used in this research thesis is library research, a method which systematically collects and analyzes existing literature. This process includes further analysis of the collected data; primary and secondary. George defines primary data as "first-hand evidence" gathered directly by the writer, while secondary data as an "interpretation" of existing information (2008:56). In this research thesis, Taylor Jenkins Reid's novel titled *Malibu Rising* serves as the primary data source which provides original material for analysis. Secondary data, such as academic articles and journals, will be utilized to offer additional context and theoretical frameworks. This method allows for a comprehensive exploration of the psychological themes within the text of the novel.