

CAHPETER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The novel *Home Sweet Loan* was published in 2022 by Gramedia Pustaka Utama. *Home Sweet Loan* was written by a young writer whose name was already popular in Indonesia, Almira Bastari. The story of *Home Sweet Loan* focused on the struggle of the protagonist's personal life. Work-life balance was an important issue that many people faced at the time. Pressure from work and family obligations often made it difficult for people to maintain this balance. This was not only an everyday problem, but also a theme that was often discussed in literary works. One of them was the novel *Home Sweet Loan* by Almira Bastari, which told the struggle of the protagonist in facing challenges to achieve this balance.

In the modern world, especially in big cities like Jakarta, work-life balance is becoming an increasingly difficult challenge to achieve. This is the main issue experienced by Kaluna, the protagonist in Almira Bastari's *Home Sweet Loan*. Kaluna is described as a young woman who works hard to achieve financial stability in the midst of the reality of a big city full of economic and social pressures. The challenges she faces do not only come from the demands of work but also from the pressure to have her own residence as a symbol of independence and life stability (Rahadania, 2024).

Kaluna faces a dilemma between pursuing her career and fulfilling her personal and social needs. As an office worker with dreams of owning her own home, she has to deal with the demands of work that take up time and energy. Often, she has to sacrifice

other aspects of her life, such as personal relationships and mental health, in order to achieve her financial targets. This reflects the reality of many young workers trying to build a future amidst economic challenges (Hona & Dewi, 2024).

In addition to the burden of work, social factors are also a pressure for Kaluna. In urban culture, owning one's own property is often considered a major achievement that determines one's status. Kaluna felt that she had to fight harder to prove herself, both to her surroundings and to herself. Her desire for financial independence collides with challenges such as high property prices and the ever-increasing cost of living (Novitasari et al., 2024).

The novel *Home Sweet Loan* illustrates how Kaluna tries to find a middle ground between ambition and personal happiness. She must learn to manage time, manage stress, and accept that not all aspects of life can be fully controlled. Her journey becomes a reflection for many people who experience similar difficulties in achieving work-life balance in the modern era (Social et al., 2023).

By understanding the problems faced by the protagonist, this research aimed to analyze how the novel *Home Sweet Loan* represented the struggle of young women in facing the challenges of work-life balance. In addition, this study also aimed to identify the factors that affected the protagonist's work-life balance and the strategies she used to survive amidst those pressures.

Through sociological and psychological approaches, this research reviewed how the social and cultural conditions in the novel reflected the reality faced by many young workers in Indonesia. By comparing the protagonist's experiences with the results of

previous research, this study was expected to provide deeper insights into the challenges faced by the younger generation in achieving life balance.

The reason for choosing this title was because work-life balance was one of the socio-cultural phenomena that occurred in modern society at the time, so this issue was considered very interesting to analyze. Hopefully, the findings of this research could provide input to modern society at large on how to balance work and personal life, as similar events were also experienced by the protagonist in the novel *Home Sweet Loan*.

In conclusion, through the analysis of the novel *Home Sweet Loan*, this research provided a broader understanding of individual struggles in achieving work-life balance. By integrating theories and data from various studies, it was hoped that this research could make a valuable academic contribution to the study of literature and sociology.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As a researcher who had a deep interest in the issue of work-life balance, a fundamental question arose about how an individual struggled to achieve this balance amidst various demands and pressures. Almira Bastari's novel *Home Sweet Loan* presented the protagonist, a young woman who tried to navigate her life between a demanding job, social pressures, and personal needs. This raised curiosity about how the protagonist faced and overcame the various challenges that arose in her efforts to achieve a balance between her career and personal life.

To understand more about the protagonist's struggle to achieve work-life balance, this research formulates two questions as follows:

1. What struggle does the protagonist go through to pursue her work-life balance in the novel?

2. What strategies does the protagonist use to pursue her work-life balance in the novel?

1.3 Objective of the Study

This research aimed to analyze and understand the protagonist's struggle in pursuing work-life balance in the novel *Home Sweet Loan* by Almira Bastari. Through this research, it was expected to contribute to literary studies and provide further understanding of the struggles and strategies in achieving work-life balance that could be applied in everyday life. Based on the identification of problems that had been carried out, the objectives of this study were described as follows:

1. To find out what struggles the protagonist go through to pursue her work-life balance in the novel.
2. To analyze what strategies are used by the protagonist to pursue her work-life balance in the novel.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This research focused on analyzing the work-life balance faced by the protagonist in the novel *Home Sweet Loan* by Almira Bastari, particularly the challenges in balancing her professional and personal life amid social, economic, and cultural pressures. The study only analyzed the struggles of the protagonist without discussing other characters in depth, and limited the scope to how the main character managed her life in aspects of social pressure, financial issues, and cultural expectations. Using a sociology of literature approach, the research aimed to understand the problems faced by the protagonist based on the content of the novel as the main source, supported by relevant theories on work-life balance from journals and previous studies.

This issue was chosen because the theme of work-life balance was increasingly relevant in modern life, especially for young workers who faced pressure to succeed professionally while fulfilling social and family demands. Based on research by Greenhaus & Beutell (1985) and Kossek et al. (2011), an imbalance between work and personal life could negatively impact individual well-being, which, in the context of the protagonist, was exacerbated by external pressures such as financial needs and social norms. Therefore, the study aimed to analyze how these challenges were represented in literary works and the extent to which the protagonist's experiences reflected the reality of young people in Indonesia at the time. By limiting the research to these aspects, it was hoped that the results of the study could provide a more focused and in-depth understanding of the protagonist's struggles and how the novel reflected the dynamics of work-life balance in real life.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this research contributed to the development of literary studies that highlighted the issue of work-life balance in modern Indonesian literature. By using a sociology of literature approach, the research enriched academic insights into how novels could reflect the challenges faced by individuals in real life. In addition, the research also provided a new perspective in the analysis of female characters in contemporary literature, especially in facing social and economic pressures.

Practically, this research was useful for various readers. For young workers, it provided reflection and a better understanding of the importance of work-life balance. Readers could learn from the main character's experiences in dealing with financial, social, and professional pressures, and find strategies that could be applied in their own lives. For

academics and researchers, the results of this study served as a reference in literary studies discussing similar themes, particularly those related to the dynamics of young workers' lives in Indonesia. Additionally, this research was also useful for the professional world and companies in understanding the challenges faced by employees in achieving work-life balance, enabling them to encourage more worker-friendly policies.

Thus, this research not only contributed to the academic realm but also provided insights and solutions for individuals and organizations in dealing with work-life balance issues. It was hoped that this research could serve as a foundation for further studies on the representation of social reality in literature and its relevance to everyday life.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Protagonist

According to Abrams (1981), the protagonist is the main character in a literary work who becomes the focal point of the story, typically facing the primary conflict and leading the plot toward resolution. The protagonist plays a crucial role in driving the narrative and often undergoes development or change throughout the story.

According to Forster (1927), the protagonist is the central character in a story whose actions and decisions serve as the main drivers of the narrative plot. This character plays an important role in the story's development and usually experiences significant transformation, whether emotional, psychological, or moral as a result of the conflicts and experiences encountered throughout the story.

According to Chatman (1978), the protagonist is the main figure in a narrative who propels the story forward through strong goals and motivations. This character typically has a clear desire or mission, and their actions in pursuit of that goal become the core of the plot's progression. Thus, the protagonist functions not only as the narrative focus but also as a dynamic element guiding the structure and conflict within the story.

According to Genette (1980), the protagonist is the main character in a story who serves as the subject of the narrative whose actions are central to the story's development. The protagonist is not only an important figure but also the primary agent who drives the plot forward through their decisions, conflicts, and changes. In other words, the

protagonist is the narrative's focal point and plays a key role in shaping the overall story structure.

According to Prince (1987), the protagonist is the character who holds a central role in the main conflict of a story and is usually the figure with whom readers most easily identify or empathize. This character lies at the heart of the narrative's development, where conflicts, challenges, and resolutions largely revolve around them, making the protagonist vital for creating emotional and narrative engagement in the story.

According to Lodge (1992), the protagonist is the main character in a story whose life experiences and actions form the foundation of the narrative structure and guide the development of the story's themes. In other words, the character's journey not only drives the plot but also becomes key to understanding the message or meaning the author intends to convey through the story.

According to Cuddon (1998), the protagonist is the main character in a narrative whose journey becomes the story's central focus. This character is often portrayed as a hero or a positive figure, around whom the plot development, conflicts, and resolutions revolve. The protagonist's role is crucial as they bring meaning and direction to the overall narrative flow.

According to Meyer (2007), the protagonist is the main character who is directly involved in the story's core conflict and serves as the narrative's focal point. This character is often depicted in a way that evokes empathy or sympathy from readers, making them the most followed and supported figure within the plot. The protagonist plays an important role in creating tension and resolution, as well as serving as an emotional bridge between the story and its audience.

According to Bordwell and Thompson (2010), the protagonist is the main character in a narrative who becomes the center of the story's dynamics by facing various challenges or obstacles in their pursuit of specific goals. This character drives the plot's development through their actions, conflicts faced, and decisions made, thereby playing a key role in shaping the story's plot and tension.

According to Abrams and Harpham (2015), the protagonist is the central character in a story who confronts the main conflict, and through this character's journey and experiences, the plot unfolds and develops. The protagonist serves as the primary focus of the narrative, leading readers through the dynamics of conflict until resolution.

2.2 Struggle

Burleson (1964) reveals that 'struggle is one way to achieve a better life in the future and also to increase prestige. That is, any hope will be achieved through struggle.' This statement illustrates that struggle is the foundation of change and achievement in life. No great achievement is achieved without hard work and persistence. In life, struggle is the means to achieve hope, be it in material, emotional, or spiritual aspects. Struggle, according to Burleson, gives deep meaning to the process of achieving a better life, so it becomes something essential in every human journey.

Struggle is a form of individual effort to maintain social identity amidst the pressures or social stigma they face. In this context, struggle is not only related to external conflicts but also includes internal efforts to remain "worthy" or accepted by society, especially when one's personal identity is questioned or tarnished (Goffman, 1963).

Struggle is the human effort to find meaning amid a life filled with confusion and symbolic complexity. This struggle reflects the human need to understand a world full of

information, signs, and symbols that are often bewildering, causing individuals to struggle cognitively and emotionally to form understanding and clarity in a reality that is not always simple (Postman, 1979).

Struggle is understood as a form of active coping, a conscious and intense effort by an individual to face and overcome stressful and uncertain situations. In this context, struggle is not merely a passive reaction to stress but a dynamic process where individuals try to assess, manage, and adjust to environmental demands perceived to exceed their capabilities (Folkman and Lazarus, 1984).

Struggle is a form of effort or hard work that individuals undertake in facing difficulties, viewed as part of the attribution process toward performance outcomes. In other words, struggle is considered an internal factor influencing how a person evaluates their success or failure, where the individual believes that certain achievements result from the persistent efforts they have made in difficult circumstances (Weiner, 1985).

Struggle is an important aspect of emotional intelligence, which is the individual's ability to persist, manage emotions, and bounce back when facing intense emotional challenges. In this context, struggle is not merely seen as hardship but as an adaptive process reflecting mental and emotional resilience in overcoming pressure, failure, or internal conflicts, enabling the individual to continue functioning effectively in various life situations (Goleman, 1995).

Struggle is the process in which individuals attempt to overcome various obstacles, whether internal (such as doubts or fears) or external (such as environmental pressures), in order to achieve desired goals. This process involves self-regulation, maintaining motivation, and showing perseverance when facing challenges. In other words, struggle

reflects personal strength in maintaining commitment to goals despite facing significant difficulties (Bandura, 1997).

Struggle is a form of resistance emerging within the context of identity and power, where individuals or subjects fight to preserve their existence amid norms and social structures that oppress or limit them. In this view, struggle is not merely a personal battle but also a political and symbolic act that challenges the rules defining who is recognized and who is marginalized in society (Butler, 1997).

Struggle is a continuous effort made by individuals in responding to social or psychological pressures. In this perspective, struggle reflects an adaptive process whereby a person attempts to cope with emotional, social, or environmental challenges in ways that allow them to endure, learn, and grow from the experience (Myers, 2010).

Struggle is the process of facing challenges that require grit: a combination of perseverance and long-term passion toward goals. In this context, struggle is not just about overcoming momentary difficulties but about sustaining commitment and enthusiasm consistently when confronting obstacles until the desired outcomes are achieved (Duckworth, 2016).

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2023), struggle is defined as a strenuous effort to achieve or deal with something difficult or to resist force or opposition. This means struggle involves intense effort and determination to overcome challenges, obstacles, or resistance in various situations.

Jay Shetty (2020) develops a framework that divides the human journey toward self-growth into five stages: internal struggle, external struggle, identity struggle, existential struggle, and narrative struggle.

2.2.1 Internal Struggle

According to Jay Shetty (2020), internal struggle refers to the inner battles that occur within a person, such as fear, anxiety, self-doubt, or feelings of inadequacy. This type of struggle is often invisible to others but greatly influences how a person thinks, feels, and makes decisions. Shetty emphasizes that facing and understanding this internal conflict is a crucial first step in the process of personal growth.

Internal struggle is an inner conflict that arises when a person feels pulled between instinctual drives (id), moral rules (superego), and efforts to adjust to reality (ego). The id pushes impulsive desires like anger or lust, while the superego restrains these urges with moral values. The ego mediates between the two, trying to balance them realistically. When the id's desires clash with the superego's prohibitions, the ego feels anxious and uses mechanisms like repression, blaming others, or justifying actions. This conflict is normal and important for personality development (Freud, 1923).

Internal struggle also occurs between the conscious ego and unconscious parts of the self, such as the shadow (dark side), anima/animus (feminine or masculine aspects of the psyche), and the drive toward a unified self (Self). Tension arises when someone rejects parts of themselves that conflict with their self-image or social norms. The process of integrating all these aspects is called individuation, a journey toward wholeness. Only by accepting hidden parts can a person live more balanced, find meaning, and grow into their true self (Jung, 1959).

Internal struggle also appears at different life stages, each with specific challenges, like trust in infants, identity search in adolescents, and acceptance in old age. Conflict arises when individuals feel torn between opposing choices. For example, teenagers trying

to understand who they are while confused about social roles. Successfully resolving these struggles strengthens self-confidence and fosters positive traits like hope, will, love, or wisdom. Internal struggle is vital for healthy personality development and a natural part of human growth (Erikson, 1968).

2.2.2 External Struggle

According to Jay Shetty (2020), external struggle refers to challenges or conflicts that originate outside of oneself, such as environmental pressure, interpersonal conflicts, social expectations, or difficulties in life situations like work, finances, and relationships. This type of struggle tests how a person responds to external conditions that do not align with their expectations and often affects emotional stability and personal growth.

External struggle is a class conflict arising from inequalities in the capitalist economic system, where the bourgeoisie (owners of production) oppress the proletariat (workers) for profit. This conflict is systemic and material, not just interpersonal, but a clash of interests between social classes. Workers gradually develop class consciousness and rise in revolution. Class struggle drives social and historical change and is inherent in unequal social structures (Marx, 1848).

External struggle also occurs between dominant and subordinate groups in social structures like bureaucracy, law, or education. When one group controls decisions and rules, others feel oppressed and demand change. Such conflict is inevitable because power is never evenly distributed and fuels social transformation (Dahrendorf, 1959).

External struggle happens in daily social interaction when individuals try to present themselves before others, like actors on a stage. Conflict arises when the image someone wants to show clashes with social expectations, such as appearing confident

despite feeling anxious. This tension triggers face-saving efforts to maintain social identity. Social conflict is not only physical or structural but also symbolic and communicative (Goffman, 1956).

2.2.3 Identity Struggle

According to Jay Shetty (2020), identity struggle is the inner conflict that occurs when a person feels confused or uncertain about who they truly are. It often arises when we feel caught between the expectations of others and our own desires, or when we experience major life changes such as moving to a new environment, shifting roles, or going through an identity crisis. Identity struggle encourages us to reflect on our values, beliefs, and life purpose in order to discover a more authentic version of ourselves.

Identity struggle is an ongoing process of shaping the self influenced by culture, history, and power. Identity is not fixed or innate but socially constructed and constantly changing, especially in diaspora or cultural hybridity contexts. Conflict arises when a person feels pressured between their true self and the image imposed by dominant culture. In migration or postcolonial settings, individuals often face conflicting cultural meanings, causing complex identity tensions. Identity should be seen as a position in social discourse, not a stable core within a person (Hall, 1990).

Identity struggle also involves fighting to express gender identities different from dominant heteronormative norms. Gender is not fixed or biological but formed through repeated social acts governed by norms. Conflict emerges when people express gender or sexuality outside societal expectations, facing pressure or discrimination. Fighting for identity means challenging social rules about who is "normal." Identity is not something one owns but something continuously performed under social surveillance (Butler, 1990).

2.2.4 Existential Struggle

According to Jay Shetty (2020), existential struggle is an inner conflict that arises when a person questions the meaning of life, the purpose of existence, and their role in the world. This struggle often occurs when someone feels that their life is empty or lacks meaning, even though everything may appear fine on the outside. Jay Shetty explains that this stage is important because it encourages individuals to seek values, life direction, and a deeper connection with themselves and life on a spiritual or philosophical level.

Existential struggle is the inner battle humans face confronting absolute freedom to choose and shape their lives. Since "existence precedes essence," humans are not born with fixed meaning but must create it through free choices. This freedom causes anxiety and despair because there is no God or absolute value as a guide. In this state, humans feel burdened by full responsibility for their lives and continuously struggle to find direction, identity, and meaning amid absurdity and uncertainty (Sartre, 1946).

Existential struggle is also the human fight to find life's meaning, especially amid extreme suffering. The main human drive is to find meaning. Those who survive hardship are not the strongest physically but those who find meaning in their suffering. When someone loses meaning (existential vacuum), they may feel empty, depressed, or hopeless. The way out is to find a purpose greater than oneself and live with moral responsibility (Frankl, 1946).

2.2.5 Narrative Struggle

According to Jay Shetty (2020), narrative struggle is an inner conflict that arises when a person feels trapped in a story or narrative that has been shaped, either by themselves or by others about who they are and how their life is supposed to unfold. This

struggle emerges when the old narrative no longer aligns with reality or the desires of the heart, creating an internal conflict between who we are supposed to be according to that story and who we actually are.

Narrative struggle is the core of the seven basic story plots, where the main character faces major obstacles to reach a goal. This struggle can be against evil, chaos, personal weakness, or ignorance and usually follows a pattern like a call to adventure, battle, fall, victory, and recovery. For example, in "Overcoming the Monster," the hero fights a destructive force threatening life. This struggle drives the plot and shows the character's psychological and moral transformation (Booker, 2004).

Narrative struggle in the monomyth or "Hero's Journey" concept is a universal story of a hero leaving the ordinary world to face challenges in a special world, then returning transformed. Stages like "Call to Adventure," "Ordeal," and "Return with the Elixir" represent physical, emotional, and spiritual conflicts. This struggle symbolizes the human inner fight to find identity, meaning, and balance, making narrative struggle an archetypal reflection of universal psychological experience (Campbell, 1949).

2.3 Work-Life Balance

According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), the concept of work-life balance cannot be separated from the term "work-family conflict." They explain that work-family conflict is a form of role conflict that arises when the demands and pressures from two primary domains in an individual's life, namely work and family clash with one another, making it difficult to manage both simultaneously. In this context, intense involvement in one role hinders or disrupts the individual's ability to effectively perform in the other role.

More specifically, Greenhaus and Beutell define this conflict as an inter-role conflict, which occurs due to a mismatch between the expectations and responsibilities associated with two different life domains. For example, when an individual is expected to complete an important project at work while simultaneously being required to attend a significant family event, the person is likely to experience role conflict that ultimately leads to an imbalance in their life.

Greenhaus and Beutell identify that the conflict between work and family can occur in three main forms or dimensions, namely:

a. Time-based Conflict

This type of conflict occurs when the time required to fulfill one role takes away from the time needed for the other role. For instance, someone who frequently works overtime may not have sufficient time to spend with their family at home. This situation leads to imbalance due to a disproportionate allocation of time, potentially causing tension within family relationships.

b. Strain-based Conflict

This conflict arises when stress, fatigue, or emotional strain from one role spills over into the other role, thereby affecting the individual's performance. For example, high pressure at work can lead to feelings of anxiety or irritability, which negatively affect social interactions within the family environment, such as becoming impatient with children or a spouse.

c. Behavior-based Conflict

This type of conflict occurs when the behaviors, attitudes, or values required in one role are incompatible or even contradictory with those required in the other role. For

instance, while a person may be required to act competitively, assertively, and rationally at work, they are expected to be gentle, empathetic, and understanding at home. The inability to adjust behaviors between these two realms may cause tension and disharmony in social and emotional relationships.

According to Clark (2000), work-life balance is an individual's ability to effectively and satisfactorily fulfill responsibilities in two main life domains, namely work and personal life, by creating a harmonious balance between the two, so that neither role interferes with or sacrifices the other.

The spillover theory introduced by Sirgy (2001) provides a broader understanding of how experiences in work and personal life influence each other. The concept suggests that the two domains are not mutually exclusive, but have an interconnected relationship, where experiences in one domain can "spill over" into the other. Spillover can be positive or negative. In the case of positive spillover, successful experiences at work, such as achieving targets or getting promoted, can result in happiness and fulfillment that then positively impacts family relationships or personal life. In contrast, negative spillover occurs when pressures from work, such as excessive workload or conflicts with superiors, create stress that eventually affects personal life, for example, through strained relationships with spouses or other family members.

According to Duxbury and Higgins (2001), work-life balance is an ideal condition where an individual experiences no conflict between the demands of work roles and personal life roles. In this state, a person is able to carry out responsibilities in both domains in a balanced manner and feels satisfied with their achievements in each role.

This reflects a healthy balance between work and personal life, characterized by minimal tension and a high level of satisfaction.

According to Frone (2003), work-life balance is a condition in which an individual experiences minimal or low role conflict between work and family, and there is a positive synergy between the two, so that involvement in one domain actually supports performance and well-being in the other.

According to Voydanoff (2005), work-life balance is the individual's ability to effectively perform roles in the work and family spheres, supported by adequate resources and low levels of conflict between the two roles. This balance is achieved when a person has sufficient time, energy, and support to meet the demands of both domains without sacrificing either, thus creating harmony between professional and personal life.

Valcour (2007) defines work-life balance as the overall level of satisfaction an individual feels based on their success in meeting the demands of both work and family roles, indicating that this balance is measured by how well a person can manage and satisfy both roles simultaneously.

Grzywacz and Butler (2007) define work-life balance as an individual's subjective evaluation of the extent to which work roles and other life aspects can be appropriately combined, emphasizing that this balance largely depends on personal perceptions of harmony among the various roles in one's life.

Grady et al. (2008) define work-life balance broadly as a harmonious balance among various aspects of life, including work, family, community involvement, recreation, and personal time. In other words, work-life balance is not limited to the

relationship between work and family but also encompasses fulfilling needs in various important life areas that contribute to overall individual well-being.

Greenhaus and Allen (2011) define work-life balance as the degree of balanced involvement and satisfaction an individual experiences in performing roles at work and within the family, stressing the importance of adequately fulfilling both aspects to achieve a good life balance.

Work-life balance affects employees from different demographic and social backgrounds differently. For example, employees who have greater family responsibilities, such as single parents or those caring for sick or disabled family members, may require additional support to achieve optimal work-life balance (Hammer et al., 2011).

Based on Hochschild & Machung's (2012) research, women often face greater challenges in achieving this balance due to the dual expectations of performing well at work while carrying out domestic roles. This is in line with the experience of the protagonist, who not only has to manage her work, but also has to deal with social pressure and her personal desire to be financially independent.

Work-life balance is an individual's ability to manage stability between work and personal life to remain dynamic and competitive at work while maintaining a cheerful and healthy home life with the necessary ease, despite work stress and endless actions that require time and consideration (Kundnani & Mehta, 2014).

The ever-increasing work pressure has an impact on women's work, where women have less time for themselves. In this era of knowledge, increased responsibilities and the proliferation of technologies such as advanced mobile phones and work-related

technologies that make work life integrated with personal life create pressure on personal and professional life. This can affect one's physical, emotional and social well-being. Thus, achieving work-life balance is a necessity for working women to have a good quality of life (Lakshmi & Prasanth, 2018)

Furthermore, a study from Allen et al. (2020) revealed that individuals who face work-life balance conflicts tend to experience emotional exhaustion and decreased quality of life. In this novel, the main character often experiences a dilemma between meeting her professional targets and maintaining her mental health and personal happiness. Her desire to own her own home is the main trigger for her ambition and struggle, but also a source of considerable pressure.

Recent research by Caffee (2022) shows that in many literary works, characters' struggles to achieve work-life balance often mirror the challenges faced by modern society in real life. These characters, who struggle with work pressures as well as personal needs, become symbols for the difficulties individuals experience in dealing with conflicting demands. In an increasingly competitive and stressful world, where the demands of work and personal life often clash, literary works serve as a reflection of this struggle. Characters in novels or stories are often forced to find ways to overcome such conflicts, which gives readers an insight into how people can strive to strike a balance between the two aspects.