

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Many depictions of the diaspora community for the first or second generation in various media e.g, literary works, films, and music, are related to problems of adaptation to new situations in their new homes. Meera (2018), in dealing with Asian diaspora in America, states that a condition of an Asian diaspora teenager with the behavior of leaving and rejecting their own culture in order to adapt to the American environment. The Indian Diaspora in general live in a separate place from their original homeland. Often Indian people who moved to the new land and were distinct from their original home are the first generation of Indian Diaspora. Whereas someone called second-generation Indian diaspora are people who were born in Newland but have at least one parent who is from India. They become Diaspora to seek opportunities in jobs, education, freedom, safety, and entertainment (Devesh Kapur, 2021). Children of immigrants are frequently confused about their true origins. Their parents are not natives of the United States, but they were born in the country, and they will indirectly act like white Americans. Indian diaspora especially women are often portrayed as receiving double discrimination because of their race, skin, and gender. Many Indian immigrants might have brought with them identities rooted in their ancestral homeland, while others have eschewed them in favor of American identity (Badrinathan, 2020).

However, the cultural separation between the homeland and the new land makes a person experience double consciousness.

As stated by Saraswati (2013, 4), colonization significantly impacted human history, the power of the West, and the burden on the East. The West is always seen as more prominent than the East. As one of the countries with the significant population in the world, Indian tend to immigrate from their original homeland. The Indians migrated to the West countries such as the United States, hoping for a better future. The West's proposition can fulfill the expectation of every colonized people in the world. The condition of a person who lives apart from their original homeland is called a diaspora (Tyson 2015, 421). Diaspora has a significant impact on people's lives, particularly on those who have ever been colonized. India is one of the countries colonized by the west, namely Britain. In 1610 the new English people can be accepted into India. From then on, the British began setting up factories, lodges and forming an army in the small amount as lodge keeper. Later, the East coast of India was occupied and maintained by the British. Since then, the British kept coming and living on the east coast of India, even some workers and researchers brought and their families (Kusdiana 2013). America is also experiencing it. Britain also colonized America around the 16th century. That made the two countries, India and America both once British colonies.

The Indian diaspora in the United States is a group known as with professional and entrepreneurial achievements. Beginning with labor immigration in the early 19th century, now the Indian diaspora in The United States has become an important part of

the dynamics of the technology industry information that grows a lot in the United States. Even though the diaspora community has lived integrated into American society, they still trying to maintain relations with India. Relationship between this diaspora and country of origin have become a symbol of long distance nationalism which Benedict Anderson states as the result of national affinity which creates a feeling of belonging. It then makes the Indian diaspora will feel double consciousness as the effect of the two cultures attached to a diaspora. (Bayeh 2015, 9) Bayeh argues that double consciousness shows the distraction of awareness and contrasting identity that happens when a person possibly fits into a different culture. Identity serves as a self-narrative. It is a process that shapes one's understanding of reality. Identity is not a static condition but a dynamic process with fluctuating borders and cognitive boundaries. For some second-generation Indian Americans, ethnic identity is a minor component of how they define themselves; for others, being second-generation Indian American is central to their daily life (Murray, 2011). The second-generation diaspora community is often depicted with a state that confuses their identity to feel double consciousness (Zezeza, 2008).

According to Du Bois (2007), double consciousness is the experience of seeing oneself through the eyes of another person or of being two people in one body, with two souls, two thoughts, and two unreconcilable strivings. In Du Bois' example, the sample was an African-American who simultaneously felt like an American and a Negro—two competing ideals contained within a single dark body. (2007, p. 3). The origins of double consciousness go back to the struggle of Africa when people question

whether they are African or American and in what terms they are considered to be with the two identities. That also applies to Indian-American diaspora experience. The same thing happens to Indian-American diaspora kids all the time. They must understand their homeland's culture and parents' culture. Immigrant children are often raised in an environment similar to their homeland, both ideologically and materially (Farah 2017, 3). In the end, the diaspora will negotiate their identity as an effect of double consciousness. Then, this negotiation determines which identity they belong to.

Indian teenagers and unmarried women are still bound by a house rule in which they are not allowed to have contact with men other than their future husbands. That leads the teenager to adults to try to adjust to American culture to leave and or reject their own cultural identity. It makes the Indian women diaspora in Western countries let go of these rules and follow the culture there, which is freedom. One of the things they generally do is have a relationship with the opposite sex and are not bound by cultural regulations in India. As in the true case of an Indian immigrant from New American Voices News, Meera Puri taught Philosophy at the University of Delhi before moving to America as a newlywed in 1973. While raising her two daughters, she later worked as a finance manager at Amtrak, a national railway company. Now that she is past the age of 55, she retires and devotes her time to teaching and doing things related to virtue. She said that "These kids are Indian at home and American outside. They were born here, so they first know that they are American. I wasn't born here, so when they came, I was Indian. So there's a reason why the child has an identity crisis." (VOA News, 2003).

Diaspora Indian is seen in the Netflix series, *Never Have I Ever*. This series is a Netflix original rom-com series that was just released on April 27, 2020. This series by Mindy Kaling and Lang Fisher tells the story of the life journey of an Indian girl who was born and raised in the United States. This series has received several awards, including the winner of the best young adult AAFCA Award nomination, the comedy shows 2021 at the People's Choice Award, Top 10 Popular Television (2019-2020) Netflix Season 1, and winner of Authentic Representation at Ruderman Family Foundation Seal of Authentic Representation. *Never Have I Ever* is also a film to tell the actual experience of Mindy Kaling going through the hardships of life in the United States as an Indian. In this series, people can see how Devi Vishwakumar, an Indian girl, tries to live her life as a teenager in the United States. However, the typical American promiscuity does not seem to match the traditional Indian values that still run in her family. Devi is not allowed to wear clothes that are too revealing, not allowed to come to parties, and not allowed to date. Of course, all these rules are disobeyed by Devi because she feels more interested in white American culture. Devi has ambitions to change her reputation at school from a nerd paralyzed Indian girl to a famous Indian girl. In order to gain popularity, Devi invites her two best friends to change their appearance and immediately forces her best friend to have an attractive boyfriend. Also, the other Diaspora India woman here is Kamala Nandiwada. She is Devi's older cousin. As a PHD student from CalTech, Kamala is likely in her mid to late 20s. Kamala is almost pressured into an arranged marriage. She was forced to follow the will of the family to marry the family's choice. Kamala is an Indian girl who moved to

the United States to attend school. She found it difficult to accept the Indian matchmaking. She also experiences challenges when working with her co-workers. Both are young Indian Diaspora with different circumstances even though they live in the same house. Devi was born in the United States, while Kamala recently moved to the United States to attend school.

The phenomenon of the Indian Diaspora is also found in the story *The Namesake*. *The Namesake*, tells about the twists and turns of the life of a husband and wife from India, Ashoke Ganguli and his wife Ashima, who migrated to the United States (US) in the period between 1968 and 2000. A tragic incident that almost took Ashoke Ganguli's life made him want to leave the convenience of the Ganguli extended family in India for a better life in the US. Accompanied by his wife as a result of his parents' matchmaking, Ashoke Ganguli dives into life as an immigrant family in the US. The difference between this story and the *Never Have I Ever* series is that the character in this film is depicting only first generation of diaspora. While the *Never Have I Ever* Netflix series depicting Indian diaspora in first and second generation. In this study the writer gives a new perspective on diaspora with Diaspora consciousness and will try to negotiate their identity. In addition, immigrant differences in terms of gender also affect racial discrimination, apart from awareness of their own Diaspora.

A previous study by Rameshbhai in the journal article *Scholar Critic*. Volume 03, Issue 01 (2016) used Du Bois idea about double consciousness as the main theory. This study discussed the notion of double consciousness in one of the short stories of Jhumpa Lahiri "Hell-Heaven" from her short story collection *Accustomed Earth*. In

"Hell-Heaven", the story's narrator, a young girl named Usha, and her guest from India, a young man, Pranab Chakraborty, are the Indian Americans who live an exiled life and also struggle with double consciousness. Deborah, Pranab's American wife, represents the white double consciousness in the story. The second study was written by Intan Novita Sari and Rina Saraswati (2012), analyzes Mr. Biswas' dual consciousness as an Indian diaspora in Trinidad utilizing Bhabha's double consciousness theory. According to this view, Mr. Biswas' double consciousness is brought on by indentured labor that deals with expulsion or separation of colonized people from their native lands. The colonized who went through this double consciousness as a result suffer from an unclear feeling of their true identity. The third study by Borgohain and Deema Ammari (2022) in the world journal of English language vol. 12, no. 1 diaspora theory by William Saffran sought to analytically and comparably examine how the negotiation of identity is represented in Indian literature, both at home and abroad, in a situation where cultures intersect, collide, and merge. The White Tiger by Aravind Adiga, Water by Bapsi Sidwa, The Inheritance of Loss by Kiran Desai, and Jasmine by Bharathi Mukherjee were the four books that the article focused on (1989). This study uncovered the ways in which the characters in the Indian novels under consideration express themselves to one another and to themselves, as well as how different interactions can show how different actors perceive, influence, reconstruct, and be influenced by the situational and structured "realities" they live in. The previous studies focused on the representation of diasporic life and double consciousness in Literature and how the Diaspora affects one's identity. Meanwhile,

this study focused on describing the negotiating identity as an effect of the double consciousness of two different diaspora generations.

This study focuses on analyzing how the two different Indian diaspora generation characters negotiate their identity as an effect of the diasporic double consciousness of their identity in the *Never Have I Ever* series. This is different from previous research that describes the Diaspora double consciousness in a person or character in the novel. Several previous studies have described the state of the diaspora and the negotiation of their double consciousness in only one diaspora generation. Meanwhile, this study describes the double consciousness and identity negotiation of two different generations of diaspora with the same age and living in the same house. Therefore, the significance of the study represented the issue of negotiating identity as the effect of double consciousness in Asian American environment. In order to analyze the object, double consciousness theory by W.E.B Du Bois and the theory of Identity by Richard Jenkins are used in this study. Du Bois will be used along with the narrative-non narrative approach. The theory of Identity by Jenkins is used in the interpretation of the findings. The narrative aspects involved four elements: story, plot, characters, and dialogues. The non-narrative aspects were analyzed through the *mise-en-scene* concept, which breaks down the details shown in the object.

1.2 Statement of The Problem

Looking at the background context of the study, the author presents some problems that will be discussed in this research. As a result, the problem statements are as follows:

I.2.1 How is double consciousness portrayed in the film?

I.2.2 How do Devi Vishwakumar and Kamala, as two different generations of Indian diaspora women in the United States negotiate their identity as an effect of double consciousness in the Never Have I Ever Netflix series?

1.3 The Objective of The study

This study's objective focuses on revealing how Devi Vishwakumar and Kamala, as Indian diaspora women in the United States, negotiate their identity as an effect of diasporic double consciousness and discrimination due to living in the United States. As Diaspora, two characters are influenced by the two cultures and confused to determine how they should behave according to their identity.

1.4 Significance of The Study

This research is used for educational purposes and as a comparative study between the Eastern and Western, seeing the Asian characters in this series play a big role in representing this issue. The study could be considered as a foundation for later studies on a similar topic. The phenomenon of double consciousness is well explained in this study, including how this double consciousness brings someone into the issue

of racial discrimination. This study focused on analyzing the identity of the two Indian diaspora female characters in the Never Have I Ever series. Therefore, the significance of the study is representing the issue of negotiating identity as an effect of diasporic double consciousness in Asian American environment. It is analyzed how the relationship between diaspora generation differences and "age" generation similarities in processing and negotiating their identities as the effect of double consciousness.

The analysis will help audiences to comprehend the purpose of this study. It also gives more acknowledgment of the double consciousness that happen to the Eastern. Moreover, it is reflected in the impact of migration reflected in everyday life. Seeing the complexion of the object This study is also beneficial for the academic community as research, especially in the English Department.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study focuses on the issue of double consciousness experienced by two young women of Indian Diaspora but different generations of Diaspora, which are Devi Vishwakumar and Kamala. This study aimed to look at the negotiations between the two figures regarding double consciousness about the two contrasting cultures they experience. Therefore, the study represents the issue of negotiating diasporic double consciousness in Asian American environment. Furthermore, the writer will only focus on the narrative and non-narrative elements that are being depicted in both music videos.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

- Diaspora : Diaspora is the state of a person that is in conditionally forced to move from their original homeland to a new country (Ashcroft 2007, 92).
- Double consciousness : Double consciousness is the feeling of seeing oneself through the eyes of others or a twoness in one body, two souls, two ideas, and two unreconciled strivings. (Bois, 2007)
- Discrimination : The treatment of a social group and its members, whether favourable or unfavourable. People naturally associate bad behaviour; however, discrimination against one particular group results in positive discrimination for others. (Smith and Mackie, 2002)
- Negotiation : A situation in which a person with a high level of uncertainty will feel uncomfortable being in an ambiguous condition, so that a certainty is needed such as through a complete details explanation about themselves. (Howard, 2003)
- Identity : The way in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their relations with other individuals and collectivities. (Jenkins, 2008).