

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This first chapter introduces background of the study, problem statements, objectives of the study, benefits of the study, and organization paper.

A. Background of the Study

Quality of life is a social concept that is determined by what are deliberated to be its most appropriate indicators. Quality of life can be seen from many aspect, such as from healthy, financial, family, social interactions etc. Quality of life as a principle that is considered to inspire the characteristic quality of living beings which is having a meaning or purpose, having real value. Quality of life which has improved to be better life, it can make life more has purpose than before

Improving quality of life can be in different aspect, such as financial, job, family life, health and feeling safety. According to World Health Organization (1998:46), quality of life is a general multidimensional concept that commonly includes subjective evaluations of both positive and negative aspects of life. The term quality of life has meaning for everyone and all academic discipline. Although health is one of the important of overall quality of life, there are others domains such as aspect of culture, values, and spirituality.

Quality of life was inspiring the author of this memoir which is through a real story between the author and his professor Morrie Schwartz. it can be seen on his book that is written entitled *Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, A Young Man, and Life's Greatest Lesson*. Mitchell David Albom was born May 23, 1958, in Passaic, New Jersey, USA. He is an author, journalist, screenwriter, playwright, radio and television broadcaster, musician, and panelist. As an

author, Mitch wrote some novels such as: *The Magic Strings of Frankie Presto*; *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*; *The Time Keeper*; *Have A Little Faith: A True Story*; *For One More Day*; *The First Phone Call from Heaven*. Albus joined high school in Southern New Jersey and moved on to Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts, for a bachelor's degree in sociology. He has a favorite professor, namely Morrie Schwartz. After graduating in 1979, Mitch and Morrie promised to keep in touch but during the time he lost contact with his professor. The aim of this written novel is to help Morrie pay his medical bill by selling the memoir.

This memoir is told about a lecturer and a student. They had class meetings on every *Tuesdays*, once a week. This class took place at the Professor's house, it began after breakfast. There were no books they used, no grades, the subject was the meaning of life. Morrie, the author's old professor, loved dancing. One day he stopped dancing because he got asthma in his sixties. Another day he was walking along the Charles River, and a cold burst of wind left him choking for air. A few years later, he began to have trouble walking in his seventies. In August 1994, Morrie had amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), Lou Gehrig's disease, a brutal, unforgiving illness of the neurological system. In the fall of 1994, Morrie came to the hilly Brandeis campus to teach his final college course. The university had understood that Morrie could skip his course.

Mitch, an author of this memoir and Morrie's student. In 1979, he graduated from the senior class of Brandeis University. One day, they met, that day Mitch had been watching television and saw his professor was on television, he visited Morrie's home. Then the class just began. Mitch called him as coach, Morrie called him as his player. They had a target to make Morrie's death as a final project for himself. There was fourteenth *Tuesdays* that they had met.

Morrie has life's greatest lesson, they had talked about life on fourteenth *Tuesdays*. The first *Tuesdays*, talk about the world. The second *Tuesdays* talk about feeling sorry for yourself. The third *Tuesdays* talk about regrets. The

fourth Tuesdays talk about death. The fifth Tuesdays talk about family. The sixth Tuesdays talk about emotions. The seventh Tuesdays talk about the fear of aging. The eighth Tuesdays talk about money. The Ninth Tuesdays talk about how love goes on. The tenth Tuesdays talk about marriage. The eleventh Tuesdays talk about their culture. The twelfth Tuesdays talk about forgiveness. The thirteenth Tuesdays talk about the perfect day. The last Tuesdays talk about say good bye. Morrie died on a Saturday morning, he had fallen into a coma two days after Mitch final visiting. Mitch was inspired by Morrie about life's lesson. This memoir was written by Morrie's idea, he called it as their final thesis.

The public responses are mostly positive. Generally, they had inspired after read *Tuesdays with Morrie* memoir. Especially, people who has disease likes Morrie. Here some positive responds from the readers of this memoir: First, according to M. Scott Peck, M.D, "A beautiful written book of great clarity and wisdom that lovingly captures the simplicity beyond life's complexities". Second, Rabbi Allen I. Freehling said that "Thanks to this book and its author, Mitch Albom! The most significant lessons about the wondrous significance of life jump off each page and penetrate each reader's heart and mind. This is must reading for anyone who is a seeker of truth". Third, Dr. Jane Greer said that "Poignant and powerfully moving, *Tuesdays with Morrie* captures the essence and spirit of a truly gifted teacher and his unwavering belief that the most important lesson in life is connecting to one another through compassion and love. Mitch Albom gives his cherished mentor the greatest gift of passing it on to us all".

Beside the positive responses above, there are some negative or critics responds that are founds by the reseacher: First, Kelly said that "Ugh, it was like stapling together eighty greeting cards and reading them straight through. Hate". Second, Trevor decided, "Nonetheless, I still believe this to be a particularly poorly written book that contains more saccharine than substance.

Still, if it brings you some sense of comfort-more strength to you”. Third, according to Valentina “The main sentiment of the book is a good heartfelt story but the narrative is so boring and repetitive. He writes down the same concepts are reiterating them over and over again, as if by repeating them so many times he would somehow make the lesson stronger or more believable”.

Tuesdays with Morrie was announced in 1997, a small volume that chronicled Albom’s time spent with his professor. The primary printing was 20,000 copies. During the time, the book sales slowly increased and settled the book a brief entrance on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, pushing the book onto the *New York Times* bestseller’s list in October 1997. It progressively increased, reaching the number-one position six months later. It remained on the *New York Times* bestseller list for 205 weeks. One of the top selling memoirs of all time, *Tuesdays with Morrie* has sold over 14 million copies and has been translated into 45 languages, from Bengali to Burmese and Hindi to Malay. Oprah Winfrey produced a television movie adaptation by the same name for ABC, starring Hank Azaria as Albom and Jack Lemmon as Morrie. It was the most-watched television movie of 1999 and won four Emmy Awards. Albom and playwright Jeffrey Hatcher later co-authored a two-man theater play that opened Off Broadway in the fall of 2001, starring Alvin Einstein as Morrie and Jon Tenney as Albom.

The researcher is interested to find the improving quality of life through this memoir focus on Morrie Schwartz lesson. His words about the lesson life is so inspiring. He can give a motivation and a life’s greatest lesson to Mitch Albom even when he had unforgiving illness, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

According to these reason, the researcher would like to find the improving quality of life by Mitch Albom (*Tuesdays with Morrie*) based on the Psychological theory. The title of this paper is **IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE IN MITCH ALBOM’S MEMOIR: TUESDAYS WITH**

MORRIE: An Old Man, A Young Man, and Life's Greatest Lesson (2006):
HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES.

B. Problem Statements

According to the explanation of the background of the study above, there are some problems that will be analyzed:

1. What are the indicators in improving quality of life reflected in Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie*?
2. How is improving quality of life depicted in Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie*?
3. Why did Mitch Albom necessarily address the issue of improving quality of life in his *Tuesdays with Morrie*?

C. Objectives of the Study:

Based on the problem statement above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the indicators in improving quality of life that are reflected in Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie*.
2. To describe improving quality of life depicted in the memoir.
3. To reveal the reason of the author, address the issue in improving quality of life in his memoir.

D. Benefits of the Study

The researcher expected to bring the following benefits:

1. Theoretical Benefit

The result of this research can be useful for the readers in giving information and knowledge, especially the literary study on *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom.

2. Practical Benefits

This research has benefit to give more understanding about the content of the play especially from the humanistic psychological perspectives in Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie* memoir.

E. Paper Organization

This research is divided into three chapters. The first chapter describes the general information of this study including background of this study, problem statement, objectives of the study, benefits of this study, and also paper organization. The second chapter explains the underlying theory that is used to analyze this memoir is psychological theory of literature. Then, some the previous study that the writer finds when writing this study. The last chapter presents about research method, which is including the type of this study, object of this study, type of data, data source, method of collecting data and technique of analyzing data.