

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Findings

This chapter provides findings and discussions about gender roles and social class-related issues as portrayed in the scenes of Little Women, the Korean TV Series (2022). This chapter will be divided into five parts which correspond to the stages of the Narrative Structure Theory. The analysis of the equilibrium stage is the first. The analysis that concentrates on the disruption stage is the second one. The analysis of the recognition step is the third. The repair of the damage stage is the subject of the fourth section of the analysis. The analysis of the re-equilibrium stage is the fifth part.

This study analyses the storyline of Little Women the Korean TV series by using Narrative Structure Theory by Todorov as well as the link between gender construction and social class-related narrations and dialogues. The dialogues and narrations that are related to gender construction are analysed using the perspective of Marxist Feminism.

4.1.1 Equilibrium phase

The equilibrium phase of the series can be seen when the Oh sisters are thriving in their life to survive despite their financial struggles. At the beginning of the first episode, it is described that the Oh sisters have been in the state of poverty. Poverty, homelessness, and unemployment characterise the lowest classes. From this TV series, the Oh sisters live in a house that is similar to houses around the slum area and

two of three of the sisters work to support their youngest sister's education. The oldest and the second oldest of three, In-Joo and In-Kyung, work in finance and as a reporter, respectively. They belong to the sandwich generation since they work to support their household and their youngest sister, In-hye, who attends a prestigious art school. The term "sandwich generation" refers to those who, due to unforeseen circumstances, find themselves in the position of providing care for both their young and/or adult children as well as either or both of their ageing parents. (Chisholm, 1999). Nowadays, the term sandwich generation can also refer to individuals who position themselves as the caregiver of their siblings. Commonly, the individuals who are a part of the sandwich generation belong to the middle class and lower class.

The narration from the very beginning of the first episode implies that the Oh sisters had been living in the state of poverty. Social class wise, they belong to the lower class. First, the beginning part of this narration shows that they could not host a simple birthday party, and even just one birthday cake, due to their financial difficulties. The price of a birthday cake varies, some are affordable and some are more expensive. Egg is one of the main ingredients for baking a cake and its price is significantly more affordable for anyone regardless of their social class. Moreover, eggs are commonly used for daily meals. Second, their friends expect them to have a cake for birthdays due to their unawareness of belonging to the middle class or upper class. Third, they used to be unable to buy a pack of toothpaste because of its price. Their realisation that their lives are different from what the TV portrays means that

the society prefers to show the good side of everything, including a certain lifestyle that only can be followed by the upper class and upper middle class.

Several minutes after the monologue, the Oh sisters' mother discusses about her never been going overseas and compares her life to her children's life. However, her behaviour might make her children unable to elevate their social class due to the vicious cycle of poverty they have been enduring.

To end the vicious cycle of poverty, the two oldest sisters have to work to make a living. However, the company where the sisters work does not treat them well. Workplace is one of the places that shows someone's social class, especially the higher positions. Not every employee who works for the same company does not share the same social class. At In-joo's workplace, In-joo asked Ms. Hwang, her boss, to pay her in advance but her boss does not want to acknowledge the reason behind In-joo's question, which relates to how the capitalism cycle works. The wealthy people will remain wealthy, and the poor people will remain in poverty.

After In-joo asked for payment in advance, In-joo encountered Hwa-young, her co-worker, and talked about how social class affects someone gets admitted into a specific kind of school, their chances of success in that school, the types of employment they have access to, and the types of friends they make. In other words, the degree of status, power, and advantages that people have or do not have in their daily lives. Their conversation relates to a statement that working-class people are less comfortable acting independently to get entry to gateway institutions than middle-class people. Even high-achieving working-class students are unlikely to go

to prestigious colleges (Hoxby & Avery, 2012) because they feel uneasy parting from their family or communities (Covarrubias & Fryberg, 2015). As a consequence, there are very few people whose social class is the same as In-joo's at the company.

After In-joo arrived home, she has a conversation about their life with her younger sister, In-kyung. In-joo said she wants to marry a rich man and depicts the traditional gender construction that a man should work for the family's living. In-joo indirectly stated that a woman should depend on a man in order to live a proper life. However, the gender construction that In-joo firmly believe does not happen in reality. In-kyung, her younger sister reminded her older sister to not overly be obsessed with wanting to marry a rich man.

Overall, it can be said that the first episode describes the daily life of Oh sisters. This episode depicts how In-joo acts and behaves at the office where she works. Based on the writer's observation, In-joo is ostracised by almost all of her co-workers and her boss due to the difference on their social class except for Hwa-young, her only co-worker whom she befriends with. Hwa-young and In-joo befriend each other due to their similar educational background that differs from most of the coworkers who attends elite universities.

The higher the social class a person belongs to, the lower the trust level they possess. Comparing high- and low-trust cultures reveals that, as would be predicted, low-trust societies have more social capital for connecting than high-trust societies do, whereas the opposite is true for bridging social capital (Füzér Huszár, Bodor, Bálint, & Pirmajer, 2019).

This episode exhibits the summary of social class and gender construction issues that the Oh sisters thrive every day. The correlation between gender construction and social class found in this stage is the state of their family itself. The Oh sisters' family consists of a father, mother, and three daughters. However, their parents are relatively absent so the Oh sisters have to find their way to earn money for a living since they belong to the lower class and gender wise, they are the subordinate one. With regard to gender relations in communist countries, Marxist-feminist scholars have focused on the issue of whether the requirements for gender equality exist in communist society if there are no capitalist class relations. However, as of the first episode, the answer regarding the statement is still unclear.

4.1.2 Disruption phase

The everyday life of the Oh sisters is depicted as the equilibrium phase in the first episode. Subsequently, the sisters are successful in solving the disappearance of 7 billion won. In order for them to solve the case, it is not going to be as simple as they imagined it would be because their only theory is that their mother stole the seven billion won. On the other hand, the case concerns members of the upper class who, at the present time, have political ambitions of advancing their standing. After the occurrence of the events described above, the disruption phase could then begin.

The phase of disruption portrayed in the movie begin when the two older sisters have to find a way to earn money in order to replace the money which was stolen by their mother. In-Joo borrows money from her only co-worker, Jin Hwa-

Young, while In-Kyung manages to persuade her wealthy grandmother because she got suspended from her office. One of the factors of In-kyung's suspension from drinking too much during working time is the gender stereotype for drinking. The sociocultural rules on what is deemed appropriate and acceptable conduct for each gender, which frequently seem to be disproportionately tighter for women than males (Aresi et al., 2021), which contributes In-kyung's suspension. On the second episode, when In-joo and In-kyung discuss about In-kyung's suspension is related to the double standards of drinking culture. Young women who drink to the point of intoxication or more may be criticised as being unfeminine, disrespectful, promiscuous, or weak and partially to blame for any harm they experience (such as being the object of unwanted sex) (Bogren, 2008; Day et al., 2004; Hutton et al., 2016). In contrast, young men who drink to the point of intoxication or more are more socially acceptable. Women's health suffers from this sort of discrimination.

Consequently, the perspective of women who does misconduct are viewed as more inferior than men. Society has been condemning women more harshly than men in terms of many aspects, including doing false acts. Mr. Shin, one of the characters, called Hwa-young bad names because of all her crimes she did. If the criminal is a man, it is less likely for him to be called by unpleasant names than women.

Other than gender discrimination, the Oh sisters also face financial problems since they earn less money than the upper class. Individuals who belong to the upper class believes that money can come to their hands naturally, meanwhile individuals who belong to the lower class. The amount of money, 1,25 million won, is

considerably high for the lower class but it is the exact opposite for the upper class. The sentence “Money also flows through familiar paths”, said by In-kyung’s childhood friend’s grandfather on the following episode, is a hint that wealthy individuals would remain wealthy as how capitalism is defined. The capitalist state has always served to formalise uneven power relations (Sprague-Silgado, 2017).

On the third episode, In-kyung is seen talking about her childhood moments with her childhood friend and his grandfather. When In-kyung admitted that she threw a rock, everyone around her seemed to be shocked as they thought throwing rocks is a typical male behaviour. Also, it is implied that showing anger is not how woman supposed to behave, according to gender construction.

When In-joo arrived at the office, she uses a knockoff luxury bag. Hwa-young, her friend, criticised her for wearing a knockoff bag to work. According to Hwa-young, people who wear knockoff items are often seen as less competent because wearing knockoff items can be symbolised as the effort of someone to seem wealthy. In-joo’s obsession with money and men is portrayed clearly in this dialogue. Thus, Hwa-young insisted her to get “some training” so In-joo could appear more professional.

Several days after she was spotted wearing a knock-off luxury bag, she visited a person related to Mr. Park’s family who got jailed to obtain new informations regarding the 70 billion won. She said to Mrs. Park’s brother that she wants to buy a new winter coat, which is considerably expensive for her to afford. Nowadays, a person's social class would be determined by their spending habits, leisure activities,

social interactions, employment, political views, personal values, educational attainment, and/or nutritional and health standards. However, buying expensive clothes can be categorized as a spending habit.

The youngest of Oh sisters, In-hye is going to an art school in Boston with Hyo-rin, Park Jae-sang's daughter both as an art student and as Hyo-rin's maid. In-hye decided to become hyo-rin's maid because she wants to lessen her sisters' burden to pay 70 billion won that has been stolen by their mother. However, to pay their 70 billion won back is not easy for the Oh sisters because they experience the effects from the gender-based wage gap, According to the marxist feminism perspective, the wage gap primarily caused by women's oppression of capitalism's political, social, and economic institutions. Based on the data from Korea, Japan: OECD (2015); China: National Bureau of Statistics of China (2010); Singapore: Ministry of Manpower (2009), the gender wage gap for Korean women is 36.7%, which means women are paid less by 36.7% than men.

From the fourth episode, it s shown that In-kyung is staying at her grandmother's house. Her grandmother's house is very contradicting to her house since her grandmother is wealthy and her house has a lot of luxurious items. When they are having meals on the same table, they discussed about her grandmother's life. The divorce of her grandmother resulted her to think that women also can be wealthy on their own. Also, at the time when her grandmother was younger, gender construction was more strictly conducted in the society as many women did not enter the workforce. In the 1960s, there were fewer women who entered the workforce

compared to the 1970s. From 26.8% in 1960 to 46.7% in 1975, the labor force participation rate for women in Korea than doubled.⁶³ Even though they were frequently young, illiterate, and inexperienced women, they were crucial to the successful introduction of Korean goods into the global market during the country's early stages of economic growth (Yang, 2021).

One day, In-kyung received a call from In-joo about her In-hye's health condition. In-hye needs surgery as soon as possible since her condition is life-threatening. Other than that, she is required to be healthy to study abroad. However, her surgery costs a lot of money. Social class inequality impacts people's health and well-being, with persons from the lower class bearing a higher cost of sickness and mortality.

After the Oh sisters visited their youngest sister at the hospital, Mrs. Park offered In-joo to become her assistant for her household. The Park family implied that they rarely give opportunities to the lower class due to the upper class' tendency of exclusivity. The exclusivity that Mrs. Park gives to In-joo consist of a leisurely life.

It is pictured that the disruptive phase shown in episodes 2 through 4 describes the problems occurred to the Oh sisters. The problems they face mostly focused on the problem for belonging to the lower class. First, the Oh sisters could not afford proper healthcare because they do not have enough money. Second, they could not fulfill In-hye's education expenses to pursue her dream to become an artist. Both In-joo and In-kyung want their younger sister to enroll into a prestigious art

school as they do not want to waste her potential. In the modern days, lower class are often referred to as the working class. When compared to their counterparts from middle-class backgrounds, students from working-class backgrounds enroll in higher education at far lower rates (Bailey & Dynarski, 2011, as cited by Dittmann et al., 2019).

Throughout this phase, the Oh sisters are thinking about the solution for earning 70 billion won as soon as possible. However, the circumstances which the Oh sisters are facing require them to involve with Park Jae-sang's family. In-joo is starting to work as Mrs. Park's assistant and In-hye is assigned to accompany Hyo-rin while attending an art school in Boston. In other words, from the marxist feminism perspective wise, the Oh sisters work as the domestic workers for the Park's household as a laborer and Mrs. Park is the source of capital.

4.1.3 Recognition phase

After the Oh sisters found the beginning step to solve their 70 billion won case, they acknowledge that it is not easy for them to execute it. In-Joo, the oldest sister, is suggested to work as the assistant of Park Jae-Sang's wife by an elite consultant named Choi Do-II. From the dialogue in the previous subchapter, it can be inferred that the job requirement for being Mrs. Park's assistant is difficult to obtain and Mrs. Park does not recruit other people as her assistant easily as she has a certain judgement towards people.

On the other hand, In-Kyung and her childhood friend took a research regarding the blue orchid that is associated with an organization linked to Park Jae-Sang. In-kyung and her childhood friend searched information about the blue orchid and they slowly acknowledge that the flower has a connection to Park Jae-sang's life and career. In this subchapter, the stage of recognition of this TV series is described when two of the Oh sisters have to carry out a scheme for getting the money back with the help of other characters. Also, Hye-Suk, their grandmother, being murdered by her maid. After that, the Oh sisters found their grandmother's secret room and they found a blue orchid that relates to a secret organization. The sisters also discovered more surprising facts regarding their case.

In the fifth episode, In-joo and In-kyung had an argument due to In-joo seems to be close to Do-il, the money launderer. In-kyung does not like In-joo involved herself to a person who is potential to ruin her life through manipulation since In-joo has a bad experience in a relationship. "Look who's talking. Be careful who you date. An ordinary man wouldn't make a living by laundering money.", shows that In-joo has gained a connection to the upper class. She obtained it because the main issue she faced, losing 70 billion won, has an involvement with the upper class.

Nevertheless, In-joo is still involved to Do-il as she encountered him at the Park family's house after several times meeting. Do-il assisted In-joo on explaining how to gain 70 billion won without getting caught by the writerity. From the series, it is shown that the Park Family holds a significant power in South Korea because Park Jae-sang is one of the candidates for being the mayor of Seoul. People who have a

higher social class have a stronger tendency to have a more favourable image of themselves. For example, they demonstrate a higher level of self-esteem and a greater degree of narcissism. If Park Jae-sang did not become a mayor because of his scandal being revealed to the public, his reputation would be ruined. Losing one's reputation can result in financial loss, the expulsion of business associates, a decline in public appeal, and a decline in support for the accused individual. After that moment, they meet again and talked about the 70 billion won issue.

Based on the dialog between Mrs. Park and In-joo at Mrs. Park's house, it is suggested that an individual's social class influences how a person dresses. Based on this dialogue, clothes is the symbol of . Fashion gives an insight into social class and growth since it reflects and impacts society's cultural, economic, and political setting. The upper class uses luxury fashion to differentiate themselves from lower socioeconomic classes. It serves as a measure of how much someone can purchase. The expensive item is symbolic since it represents both the actual thing and the purchasing experience.

From the economic perspective, price is a component as well as a signal of distinction. Without using words, the price tries to convey that the gift is as much for the recipient as it is for the object itself (Chen & Chiu, 2018). Thus, a price of luxury clothes symbolize exclusivity. Mrs. Park hinted that she has to present herself nicely, especially when she is around her husband. The expensive clothes she wears represents her husband's worth as a future mayor. The presentation of Mr. and Mrs. Park plays a huge role for the election since they have to influence the public eye.

On the sixth episode, it can be seen from the series that In-joo and In-kyung are staying at the Park family's residence because they have to look after Hyo-rin, the daughter of Park family. Hyorin has a sleeping problem and required to consume sleeping pills to have a proper sleep. If Hyo-rin, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Park, caught red-handed consuming sleeping pills, her family's reputation would fall from grace because the society would view Mr. and Mrs. Park failed their obligation as Hyo-rin's parents. Also, the media would likely to create drug scandal towards Hyo-rin. In consonance with the excerpt of a conversation between In-joo and In-kyung at Hyo-rin's room shown that In-kyung asked a rhetorical question "Are the rich always assailants whereas the poor are victims?" to remind In-joo that lower class are not always the victim of any kinds of circumstances. There is a correlation between some crimes and poverty in some cases. Both homicide and robbery show a strong correlation with the economic gap between victims and perpetrators. If income is distributed more fairly, we should see a reduction in all three types of criminal activity. This demonstrates that there is a connection between being poor and being a victim of violence (Fleming, 2011).

The seventh episode narrates about the upper class people possess certain and discreet connections to maintain their wealth and power. The Jeongran Society from the movie is an organisation created by General Won after he and his soldiers were lost during the Korean War with Vietnam. They believed that their own nation had let them down, which made them furious and motivated to act badly. The blue flower served as a symbol of how their negative emotions had taken control of them and

transformed them into this monster who kills others.

Each individual in this group is given a blue flower, which is placed on the Father Tree in a hidden chamber inside General Won's house. This society ensures that its members are protected while also assisting them in advancing in society and taking advantage of their circumstances to obtain their selfish desires. Based on the description above, the Jeongran Society's member recruitment seems to be selective due to its purpose and goal, which only upper class people who can obtain. Thus, that society never recruit someone who belongs to the lower class. Most people are more likely to express trust towards people from the upper class than people from the lower class (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2002; Gheorghiu et al., 2009; Hamamura, 2012; Brandt et al., 2015; Navarro-Carrillo et al., 2018b).

On the other side, In-joo talked to herself that she loves counting money ever since she was a child. Lower class people consider their money for affording anything they could to survive. In this monologue, In-joo could only imagine that she could buy a plenty of food to enjoy for her and her family. Based on In-joo's thought, achieving a higher social class has never been easy. Thus, In-joo describes the happiness as a person who succeed in raising their social class from lower class to at least middle class. It is implied from she's saying "the day I bought everything I had ever wanted."

From the dialogue spoken on the eight episode, it is stated from Mr. Park's words, "What makes you think I would bear something like that? Where I can bulldoze for it. It's people like you who should be worried about such scenarios." that

the Park family misuse their power and capital towards everyone whose social status is below them by “bulldozing” their life.

Mr. Park’s has a strong support from their connections. Thus, his family believed they do not have to be concerned about their daughter as they have enough money to support her. On the other hand, the Oh sisters’ family does not have equivalent support, both in financial and power. If In-kyung had a father who has connections to television stations, she would obey him when he suggests his daughter to work for the TV station he chooses for her. Father figures are glorified as the representation of the divine where obedience is not an option for the Korean people (Bennet, 2010).

The higher class has more authority and many upper class people who abuse their wealth and influence in favour of anyone who is lower on the social scale. The example of this statement is this dialogue between Mrs. Park and In-joo. Mrs. Park sees In-joo as her puppet by making her as the lead for the “play”. According to Mrs. Park, In-joo is the perfect protagonist because she seems to be easily manipulated by everyone who behaves helpful towards her. Consequently, in real life, many people who belongs to the lower class who has or wants to achieve their goals are seen as hopeful and hard-working. Many people sympathise over their backstory behind their goals. However, she is not Mrs. Park’s favourite character. Instead, Hwa-young is more favoured because she is poor yet she yearns to have an upper class lifestyle.

Based on the analysis of episode 5 to episode 8, the main characters of the series clearly show their efforts to solve their 70 billion won issue. In-joo, the oldest

of three, consistently displaying her traditional point of view towards gender construction. She keeps yearning of marrying a wealthy man so she could live her new dream life. She also imagined of her owning a large sum of money to fulfill as she genuinely loves counting money and imagining herself purchasing all the items she wants since she was young. However, being a women could hinder her to earn more money due to she receive less wage than men.

The social class problem in this stage is shown by Mr. Park's words towards In-kyung. He threatened In-kyung to not betray him and if she does, he would destroy her life in all aspects. Apart from that, his wife, Mrs. Park, also takes part to manipulate the Oh sisters by abusing Mrs. Park's power towards In-joo by making In-joo as her "assistant". Before Mrs. Park revealed that she has been manipulating In-joo since the very first day they met, Mrs. Park has taught In-joo on how to dress lavishly.

4.1.4 Repair the damage phase

From the recognition phase, it is shown that the socialclass and gender construction problems are still ongoing. The continuation from the events happened on the previous stage includes In-joo saved herself from being killed by Mrs. Park because the Park family's scheme has failed because of In-kyung has found the ledgers. Other than that, In-hye is being locked up by Mrs. Park without her older sisters knowing. However, In-hye managed to escape from the room where she got locked up. She

planned to run away to Japan with Hyo-rin and fortunately, they succeed and arrived at Japan together without their family knowing.

Another event that contributes to repair the damage the issue has done to the Oh sisters is the revelation of Mr. Park's true color. It happened due to Mrs. Park's brother purposefully came over into Mr. Park's residence to proof that Mr. Park is actually a murderer. After that, a video of Jae Sang's brutal execution is displayed on public and In Kyung had already brought Park Il Bo, Park Jae Sang's father, to the television station to confess to An So Yeong's murder. Despite being in an unsafe situation prior to the election, the poll indicates that Jae Sang is still in the lead. But after a covert, quick, and unexpected video of Jae Sang jumping off a building became viral, he passed away. Before he jumped, Mrs. Park and him has a conversation that indirectly mentions the traditional role of a family is illustrated, where the husband provides material items for his family. However, a wife must always be protected by her husband, regardless of the circumstances

On the next scene, the clear difference between lower class and upper class families is depicted in this dialogue. If In-kyung came from a wealthy family, her family would gave her more support to make her name as a reporter by introducing her to major TV stations. However, it is possible for In-kyung to elevate her social class by working hard, just like what she insisted. Lower class person can become a more privileged position as a result of moving from a lower to a higher class, and they may be better able to hide their old class status utilizing dress, employment status, specialization, language, etc. Second, according to both objective and

subjective evidence, social class from one's early years is ingrained in an individual's identity (Bluestein, 2006; Kish-Gephart & Campbell, 2015; McCall & Lawler, 1976).

In the tenth episode, In-hye does not want her sisters worry about her because she wants to live independently without receiving financial support from her sisters as she told her sister she wants to run away by going to an art school in Russia. Her words also imply that she wanted to have a fresh start as a person who does not belong to the lower class. The Park Family is a family who possess privileges that only upper class family can have. However, Hyo-rin feels that the pressure from being born as an upper class gives her burden. The burdens she implicitly tells in her monologue is the pressure for satisfying her parents.

This dialogue between Mr. and Mrs. Park in the eleventh episode depicts the traditional role of a family whereas a husband provides material things for his household. On the other hand, a wife should be protected by her husband regardless of the circumstance. Mr. Park declared "I would do anything to protect you. Even if I had to jump from the highest place in the world." to reassure his wife that he is doing his obligation as a husband well.

The prejudice towards lower class people is described in this dialogue between the detective and In-joo at the jail. Despite In-joo having returned 2 billion won, she still gets interrogated and received a 20 years sentence. However, withdrawing money from an account that a person doesn't own could cause life risks, including receiving sentences into jail. She used the 2 million won only for fulfilling

her wish list. Moreover, the police did not fully trust her statement regarding her 70 billion won scandal.

According to the success and well-being theory of trust (Delhey and Newton, 2003), upper-class people are more likely to express generalised trust than lower-class people (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2002; Gheorghiu et al., 2009; Hamamura, 2012; Brandt, 2015; Navarro-Carrillo, 2018b). Lower-class people are more at risk of trusting (Hamamura, 2012; Navarro-Carrillo et al., 2018b). Lower-class people with little resources cannot afford to lose even a little trust. She knows many people perceive her actions as suspicious. Individuals from the lower class always suffer discrimination and social exclusion (Putnam, 2000)

Generally, episode 9 to episode 11 portrays how a person's social class affects other people's perception about the person. For instance, after In-hoo has flew a paper aeroplane while she was waiting to go inside, the security found her paper aeroplane and told her that it is illegal to litter in Singapore, Mrs. Park utterly expressed "Don't you know that you could get fined just for littering in Singapore?" as she thinks In-joo does not know about this matter because she has never been overseas beforehand. Also, Mrs. Park may also view In-joo as a careless person since In-joo struggles financially. From the statement before, it is clear that upper-class women holds much power towards fellow women whose social class is below them.

Privilege is also mentioned throughout this stage. First, when In-kyung is told that she could have been having a more prosperous career if her family is more well-

off. Having a privilege is an advantage for people to obtain success. At the same time, In-kyung does not have the privilege due to her background. People from working-class or lower class backgrounds may feel less at ease exhibiting the independence behaviors needed to enter institutions due to cultural mismatch, and this difference may also cause educators or bosses to see them less favorably. Even when individuals from working-class backgrounds beat the odds and are admitted to colleges or professional jobs, they still deal with a cultural mismatch that may limit their chances of success (Stephens et al., 2019). Also, gender construction in the workplace takes part for hindering lower class women to earn more money as in Korea, women's wage is significantly lower by 36.7% based on a data from Korea, Japan: OECD (2015); China: National Bureau of Statistics of China (2010); Singapore: Ministry of Manpower (2009).

4.1.5 Re-equilibrium phase

The re-equilibrium phase from this TV series begins with the arrest of In-joo due to embezzlement of 70 billion won and she was helpless while she seated in the defendant's chair during court. Other than that, In-joo got confused regarding Mrs. Park's confession regarding she kidnapped her sister, In-kyung with the help of the Principal of Wonryeong School. However, In-joo is lucky despite of her being helpless since Do -il appears in court as a witness for Mrs. Park and his confession

about the situation brings the light for In-joo. Do-il admits that he has returned all the money he took through Sang Ah's company account.

At the end of the re-equilibrium stage of the series, the three sisters finally living a better life without any financial difficulty. Before their 70 billion won issue has been resolved, their life was rather unhappy. It is often said that money cannot buy happiness. However, contrary to what the majority of data suggests, having more money does not, after addressing fundamental needs, necessarily translate into better wellbeing (Brugger et al., 2022). These correlational results, however, should not be read as evidence that happiness cannot be bought; rather, they may only suggest that the common approach of having people spend more money may not be the most effective way to increase happiness.

In-Joo received an apartment as an inheritance from her grandmother. The apartment she resides represents that she has already achieve a better living with the help of the money she received after she left the court. The enormous opportunities for using money are founded in the increased possibilities of ownership. When a person owns anything, they have the only right to use that item, however when a person owns money, they have the potential to enjoy an unlimited number of items (Simmel, 2004, p. 310). In-Kyung went to the United States with her childhood friend. In-Hye, the youngest of three hopes that her older sisters can live comfortably onwards.

In conclusion, the re-equilibrium stage of Little Women the Korean TV series, is the final process on how the Oh sisters solve their 70 billion won case. It ended

happily for the sisters as they finally obtain the life which each sister has been longing for since they received the money after the case has officially closed. In the material scale, money stands for the promise of services for any reason and, within the limits of a person's budget, the chance to buy anything that is sold in markets. Money's full potential becomes clear when we remember that it can be used to buy not only things that are made right now but also things that haven't been made yet but will be sold in the future (Deutschmann, 2011).

Before the Oh sisters finally receive their money after the court has done interrogating In-joo, they worked as a laborer for a company and the company where the oldest and the second oldest sister work for illustrate the capital. In spite of the Oh sisters receive their money, it does not deny the fact they did not fully solve it themselves. Do-il arrived at the court to testify himself as a witness while unintentionally saving In-joo who was confused at the moment. The court scene portrays the unequal treatment of women and men towards economic systems with the result that In-joo possible receive the 20 years sentence if no one, especially an upper class male, arrives at the court to “save” her.