



Analysis of racism depicted in Octavia E. Butler's *Kindred* novel

Sherina Ananda Priyadi¹, Taufiq Effendi¹

¹Universitas Gunadarma, Jawa Barat, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Background: This research analyzes forms of racism experienced by Edana Franklin in the novel entitled *Kindred* by Octavia E. Butler.

Purpose: The intent of the research is to discover the forms of racism encountered by Edana Franklin, as the main character of the novel.

Design and methods: The method that is used is descriptive qualitative method. The source data is Edana Franklin's experiences of slavery/racism conduct in the novel written by Octavia E. Butler. The researcher uses Henry & Tator forms of racism theory, secluded by four forms which are: Internalized Racism, Interpersonal Racism, Institutional Racism, and Structural Racism to define the racism depicted in the novel "Kindred".

Results: After analyzing *Kindred*, the researcher found an amount of forms of racism. The first one is Internalized Racism five (5) data, Interpersonal Racism twenty-three (23) data, Institutional Racism six (6) data, Structural Racism twenty (20) data. Resulting to the total of fifty-four (54) data in total.

Keywords: racism; slavery; people of color

Introduction

The prevalent idea of literature is consecutively indicated as a pursue of a writing creation. Literature forms a conceivment of creativity acquired from imaginative perception, attaining a dreamlike concept. The inclusion of human's expression is essential, for the concept is uttering the writer's consciousness, and considered as fiction.

Literature is not just a document of facts; it is not just the collection of real events though it may happen in the real life. Literature can create its own world as a product of the unlimited imagination (Wellek & Warren, 2016). As stated, the limitation of literature is ungrounded, for it is not merely a set of life occurrences as people experience it, The variation of literature extends to artistic envision, such as poetry, prose, novel, drama, and film. One of the acclaimed and appreciated by most of literature work is novel.

Novel is defined as a series consisting of a considerable volume narrative shaped creation of prose, depicting circumstances of fictional, intricate plot (filled with uncertain future of events) and characters that are developed through bigger value in collection of settings. Furthermore, novel is a written form of fictional continuance, containing the progression of circumstances, portraying human's life experiences with inspiration. Sustained by a performance of characters in series of action that are narrated systematically according to the storyline the author portrayed. Through decades, new genres of novel emerged, such as romance, action and adventure, thriller, drama, fantasy, crime, and so on. Along perceived as part of literature's relevance, for novel clasps the eminence of human's life portrayal. And part of the prominent subject through generations is race and power.

CONTACT Taufiq Effendi ✉ taufiq.effendi@gmail.com

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Race is an idea that human is placed into particular arrangement based on physical attributes. Moreover, race is an assortment of people divided from their inheritance of physical complexion, such as color of the skin, outer features, and other particularities revolve around biological traits. Those appeared from geographical state and validated by the similarity in culture of behavior, performances in life, and activities conducted. In popular language, 'race' is usually synonymous with skin 'color' (Malik, 1996).

As stated, the view relates to biological appearances, especially to the color of people's skin. The matter complicates a certain power, and through it unravel racism. Racism is a conviction of prejudice suspecting differences within people identified as a determiner of superiority from one to another group of people and could affect inequality on social, political, and economical advantages. Racism can be considered as one of the obstacles in the society itself. As there is a belief of a person's right can be distinguished and the cause tremendously affect their life environment, work place, and institutions applied for.

According to Henry & Tator (2016), "racism is divided into two forms, those are Individual and Systemic Racism. Individual racism refers to an individual's racist assumptions, beliefs or behaviors and is "a form of racial discrimination that stems from conscious and unconscious, personal prejudice."

Internalized racism lies within individuals. This racism can take many different forms including racial prejudice toward other people of a different race; internalized oppression, the negative beliefs about oneself by people of color; or internalized privilege, beliefs about superiority or entitlement by white people. Interpersonal racism refers to an individual's racist assumptions, beliefs or behaviors; can be conscious or unconscious. Interpersonal racism occurs between individuals. Once we bring our private beliefs into our interaction with others, racism is now in the interpersonal realm.

Institutional racism is the racial discrimination that derives from individuals carrying out the dictates of others who are prejudiced or of a prejudiced society. Structural racism is "inequalities rooted in the system-wide operation of a society that excludes substantial numbers of members of particular groups from significant participation in major social institutions" (Henry & Tator, 2016).

The researchers analyzed *Kindred* novel by Octavia E. Butler. The focus of the research is on the main character, Edana Franklin, struggling on racism. The novel itself is a story about an execution of slavery in the South of America from the objectivity of a black woman in 1970s. In this study, the researcher purpose is to uncover forms of racism depicted in *Kindred* novel by Octavia E. Butler. *Kindred* novel's story is filled with awareness of mortal's indecency in situations represented from undeniable appalling experiences that are perceived by the people of color's minority. It's expected to identify the unacceptable practices that must be diminished and to honor the survivors that has struggled through.

There are several studies discussed relating to the forms of racism. Nurlam (2017) studied of racism in a novel entitled *The Secret Life of Bees*. The aims of this research are to find out forms of racism and to find out the effects of racism in a novel entitled *The Secret Life of Bees* toward black society. The main analysis focuses on the experiences of African Americans people as a minority ethnic surrendering in America.

Next, Rahmi (2018) analyzed racial issues in the novel of Alice Walker and to investigate how racist attitudes are experienced by blacks as portrayed in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* also to describe the values of racism. Racism is defined as the belief that members of one race are basically superior than members of other races.

Then, Rahayu (2019) added value on the discussion in which elaborate about racism toward to black who get different treatment and at the end the black can get equal treatment.

This research aimed at findings the level and forms of racism using the theory of American Journal of Public Health (2000) and Social Determinants of Health (2013).

This study sought to answer two questions. The first is what forms of racism experienced by Edana Franklin as the main character in *Kindred* novel by Octavia E. Butler, and the second is which form is most experienced by Edana Franklin as the main character in *Kindred* novel by Octavia E. Butler?

Methods

To complete the research, the researcher uses qualitative method. Qualitative research method is an approach for the analysis relating to social issues of general circumstances. The design used by the researcher is descriptive qualitative method. For the data is gathered through written form of literature, and it is precisely sourced from a novel. Therefore it's meant to establish the result of the research by analyzing and describe forms of racism confronted by the main character of the *Kindred* by Octavia E. Butler novel, Edana Franklin.

Findings & Discussion

Results

The result found are 2 forms of racism, in which separated into 2 forms of racism in each section. The racism depicted in the novel "*Kindred*" by Octavia E. Butler and experienced by the main character, Edana Franklin, are: five (5) data from Internalized Racism, twenty-three (23) data from Interpersonal Racism, six (6) data from Institutional Racism, and twenty (20) data from Structural Racism.

Discussion

This research revealed several passages and dialogues that entail the presentation of forms of racism experienced/witnessed by the main character of *Kindred* by Octavia E. Butler's novel, Edana Franklin.

Displayed below are some of the examples of the data the writer has gathered.

Internalized Racism

"Don't argue with white folks," he had said. "Don't tell them 'no'. Don't let them see you mad. Just say 'yes, sir.' Then go 'head and do what you want to do. Might have to take a whippin' for it latter on, but you want it bad enough, the whippin won't matter much."

Description of the Context

Internalized racism occurs inside the people of color/the person who experiences it, taken by the negative impression belief/entitlement from any race, either it's people of color or white people themselves. In the case above, Luke was being one of Tom Weylin's Slave, and his job was to manage the field.

Analysis

Luke has been in the Weylin's household for years, and to do his job as told and behave well have been internalized at the back of his mind, and the passage is the prove. For all the mistakes that he made during the job conducted would lead to either a severe or bad punishment, and he has learned to avoid the circumstances at all costs.

Interpersonal Racism

“Where Elisa breathed into the dead boy’s mouth, and the boy came back to life. Mama said she tried to stop you when she saw you doing that to me because you were just some nigger she had never seen before. Then she remembered Second Kings.” “She said I was what?” I asked. “Just a strange nigger. She and Daddy both knew they hadn’t seen you before.” (p. 89).

Description of the Context

Interpersonal racism exists within one belief of different privileges between people of color and white people, and it's passed to another person that suffers from the discrimination/the entitled ones. The situation from the passage refers to Rufus reminiscence's moment of Dana's first appearance before his family. Dana has asked Rufus on why his father pointed a gun to her even though she has saved his life. As described by Rufus, his parents thought Dana as a dangerous unknown black woman.

Analysis

The statement by Rufus' parents regarding Dana would be a different case in the situation if she's not people of color, instead a white person. The racism act was so common in the past time, even Rufus' mother, Margaret, referred Dana with a racial slur, which was considered as the usual language white people used to people of color in the time, and not as a form of offensive behavior.

Institutional Racism

Some of his neighbor sound out what I was doing and offered him fatherly advice. It was dangerous to educate slaves, they warned. Education made blacks dissatisfied with slavery. It spoiled them for field work. The Methodist minister said it made them disobedient, made them want more than the lord intended them to have. Another man said educating slaves was illegal (p.602).

Description of the Context

Institutional racism is the form of prejudice against people of color relating to social advantages that each human has received, such as unconventional practices in society/organizations, like education, work employment, power in politics, and health care. Rufus' children, Joe and Hagar, was received from Alice, and as a result, their breed were from half and half races. Dana has advised Rufus to give proper education to his sons, even if the society regulations during the time was prohibited to permit people of color to achieve learning process.

Analysis

As stated above, the authority mentioned how the process of the learning could create a diversion thought to the people of color/black people minds. The diversion was threatened

to be a development one's critical mind, it was believed to distract black people's mind from finishing their involuntary work. As they were defined as slaves, defined to only conduct relentless work and not a human being with privileges and opportunity to live life they supposed to have.

Structural Racism

"They cut off the boy's ears." "Yeah. Cut them both off. He fought. Strong boy, even if he didn't show much sense. The judge's son hit him, and he struck back. And he said some things he shouldn't have said." "Did. After they got through with him. Nigel told me 'bout it—how they cut him, beat him. He'll have to do some healing 'fore he can go to Mississippi or anywhere else." (p. 393).

Description of the Context

Institutional racism is the form of prejudice against people of color relating to social advantages that each human has received, such as unconventional practices in society/organizations, like education, work employment, power in politics, and health care. Equivalent to the resolved episode above, the Isaac's tragic fate was explained in this passage. Isaac was defending himself for receiving the severe punishment, which was getting both of his ears cut off, and hit a few times. The person in the dialogue even mentioned how his condition was frail enough, that he should be treated first before he could be bargained to another master/white people.

Analysis

The explanation of the barbarous incident was disturbing enough to notice how cold-blooded the Caucasian race's rule in the 1800's. As if it wasn't adequate enough to witness an innocent man overpowered by a brawl, the patrollers continue to disarrange both of his ears. It was also not mentioned if Isaac apprehended a fair treatment to the injury before being exchanged to another state. The enforced slavery was either determined to be a banter the white people adore to conduct, and a serious violence against human rights violation.

Most Experienced/Witnessed Racism

In addition, the most experienced/witnessed racism that affected the main character's life understanding, Edana Franklin, is Interpersonal Racism. Based on the data specified above, there are 24 data depicted from the novel that corresponds with the factual theory of the 2nd form of racism afflicted.

Conclusion

Depending upon the analysis outlined in discussion, the researchers have created the outcome of forms of racism found based on the main character, Edana Franklin, in *Kindred* novel by Octavia E. Butler. Qualitative research method was applicated within the process. The completion of the data analyzed was constructed based upon 4 forms of racism theory by Henry and Tator. In which the kinds of racism divided into four categories, internalized racism, interpersonal racism, institutional racism, and structural racism.

The first form of racism found is internalized racism, resulting to the founding of five (5) data in total corresponding with the theory. The second form of racism depicted in the novel is interpersonal racism, producing twenty-three (23) data in total. The third form of racism is institutional racism which emanates six (6) data in total. And the last one from the forms of racism found, is structural racism. This form has proceeded with twenty (20) data in total.

Moreover, the most experienced/witnessed racism that affected the main character's life understanding, Edana Franklin, is Interpersonal Racism. Based on the data, there are twenty-three (23) data depicted from the novel that corresponds with the factual theory of the 2nd form of racism afflicted.

Suggestion

Based the conclusion above, the researchers have suggestions for the reader to conduct the research. There are certain aspects to comprehend with completing it. First, the researcher is required to perceive the object of the research meticulously, which in this case is the literature creation. The researchers expect the next researcher can gain knowledge and better understanding from moral values aspects in life.

The narrative structure and characters involved are within process of the comprehension as well. Surely after that, the researcher could identify forms of racism based on the main character's experiences/witnesses upon the story in the novel with the support from four kinds of racism theory used to analyze. Finally, the researcher anticipates the next researcher to apprehend finer understanding regarding race's uncertain complication.

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