

SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE UNDER RACIAL DISCRIMINATION OF DON SHIRLEY AS A BLACK AMERICAN IN PETER FARRELLY'S MOVIE, GREEN BOOK (2018)

Delia Rima Puspita Sari
Makmun Fauzi
Sekolah Tinggi Bahasa Asing Pertiwi
Jl. Dewi Sartika Kav. 2-3, Jakarta Timur
deliarimapuspitasari@gmail.com
makmun.fauzi@pertiwi.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The writer chooses this topic and Green Book film as the main source to be analyzed because the writer sees something interesting and it can be as a new knowledge and learning at once through this film. This film is semi-biographical and directed by Peter Farelley. Besides, she also realizes the conditions that represent in the film also occur in today's society. This research uses qualitative method to analyze data based on the events of the film. This film is about the life of Don who has been discriminated by white society. A black American pianist who is about to embark on a concert tour. In need of a driver and protection to accompany him through the tour, Don Shirley recruits Tony Lip, a bouncer from an Italian-American background. During the tour, Don Shirley faces racism, discrimination, social inequality and prejudice, because areas of the concert are not welcoming towards black people, even someone as renowned and well-respected as Don Shirley. To answer the problems formulation, the writer uses sociological approach and socio-psychological approach. The theories that the writer chooses are racism, social inequality, social rejection, prejudice, white supremacy, stereotype, discrimination, social acceptance and well-being. By applying the approaches & theories, it can be concluded that Green Book shows how social background is the important issue from the film. That was the cause of the discrimination that Don faces because the superiority of white people. But, Don can through the phases of discrimination because his good attitude and kindness.

Keywords: *racism, discrimination, black, white society*

ABSTRAK

Penulis memilih topik ini dan film Green Book sebagai sumber utama untuk dianalisis karena penulis melihat sesuatu yang menarik dan hal tersebut dapat digunakan sebagai pengetahuan dan suatu pembelajaran baru secara sekaligus melalui film ini. Film ini adalah semi-biografi dan disutradarai oleh Peter Farelley. Selain itu, penulis juga menyadari kondisi yang direpresentasikan dalam film juga terjadi di masyarakat saat ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk menganalisis data berdasarkan peristiwa dalam film.

Film ini menceritakan tentang kehidupan Don yang didiskriminasi oleh masyarakat kulit putih. Seorang pianis kulit hitam Amerika yang akan memulai tur konser membutuhkan sopir dan perlindungan untuk menemaninya melalui tur, Don Shirley merekrut Tony Lip, seorang penjaga dari latar belakang Italia-Amerika. Selama tur, Don Shirley menghadapi rasisme, diskriminasi, ketidaksetaraan sosial, dan prasangka, karena area konser tidak ramah terhadap orang kulit hitam, bahkan seseorang yang terkenal dan dihormati seperti Don Shirley. Untuk menjawab formulasi masalah, penulis menggunakan pendekatan sosiologis dan pendekatan sosio-psikologis. Teori-teori yang penulis pilih adalah rasisme, kesenjangan sosial, penolakan sosial, prasangka, supremasi kulit putih, stereotip, diskriminasi, penerimaan sosial dan kesejahteraan. Dengan menerapkan pendekatan & teori, dapat disimpulkan bahwa Green Book menunjukkan bagaimana latar belakang sosial menjadi isu penting dari film tersebut. Itulah penyebab diskriminasi yang dihadapi Don karena superioritas orang kulit putih. Tapi, Don bisa melewati fase-fase diskriminasi karena perilaku yang bagus dan kebajikannya.

Kata Kunci: rasisme, diskriminasi, kulit hitam, masyarakat kulit putih

INTRODUCTION

Human is the God's creation, which human naturally being a social creature, which making interactions with one another is part of socialization process that purpose is to be able to provide a large amount of information necessary to carry out daily activities. Human, as we all know, are social creatures who depend on one another to meet their needs. The needs are to build and develop relationship with other people in order to survive. To socialize, humans need to communicate. Communication will be the connector between two individuals to exchange information. The process of communication is the attempt to present information that explains, justifies, or expresses one's point of view understanding. According to Douglas Harper in The Online Etymology Dictionary (2013), declares the meaning of communication: Communication, from Latin *commūnicāre*, meaning "to share" is the activity of conveying information through the exchange of ideas, feelings, intentions, attitudes, expectations, perceptions or commands, as by speech, gestures, writings, behaviour.

In communication, one thing has an important role, it is a tool to communicate to each other. The tool is called language, by using language we can give and receive a message that is purposed. A language that is spoken internationally and learned and spoken by numerous people is English. English is the main foreign language that is very important to learn as an international language. There are many ways to learn English. The easiest and most fun way to learn English is to use literature as the media. According to Wellek and Warrant (1976: 94), literature is a product of author's imagination. Learning literature can help us understand better life especially environment, culture, and value because literature represents the life, which may occur in social reality. From the definition of the literature above, the writer is interested in analysing a movie. Movie can take the audience to a certain situation, place or periods that occur in the story of film. Through the series of events and conflicts experienced by

the characters, the audience seems to enter the character's life in the movie. At the end of the movie the audience can discover meanings, messages or values which are conveyed in the movie.

There are many kinds of movies with different stories and genres. However, the writer chooses *Green Book* because the writer is interested with the story-line of this movie. Here are some reasons why the writer chooses *Green Book* as the media to be analysed. Firstly, the writer is interested to the story because there is a story about Black American. Secondly, the writer gets many lessons from *Green Book*. It teaches us much about prejudice and stereotype of blacks in the society, because the main character in the story shows the audience how a black man experiences mistreatment and discrimination from white community which is the crucial issues in America Society. *Green Book* argues that racism create a sort of crime to someone, and how people need to be rescued from them, also states that it is a righteous act what people do to help someone out of those perceptions no matter what races you are. The objectives of the study, first, to explain the Don's struggle as a black American in facing the all kind of discrimination in white society. Second, to tell the reasons of white society discriminates people from different races especially black people or more specifically African-American. The last, to find out how the process of Don in handling situation when him as black people being discriminated in white society.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

To analyze a literary work, it is necessary to use some theories. Here are the theories that the writer use:

1. Sociological Approach: Sociological theory proposed by Alan Swingewood in *The Sociology of Literature*, sociology is the scientific, objective study of man in society, social institutions, and social processes; it aims to address the questions of how society is possible, how it functions, and why it continues (1972:11). From the explanation above the writer concludes, sociological approach is a general understanding of why and how the problem develops, of how people get affected by them and what are involved in dealing with them. In other words, sociological approach is an approach to find the meaning of imaginary in literary works that learns about the society, social classes, love affair, religion, nature, etc. Moreover, sociological approach can be used to develop the issues within society. Below are the theories the writer applied that related to the movie.

a. Racism

The term racism which refers to a negative action toward other people, who are viewed as different, may be caused by the emergence of some races who regard their groups as superior. According Clair et al, in their journal, racism at root is an ideology of racial domination in which the presumed biological or cultural superiority of one or more racial groups is used to justify or prescribe the inferior treatment or social positions of other racial groups (2015:1). As the writer explains the definition about racism, there is specific theory related to the movie issue. This is racism against Black-Americans in 1960's. According to Britannica.com written by Audrey Smedley, Professor of Anthropology, Virginia Commonwealth University, in the United States, racism came under increasing attack during the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. The civil rights movement was an organized effort by black Americans to end

racial discrimination and gain equal rights under the law. Historically, the civil rights movement was a struggle for social justice that took place mainly during the 1950s and 1960s for Black Americans to gain equal rights under the law in the United States. The Civil War had officially abolished slavery, but it did not end discrimination against Black people they continued to endure the devastating effects of racism, especially in the South.

b. Stereotype

A stereotype is an assumption that public belief about specific social groups, or types of individuals. It can be said that stereotyping other individuals or groups is treating them as they have differences with the others. According to Sibley et al in their journal *The International Encyclopedia of Political Communication*, First Edition. Stereotype is to provide people with expectations about the traits and behaviours that are perceived to occur with a given social group (2015:1). By this, stereotype is defined as a fixed belief about a particular group or class of people.

c. Social Inequality

Social Inequality is life chances or opportunities are distributed unequally between individuals and groups because they are affected by social factors such as class position, gender and ethnicity. According to Hradil quoted by Hoffman in his journal *Socioeconomic Differences in Old Age Mortality*, social inequality exists when people frequently receive more of a society's valuable goods than others owing to their position in the social network of relationships (2008:29).

d. Social Rejection

Rejection occurs in life because of certain condition that must be fulfilled in order to include in certain groups. According to DeWall et al in his journal *social rejection is a behaviour of somebody that starts from distancing and ignoring another person's presence to actively expelling him or her from a community or existing relationship* (2011:256). By this, the meaning of social rejection is way to define someone who does not quite fit in society.

e. Prejudice

Prejudice is "an unfair and unreasonable opinion or feeling, especially when formed without enough thought or knowledge". According to Tiffany Ito et al in the journal *Race and Gender on the Brain: Electrocortical Measures of Attention to the Race and Gender of Multiply Categorizable Individuals*, human instantly analyze three pieces; their race, gender, and age, those all information about strangers when meet them that sparks in our mind (616:2003).

f. White Supremacy

White supremacy is the notion that white people are superior to those of other races and should therefore should dominate them. The belief is in favor of preserving and defending white power and privilege. According to Britannica.com written by John Philip Jenkins, Professor of History, Baylor University in the United States, white supremacy refers to views and concepts that assert the lighter-skinned, or "white," human races have a natural superiority over other racial groupings.

g. Discrimination

Discrimination means treating someone unfairly because of a personal characteristic such as their sex, race or age. The word discrimination is often used to represent the actions of a dominant majority group in relation to a weak minority group. According to Blank et al in his book *Measuring Racial Discrimination*, racial discrimination occurs when "a member of one racial group is treated less favorably than another and suffers negative consequences" (2004:40). It states that race can cause

discrimination because on the basis of their own or their ancestors physical characteristics such as their skin color.

2. Socio-Psychological Approach: The second approach that the writer discuss is about the Socio-Psychological approach. Social psychology is the study of how individuals perceive, influence, and relate to others. The terms thoughts, feelings, and behaviours include all of the psychological variables that are measurable in a human being. According to Bonaiuto et al in his journal Social-Psychological Approaches In Environment-Behavior Studies: Social-psychological approaches is perceptual please in favour of more socially, contextually, and culturally. This already be considered a significant development with respect to some traditional psychological perspectives that isolate individual psychological processes from any sort of environment. (2000:67). These are theories that the writer applied social acceptance and well-being.

a. Social Acceptance

According to Leary quoted by DeWall et al in his journal Social Acceptance and Rejection: The Sweet and the Bitter, social acceptance occurs on a continuum that ranges from merely tolerating another person's presence to actively pursuing someone to include you in their groups and relationships (2011:256). It defines social acceptance as an attitude of willingness to tolerate or it is right that someone should be included within a community or society.

b. Well-being

Well-being emerges from people's thoughts, actions, and experiences. Most of them people have control over. For example, when we think positive, we tend to have greater emotional well-being. When we pursue meaningful relationships, we tend to have better social well-being. In psychologytoday.com written by Tchiki Davis M.A., Ph.D., Berkeley graduate and well-being-technology expert that published an article on January 02, 2019 with title What Is Well-Being? breaks the types of well-being into 5 different types. The writer took 2 from 5 types, that suitable to the movie issues. They are Emotional Well-Being, and Social Well-being. First, emotional well-being. This is the ability to cope with everyday life and reflects how we think and feel about ourselves, boost self-love, and generate the emotions that lead to good feelings. Second, social well-being. This is the ability to communicate, develop meaningful relationships with others, and maintain a support network that helps you. This is the extent that we feel a sense of belonging and social inclusion. The way we communicate with others, our relationships, values, beliefs, lifestyles and traditions are all important factors of social wellbeing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this analysis, the writer uses qualitative method, it means that the writer tries to elaborate the issues reflected in the movie as the object of her analysis, to find out the reasons causing the issues, and to answer the problems based on the problem formulation. The writer uses qualitative method because this is the most suitable method in her thesis related to the approaches and the theories she uses, which is research using data collection methods and analysis methods using observations. in Lisa M. Given journal The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Method (2008), points out that in qualitative, in a very approachable language, offers current and full material, as well as ready-to-use methodologies, data, and examples from the field of qualitative research. The research method adopted adheres to the following important points:

1. The Object of Research: The object of research in this thesis is the movie "Green

Book (2018)” by Peter Farrelly. The writer analyzes the scenes and dialogues in the movie so that some formulations of the problems previously discussed are formulated.

2. Data Source: a.Primary data: Data obtained by taking data directly on the research object as the main source of information in form of video and script. The primary data is from the movie “Green Book (2018)” by Peter Farrelly.

b. Secondary data: Source of data obtained from other supportive sources. Secondary data for this research are from books/journals/internet/etc.

3.Research Techniques: First, making observations, which are making direct observations of the object of research by watching and observing carefully the scenes and dialogues in the movie “Green Book”. Then choose the scene or script needed for research. After that, conducting document research, which is collecting data through reviewing and examining various literary sources that have relevance to the research material for further argumentation, such as film files, archives, the internet, etc.

RESULT AND FINDING

1. THE KINDS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION THAT DON EXPERIENCES

The racial issue problem comes from the race that Don has within himself. Don’s race background is the factor that contributes to the discrimination. The writer would explain here in detail.

a. Stereotype

Racism arises from stereotypes, because all differences in the treatment that people treat one another are caused by a misperception of one another. A stereotype is a judgment made by others about someone based on their physical and non-physical characteristics. The majority of individuals judge someone only on the basis of their physical appearance. Stereotyping of African-Americans, particularly males, had a faulty influence on African-American families and communities throughout history in the United States. For example, stereotypes of Black American as unintelligent, lazy, violent, and criminals. During the scene, when the two black men came to fix the broken sink at Tony who is white. In the minute 08:47-08:52, Tony gets rid of the two glasses just because the black men have used those glasses and Tony assume they are dirty because of the repairmen. From the situation, Tony reveals his racist toward the Black. There was a stereotype about black that Tony had on his perspectives, he stereotypes that something that black people used are harmful and bad.

b. Social Inequality

Social inequality focuses on the importance of individual values such as social background, gender and ethnic identity. In this movie, the writer would like to discuss social inequality on one of the central factors which is ethnic background. In the scene 1:04:52-1:05:34, the host of Don’s tour in that area Mr. Anderson, giving Don outside toilet, which look old and broken, instead giving him the proper toilet. The unfair treatment from that situation, obviously shows the social inequality toward Don as a black. This happens because his ethnic background. Mr. Anderson expresses the acts of contempt and disrespect to Don regardless the high status of Don holds as musician.

c. Social Rejection

Rejection can happen for a multiple of reasons. It can come from individuals or organizations, and the severity of the rejection is determined by the nature of the relationships. It shows in the scene 57:13-57:25, Don was rejected by the local people in the tour area just because he is different as it means he is black with high social status. He is being hit by the local people just because he is having different color of skin with the majority people at the bar. It clearly shows Don who does not fit the society, so he is

being rejected.

2. THE REASONS OF WHITE SOCIETY DOING THE DISCRIMINATION

Based on the writer's point of view after watching the Green Book movie, the writer found the reasons of white society discriminates black people. Below here in detail.

a. Prejudice

Common features of prejudice include negative feelings, stereotyped beliefs, and a tendency to discriminate against members of a group. These prejudices can emphasize a race as a standard interaction between individual or groups in society. The majority of people treat others seen by physically appearance includes skin color, hair color, nose and eyes shape. In the scene 51:30-52:13, Tony, the driver of Don, Tony thought all black people have been eating fried chicken, when the truth is not. From Tony's statement "You people love the fried chicken", it can be concluded that he prejudices towards Don by saying that. It clearly shows racial prejudice to black person. Tony has a tendency to see everyone who belongs to a particular group is similar.

b. White Supremacy

The white people who publicly practiced this, embracing that member of low-status race should be restricted to the same level in society, while members of the dominant race should have exclusive access to all sorts of society. In the scene 1:25:42-1:25:50, the police who came as patrolmen at night, at that time there was heavy rain, and Don was asked by the police to get out of the car and arrested by the police, put him in the jail. The act that carried out by the police here. This is the most real, clear and offensive act toward Don as a black person. Tony himself has the reason why he is put in the jail, but Don is not. The reason of the police caught him just because he is a black person. The police neglected him even though he is innocent.

c. Discrimination

The members of majority group turn their own unacceptable feeling into a discriminating act toward the minority group. Prejudice and White Supremacy toward black people in this movie leads to discrimination. Discrimination is the unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age or sexual orientation. The writer especially would like to talk about discrimination in race specifically. It shows in the scene 1:13:54-1:14:13, The scene above happens when Don is fighting in the sauna with one of local people there which is white person. Don is trying to make a deal to make everything clear, but the polices do not want to make the things easy. Don treated as attacker even before knowing the truth behind the fought. The action that the police took clearly shows act of discrimination toward black people.

3. HOW DON DEALS WITH THE WHITE SOCIETY'S DISCRIMINATION TOWARDS BLACK AMERICANS

To change how black should be treat equally in different environment especially in white society, Don tries some efforts.

A. Getting Along with Whites by Social Acceptance

Don's race background is the factor that contributes to the discrimination and how he deals with that discrimination by getting along with whites use social acceptance. Don within himself tries to forgive and understand the social he lives in. So, the writer would explain here in detail. She breaks the social acceptance into three types.

a. Social Acceptance in Workplace

Social acceptance is a topic that is rapidly growing in importance, becoming a key subject for working people. We live in an open, hyper-connected world, and therefore synergies happen naturally amongst businesses. In the scene 32:15-32:45, the conversation between Don and Tony when they were having a meal in a restaurant on the first drive to the concert tour. Because this is their first trip together, Don is trying to be friends with Tony, who had bad impression toward black. In order to make Tony as his driver for the long journey feel comfortable, he starts the conversation first for the ice breaker.

b. Social Acceptance in White Community

Understanding how people think about and judge the diversity of groups is both theoretically and practically important. Perceptions of group composition play a key role in outcomes such as the encoding and storing of information about groups, stereotyping, and in-group identification. In the scene 2:01:05-2:02:22, when Christmas, Tony invites Don to his family's Christmas party, but Don at first refuses to come, because he is afraid of not being welcomed by Tony's family. Despite in fact, he takes a second for Don himself to blend with Tony's family because he is afraid of getting discriminated by them. But it does not affect him, he challenges himself. He is getting along with white people.

c. Social Acceptance with His Surrounding

Social acceptance with the circle and relationships are important to person's social and emotional development. This social acceptance and friendship provide a wide range of learning and development opportunities for human. In the scene 49:50-50:50, the writer found how the main character Don is dealing with his discrimination by social acceptance with his surroundings. It is when Don opens up about his though life as a musician to Tony, his driver. At this time, Don and Tony in a process developing a good relationship with each other, not just as a job partner but also as a friend.

B. Well-Being

Well-being means someone mature who acts in a manner considered comfortable, healthy, and happy. It's a complex combination of a person's physical, mental, emotional and social health factors. Wellbeing is strongly linked to happiness and life satisfaction. In short, wellbeing could be described as how you feel about yourself and your life. So, the writer would explain here in detail. She breaks the well-being into two types.

a. Emotional Well-Being

The better we are able to master our emotions, the greater our capacity to enjoy life, cope with stress and focus on important personal priorities. In the scene 31:11-31:40, The first scene of emotional well-being is when Don is talking to his crew about the first meeting point on their tour by talking in window's car. Don and the crew are talking in Russian. But, Tony as Mr. Know-it-All, thinks they are talking in German. Tony is being a stereotypical white, he is being racist, but Don calmly stops Tony without interrupting or insulting Tony.

b. Social Well-Being

Social well-being can be defined as the sharing, developing, and sustaining of meaningful relationships with others. It shows in the scene 1:07:40-1:10:03, when Tony writes letter to his wife and this is not the first time. But, at this time Don and Tony's relationship is closer than before. So, Don approaches Tony first. The way Don helps Tony and takes an action even though he can choose not to do that, it shows Don's

social well-being is. He helps others. He can probably just ignore Tony's letter. But Don offers himself to Tony for helping him writes the letter to his wife. That is how Don deals with the discrimination, with social well-being.

REFERENCES

- Blank, Rebecca M., Dabady, Marilyn, & Citro, Constance F.
2004, *Measuring Racial Discrimination*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
- Bonaiuto, Marino, Mirilia Bonnes
2000, *"Theoretical Perspectives in Environment-Behavior Research"*, edited by Wapner et al, New York: Kluwer Academic / Plenum Publishers
- Britannica.com. (2005, March, 17). *"White supremacy"*, Retrieved on June 22, 2021, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/white-supremacy>
- Britannia.com. (1998, July, 20). *"Racism"*. Retrieved on January 2, 2021, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/racism>
- Clair Matthew, Jeffrey S Denis
2015, *"Sociology of Racism"*, In International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2nd edition, Volume 19, edited by James D. Wright. Elsevier, United States: Elsevier Ltd.
- Creswell, J
2003. *Research Design, Qualitative and Quantitative Methode*. Upper Saddle NJ. Merrill Pentice Hall Publication
- DeWall, C. N., & Bushman, B. J.
2011, *"Social acceptance and rejection: The Sweet and the Bitter"*, United States: Sage Publications, Inc
- Douglas Harper. (2013) *"Communication"*, in The Online Etymology Dictionary. Retrieved on September, 20, 2020, from <https://www.etymonline.com/>
- Green Book. Directed by Peter Farrelly. Performances by Viggo Mortensen, and Mahershala Ali. Universal Pictures, 2018.
- Given, Lisa M
2008. *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods: Volume 1&2*, United States: Sage Publications, Inc
- Hoffman, Rasmus
2008, *"Socioeconomic Differences in Old Age Mortality: Chapter 3 Concepts of Social Inequality"*, New York: Springer Science+Business Media B.V.
- IMDb. (1990). *"Green Book"*. Retrieved on December 20, 2020, from <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0878804/>
- Ito, Tiffany, Geoffrey R. Urland
2003, Race and Gender on the Brain: Electrocortical Measures of Attention to the Race and Gender of Multiply Categorizable Individuals, In Journal

- of Personality and Social Psychology Copyright 2003 by the American Psychological Association, Inc.2003, Vol. 85, No. 4, 616–626 0022-3514/03/\$12.00 DOI: 10.1037/0022-3514.85.4.616
- Psychologytoday.com. (2019, January, 20). “*What Is Well-Being?*”. Retrieved on January 18, 2020, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/click-here-happiness/201901/what-is-well-being-definition-types-and-well-being-skills>
- René Wellek and Austin Warren
1976. *Theory of Literature Third Edition*, New York: A Harvest book, Brace and World
- Sibley, Chris G., Danny Osborne
2015, “*The International Encyclopedia of Political Communication*”, First Edition. Edited by Gianpietro Mazzoleni, United States: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Swingswood, Alan
1972. “*The Sociology of Literature*”, London: MacGibbon and Kee