

STRUGGLE AGAINST RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN *WE CAST A SHADOW*

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper, the writer analyzes the acts of racial discrimination and struggle against racial discrimination as seen in *We Cast a Shadow*. This novel depicts the story of a black lawyer and his family who live in the New Orleans. This African American family often experienced racial discrimination which then lead them to react against it. Based on the problem above the purpose of the study is to describe the struggle against discrimination of an African-American. Bowling states that discrimination consist of unequal, unfavorable and unjustifiable treatment based on race. Bowling categorizes discrimination into two types, such as direct discrimination and indirect discrimination [1]. According to Jalata, African-American struggle against racial discrimination takes the form of struggle economic, politic, education, and motivation [2]. Experiencing racial discrimination is an unpleasant treatment. The writer consider racial discrimination and struggle against racial discrimination very important to study.

METHOD

The data is taken from a novel entitled *We Cast a Shadow* by Maurice Carlos Ruffin [3]. The research is done by doing close reading and interpretation techniques. Jacobus explain that close reading is a significant exploration where the significant is clearly seen at the first reading in a work. Close reading must include interpretation as evidence to support reading [4]. In conducting research, the writer collected data about racial discrimination experienced by the characters. The writer collects these data into two types of discrimination and gives interpretation to the data. Data showing the struggle against racial discrimination are then classified and interpreted. The data were analyzed based on the applied theory.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The act of racial discrimination found in *We Cast a Shadow* fulfill all types classified by Bowling. Direct discrimination is experienced by Nigel. Discrimination occurred when Nigel's father wanted to send Nigel to a more mainstream school.

I had wanted to send Nigel to a more mainstream school, one that required khaki uniforms and distributed little folders with crests on them, somewhere he could socialize with the children of the shareholders I worked with at Seasons. My top choice for Nigel, the Morrison School, hadn't admitted a child of color in over a decade. If I was so worried about Nigel's face, why not send him to a school where appearances didn't matter? But appearances always mattered. He was one of perhaps six students of color in a body of several hundred, and he reported bullying at the School Without Walls, just like at his previous learning institutions. At least the School Without Walls had an on-call therapist to help him with his anxiety (39)

Nigel's father wants to send his son to a public school, a school that has a place to socialize with the children of shareholders who work at Seasons. Nigel's father main choice for Nigel's school was the Morrison school. But the school did not accept black people. Education should be everyone's right, but for Nigel this was very unfair. Black people should get the right to free education, where black people must be able to gather to go to school and socialize with each other without any boundaries between white people and black people. Until finally Nigel can go to school without walls, namely is a schools for black people. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that this is a form of direct discrimination, because it directly limits or differentiates education for black people.

Indirect discrimination is experienced by Nigel's father when he visits Jojo's house. The following data shows indirect discrimination done by Nigel's father.

The doorbell rang. I opened the door and a man in fatigues stood there, a shotgun slung from his hip. I raised my hands. He shoved me into the wall, choking my windpipe with his forearm.

"Hey, hey, hey," Jo Jo said. "Easy, officer. The good brother is with me."

"Oh. I didn't know." The officer released me. I grabbed my throat.

"Why'd you do that, man?" Jo Jo said.

I gasped and coughed. "I did it for his safety."

"My safety?" I asked. "How is that possible?"

"I had to make sure you weren't a danger to me or yourself," the officer said. His neck was bigger than his head.

"I'm not used to seeing black guys around here. You can't be too careful these days. There was a robbery" (87-88)

When Nigel's father entered to Jojo's house, the gun suddenly swung at him. The officer did not like black people, this can be seen clearly from the actions taken by the officers against Nigel's father and the officers' words that he was not used to black people around him. This incident is a form of indirect discrimination because the officer indirectly discrimination against Nigel's father. The officer also confirmed whether Nigel's father was dangerous or not. This is an unpleasant treatment because white people think black people are a threat, Nigel's father was treated badly. Nigel's father should be treated like a guest without having to use a gun. Then from that incident the sentence "there is a robbery" was used as an excuse by the officer. In this way we can see that black people are considered criminals or robbers. That is a form of indirect discrimination. The act of racial discrimination results in the character who experiences it, of course, will not remain silent. They will actually oppose acts of racial discrimination.

One of the struggles against racial discrimination can be seen in the form of economic struggle shown by Nigel's father.

One night, years earlier, I was at the firm late. Some clients from out west were in town, and the shareholders were having a big to-do for them in the conference center. Walking by the prep area, I saw Etherine putting away flatware (32)

It could be seen that Nigel's father had to work hard, he was willing to work overtime. Nigel's father struggled in his economic form, that is with him working late into the night at his company, he often came home late. This is used to support his family and

improve the quality of the economy. This is also evidence of the father's struggle against racial discrimination. He had to work at his company late into the night.

Another struggle against racial discrimination faced by the character is political struggle as seen below.

Mixed-race couples were rare these days, having reached a climax during Sir's youth, before the authorities overreacted to a protest by a black nationalist organization. As for the porter's distraction by Nigel's birthmark, that was just one more reason Nigel needed the procedure (51)

Nigel's father was part of a black national organization. Of course black people also form a black group whose purpose is to fight racial discrimination and to get their rights. They carry out protests against racism because black people also want to get the same rights and equality. That is the reason for Nigel's father to immediately operate on Nigel so that Nigel no longer experiences discrimination. The quote above can be evidence that Nigel's father struggled against racial discrimination in the form of politic struggle.

The third of struggle against racial discrimination is the form of education. It can be seen in the data below.

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Everyone has the right to a proper education, everyone has the right to get proper access to study. But not for Nigel, Nigel was not accepted at the Morison school which is the general school. School where mostly white people. Just because a black Nigel, then Nigel not accepted at the school. But not an obstacle for Nigel's father to send Nigel to school. Nigel's father still struggle to send his son to school. Until finally Nigel's father can send his son to school

where appearance is not important. Nigel's father put his son into a School Without Walls, which is a school for black people. Even though it was a black people school, Nigel still went for education. This can be used as evidence that a father struggle against racial discrimination in the form of education. Because Nigel's father wanted his son to go to school and have a decent education.

The next struggle against racial discrimination by the character is the form of motivation.

I had visited the clinic once before on my original fact-finding mission. That time the waiting room was populated by all kinds of people: a girl with a partially corrected cleft palate, a large-bellied man, a redhead in cycling clothes. I had quickly downloaded the demelanization brochure (only available if you stopped into the clinic) but accepted a couple of brochures about varicose vein correction to cover myself and giddily ran out. This time everyone was black (and half of the room wore purple faux-fur coats). This time I checked in at the counter and took my seat in a far corner with my back to the wall like a mafioso. I needed to meet Dr. Nzinga. I needed to tell him about my intentions for Nigel (150)

It can be seen that Nigel's father does not accept that his son often received such unpleasant treatment. From what Nigel's experience, made Nigel's father motivated to operate on Nigel so that Nigel's skin turns white white and face his becomes normal. Of course. A father does not want his son to continue to experience unpleasant treatment. Nigel's father tried to download some brochures on Nigel's demelanization or procedure. Nigel's father tries to see doctor Nzinga, a plastic surgeon. Nigel's father tells the doctor his intention is to operate on Nigel so that Nigel will no longer experience racial discrimination. So it can be concluded that Nigel's father struggled against racial discrimination in the form of motivation.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The results of this study indicate that indirect discrimination is often experienced by the characters. The factors that causes indirect discrimination are they live in white neighborhood and working in white dominated society. The form of struggle that is often carried out are economic and motivation struggle. Further study of this novel through the perspective of racial discrimination is suggested to add insight into how to struggle against racial discrimination.

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