

An analysis of gender inequality on black women characters in *hidden figures* film

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Abstract

This research discusses gender inequality on black women characters in "Hidden Figures" Film. The objectives of this research are to find gender inequality and to show what factors that cause gender inequality in "Hidden Figures" film. This research used the descriptive qualitative method. This is related to the description of the data in the form of a conversation in film. Analysis in this research using analysis from spreadlay and theory from Fakh and Relawati. The results of this reseacrh indicate that there are two types of gender inequality found namely marginalization and subordination. In addition there are four factors that cause gender inequality in "Hidden Figures"film , namely the factor of public confidence in the myth, factor of rationality, factor of Patriarchy and Factor of Capitalist System.

Keyword: Film, Gender Inequality, Factor, Hidden Figures.

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A. Introduction

Literature in general is the form of a very beautiful work, whether written or spoken. Literature itself actually has a different definition from everyone, because the view of literature is very broad so that everyone has a different opinion. According to Sumardjo and Saini (in Rokhmansyah 2014), literature is an expression of the human person in the form of experiences, thoughts, feelings, ideas, the spirit of belief in a form of concrete images that evoke charm with language tools. Wellek and Warren (2014), state that literature is a creative activity, a work of art. Literature also gives birth to many works of art which of course are widely known by everyone, such as poetry, novels, dramas, short stories and films.

One form of literary work that is favored by various groups is film, this can be seen from the enthusiasm of the public to watch films. According to Ayoana(2010) films are life-images, also often called movies. Film, collectively is often called cinema. Cinema itself comes from the word kinematics or motion. The message of a film in mass communication can take any form depending on

the mission of the film. Generally a film can include a variety of messages, be it educational, entertainment and information messages. .

Basically, films can be grouped into two basic divisions, namely the category of story films and non-story films. Other opinions classify it into fiction and non-fiction films. Feature films are films that are produced based on stories composed and played by actors and actresses. In general, feature films are commercial in nature, meaning that they are shown in theaters for a certain ticket price or shown on television with the support of certain advertising sponsors.

Films are considered as a powerful communication medium for the masses they target, because of their audio-visual nature, namely living images and sounds. With pictures and sound, films can tell a lot in a short time. When watching a film, the audience seems to be able to penetrate space and time that can tell life and can even influence the audience. Usually many films are taken from community activities such as habits and daily life in society so that this film can produce a message or meaning that will be conveyed through audio and image media. One of the films that is often taken from everyday life is about women.

Women are often the object of a work such as a novel or film. there are many novels and films that carry the theme of women in their works because it seems like there is no end to the discussion. In life, of course, women play a very important role in daily activities, whether they are housewives or working women. Even though they play a very important role, sometimes there are still many gender inequality experienced by women such as economic, socio-cultural, work and so on. According to Cary and Zilva (2017), the definition of gender inequality is differences and inequalities between men and women in various aspect of life, such as education, employment, health, politics, decision making and many others. Gender inequality is discrimination on the basis of sex or gender causing one sex or gender to be routinely privileged or prioritized over another. Gender equality is a fundamental human right and that right is violated by gender based discrimination. Ponthieux and Meurs (2015), says gender inequality refers to all form of unfair treatment, such as: exceptions, restrictions on rights and freedoms in various fields between men and women, whether economic, political, and social.

Women that often experience gender inequality and discrimination are black women. Black women often experience gender inequality and discrimination because they are born with two identities that are often oppressed, namely being born as a woman and being black. In addition, the gender inequality experienced by black women is caused by the existence of minorities and the stigma that they are a low social class.

Castells (2011) said that in order to escape the prevailing stigma, they must develop their potential to be balanced with white groups. However, not all black people were able to get the opportunity to develop their potential because of the socially previllege of whites. In addition, black groups who have succeeded in developing their potential and getting jobs and positions that are quite good still experience gender inequality and discrimination because of the difficulty of removing the stigma attached to them. therefore, it is very difficult for black women to avoid discrimination and gender inequality because of their identity. Black women must continue to fight against gender inequality in the economic, political, social and cultural fields. In this research the researcher will discuss gender inequality and factors that causing gender inequality on black women characters in hidden figures film.

There are several studies on the idea of gender inequality that have been reviewed by previous researcher. First reseach from Ian Kunsey (2018), the title of this study is "Representation of women in popular film: A study of gender inequality in 2018". The result of th is study indicate that portrayals of women are much more positive in movies directed by women and that female directors frame female characters much more positively. These positive portrayals are largely affected by the presence of a critical actor behind the scenes.

The second research from Juhana, Nur Qalbi, Sri Arfani (2020), the title of this study is "Gender inequality in the novel Death of an ex-minister by Nawal El Saadawi". The results of this study showed that gender inequality that was manifested in four forms: marginalization, subordination, stereotyping, and violence.

The third research from Rika Eliyana, Setya Ariani, Indah Sari Lubis (2019), the title of this study is " The portrayal of discrimination towards female characters in hidden figures movie". The results of this study showed that there were two types of discrimination portrayed in the movie; those are

derogation and denial. The findings also showed that the impacts of discrimination toward black female characters emerged in psychological and economic fields.

The fourth research from Laily Fitriani, Muassomah (2021), the title of this study is "Gender inequality within a family: The representation of women's novel in social media". The results of this study showed that women's novels in social media tend to experience marginalization/ discrimination, stereotype/ negative labeling, subordination, and excessive burden for women. The dominating cultural construction, patriarchy ideology, and familial ideology are the influencing factors. Women's novel also contains messages about religious values, education values, and the values of patience and endurance.

And the last research from Lisa Permata Sari, Abdurahman A, Yasnur Asri (2019), the title of this study is "Gender discrimination in novel *Biru* by Fira Basuki". The results of this study indicate that gender discrimination in the novel *Biru* 17 data consists of marginalization, stereotypes, and violence. It can be deciphered.

From the previous researches above the researcher finds similarities between the journals that have been reviewed and the research that will be examined, namely both researching gender inequality. In general, gender inequality is experienced by women because they are in the lower class and don't have the opportunity to develop their potential so that they continue to live in the stigma that has been formed and have no chance to escape injustice. However, in this research the researcher wanted to know whether gender inequality also occurs in black women in hidden figures films who have high potential, skills, education and work at NASA. In addition, researchers also want to know what factors that cause gender inequality.

B. Methods

This research used descriptive qualitative method. Lexy J. Moleong (2011), States that qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behavior. description of a form of research aimed at describing or describing existing phenomena, both natural phenomena and human engineering. In collecting the data, the researcher used some steps namely 1) Watching Hidden Figures film, 2) Understand the story and conflict in the film, 3) Write the conversation into a transcript, 4) Mark the part of the conversation that show gender inequality in the film, 5) Analyzing the forms of gender inequality and the factor of gender inequality, 6) Make a conclusion. To examine the data in this research, This research uses Spradley analysis, namely qualitative data analysis proposed by James Spradley in 1979. the researcher use three stages of analysis namely domain analysis, taxonomy analysis and componential analysis.

C. Result

This chapter show the research findings and discussion of gender inequality and factors that cause gender inequality on black women characters in hidden figures film based on theory gender inequality from Fakhri (2008) and theory factors that cause gender inequality from Relawati (2011). The data in this research are all conversation in the film. in this research, the researcher found two types of gender inequality and four factors that cause gender inequality experienced by black women characters in hidden figures film.

1. Gender inequality

Gender inequality is system and structure that places women and men as unequal in social system. according to Fakhri (2008) there are five types of gender inequality namely, marginalization, subordination, stereotype, violence, and double burden. In this research there are two type gender inequality were found namely marginalization and subordination. The following is an explanation of the two types of gender inequality found.

a. Marginalization

Marginalization is a phenomenon that makes individuals or groups marginalized because of gender inequality. Women are marginalized because of gender inequality. The type of marginalization in women can occur in the workplace, household, community, culture and also the State. From the

research that has been researched, there are 7 marginalization data found. The following is explanation.

Sample :

The situation in this conversation occurred when Katherine entered the space task group as a temporary employee. Katherine was confused because the employees there were dominated by men. When Katherine wanted to ask where her desk was, a white male employee put the trash into the things Katherine brought.

Sam : This wasn't emptied last night. (sam put the trash in the thing Katherine brought)

Katherine : I'm sorry, I'm not the...custodian.

(00:16:50,360 -- 00:16:55,754)

The conversation above is the marginalization experienced by Katherine. Katherine became a marginalized employee because the employees there were dominated by men and also because Katherine was the first black woman to work in the space task group.

b. Subordination

Subordination is a view that places women in an unimportant position. This happens because of the assumption that women are emotional and irrational so that women cannot become leaders. From the research that has been researched, there are 8 subordination data found. The following is explanation.

Sample :

The situation in this conversation occurred when Katherine gave Paul a report on Guss Grison's calculations that she had been working on. Paul tore up the front page of Guss Grison's report when he saw that Katherine's name was on it. It happened because computing people were not allowed to write the name of the report.

Mr. Harrison : Give Glenn's orbit a go. But you run it all through Stafford, you understand?

Katherine : Yes, sir. Thank you.

Paul : Computers don't author reports. (01:14:45,240 - 01:14:58,278)

The conversation shows subordination when Paul doesn't allow Katherine to write her name on the results Katherine has been doing. This shows that there is a view that places women in an unimportant position.

2. Factor that causing Gender Inequality in *Hidden Figures* film

A factor is an event or condition that causes event to occur. Based on theory from Relawati (2011) there are four factors that cause gender inequality were found namely, factor of public confidence in the myth, factor of rationality, factor of patriarchy and factor of capitalist system. The following is an explanation of the four factors that cause gender inequality found.

a. Factor of public confidence in the myth

Myth is the problem of every community group that forms patterns of behavior and views of individuals or groups in society in areas of life such as social, cultural, political and economic. The patterns of behavior and views that are formed make the space for movement narrow because of the many rules that are formed. From the research that has been researched, there are 4 factor of public confidence in the myth data found. The following is explanation.

Sample :

The situation in this conversation occurs when Levi Jackson and Mary finish worshipping at church. Levi Jackson forbade Mary to take a white class at Hampton High School as a condition of becoming an engineer.

Mary : You better settle down, Levi Jackson. Unless you want this female's mind, right here, in front of everybody.

Levi Jackson : All I'm saying...don't play the fool. I don't wanna see you get hurt. NASA's never ever given you guys your due. Having a couple of extra degrees ain't gonna change that. Civil rights ain't always civil. (00:34:14,040 -- 00:34:35,830)

The conversation above is about gender inequality caused by the factor of public confidence in the myth, it happens because of the views and stigma from society that shape the rules of behavior patterns so that Mary cannot develop in her work even though she has an extra degree.

b. Factor of Rationality

The rationality factor is a factor that causes gender inequality against women which causes women to experience discrimination so that women are in unimportant positions and cannot become leaders. This happens because of the assumption that men are rational, think logically and can make decisions. While women are irrational and emotional. From the research that has been researched, there are 4 factors of rationality data found. The following is explanation.

Sample :

The situation in this conversation occurred when Katherine had just moved into the space task group room as a temporary employee. When Katherine cleared her desk, Mr. Harrison asked Ruth where the computing person would be working in office. Mr. Harrison couldn't believe it when Ruth said that Katherine was a temporary employee in the space task group.

Mr. Harrison : Does she handle Analytic Geometry?

Ruth : Absolutely. And she speaks. (00:18:09,960 - 00:18:24,398)

The conversation above is a factor of rationality because according to the assumption that women are irrational and don't think logically, Mr. Harrison didn't believe that a black woman like Katherine could do analytical geometry in the space task group.

c. Factor of Patriarchy

Patriarchy is a social system that places a position where men have power over women and have a higher position in all aspects of life. As a result of the existence of patriarchy men have greater opportunities than women in all aspects of social, economic and cultural life. From the research that has been researched, there are 5 factors of patriarchy data found. The following is explanation.

Sample :

The situation in this conversation occurred when Katherine gave a report to Paul and asked him to attend a big meeting so that he didn't miss it and could calculate the data, but Paul didn't allow Katherine to come because there was no direction for women to be included in the meeting.

Paul : Katherine, we have been through this. It is not possible. There is no protocol for women attending.

Katherine : There's no protocol for a man circling the Earth either, sir.

Paul : Okay. That is just the way things are. (01:20:16,240- 01:20:25,839)

The conversation above shows that there is a factor of patriarchy that causes gender inequality because Paul does not allow Katherine to attend the meeting on the grounds that there is no protocol that allows women to attend the meeting. This means that men have a higher chance than women.

d. Factor of Capitalist System

The capitalist system is a production system to achieve maximum profit with small production costs by suppressing the wages of workers. The capitalist system will create injustice for workers because workers don't get paid according to what they do. Women often experience this injustice because women are placed in a vulnerable position that allows them to be exploited. From the research that has been researched, there are 2 factors of capitalist system data found. The following is explanation.

Sample :

The situation in this conversation occurs when Mery, Dorothy and Katherine are on their way home, Dorothy feels grateful that Katherine and Mary have improved in their work but Dorothy is also annoyed that she cannot progress in her work even though she has done her best.

Dorothy : I haven't been late one day in 10 years. Haven't been out sick. Haven't complained. My work's on time. It's done right. It's done well.

Mary : It's not fair, that's a fact.

Dorothy : What's not fair is having the responsibility of a supervisor... but not the title or the pay. (. 00:27:25,200 - 00:27:39,237)

The conversation above is a factor in the capitalist system because in that conversation Dorothy has done her job well but the salary that she received doesn't match what she does.

D. Discussion

Based on the findings of gender inequality that have been studied, the researcher analyzes the types of gender inequality in hidden figures films experienced by black women characters. This finding is supported by the theory of Fakh (2008) which states that there are five types of gender inequality, namely marginalization, subordination, stereotypes, violence and double burden. In this analysis, researchers found two types of gender inequality in hidden figures films, namely marginalization and subordination. The most common type of gender inequality is subordination. The reason why subordination is the most common type is because the conversations in hidden figures show that women are placed in unimportant positions and are not considered to be able to gain higher level in their community, this is in line with the opinion of Fakh (2008). Gender inequality that is not found in hidden figures films is stereotype, violence and double burden.

Gender inequality occurs because of a causal factor. In this analysis, the researchers found that there are four factors that cause gender inequality in the hidden figures film, namely, the factor of public confidence in the myth, the factor of rationality, the factor of patriarchy and the factor of the capitalist system. This finding is supported by the theory from Relawati (2011) which states that there are four factors that cause gender inequality. In the hidden figures film, the most common factor found is the factor of patriarchy, while the least factor is the factor of capitalist system.

In the analysis of gender inequality based on the findings, there are several factors that cause gender inequality experienced by black women characters in the conversations in the hidden figures film which show gender inequality, for the type of gender marginalization there are three factors namely, the factor of public confidence in myths, factor of patriarchy, and the factor of capitalist system. for the type of gender subordination, there are two factors that cause gender inequality, namely factors of rationality, and factor of patriarchy.

From these findings and analysis, the researcher shows that gender inequality occurs because of factors that encourage it to happen, besides that gender inequality occurs because of interference from the environment and community groups that create stigma and patterns of behavior that are detrimental and cause injustice to an individual or group. The researcher hopes that gender inequality can be stopped so that all genders can have equal opportunities and can develop their potential without being hindered by a lot of stigma.

E. Conclusion

Based on the findings and analysis that researcher has done in the hidden figures film, the researcher found that are two types of gender inequality and four factors that cause gender inequality experienced by black women characters in the film Hidden Figures, for the type of gender marginalization there are three factors namely, the factor of public confidence in myths, factor of patriarchy, and the factor of capitalist system. for the type of gender subordination, there are two factors that cause gender inequality, namely factors of rationality, and factor of patriarchy.

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