

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6369381>

# **AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE ON BLACK PEOPLE IN GREEN BOOK MOVIE: PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH**

**Iftinadia Rahma Prasetyawati Melania**

Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: [a320180207@student.ums.ac.id](mailto:a320180207@student.ums.ac.id)

*Corresponding Author*

**Abdillah Nugroho**

Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: [abdillah\\_nugroho@ums.ac.id](mailto:abdillah_nugroho@ums.ac.id)

Received: 2022-01-20

Accepted: 2022-02-09

Published online: 2022-03-19

---

## **Abstract**

The aim of the study is to show what kind of discrimination treatment is given by white people to black people, as shown in this movie. Discrimination is not only about racial or religious differences, but when in the workplace who as preventing someone from fulfilling their professional and personal aspirations without regard to achievement. But the things that often occur in discrimination are terms of race, religion, or belief. Based on this movie, black people from African-Americans do not get their rights as human beings properly. The method used in this research is in the form of document analysis. In document analysis, the author analyzes the document to be able to find out the content or meaning which is sometimes in the form of a document. This story will tell the story of a white man of Italian descent who at first disliked black people and kept his distance from them, which in the end changed his views and became a friendship between the two. The impact of the discriminatory treatment given by people to Don, caused him to be a person who always felt insecure wherever he was.

**Keywords:** Perspective, discrimination, African-American.

---

## **INTRODUCTION**

There are still many people who do not get fair treatment from the environment. Whereas they did nothing wrong, they still get berated and excommunicated from people around them. Something like this will have a bad impact on people who got discrimination, for example someone can not find comfort in their environment and feel uncomfortable because they will feel stressed. Especially racism that occurred in 60's, when the black people get bad view from American. However the black people have an achievement or good background, while people does not care about that and can not live side by side. For white people, black people can only live and work where a group

of black people are and it is deemed inappropriate to be able to work together or even be above it. As illustrated in the topic that will be discussed in this study, even though black people have wealth and a worthy place. When he left his residence, he was still looked down upon and despised. Even so, he still tried to accept the treatment that was clearly not deserved. As a viewer that story can be moral message and the historical so the audience clearly feels the image of racism at that year.

According to Theodorson & Theodorson in Khasnawati's research in 2017 shows that classification is a conflicting treatment of individuals or get-togethers, considering something, by and large total or obvious attributes, similar to subject to race, personality, religion, or enlistment of social classes. Many people who get acts of discrimination both from far away and even the closest environment is also very possible. But we cannot avoid it, because we cannot control the opinion, or the mindset of others.

This study tells about discrimination that obtained by the main characters. The discrimination is not only about racial or religious differences, but when in the workplace who as preventing someone from fulfilling their professional and personal aspirations without regard to achievement. But the things that often occur in discrimination are terms of race, religion, or belief. Based on this movie, black people from African-Americans do not get their rights as human beings properly. White people more respected and able to get their rights, that is totally different with black people. As black people they had difficulty to gaining the trust of others and also not being able to live or visit some place easily. So in this movie it is shown that black people need a guide book to be able to travel, so they can go somewhere being safely without any restrictions from white people.

The difference in treatment carried out by each other such as the behavior of racism is caused by the existence of incorrect perceptions; this is the reason for the emergence of stereotypes. A form of behavior that one's behavior can be physical and non-physical, but not a few of those who conduct an assessment are only based on their physical form. A stereotype is a form of assessment of other people who are closely related to discrimination behavior. Because people who are victims are considered different from the people around them.

The green book is a book of specific guides given to black riders who wish to tour South America, compiling the addresses of separate hotels to help with non-confrontational travel. This book was given to Tony to provide his first clues that his assignment involved little more than controlling and protecting a musician across the country. At first Tony is a person who is racist towards black people; however he also needs money so he is willing to be ordered, escort and also protect Don during a concert tour.

Tony was still being reckless and contrary to Don. In the long run, they lowered each other's egos and could accept each other's differences. During the concert, Don often gets unpleasant treatment from white people. But Tony was always able to protect Don during his concert tours. The tour was actually organized by Don with the aim of changing the view of white people towards black people through his musical performances. In this story, it does not only focus on the story of their friendship which was awakened by the long journey of the two, but there is history to the moral message that is in it.

The reason for choosing this movie is because depicts what the fate of black people at that time was when they had identity difficulties. They always get unpleasant treatment and feel they don't deserve it. We can also see how they struggle to always be safe from threats or unpleasant actions from white people. But the film also explains that as black people, they shouldn't be afraid to show their talents even in front of white people, because they feel it's not harming them at all. But as black people, they must be patient and sincere in receiving treatment from white people.

The psychological approach used in this study leads to a significant strengthening of the meaning of a literary work. When discussing psychology in a literary work, researchers will learn from the author's imagination. Because most literary works are based on experiences that happened to the author such as emotional stories or others.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to Nurwahyuni & Samelia in 2020 clarifies that in the film the creator tracks down that the prevailing kind is Individual Discrimination. Found in this film that there are numerous demonstrations of individual discrimination where Don Shirley is the person in question. As conveyed by Rani & Winaya in 2020 also explains that the message contained in the film for the community is a way to solve problems when experiencing cases of inequality or discrimination. Americans which has grown rapidly over the past two decades. In this regard it presents arguments for the importance of intersectional examinations in the study of discrimination and physical health in African Americans. As much of the literature on discrimination and health has grown out of a desire to understand the very high rates of morbidity and mortality observed in this cohort, we mainly focus on objective, (arguably) more mechanical outcomes of physical health as described by Lewis & Van Dyke in 2018. Danzer et al. tells on their study in 2016, clarify how African Americans are influenced by prejudice relies upon the individual, albeit the impacts on the individual likewise happen inside a common social setting. According Jelsma & Varner in 2020 shows that experience of racial discrimination by teachers and peers is associated with higher alcohol use.

This study uses a type of social psychology because, in this case, it will explain the American people in dealing with black people. Allport in 1968 said that social brain science is struggling to comprehend and clarify how the presence of others influences the musings, sentiments, and conduct of people. It is not uncommon for us to have unfavorable relationships with other humans in social life, such as disputes, quarrels, or disputes between groups. And then, it can encourage the development of social psychology to study human relationships and the behavior that affects these relationships.

Prejudice is a negative attitude that directed by an individual or group toward something without underlying reason. As stated by David O. Sears in Ginati's research in 2015, social prejudice is an assessment directed based on differences with other groups.

This is also related to discriminatory behavior, which is unfair treatment or discrimination against fellow citizens based on skin color, class, ethnicity, economy, religion, and so on. Because in theory, prejudice comes from attitude while discrimination refers to an attitude. As stated by Theodorson & Theodorson in Hasyim's research in 2018 stated that discrimination is an unequal treatment of an individual or a group based on race, religion, ethnicity, or membership of social classes. According to Fulthoni in Bimantara's research in 2020, discrimination occurs when prejudice has turned into action. Discrimination is also an unfair and unequal act to distinguish individuals or groups based on categories or characteristics based on race, ethnicity, religion, or membership of social classes.

Although with various ethnicities, races, and also beliefs we can't force everyone to be what we expect. Because other people have their own point of view and opinion. According to Wulandari in 2020 America is a multicultural country that adheres to multiculturalism. This is done to solve problems in people's lives due to different cultural backgrounds; one of them is racial discrimination. Black people experience racial discrimination because of the color of their skin. On racial discrimination have many negative impacts on victims and group members. These impacts can lead to health problems, well-being, and also affect emotional reactions.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research uses a social psychology approach which in this case will discuss individual behavior towards the social and cultural environment. In this study, the writer of the film will show the message and what we can learn from this film. So that the researcher will convey the observations conveyed by the author through the Green Book film by Peter Farrelly in 2019. The method used in this research is in the form of document analysis. In document analysis, the author analyzes the document to be able to find out the content or meaning which is sometimes in the form of a document.

According to (Bowen, 2009) record investigation is a type of subjective examination, where the report is deciphered by the specialist to give a voice and which means around the exploration theme. This research uses image-capturing techniques to show parts of the film that are described or intended by the researcher. So that it will be easier to be able to understand which part that intended in the study.

## **RESULTS**

### *A. Finding*

The character told in this movie describes how he has to struggle with the oppression he often gets during his time as a musician. As if being born into a black person is something that should not be obtained and happens. White people always despise and dirty black people. This story will tell the story of a white man of Italian descent who at first disliked black people and kept his distance from them, which in the end changed his views and became a friendship between the two. Their journey will follow the directions listed in the "Green Book" to be safer and avoid problems.



Figure 5

Don prefers Tony to be the driver, because he believes that if Tony can overcome any problems that occur during Tony's trip, he can help him. During the trip Tony is asked to follow the directions of the path and the place where the Don can stay.



Figure 6

At first Tony lived with a family who had a view that blacks or Negroes could not live and work with them. So they always look down on black people.



Figure 7

Even though Tony had worked with Don for concert tours, early on in the journey Tony's views on blacks or Negroes remained the same and were difficult to change. Tony still doesn't trust Don, even though during the trip Don doesn't do anything that makes Tony feel wronged.



Figure 8

At Don's first concert, Tony changed his mind a bit about black people. His thoughts haven't completely changed, but with Don's performance when playing the piano, Tony was amazed and amazed by his playing on stage.





Figure 9



Figure 10

Tony still has the same stereotypes about people as Don. Whatever the blacks did, the Don must have done. Because Tony thinks they are the same so it's only natural that they have the same behavior and habits. Don feels that this is too narrow if he still has that mindset. Because basically everyone has a different sense of self, of course, even though they have the same skin.



Figure 11

Even so, Tony continued to do his job as stated in the contract, to ensure the state of the stage before the Don appeared. Tony didn't want Don if he didn't get the piano he wanted and there was a lot of trash on the piano that wasn't supposed to be

there if it was to be played. With Tony's efforts, finally Don can play with the piano he asked for in a clean condition.



Figure 12



Figure 13

Don held concert tours of several places to attend events organized by wealthy people. When playing on stage, Don is appreciated and appreciated for the piano playing he and his friends play. But only on stage, after that he was often discriminated against by the show owner or his own environment. Instantly the Don was considered a Negro again. Don didn't do anything wrong to deserve this treatment.



Figure 14





Figure 15

Even when Tony and Don enjoy their free time, Don still gets unpleasant stares from those around him. Their gazes defined what a person like Don was like in the environment. Even when Don was about to try on clothes that were in one of the boutiques, the owner objected and took the clothes that were in Don's hand back. Immediately Don smiled with the shop owner as if he understood and understood the condition if he did not deserve to try the clothes in the shop.



Figure 16

Even the rules of the road made it difficult for people like Don to travel alone. This should not be applied because everyone has the right to pass that way.

### *B. Discussion*

This experience is the first time for Tony to be a driver for black people who at first he did not like black people. Just because he needed money for his family, he accepted this job and tried to be professional for his boss who had given him the money he wanted before. Tony also got a guidebook to show them their paths and where to live. The thing that made Tony start to open his mind was thanks to Don who taught him many things. Tony's behavior was also improved by Don, so that he could become a better person even though the words that came out of Tony's mouth were not good words to convey. Without realizing it, Tony changed himself; he no longer looked down

on black people and also began to become a friend to Don who basically he had no friends to listen to his life story. With so much bad treatment given to Don, he couldn't help but smile and accept everything very sincerely. Don had no intention of retaliating violently like Tony did, because he thought it would look childish and immature. But when Tony sees Don's disdain from others, he's ready to stand up for him.

## **CONCLUSION**

This movie that happened around the 60s tells how an African-American gets treatment from the white people around him, even from the people who pay him to appear on stage. But he didn't get the same treatment when he got off the stage; Don was still considered a Negro who deserved to be treated differently from other people. Not only did people discriminate against Don, but he also received stereotypes that equated him with other black people. Not in positive terms, but behaviors such as evil, laziness, incivility and others.

The impact of the discriminatory treatment given by people to Don caused him to be a person who always felt insecure wherever he was. As stated by Awad et al., in 2019 the bad impact of this is insecurity, hopelessness and a sense of alienation among individuals. Therefore, it causes problems for the mental health as well as the physical health of black people.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I would like to thank all sources and supervisors who have helped and guided the author in the process of preparing this article.

## **References**

- Allport, D. A. (1968). Phenomenal simultaneity and the perceptual moment hypothesis. *British Journal of Psychology* (London, England : 1953), 59(4), 395–406.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8295.1968.tb01154.x>
- Awad, G. H., Kia-Keating, M., & Amer, M. M. (2019). A model of cumulative racial-ethnic trauma among Americans of Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) descent. *American Psychologist*, 74(1), 76–87.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000344>
- Bimantara, G. (2020). Racial Discrimination Reflected in Series Drama *Tennounourouriban (the Emperor's Cook)*. *Journal of Islamic World and Politics*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.18196/jiwp.4250>
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. In *Qualitative Research Journal* (Vol. 9, Issue 2).  
<https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>

- Danzer, G., Rieger, S. M., Schubmehl, S., & Cort, D. (2016). White Psychologists and African Americans' Historical Trauma: Implications for Practice. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma*, 25(4), 351–370.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2016.1153550>
- Ginati, R. (2015). Prasangka sosial. *Jurnal Sosial*, 1–26.
- Hasyim, D. (2018). Identifikasi Diskriminasi Ras dan Etnis Menurut Undang-Undang Nomor 40 Tahun 2008 dan Diskriminasi Wanita Menurut Undang-Undang No 7 Tahun 1984 dalam KUHP Perdata. *Jurnal Hukum De'rechtsstaat*, 4(1), 15–28.
- Jelsma, E., & Varner, F. (2020). African American adolescent substance use: The roles of racial discrimination and peer pressure. *Addictive Behaviors*, 101(May 2019), 106154. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2019.106154>
- Khasnawati, K. (2017). Social Discrimination Against Minority Reflected in Okky Madasari ' S Novel the Outcast ( 2014 ) : a Marxist Analysis. 2014.
- Lewis, T. T., & Van Dyke, M. E. (2018). Discrimination and the Health of African Americans: The Potential Importance of Intersectional ties. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 27(3), 176–182.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721418770442>
- Nurwahyuni, K., & Samelia, M. (2020). Stereotypes and Discrimination in the " Green Book " Movie : A Critical Discourse Analysis. 3(1), 44–50.
- Rani, K. D., & Winaya, I. M. (2020). Intrinsic Elements and Sociological Criticism of Green Book Movie. *Humanis*, 24(3), 247.  
<https://doi.org/10.24843/jh.2020.v24.i03.p03>
- Wulandari, F. (2020). The Negative Impact of Racial Discrimination Experienced by African-American People Reflected in Angie Thomas ' The Hate You Give. 1–12.