CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Racism is the idea that certain racial groups are inherently better than others (Hughes and Kroehler, 2010:214). This damaging belief system, often rooted in historical prejudices and stereotypes, leads individuals or groups to humiliate, discriminate against, or underestimate others based on their race or ethnicity. Racism also intersects with and reinforces other forms of discrimination, including those based on gender, disability, ability, sexual orientation, class, and age (Heldke & O'Connor, 2004).

Historically, racism has manifested in various forms, such as slavery, colonization, and segregation, profoundly impacting marginalized communities. These injustices have contributed to ongoing racial inequalities and disparities in areas such as education, employment, and healthcare. Racism has played a significant role in shaping human societies, often marginalizing and oppressing certain racial or ethnic groups (Fredrickson, 2002:5).

In contemporary society, racism persists but often in more subtle and hidden ways. Practices like microaggressions, racial profiling, and institutionalized discrimination continue to affect individuals and communities of color, perpetuating racial inequalities. The ideology of color-blind racism suggests that racism is no longer a problem, leading to the denial of ongoing racial disparities (Bonilla-Silva, 2006:27).

The film *Blindspotting*, directed by Carlos López Estrada and released in 2018, is one of films that provides a compelling narrative to explore racial dynamics and identity formation. Set in Oakland, California, the film follows Collin, a black man who witnesses a police shooting, as he navigates his own identity and place in a changing city. Through Collin's experiences and interactions, the film specifically addresses themes of race, class, privilege, and society stereotype.

Blindspotting challenges viewers to confront their biases about race and identity. By examining how *Blindspotting* depicts racial dynamics and societal stereotype, this study aims to deepen understanding of these issues and their impacts. This study seeks to contribute to broader discussions about race, identity, and representation in contemporary cinema and society.

1.2 Research Problem

Drawing from the study's background, the research problems will be categorized into two main analyses. The followings are the research problems:

1. How does *Blindspotting* depict the intrinsic elements of the film?
2. How does *Blindspotting* depict characters in the film forming their racial identity based on the way society perceives them?
3. How does *Blindspotting* reflect recent racial tensions and stereotypes?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The purposes of this study are:

1. To analyze how *Blindspotting* uses intrinsic elements to depict racial identity and societal perceptions.

2. To analyze how *Blindspotting* portrays the process of characters forming their racial identity in response to societal perceptions and pressures.

3. To examine the ways in which *Blindspotting* reflects and comments on contemporary racial tensions, stereotypes, and societal dynamics.

1.4 Previous Studies

Blindspotting directed by Carlos López Estrada, portrays the story of Collin, an African-American man, aiming to complete his probation without incident. However, his plans are disrupted when he witnesses a police shooting, leading to a reassessment of his friendship with the impulsive Miles. The film explores themes of identity and gentrification in Oakland, highlighting the complexities of race and friendship in a changing environment.

The first study reviewed is a thesis by Deani Prionazvi Rhizky from the Department of Communication, Faculty of Social Economics, Universitas Amikom Yogyakarta, titled *Wacana Rasisme dalam Film "Blindspotting"* published in October 2021. The study analyzes how *Blindspotting* portrays racism in black communities in Oakland. It focuses on the intimidation and suspicion black civilians face from the local police, despite their law-abiding behavior. The film depicts prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination, and antisemitism, highlighting the harmful effects of racism.

The second study that the writer reviewed is an undergraduate thesis by Luthfi Hakim Bintang Pratama from the English Literature Study Program, Faculty Of Languages And Communication Science, Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang in 2020 entitled *The Portrayal of Racial Discrimination and Its Psychological Effects in the Main Character of Peter Farrelly's "Green Book" Movie*. The analysis reveals that Dr. Don, the main character, faces racial discrimination from white people in America during his concert tour. The study suggests that this discrimination has negative effects on mental health, including stress, anxiety, insomnia, and irritability.

The third study that the writer reviewed is an undergraduate thesis titled *Analysis of Racism Experienced by The Main Character in Get Out (2017) Movie* by Rifqi Naila Zulfa from the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Communication Science, Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang in 2022. This study focuses on analyzing the racism portrayed in Jordan Peele's film, *Get Out* (2017). The research aims to identify and explain the types of racism depicted in the movie using George M. Fredrickson's theory. The study finds that the main character, Chris, experiences subtle, aversive, and symbolic racism, as well as cultural, institutional, and individual racism in the film.

The differences between this study and the three previous studies are this study specifically focuses on how *Blindspotting* illustrates the formation of racial identity and its reflections on recent racial tensions and stereotypes. It aims to provide a deeper understanding of the film's portrayal of these issues, potentially offering new insights and perspectives.

I.5 Scope of The Study

This study focuses on examining how *Blindspotting* portrays the process of individuals shaping their racial identity in response to societal pressures and perceptions. The analysis will closely examine key scenes to understand how the characters navigate their sense of self in relation to the expectations and biases of the world around them. Additionally, the study will explore how *Blindspotting* addresses contemporary issues of race, including stereotypes, tensions, and societal dynamics. Through this analysis, the aim is to uncover the film's insights into the complexities of race and identity in recent society.

1.6 Method of Study

1.6.1 Method of Research

For this study, the writer relied on library research to gather data. Several sources that include data relating to the subject of a study are included in Mary W. George's definition of library research as a method of data collection (2018:6). Both primary and secondary data are used in the library study method. Mary W. George defines primary data as original research or firsthand accounts of events or experiences (George, 2018:73). To put it differently, primary data denotes information gathered directly from sources, including surveys, interviews, experiments, or observations, and has not been previously published or analyzed by others. The primary data for this study was gathered from a close analysis of *Blindspotting,* focusing on the dialogues and scenes from the movie.

In addition, secondary data is information that has been collected, analyzed, and interpreted by others (George, 2018:73). It also can be interpreted that secondary data consists of sources like books, articles, and other documents that provide a second-hand account or analysis of primary data. The secondary data used in this study comprised scholarly books, journal articles, and research papers that offered insights and analyses relevant to the themes and issues explored in *Blindspotting*. Overall, the combination of primary and secondary data enabled the writer to conduct a comprehensive analysis of *Blindspotting,* enriching the study with diverse perspectives and critical insights.

1.6.2 Method of Approach

In this study, the writer uses Abrams' Theory to analyze the intrinsic aspects of *Blindspotting*. The intrinsic elements, including plot, character, setting, and theme, are studied to understand how they contribute to the film's narrative structure and message. Moreover, the writer includes the history of Black Americans, contemporary racism issues in the United States, the concept of stereotypes, the concept of racial dynamics by Michelle Eliasson in 2023, the concept of perception by Amodu in 2006 and the theory of social identity proposed by Tajfel in 1978 and later developed by Tajfel and Turner in 1979 to gain a deeper understanding of the movie. By examining these extrinsic elements, the writer aims to uncover how they work together with the intrinsic aspects of narrative to convey the film's themes and messages about race, identity, and perception. Moreover, to comprehensively analyze the film, the writer use cinematography elements to enhance the film's storytelling by creating a more immersive experience for the audience.

1.7 Organization of The Writing

The writer divides this discussion into several sections:

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer discusses the background of the study, research problems, scopes of the study, aims of the study, previous studies, research method, organization of the writing.

CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the writer will elaborate on the theory and method used in this study. The author will discuss the definitions and theories of intrinsic, extrinsic, and cinematographic elements as they pertain to the subject of this study.

CHAPTER 3 FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter contains discussion covering intrinsic, extrinsic and cinematic aspects of the film *Blindspotting* (2018) Movie.

CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION

This chapter contains the final results of the discussion of this research.

REFERENCES