

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

*Nightcrawling* is a literary work written by Leila Mottley. The story centers on Kiara Johnson, a seventeen-year-old teenager who must endure poverty, lack of secure housing, and limited access to work in Oakland, California. Her struggles reveal how structural inequality and economic deprivation create conditions where survival often requires choices that compromise safety and dignity.

This study uses a Marxist perspective to analyze the extrinsic elements of the story, focusing on four aspects of economic exploitation. First, the depiction shows how Kiara's daily life is dominated by food shortages, rent insecurity, and the inability to meet basic needs. Second, the causes and effects of economic exploitation highlight how systemic poverty forces her into unsafe decisions and limits her freedom of choice. Third, the forms of exploitation she experiences, such as underpayment, nonpayment, intimidation, and sexual substitution as payment, demonstrate how exploitation extends beyond labor into the commodification of the human body. Fourth, Kiara's financial struggles emphasize that poverty is not an individual failure but the result of unequal socio-economic structures that oppress the working class.

The findings indicate that economic exploitation in *Nightcrawling* operates at multiple levels, combining material deprivation, coercion, and structural injustice. Kiara's experiences reveal how capitalism not only exploits labor but also reduces human life and dignity to commodities controlled by those in power. Because of this economic exploitation, Kiara suffers from profound alienation, the

accumulation of misery, physical degradation, mental degradation, entrapment within the industrial reserve army, and the sacrifice of humanity. Based on these findings, future research could examine how economic exploitation intersects with race, gender, and state power, broadening the analysis of systemic injustice. Comparative studies with other literary works addressing similar themes would also provide deeper insights into how literature functions as a medium to expose and critique social injustice.