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Moonlight

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Moonlight

Moonlight is a movie that was directed by Barry Jenkins and was released in 2016. The movie has used a state-of-the-art design to present significant challenges. Black individuals face and how they maneuver to adapt to the situations. The story revolves around the theme of sexuality, masculinity, race, and gender. Therefore, Chiron being the main character in the film, his story is illustrated from childhood and the challenges he experiences, such as identity when he progresses to manhood. The media plays a vital role in ensuring equality and respect for individuals' identity regardless of their race and shaping society's perception of the Black minority. This paper will explain society's preconceived preconceptions on African Americans, discuss the problems with the mainstream media on black minorities and explain several themes based on Chiron's view.

Chiron, a young African American man struggling to find his identity suffers from being incorporated into society. He is bullied because of his sexuality and does not have a piece at home. Also, Chiron is raised in the impoverished area of Miami, and the society's preconception is that Africans were slaves and still do not deserve equal rights as other whites. Intersectionality, the central theme in the movie, indicates how Chiron is born from poverty and struggles to fit in society. Society has always expected young African American males to be stereotypical and play masculine roles. For instance, Black men were given physical jobs during slavery, and women were allowed to cook and clean. Therefore, society portrays a black man who is gay as acting feminine.

Moreover, society also preconceived femineity as a weakness. Since Chiron's sexual identity is gay, he faces significant discrimination and bullying. Randolph (2017) claimed that femininity is portrayed as a weakness, and a young black man is not required to present any sign

of weakness. The preconceived preconception with society is that gays must be flashy and bisexuals to be unrestrained. Therefore, these conventions make the African Americans to be affected in how they interact in social and private spaces; this is indicated when Chiron speaks to his mother in the rehabilitation facility and Kevil at the restaurant. In the beginning, Chiron has a tough persona, but it fades away when he shares intimate moments with the individuals he cares for. African American men rose to work as laborers and created a nation; therefore, the film condemns them to go against the image of strength and power. The society also preconceptions that African Americans cannot have equal education with the white, which is indicated in the film when Chiron struggles in school. The film indicates that Chiron, a black man, does not experience equality because he turns out to be like Juan despite going to school. As a result, Chiron was arrested and became a drug dealer.

Another society preconception of African Americans is that they do not need to present their sexual identity to the public. Kevin and Terrel also face struggles in life because of their sexuality. Chiron faced discernment for being gay and was bullied and harassed by Terrel, although Terrel and Kevin demonstrated different methods of dealing with sexuality rejection (Randolph, 2017). Chiron also faced child abuse in his earlier life. Her mother, Paula, is a drug addict, and she abuses Chiron emotionally and regularly places her interests above her sons.

The media has a role to play in ending prejudices against African American men. First, the black man is underrepresented in the media, creating a varying perception in society. For instance, although the world of the gaming industry is changing significantly in adopting black men as characters, blacks are still underrepresented, particularly as active playable characters in video games (Mastro, 2017). Also, those represented in the media feature the black man as a gangster and street individuals. The moonlight film indicates how Black men turn into drug

dealers and control society with all sorts of things. Also, Chiron goes to school and is nurtured by Juan as his father figure. Chiron follows in Juan's footsteps and is involved in drug dealings. The media has portrayed men in bias by presenting black men as gangsters and not the white.

The mainstream media also creates prejudices on the black minority because most information presented about African Americans concerns poverty. Therefore, these stories are more likely to create perceptions that can strengthen stereotypes and make it hard to recognize black males. For instance, Chiron lived in an environment that was poor and neglected by her mother (Randolph, 2017). Although living with a careless mother was one of the reasons that made Chiron not have close friends and faces ridicule from the other boys in school. However, one day as running from the bullies, runs past Juan who deals with crack. As a result, Juan pities Chiron and takes him home.

Moreover, the media can make black males perceived as efficient and holding their responsibilities as parents. However, in most cases, the media presents black men in minimum occasions to be responsible for handling specific roles in society (Mastro, 2017). for example, most African American men are not represented by the media to hold parenting roles that the audience can relate to. For instance, Chiron did not have a father, and through being raised with a single mother who is a drug addict, he admired having a father figure in his life. Juan became a father figure to Chiron, and this made him get advice. Juan teaches Chiron to swim and advises him that it is acceptable to be susceptible. It is good to allow individuals into his life because it creates meaningful associations that can make him experience love, and thus Chiron must accept to provide love.

Different individuals have varying ideologies considering sexuality. Therefore, individuals need to respect other people's sexual ideologies. Nevertheless, religions have

different opinions concerning sexual ideology because they do not support homosexuality. Chiron, a gay African American, is unable to reconcile his sexuality with society. For instance, Terrel bullies and mocks Chiron for his homosexual ideology and convinces Kevin to punch Chiron (Randolph, 2017). Therefore, for Kevin not to ruin his picture in public, he regrettably agreed to beat Chiron. The film presented how society does not provide individuals with a chance to present their sexual identity freely because Kevin ends to the extend of betraying his friend to confirm what society wants him to do. Chiron is toned between expressing his sexual identity and realizing the community; although he tries to balance the two, he cannot be himself and thus decides to go through life by himself.

Men need to have healthy masculinity and not present themselves with hyper-masculine behaviors such as aggression and assertiveness. Nevertheless, most men in society are experiencing toxic masculinity, which is harmful in their life; for instance, Kevin represented toxic masculinity by punching Chiron for fear of losing his masculinity in society. Nevertheless, Chiron represented healthy masculinity because he expressed his sexual identity as a man through being honest with himself regarding his feelings, wants, and desires. Moreover, Chiron was a cool man ever since he was young and treated every individual with kindness and respect they deserved. Zernechel & Perry (2017) stated that healthy masculinity allows men to appreciate their bodies, develop and maintain relationships, and experience and enjoy touch and affection with other men. However, although Chiron and Kevin developed a good relationship, the film has indicated that stereotypes emerge where men cannot build meaningful associations or show their weakness.

Individuals can interact in different ways; however, they need to have proper social competence to efficiently handle social associations Camras & Halberstadt (2017) claimed that

social competence provides a chance for individuals to get along with other peers and can build and maintain relationships and react in adjustable methods in the social environment. Therefore, Chiron was not socially competent because he did not have adaptive behavior that could allow him to adjust to the situations he faces in society. Also, Chiron did not have social skills such as swimming and how he could handle his challenges and at the same way interact with peers. This made him face rejection from other children.

Media has a substantial relationship with gender because it presents gender stereotypes. Men are equivalently represented by media frequently than women, but the depiction is disparaged for their representation of sexist stereotypes. Scarcelli et al. (2021) emphasized that most media channels such as television and films indicate men have aggressive characters and are more brutal than average men. This representation influences how the audience views and understands violence in society. Furthermore, when the media presents strong leaders and powerful women, it influences positive masculinity rather than the unhealthy masculinity presented in the media with inhuman, dominant, and violent characters.

Moreover, when the media indicates racial stereotypes, it will make the audience start categorizing people. For instance, lack of contact among racial individuals depends on media stereotypes to develop notions regarding individuals outside their race. Also, traditional media can significantly affect white people's perceptions of individuals of color and racial stereotypes in the television or other media channels, hence aggravating earlier racist fears (Mastro, 2017). The same source also stated that extended exposure to television projects is a reduction in self-esteem for black girls and boys; however, it enhances self-esteem for counterparts' white boys portrayed as heroes, such as in Hollywood films.

Moonlight film has used both Dutch and Oblique angle shots techniques to create different views and understand the image inside the viewer's mind. The producer used varying camera shots to make the film more interesting. For instance, a Dutch angle was used to make the video have a noticeable tilt in the camera. For instance, the Dutch angle is present when Chiron was hiding from bullies and also when they were smoking weed at the beach with Kevin. This shot was used to present tension, uneasiness, confusion, and anxiety. Oblique angle is another cinematic technique used in the film. The oblique angle technique is where the camera is tilted and not parallel to the floor. For instance, when Juan was helping Chiron sit at the table, it indicated a feeling of unbalance and instability.

The movie has communicated the message starting from the title itself. The title "moonlight" is regularly repeated in the film because it's a form of illumination. The title mimics how the moonlight operates by casting a soft glow on a young man whose life is harsh. For instance, Juan brings the idea of moonlight when he talks to Little about his childhood story. Also, "black boys look blue" is used to pass messages because blue indicates tranquility and peace in the movie because Chiron finds his true self from within and not others. Finally, the last part of the film refers to Chiron as Black several years after coming out of prison and is involved in drug dealing, which has altered his outward appearance and behavior. This indicates that he has conformed to the stereotypes and acted based on society's expectations of a black person.

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