

GENDER DISCRIMINATION TOWARD JOSEY AIMES AS THE MAIN CHARACTER IN *NORTH COUNTRY* FILM

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to find out the kinds of gender discrimination toward Josey in *North Country* film. Further, the other purpose of this research is to identify Josey's responses against gender discrimination as depicted in the film. In this research, the researcher focuses on examining kinds of gender discrimination by using Sheila McLean's theory about kinds of gender discrimination and also focuses on what Josey's responses against gender discrimination that happened to her in *North Country* film by using Feagin and Sikes's theory of responses. Furthermore, the researcher uses qualitative-descriptive research and Miles and Huberman's data analysis. In this film, the researcher finds there are four kinds of gender discrimination that have appeared in the film. The kinds of gender discrimination are subordination, marginalization, stereotype, and violence. In addition, those kinds of gender discrimination that happened toward Josey made Josey act three kinds of responses toward it. The three responses that acted by Josey in the film are withdrawal, resigned acceptance, and verbal confrontation.

Keywords: gender discrimination, sheila mclean's kinds of gender discrimination, feagin and sikes's kinds of responses, north country.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui jenis-jenis diskriminasi gender terhadap Josey dalam film North Country. Selanjutnya, tujuan lain dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi tanggapan Josey terhadap diskriminasi gender seperti yang digambarkan dalam film tersebut. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti berfokus untuk mengkaji jenis-jenis diskriminasi gender dengan menggunakan teori Sheila McLean tentang jenis-jenis diskriminasi gender dan berfokus pada apa tanggapan Josey terhadap diskriminasi gender yang terjadi padanya dalam film North Country dengan menggunakan teori tanggapan Feagin dan Sikes. Selanjutnya, peneliti menggunakan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif dan analisis data Miles and Huberman. Dalam film ini, peneliti menemukan empat jenis diskriminasi gender yang muncul dalam film tersebut. Jenis-jenis diskriminasi gender adalah

subordinasi, marginalisasi, stereotip, dan kekerasan. Selain itu, jenis-jenis diskriminasi gender yang terjadi pada Josey membuat Josey melakukan tiga macam tanggapan terhadapnya. Tiga tanggapan yang ditunjukkan oleh Josey dalam film tersebut adalah penarikan diri, penerimaan pasrah, dan konfrontasi verbal.

Kata Kunci: *diskriminasi gender, jenis-jenis diskriminasi gender sheila mclean, jenis respon feagin dan sikes, north country*

A. INTRODUCTION

Literature is a reality of human experience. One of literature characteristic tells that literature is true. Literature could describe or deliver about the real life, as seen from many kinds of literary works which adopted from social life, biographical and historical. According to Griffith, even though works of literature are fictional, they have capacity for being true (35). It means literature is an illustration of various lives that experienced by the author and also come up from the events that happen in the society. Gender discrimination takes part in literature as the real-world reflection that is still to be found in society. This reality, which is about gender discrimination that adapted by writer into literary works. The writers adapt it into literary work because of their awareness of gender inequality between men and women. Literary works that contain elements of gender discrimination usually show the story of the weak women roles and existence in the society. Sometimes, women's character in literary work is described as imperious beings, weak, helpless, less intelligent and very emotional based on their biological form. One of literary works that tells the issues about gender discrimination is a film entitled *North Country* released in 2005, and directed by Niki Caro.

North Country film tells a story about Josey Aimes as a single parent for her two children, and how the life journey of Josey Aimes as a woman who has to work in an Iron Mine and fight all of discrimination toward women, including her. This film focuses on how Josey Aimes and other women characters are treated arbitrarily and unfair by people in the work place, family and society, and also how they fight for their right to get justice. *North Country* film itself based on true events of Jenson v. Eveleth Taconite Co's case in book *Class Action: The Story of Lois Jenson and the Landmark Case That Changed Sexual Harassment Law* by Clara Bingham and Laura Leedy Gansler, which chronicled the case of Jenson v. Eveleth Taconite Company, one of the cases about sexual violence in United State.

The researcher chooses *North Country* film because this film based on the true story, and *North Country* itself only known by the public as a film about sexual harassment, but actually, the researcher found there is a gender discrimination problem that actually very strong appeared in the film when the researcher watched and understood it closely.

Based on the background above, the purposes of this study are: (1) to identify kinds of gender discrimination experienced by Josey Aimes as the main character in *North Country* film; and (2) To identify the responses of Josey Aimes against gender discrimination in *North Country* film.

B. RELATED LITERATURE

1. Discrimination

There are many experts who discuss discrimination, and two of them are Cox and Theodorson. Cox said that usually, discrimination refers to behavior bias to word a person based on their group identity, and also systemic actions to treat different groups of people in different ways (64).

Meanwhile, Theodorson and Theodorson state that discrimination is the unequal treatment of an individual or group against another individual or group based on categorical, attributes, such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, or social class membership (115).

Based on an explanation about discrimination by some experts above, the researcher concludes discrimination as an unfair action that harm one group or individual, discrimination not only in form of words, but also can be in actions that negatively affect others. Discrimination can occur in various forms, such as racial discrimination, religion, age, health discrimination, national, gender, etc.

2. Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination is one type of discrimination. Gender discrimination is a term used to describe actions or unfair treatment performed by individuals or groups based on gender differences. According to Ben Bowling and Correta Phillip, Gender discrimination is a situation in which individuals are given the service that is unfair because of their gender. It may discourage people from entering a job to which they are best suited (212).

According to McLean's theory about gender discrimination (1988), gender discrimination divides into five kinds, there are:

1. Subordination: A degrading thought or assumption. The assumption that women are irrational or emotional so that they cannot lead, thus placing women in positions that are not important.
2. Marginalization: Form of the process of marginalizing or classification due to gender differences that resulted in poverty.
3. Stereotype: Negative labeling of people or group based on their gender in a way that tends to be negative, causing injustice and losses for one gender.
4. Violence: An attack or insult of a person's physical and mental integrity. In addition, there are five forms of violence experienced by women. The five forms are, rape, Domestic violence, prostitution, molestation, and sexual and emotional harassment.
5. Double burden: Double burden is a form of discrimination that aimed at one type of gender, which is the burden of work received is more widely than any other gender.

3. Responses to Discrimination

As a direct response, no one will respond in the exact same way to the discrimination that they face. However, to demonstrate and determine the type of response to discrimination can be done by classifying a self-adjusting pattern. Joe R. Faegin and Melvin P. Sikes in their book mentioned that there are four distinct types

of response toward discrimination, namely withdrawal, resigned acceptance, verbal confrontation, and physical confrontation (83). Each of types will explain bellow:

a. **Withdrawal**

Withdrawal is one type of response of the victim that avoids discrimination that is happening or will happen. Withdrawal as a response to discrimination carried out after careful assessment to leave the side of discrimination rather than to create a disturbance (103).

b. **Resign Acceptance**

Resigned acceptance is a type of response toward discrimination that ignores discrimination with self-acceptance that something unwanted cannot be avoided. The resigned acceptance is a response that ignores the discrimination, and continues with the interaction. It is a kind of “blocking” strategy.

c. **Verbal Confrontation**

Verbal confrontation is verbally challenging the discrimination as a respond of disagreement. Verbal confrontation as a response to discrimination that verbally reprimanded the discriminators. Reprimand can be in the form of sarcasm, a subtle or rough reprimand.

d. **Physical Confrontation**

Physical Confrontation is a type of response toward discrimination that is using physical power to fight for their right. Physical confrontation defines as physically responding to the discrimination. Unlike verbal confrontations, a physical confrontation is a physical counterattack committed by victims of discrimination to end the discrimination that happens to them

C. RESEARCH METHOD

1. Research Design

This research includes as qualitative research. Quinn Paton stated that Qualitative research is characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its method which (in general) generate words rather than numbers as data for analysis (2). Besides that, this research also includes as descriptive research. Descriptive research is a research that leads to a systematic description of a situation, problem, phenomenon, service, or program, or information about the situation that life conditions in the community or description of an attitude toward a particular problem (Liberio 6).

So, based on some explanations of previous experts, descriptive research can be concluded as a study that contains about the situation, events, or current issues, which aims to make systematic representation, factual and accurate about the relationship between the phenomena that analyzed. Therefore, this research concluded as descriptive qualitative research, because its research is in the form of words in describing, analyzing, and interpreting the problems that exist.

2. Data and Source of Data

The data source in this research is the film script and *North Country* film itself. *North Country* film will be analyzed through narration, dialogue, expression and action of the characters in the movie. Furthermore, the data which consist of

narration, picture, dialogue, expression, picture and action will be presented through words, phrases, sentences, clauses, paragraphs, throughout the movie. The data are only information that relate with the gender discrimination issues and response toward gender discrimination that reflected in the film.

3. Data Collection

Data collection for the first research question and the second research question will be obtained by taking several steps. First step, the researcher watches *North Country* film, listen carefully about the conversation in the film, and read the script of the film to understand the story of the film. The second step is choosing the data. Which is the researcher choosing and selects the scenes and dialogue in the film and script that felt relevant with the problems of the study. In this step, the researcher observed the narration, dialogues, expression and actions that relates to the categories of gender discrimination and response toward discrimination. Third step, the researcher re-watches the movie and filled the data that may have missed. The last step, researcher divide the data into each category of kinds of gender discrimination, and also divide the data into each category of types of responses to discrimination, then classifying the data that has been gathered before.

4. Data Analysis

The Researcher used three parts of data analyze by Miles and Huberman which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion, drawing and verification.

1. Data reduction: A process of selecting, simplifying, focusing, abstracting, and transforming raw data that have been collected.
2. Data display: A process of displaying and analyzing the data. In this section the data are displayed in the form of descriptions.
3. Conclusion, drawing and verification: a process of describing conclusions after the data has been analyzed. This final step contains the result of the research. In this research, conclusions are made after all data are valid and relevant in answering the research problems.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Findings

In this part, the findings of the research were divided into two parts based on two research questions of this research: Kinds of gender discrimination toward Josey Aimes as the main character in *North Country* film, and the responses of Josey Aimes to against gender discrimination in the film. Thus, the data findings of this research are presented as the following parts.

1.1 Kinds of Gender Discrimination Toward Josey Aimes as the Main Character in *North Country* Film

In this study, the kinds of gender discrimination that happen to Josey Aimes are analyzed by using Sheila McLean's theory about kinds of gender discrimination. The data shows that there are four kinds of gender discrimination that are shown in the analysis below:

a. Subordination

The first kind of gender discrimination that showed in this film is subordination. Subordination is a degrading thought or assumption that women are irrational or emotional. The assumption that the rules of one gender are lower than another gender. This kind of gender discrimination caused Josey cannot to lead, thus placing Josey in positions that are not important. In *North Country* film, the researcher found some evidence that matched the degrading thought or assumption act.

The other evidence of the subordination act also can be seen in the scene when Josey came to Mr. Pearson, the owner of the mining company, to report several complaints about discrimination that occurs in the Mine.

(Data 2)

Josey : I didn't want to forget anything, so I wrote a couple of things down

on a piece of paper here.

Mr. Pearson : **Excuse me, Josey... Do you mind if I call you Josey?**

Josey : No.

Mr. Pearson : I'd like to make this easier for you...if you don't mind. I know what you're going to tell me. I've been well-briefed.

Josey : Great. I just thought that a few of these...

Mr. Pearson : **Please, I think you'll be pleasantly surprised. Well, the current union contract requires... ...that an employee provide us with two weeks' notice... ...before leaving his position. However, given how obviously emotional this has been for you... ...we're willing to do something special in this case. We've decided to waive the two-week requirement... ...and allow you to tender your resignation effective immediately.**

(Min. 01:02:43-01:03:36)

In this movie, Mr. Pearson is the owner of the Mine company where Josey works. The actions taken by Mr. Pearson above are classified as acts of discrimination in a form of subordination to Josey. Mr. Pearson repeatedly stopped Josey every time she tried to convey her complaint, Mr. Pearson did not let Josey convey her thoughts because he considered Josey is a woman, and her opinion was not important. Mr. Pearson actually intends to fire Josey. Seeing this, Josey, realizing that she still needed the job, so, she was forced not to continue her protests.

b. Marginalization

Besides subordination, in this film also reflected the marginalization which defined as a form of the process of marginalizing or classification due to gender differences that resulted in poverty. In the film, Marginalization can be seen in several events. The first marginalization act that appears in the film happened to

Josey when Josey reports to Mr. Pavich about acts of discrimination committed by male employees against herself and other female workers.

(Data 7)

Mr. Pavich : Are you hearing a word of what I'm saying? **You're taking jobs**

where there aren't any to take. These boys aren't your friends. I'm not your friend. **You got no business being here** and you damn well know it.

(Min. 00:29:55-00:30:06)

From the treatment and words shown by Mr. Pavich to Josey above is also categorized as an act of marginalization, which is a kind of gender discrimination that categorizes or differentiates work between men and women, causing poverty for one gender. Mr. Pavich clearly considers that work in the mines is a job that only men deserve, so Josey should not work and even be there because she is a woman where women should only take care of household matters. Mr. Pavich's thoughts as above can cause difficulties and poverty for women who need work to be able to finance their needs, especially women like Josey who is a widow with two children.

c. Stereotype

Stereotype is the third kind of gender discrimination that happened to Josey in *North Country* film. McLean defines gender stereotypes as negative labeling of people or group based on their gender in a way that tends to be negative, causing injustice and losses for one gender. The evidence of gender stereotype happened when Josey was in court and in the middle of trial. Josey gets gender stereotypes from Mr. Pavich who acted as a witness on the part of the Mining company to fight the demands regarding gender discrimination that happened to her and other female workers.

(Data 9)

Leslie Conlin : How do you know who to believe in a situation like that?

Mr. Pavich : Look, **men will always walk the line.** It's when they cross over it... ..is when most gals give them a slap on the hand... ..get them back on their side of that line. **That's how men and women have been handling problems since Adam and Eve.**

(Min. 00:46:07-00:46:37)

Mr. Pavich's statement above is also a form of gender stereotype because Mr. Pavich's statement above contains negative points of view about women, especially Josey. Mr. Pavich thinks that it is impossible for men to make mistakes because men always follow the rules, while Josey acts according to her emotions. This is a form of a stereotype because what Mr. Pavich is not based on facts, but only based on his own perspective about women. His statement which says "**That's how men and women have been handling problems since Adam and Eve**" is also a form of stereotype, because he considers all men and all women,

in handling problems from the past until now, that men will always follow the rules, while women don't, they follow their feeling or emotion.

d. Violence

Violence is an attack or assault on both physical and non-physical. According to McLean, violence is the most obvious and visible form of decriminalization. It is an attack or insult of a person's physical and mental integrity (11). In *North Country* film, the violence act could be found in several scene. The evidence of gender discrimination, the type of violence that happened to Josey, can also be seen in the scene on Josey's first day working at a mining company. Josey came late and she got dirty joke from the Mr. Pavich about her Body, which is her private thing.

(Data 13)

Mr. Pavich : You're late. Got your paperwork?

Josey : Yeah. Yes, sir. I got my consent form.

Mr. Pavich : Yeah. **The doc says you look darn good under those clothes. Sense of humor, ladies.**

(Min. 00:17:22-00:17:35)

Through the scene above, the words of Mr. Pavich indicated as violence, indirect violence against Josey, especially violence in a form of sexual and emotional harassment. Mr. Pavich did violence against Josey in the form of sexual and emotional harassment by saying that the body behind Josey's clothes was really beautiful, this was a form of harassment against Josey because he commented on someone's body which was a private matter. Apart from that, Mr. Pavich didn't feel guilty about his words either, he said it was just a joke. In this case, the words of Mr. Pavich are no longer a joke, but discrimination in the form of sexual and emotional harassment, because his words are something that is not fun for Josey. Mr. Pavich was indicated as sexual and emotional harassment also because he used vulgar jokes against Josey that make Josey uncomfortable and embrace. Hearing Mr. Pavich's words, Josey just silently accepted without fighting or reprimanding him, because she had no power and at that time it was also his first day working there.

1.2 Responses of Josey Aimes against Gender Discrimination in *North Country* Film

In this section, the second research question regarding the response of Josey Aimes to gender discrimination that occurs to her is answered by analyzing the data using Joe R. Feagin's and Melvin P. Sikes' response theory. Throughout the story of *North Country* film, there are three types of Josey Aimes's responds toward gender discrimination ranging from withdrawal, resigned acceptance, and verbal confrontation.

a. Withdrawal

Withdrawal is a type of response that avoids discrimination that is happening

or will happen. Feagin and Sikes said that withdrawal is a response carried out after careful assessment to leave the side of discrimination rather than to create a disturbance. The stage of withdrawal response could be seen when Josey Aimes as the main character asking to the workers at the mine company to drive her home. Josey tries to avoid the discrimination that may be happen again after she got discriminated from Bobby Sharp at the Powder room.

(Data 14)

Josey : **Can somebody drive me home, please?**

Betty : Where's your dad?

Josey : He's on nights.

Betty : Just take my keys from my locker.

Mr. Pavich : Where do you think you're going?

Josey : **I quit.**

(Min. 01:13:37- 01:14:09)

The action taken by Josey to leave and quit the mining company was a withdrawal response she took to avoid discrimination that occurred and that might happen again in the future. This response was made by Josey as the only thing she could do at the time because even speaking no one wanted to believe or defend her because she was a woman, and women were not respected in the mining company. So that, Josey did not make any response except to avoid it.

b. Resign Acceptance

Resigned Acceptance is a kind of response that the victim accepts and ignores the discrimination, and continues with the interaction. In this film, when it is impossible for the victim to avoid the discrimination that occurs, Josey tries to accept the discrimination, Josey tries to accept the gender discrimination that men in the workplace or family do to her and did nothing about it because that was how the society and men works. The evidence of resign acceptance response of Josey could be seen when Josey have an argue with Sammy, her own son.

(Data 16)

Sammy : Just most people's mothers cook and clean. They don't work at
the mine.

Josey : Remember you used to tell me you want to be a doctor when you
grew up? So., I used to tell you, you could be anything you want. Isn't it the same for me? Aren't I allowed to be anything I want?

Sammy : Not when you're doing someone else's job.

Josey : **Bill White's signing some autographs down at the rink on Saturday. We could go...**

(Min. 01:05:33-01:06:03)

The scene above shows that Josey just tries to accept and ignore the

discrimination that occurs but still continues the interaction by talking about new topics. It is a kind of blocking strategy to ended the discrimination so that discrimination does not continue. Josey's response above is also classified as resigned acceptance because Josey only ignores the discrimination that occurs without making any defense or resistance either verbally or physically.

c. Verbal Confrontation

When Josey felt she had enough of the discrimination that society and men had against her and other women, she eventually took some actions against the discrimination to get justice by fighting verbally. The evidence of verbal confrontation response of Josey could be seen when Josey responded to Sammy stereotype by get her point across to Sammy telling him that she always allows him to be whatever he wants when he grows up, then why can't his mother be whatever she wants to be.

(Data 19)

Sammy : Just most people's mothers cook and clean. They don't work at the mine.

Josey : Remember you used to tell me you want to be a doctor when you grew up?

Sammy : So?

Josey : **So. I used to tell you, that you could be anything you want. Isn't it the same for me? - Aren't I allowed to be anything I want?**

(Min. 01:05:33-01:05:58)

Josey's response above shows that she was trying to say that women also allow and can also do whatever they want. a mother can also work in a company or other industry, not only doing housework. Her response is classified as verbal confrontation because she verbally opposed that gender discrimination without physical threat as a form of disagreement response to the statement of Sammy who underestimated women jobs.

2. Discussions

North Country film is directed by Niki Caro, successfully reflects the gender discrimination that occurs in the family environment and in the work environment. This film focuses on the gender discrimination that occurs in Josey Aimes as the main character in *North Country* film. In the research of Gender discrimination toward Josey Aimes described above, the researcher found out that according to McLean's theory kinds of gender discrimination there are four kinds of gender discrimination that appear in this research. The four kinds of gender discrimination are subordination, marginalization, stereotype, and violence.

Among the four kinds of gender discrimination that have been found in this research, violence is the most dominant kind of gender discrimination that appears

or most often occurs in Josey in the film. In *North Country* film, violence can be seen through how the way men around Josey thought or treated her. The violence that Josey experienced varied, ranging from violence in the form of domestic violence by her husband Wayne, to rape by her teacher, Mr. Lattavansky, molestation carried out by Bobby Sharp, to sexual and emotional harassment by Mr. Pavich, Bobby Sharp and also male workers at the mining company where Josey works.

In addition, subordination also appears in this film. The subordination that Josey experiences is often seen by the assumptions and actions of people around Josey who challenge Josey's decision to work in the company because they think that women are irrational and emotional, they cannot lead to the important position, and their role is only to take care of household matters.

Next is marginalization. Happened to Josey when she decided to work in the mines, she experienced rejection from people around her because they thought that mining work was not a job intended for women. Mine work is a job that only men can do. This was expressed by Hank and Mr. Pavich to Josey. This kind of discrimination makes it difficult for Josey to get a job and can cause poverty for Josey because of her situation that she is a widow with two children who have to earn money to support her life and her children. And the last, the kind of gender discrimination that occurs in Josey is Stereotype. The stereotype experienced by Josey occurs in the form of the assumption that a mother is someone who has to take care of all household matters, starting from cooking, washing, taking care of children, and others.

Through this research, the researcher also found that the various forms of gender discrimination that happened to Josey in this film lead her to make several responses to fight it and to get justice. Using the response theory of Joe R. Feagin and Melin P. Sikes, the researcher found out how Josey responded to the gender discrimination that happened to her in the film. The researcher found that there are three kinds of responses that Josey showed based on gender discrimination that happened to her, namely withdrawal, resigned acceptance, and verbal confrontation.

Withdrawal happened when Josey chose to avoid discrimination that is happening or will happen to her with no attention to taking any part of it. Josey chooses to avoid discrimination that is currently or may occur because Josey is aware that she can no longer accept the discrimination that is happening to her, and she also realizes that she does not have enough strength, either physically or in a high position to stop the discrimination. At the beginning of the film, when Wayne, Josey's husband, returns home and immediately begins discriminating violence in the form of domestic violence against Josey, Josey tries to avoid it by leaving her home and husband, because if they stay, the discrimination will continue, and she will not be able to dodge or fight.

When there is no opportunity to avoid discrimination that is currently occurring or discrimination that has suddenly occurred, Josey was responding to it by resigned acceptance. Josey's resigned acceptance response is shown when she has to accept the fact that she must be prepared to experience discrimination from male workers at work because there will be no defense or protection from the company, Josey must be ready to accept the stereotype that women should not work in mines, and Josey

must also accept the fact that every facility provided by the company for her and other female workers contains indications of discrimination.

The last response of Josey toward gender discrimination is when Josey feels like he is capable enough to fight discrimination and chooses to seek justice and equal rights by making verbal confrontations against the discrimination that occurs to her. Josey fought the discrimination she experienced by taking her case to court. Josey sued the mining company and the male workers who discriminated against her. Josey's action is a form of verbal confrontation response.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of kinds of gender discrimination toward Josey Aimes as the main character in *North Country* film, the researcher found that there are four kinds of gender discrimination that have appeared in the *North Country* film by using the theory of Sheila McLean about kinds of gender discrimination. The four kinds of gender discrimination are subordination, marginalization, stereotype, and violence.

Thus, after analyzing the kinds of gender discrimination toward Josey in the film, the researcher also analyzed the kinds of responses that Josey showed against gender discrimination that happened to her by using Feagin and Sikes's theory about kinds of responses. The researcher concluded that there are three kinds of responses shown by Josey in the film, starting from withdrawal, followed by resigned acceptance, then ending with verbal confrontation.

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