

## Analysis of Racism in “12 Years A Slave” Movie Directed By Steve Mcqueen

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### Abstract

**Analysis of Racism in “12 Years A Slave” Movie Directed By Steve Mcqueen.** Racism mostly still happens in many countries, especially the country with a lot of majorities and minority groups with very strict differences in characteristics such as in the United States of America or other European countries. This action is depicted very clearly in racism in 12 years movie. The study aims to analyze racism in 12 years movie directed by Steve Mcqueen. The method used is descriptive qualitative. The result of the study shows that racial prejudice that occurs in *12 Years a Slave Movie* happened in the four social aspects of social structure, there are in the aspect of economic life, political and legal process, and in educational aspect. This study also reveals that the novel also reflects the racial prejudice in its social aspects of social structure in Southern America in the 1950s.

Keywords: racism, discrimination, characters

### Introduction

Racism is a concept that excludes a group of people based on their race or ethnicity (Lentin, 2000). If this understanding is correctly interpreted, it may lead to differences in how people view others based on a variety of factors, such as skin colour, nationality, faith, and race. In reality, since everyone is born differently, prejudice does not exist because we are all one unit, regardless of ethnicity or race. However, many people continue to underestimate one another, allowing prejudice to existing in daily life. They believe that these various groups deserve to be bullied, resulting in several instances of racism around the world, including one in the

United States.

Americans were viewed as a race with negative traits like as sloth, theft, and sexual indiscretions. (Navarro-Ayala, 2012). White people's economic bias against black people stems from their perception of blacks as symbols of sloth, poverty, homelessness, and inability to do a competent work. The economics of black people was exploited by white people. (Simpson & Yinger, 2013) analyze prejudice and discrimination in America and split them into five parts of social structure: (1) economic life, (2) political and legal procedures, (3) family patterns and intermarriage, (4) religious institutions, and (5) education.

In the United States, one example of racism is in the music industry. Bob Dylan, the well-known American musician, is being investigated in France after a Croatian cultural group accused him of making racial hate remarks in Rolling Stone magazine. Dylan tried to convey prejudice was back in America in an interview with the publication. Dylan said at the time, "Blacks can taste it if they have ancestors who were slave masters or members of the (Ku Klux) Klan in their blood. Until now, Jews have tasted Nazi blood and Serbs have tasted Croatian blood." With the current case of racism in America, racist-themed films have been made, one of which is *12 Years a Slave*.

This film depicts the life of an independent New York nigger who is abducted in Washington, DC and forced to work as a slave in Louisiana for 12 years. He also defined the extent of cotton and sugar plantations in Louisiana, as well as slave market operation in Washington, DC and New Orleans. *12 Years a Slave* is a moving film that exposes the brutality of the slavery system, which did in fact exist. The audience would undoubtedly be moved by the portrayal of slaves' lives as insignificant in the eyes of their masters and those in positions of power.

The presence of different races in the world, as depicted in the film *12 Years a Slave*, cannot be distinguished from racism. And though the era has progressed, many people still hold racist beliefs. This is not a new concept in the international community; in reality, it is deeply rooted. Racism is a community of people's viewpoint that distinguishes one race from another. Racism promotes racial inequality, which has caused tensions in the international community. There are groups that believe they are superior (better) than others, and there are groups that feel embarrassed.

It is interesting to analyze because racism is sometimes found in the real life. On another side, *the 12 Years a Slave movie* helps the people who watch this movie to understand that racism is something real, something that must be stopped in the

name of human rights. In addition, racism become a part of social conflict that usually happened in human life and it has an influence on human interaction, human social life. In this research, I would like to find out and discuss the racism in *12 Years a Slave* in social aspect by using sociology literary approach.

There has been a lot of previous studies about racism in general, the researchers found two relevant studies. First research from (Taufik & Hasniar, 2016), Taufi's study focuses on the types and impacts of racial injustice against black characters in *12 Years a Slave*. He uses three different ones theory to find out the answer to the goal: Paradies et. al and Liliweri theory about types of racial injustice and Utsey et. al theory about the impact of racial injustice. Taufik's research form is descriptive qualitative research. The results of his research found five types of racial injustice and three types of impact. Types of racial injustice are prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination, violence, and segregation. Meanwhile, the three impacts are presented as trauma related to racism, stress and distress related to racism, and anticipatory racism reaction.

Second, Dezelin Brigitha Julan's research on January 2021. (Julan et al., 2021) Julan research aims to describe the depiction of racial discrimination shown in Solomon and Patsey's characters in the film *12 Years a Slave*. To do so, this research using Allport's theory of intentional and explicit discrimination that focuses on certain types of racial discrimination such as verbal antagonism, avoidance, segregation, physical attack, and extermination. This study shows that the depiction of race discrimination as shown in the characters Solomon and Patsey from *12 Years a Slave* films are classified into five types of intentional and explicit discrimination: behaviors such as verbal antagonism, avoidance, segregation, physical assault, and extermination. On the one hand, the depiction of racial discrimination as shown in Solomon's characters include verbal antagonism, avoidance, separation, physical attack, and annihilation. On the other hand, the depiction as shown in Patsey's character is a little different because Patsey doesn't experience anything segregation treatment. This study concludes the depiction of racial discrimination as shown in the characters Solomon and Patsey occur as a result of the color white supremacist ideology as the basis of thought and belief of most white figures in film. Two previous researches above is different from this study, where the purpose of this study is to find out the racism experienced in the *12 Years a Slave* film by using a sociology literary approach.

## **Methodology**

This research utilized descriptive qualitative method. The method used to describe the racism contained in the movie *12 Years a Slave* as the source of data for this research is the movie *12 Years a Slave*. (The data is in the form of words or all of the utterances from transcripts. The researchers also took other sources such as books, and other relevant references).

The data collection technique that employed in this research is divided into three steps; first, Observation is an activity to see directly (without using medium) the object of research to look closely at what the object doing with that activity (Soehartono, 2004). In the meantime, the researchers directly watched the movie *12 Years a Slave* and paid attention to the important points that probably supported research data. The important points mean in this case are not only come from the dialogues observation that viewed in the movie, but also from each event, scene that happened or played in the movie. Second, Documentation. In this step, the researchers took a note of some important parts of the story in the film and related it with the relevant data from other sources to support the research topic (such as books, the script of the movie, internet, etc). Third, Classifying, before summarizing data, firstly the researchers needed to classify the data into several parts based on the concept that discussed in a theoretical framework. It helped in the process of analyzing data.

Data analysis is a selected data to be analyzed. The data collected will be analyzed to answer the problem statements. Thus, it will be focusing on the racism in the movie *12 Years a Slave*. In this study, the researchers tried to analyze the data that have been collected briefly. The analysis aimed to get valid data that is appropriate with the research problems. There are some steps in doing data analysis as follows:

- a. After the data have been collected, the researchers tried to review the data that have been collected.
- b. Classifying the data that deals with the statement of the problems.
- c. Analyzing the data that explained aspects of the character's personality based on the movie, based on the statement of the problems.
- d. Drawing conclusion after the data has been analyzed.

## Findings

In this chapter, the researchers presented about the characters, setting, and themes.

### 1. Characters

This film features characters that help to represent racism. It provides a cast of characters that are both white and black. White character like Burch, Theophilus, John Tibbeats, Bass, Mr. Epps, and Mrs Epps and also there is one black folks are Clemens Ray.

#### a. Burch

*“Resolve this. Produce your papers. You’re no free man. And you ain’t from Saratoga. You’re from Georgia. You ain’t a freeman. You’re nothing but a Georgia runaway. You’re just a runaway nigger from Georgia. You’re a slave! You’re a Georgia slave! Are you a slave?”*

(00:13:58,338 --> 00:14:47,561)

#### b. Clemens Ray

*“If you want to survive, do and say as little as possible. Tell no one who you really are and tell no one you can read and write. Unless you want to be a dead nigger”. (00:21:40,758 --> 00:21:50,193)*

*“Three can’t go against the whole crew. The rest here are niggers. Born and bred slaves. Niggers ain’t got no stomach for a fight. Not a damn one”. (00:22:22,633 --> 00:22:33,277)*

#### c. Theophilus

*“Ah, yes. A thousand for Platt. This is a nigger of considerable talent, I assure you. 700 for Eliza. My fairest price”.*

(00:29:55,669 --> 00:30:06,393)

#### d. John Tibbeats

*Are you an engineer, or a nigger?*

(00:36:37,737 --> 00:36:40,490)

*“You black bastard. You goddamn black bastard. Strip your clothes. Strip”*

(00:46:01,175 --> 00:46:14,317)

*“You will not live to see another day, nigger! Help! Murder! I’m sorry”!*

(00:46:26,409 --> 00:46:45,011)

#### e. Mr. Epps

*“You’re a liar. You damn liar. I saw you talking with her. Tell me”*

(01:10:22,760 --> 01:10:32,190)

*"I'll cut your black throat!"*  
(01:10:35,815 --> 01:10:37,567)

*"It's the Lord's day. Ain't nothing Christian in us carrying on like this. I concede to you. In the name of valor help your master to his feet. I'm gonna kill you!"*  
(01:11:33,372 --> 01:12:00,691)

*"I'll fetch you down. I'll teach you to go to Shaw's. Treach. Run and fetch some line. Strip her. Strike her bare and lash her to the post. You done this to yourself, Pats".*

*"Beat her. Give her the whip! Give it all to her! Platt, you come here and you beat her now. Plat!! Come here!"*

*"You strike her. Strike her"*

*"Strike her, Platt, strike her! You will strike her until her flesh is rent and meat and blood flow equal or I will kill every nigger in my sight. You understand me? Strike her! Strike her! Until I say no more. I ain't said nothing! Give me the whip! Ge up!"*

(01:50:11,980 --> 01:51:43,371)

*"You might as well ask what the difference is between a white man and a baboon. I saw one of them critters in Orleans. Know just as much as any nigger I got"*

(01:44:05,156 --> 01:44:15,875)

*"You know, you know, you know! You know! You miserable black dogs .You stand like the deaf and dumb. Speak! She gone. My Pats is gone".*

(01:46:02,773 --> 01:46:36,648)

#### **f. Mrs Epps**

*"You will sell the niggers"(01:00:33,755 --> 01:00:36,258)*

*"Are you blind or ignorant? It was hot, hateful scorn. It filled that black face. You tell me you didn't see it. It's because you choose not to look, or are you saying I lie"?*

(01:16:52,691 --> 01:17:05,539)

*"You let it be, it's gonnacomeback to us in the dark of night. You want that? You want them black animals leave us gut like pigs in our own sleep? Oh.. You are manless" (01:17:22,721 --> 01:17:40,073)*

## 2. Settings

In “12 Years a Slave” the description of some settings and scene such as such as the Prison, Farm, Ship, Epps Residence and the Epps House.

### a. The prison

**Burch** : “You're not any free man”.

**Solomon** : “I promise you upon my liberation. I will have satisfaction for this wrong”.

**Burch** : “Resolve this”

**Burch** : “Produce your papers. You're no free man. And you ain't from Saratoga. You're from Georgia. You ain't a freeman. You're nothing but a Georgia runaway. You're just a runaway nigger from Georgia. You're a slave! You're a Georgia slave! Are you a slave”?

(00:13:24,012 --> 00:14:11,517)

**Clemens** : “I'd be just as certain they're counting the money paid for delivering You to this place”.

**Clemens** : “The reality to come is us being transported southward. New Orleans, if I was to venture. After we arrive, we'll be put to market. And beyond that...Well, I suppose once in a slave state, there's only one outcome”.

(00:18:20,725 --> 00:18:46,935)

### b. Slave Trader Room (Theophilus House)

**Eliza** : “You will not take them from me”!

**Theophilus** : “God damn you! Get her out of here, Cape”!

**Eliza** : “Please! No! No”!

**Theophilus** : “Get her out of here, god damn it! Platt, get your fiddle. Play, play, play something. I will give you something to cry about, you goddamned witch! Get her out of here, Cape! Out, now”!

(00:31:36,019 --> 00:31:52,415)

### c. Farm

**Epps** : “A good day's labor would average 200 pounds”.

**Armsby** : “Yes, sir”.

**Epps** : “I'm sure in time, you'll develop as a picker. But it takes effort, boy. Put some damn effort into it”.

**Armsby** : “Yes, sir”.

- Epps** : “Take them out, get to whipping”.  
(01:29:10,345 --> 01:29:30,415)
- Treach** : “182 for Platt”
- Epps** : “How much can even an average nigger pick a day?”.  
**Treach** : “200 pounds”
- Epps** : “This nigger ain't even average”.  
(00:56:24,464 --> 00:56:34,558)

#### d. Epps House

- Mrs. Epps** : “Sell her”
- Epps** : “What's all this”?
- Mrs. Epps** : “You will sell the negress.”
- Epps** : “Sell little Pats? She pick with more vigor than any other nigger. Choose another to go”
- Mrs. Epps** : “No other. Sell her”
- Epps** : “I will not”
- Mrs. Epps** : “You will remove that black bitch from this property...or I'll take myself back to Cheneyville.”  
(01:00:31,294 --> 01:00:54,614)

### 3. Theme

#### a. Religion

- Mr. Epps** : “I am deeply sadness to hear about your misfortune. Your price don't reflect your concern. Listen up. You're Judge Turner's for the season. More, if need be, until my crops return. Y'all bring no disrespect to me. Don't bring no biblical plagues to him, you hear? Or I'll take it out on your skin. Get out”.(01:22:35,617 --> 01:23:00,521)

#### b. Sexual Assault

- Mr. Epps** : “Strike her, Platt, strike her! You will strike her until her flesh is rent and meat and blood flow equal or I will kill every nigger in my sight. You understand me? Strike her! Strike her! Until I say no more. I am not said anything! Give me the whip! Get up”!  
(01:13:29,980 --> 01:15:25,371)

#### c. Identity

- Burch** : “Resolve this. Produce your papers. You're no free man. And



*you ain't from Saratoga. You're from Georgia. You ain't a freeman. You're nothing but a Georgia runaway. You're just a runaway nigger from Georgia. You're a slave! You're a Georgia slave! Are you a slave"?*

(00:13:58,338 --> 00:14:47,561)

#### **d. Racism and Slavery**

**Clemens** :*"After we arrive, we'll be put to market. And beyond that...Well, I suppose once in a slave state, there's only one outcome"*.

(00:18:39,368 --> 00:18:46,935)

### **Discussion**

#### **Characters**

Burch was a cruel man who subjected even Solomon Northup to torture. This was the start of Solomon Northup's most difficult life as a slave, as he was duped by two white people who gave him a job with the circus company. Solomon Northup's life changed radically as he went from becoming a free Negro to a slave. Then Solomon Northup was subjected to physical abuse by his defenders, who beat him regularly and forced him to confess that he was from Georgia. He was subjected to physical and psychological violence for the first time.

Relating to the idea of Blummer who proposed four feelings that always appear in racial prejudice of the dominant group, i.e. the feeling of superiority.(Blumer, 1958) The feeling of superiority is the feeling that there is a self-assured that the dominant racial group is superior and better than the subordinate group.(Wade, 1987)

Theophilus Freeman is a ruthless New Orleans slave trader who abducts Solomon, Eliza, and her children (among others) from his business partner James Burch. He is cruel, refusing to let Eliza and her daughter, Emily, remain together despite William Ford's offer to buy them both. Freeman is an evil and selfish man who thinks he will profit more from Emily as she grows older. Theophilus Freeman bustled about in a very industrious manner, getting his property (slaves) ready for the sales-room, intending, no doubt, to do that day a rousing business.

Racial prejudice also prevented African American Workers from obtaining the same quality of work preparation and from securing satisfying employment. (Abielah, 2016). According to Bates & Bates, African Americans often occupied jobs with low status, low financial reward, little chance for upward mobility, and jobs that no one else would perform.(Bates & Bates, 1997)

Tibeats is a vicious and capricious master, frequently attempting to hurt or even murder Solomon although Solomon is a dedicated and skilled artisan, in stark contrast to the kind and sensitive Ford.

Tibeats and Solomon are at issue because Tibeats is unhappy with Solomon's work. Tibeats is walking around the room checking at his work as if hunting for his fault. He chastises him because he believes he does not comply with the rules. He believes, however, that he has carried out his orders. Tibeats is strangling him around the neck, but he is fighting back. Tibeats becomes enraged and threatens him as if he will murder him. He swears niggers. This term refers to those with black skin.

According to Kleck, the prejudice toward blacks is higher in the legal process when blacks commit a violent crime against whites. Blacks could easily sentence the death penalty. (Kleck, 1981) Traditionally, blacks and whites have not been treated equally under the law especially in the United States.

Epps is Solomon's third and most inhumane master, whom Solomon serves for ten years. Epps is cruel and spiteful to all of his slaves, including Solomon (whom he refers to as Platt), but reserves particularly brutal treatment to an elderly male slave named Abram and a young pretty female slave named Patsey. Epps frequently rapes Patsey, making her the object of Mrs Epps' jealousy and hatred.

This judgment was given to Solomon Northup by his Master, Epps When Solomon Northup indicated that he had told another slave about his identity, Epps who did not know the true identity of Solomon Northup he was tried and convicted. Thought that Solomon Northup was a liar. Mr Epps cannot control his bad temper. Thus, he expresses his emotion by swearing at Solomon.

According to the idea of income Simpson Yinger, many jobs were widely regarded as "black" or "white," and those designated black were inferior in status and pay relative to those in the white category. (Simpson & Yinger, 2013) Besides, the incomes of blacks were lower than whites.

Solomon knew that Epps would simply create his way to hassle Patsey which might cause her to induce another harsh treatment from Mrs Epps. The physical attacks done by Epps was he pushed Solomon onerous enough to own him bit the bottom and threatened him by shoving a knife to his throat. No injury came out of this, however, Epps' behaviour was still enclosed as a physical attack since he inflicted murder arrange on Solomon.

Mr Epps strikes Patsey until he is not able to do it. Mr Epps takes the whip from Solomon and starts to stroke her brutally. It is terrible. Solomon cannot stand

seeing it in front of his eyes. He warns him about this sin that he should redeem later in eternal justice. This scene also showed how bad the niggers were treated by White Americans, they relentlessly whipped, stroked, beaten even killed the slave if they wanted. Slaves' life was fully tortured by violence by the White American, even in every step they took their life were humiliated directly.

Mr Epps uttered this sentence. Epps noticed a significant difference between white and coloured persons. He also used the word "baboon," which refers to persons of colour. It appeared that Epps believed that coloured people were no better than baboons in terms of physic and mind. Eps, on the other hand, believes that there is a significant difference between white and black. Furthermore, he uses the term baboon to refer to people of colour.

Mr Epps becomes enraged as a result. As a result, he scolds her and yells at her using the phrase "black dog." The word dog is an epithet that describes someone as an animal. Because Mr Epps is inebriated, he is unable to manage his rage. He has no control over what he says. He also threatens Phebe to coerce her into providing information regarding Patsey's whereabouts.

According to Blummer 1958, his kind of feeling also often appear in the dominant racial group when they think that the subordinate racial group is not the same as them.

Mrs Epps is the wife of Edwin Epps (Mrs Epps), and the mother of at least two children. Although she is presented as being polite to the slaves (she even cries when Solomon is rescued because she'll miss his talent for the fiddle), Mrs Epps fosters a wicked hatred for Patsey due to jealousy, since Patsey is beautiful and is the helpless object of Edwin Epps' sexual abuse. For these reasons, Mrs Epps frequently convinces Epps to beat and whip the slave girl.

Mrs Epps, who was driven by her jealousy at the dance party at the Epps' house, quickly threw an empty bottle of wine right at Patsey's forehead. Then she told her husband to sell Patsey by using the insulting term "Niggers." Mrs Epps had practised physical attacks on Patsey as a result of her jealousy. Patsey suffered a physical injury as a result of her violent attacks, as the bottle of the wine cut her forehead.

Mrs Epps scratches her face until she cries in pain after saying that filthy word in this scene. Based on this citation, it can be stated that this is a verbal representation of forced slavery, and the source of mistake is always from the slave even sometimes a master can make a mistake too.

As Blummer quoted that the feeling of superiority often can be seen in the way the dominant racial insult the traits quality of the subordinate racial group.(Blumer, 1958)

### **Settings**

The scene in the prison showed Solomon Northup being treated to racism and physical abuse by white Burch for the first time, and then he was accused of being a runaway Negro from Georgia not from Saratoga. But Solomon Northup had still kept his defence if he was a free Negro from Saratoga.

The liberty that was owned by Solomon Northup was not trusted by Burch. Solomon even got physical abuse from the Burch for being dispute. This occurrence was the beginning of Solomon Northup's journey as a slave.

According to Adams & Bell, In most multiethnic societies, ethnic groups are arranged in a hierarchy in which the dominant group receives privileges because of greater political, economic, and cultural power to enforce its power and sustain its privileges (Adams & Bell, 2016) the dominant ethnic group employs certain tools such as by doing actions against minority ethnic groups, including avoidance, denial, threat, or physical attack which is called discrimination.

During the prison scene, the action of exploitation was done to get benefit from Black. Black which was the slaves were sold into the market and treated just like the property.

According to Lomotey in Abielah, the kind of racism for African Americans in the South offers an example of the most extensive form from economic exploitation, racial prejudice, and the desire by many whites to create a permanent underclass of workers.(Abielah, 2016)

In Slave Trader Room (Theophilus House) Theophilus gets his property (slaves) ready for the sales-room, intending, no doubt, to do that day a rousing business. And he details the preparations Freeman requires to get "his property ready for the sales-room." Part of that includes making slaves dance for prospective customers, and in that effort, Solomon's ability to play the violin sets him apart.

heophilus, who is annoyed by his slaves. He can't control his anger, so he yells goddamn you, goddamn it, and goddamned at her. These are considered offensive words. They should not be said in an informal setting or a profane manner. He has a fiery personality. He has no sympathy for their slaves. He just focuses on how to raise the price of the slaves.

Solomon Northup journey as a slave was met by a master who was notorious for his slaves. Yet again, Solomon Northup was powerless to intervene; he was forced to confront the problem. He was worked on a farm as a cotton picker under extremely harsh conditions; they were treated as if they were animals forced to work.

Mr Epps was a vicious bigot who forced the slaves to pick cotton at a rate of at least 200 pounds per day, and if they did not, they would be lashed. Solomon Northup, on the other hand, could only pick 182 pounds and received a caning as a result. He was enslaved by an arrogant and ruthless master, and this was the most difficult circumstance he had ever encountered.

According to (Abielah, 2016) racial prejudices also prevented African American Workers from obtaining the same quality of work preparation and from securing satisfying employment. African Americans often occupied jobs with low status, low financial reward, little chance for upward mobility, and jobs that no one else would perform.

Mr Epps family live in their luxurious house with all marvellous facilities inside, that is commonly called as a great house. Meanwhile Solomon Northup's residence as a slave who only lives in a house made of boards that were a little far away from his master's house. To create a separation between the slave and the master, Solomon Northup and other slaves were purposefully positioned a little distant from the master's house. And the host's house was in much better shape than the slaves.

This scene happens in Mr Epps' main house in the night where all slaves gathered to dance. Mr Epps forces them to dance and twirl on the floor. Mistress Epps, who was controlled by her jealousy during the dance party at Epps' house, suddenly threw an empty bottle of wine right at Patsey's forehead. She then told her husband to sell Patsey by calling her a "Black bitch", which was insulting. Mistress Epps had practised physical attacks on Patsey as a result of her jealousy. Patsey suffered a physical injury as a result of her violent attacks, as the bottle of the wine cut her forehead.

According to Pearson, the prejudice toward blacks is higher in the legal process when blacks commit a violent crime against whites. (Pearson et al., 2007) Blacks could easily sentence the death penalty. Traditionally, blacks and whites have not been treated equally under the law especially in the United States.

## **Theme**

In this film, religion plays an important role. Northup emphasizes which characters are “good” and which are “evil” by using religion. Tibbeats and Epp, for example, both swear a lot and use God's name in vain, showing their bad character. Ford, on the other hand, never uses God's name in vain and is represented as a dedicated believer. Ford even holds sermons and encourages his slaves to spread the gospel with him.

Meanwhile when during a difficult period for Mr Epps' plantation. Mr Epps is blaming his slaves for this damnation.

Salomon had tried many resistances in an attempt to get him free, Firstly he was almost giving up but finally, he realized only Lord could change everything. According (Stern, 2020) this mixing of the races would result in the mongrelization of the white race. Whites could not accept the mongrelization of race because they believe that blacks are inferior.

Slave women were subjected to the same arduous labour, capricious punishments, and emotional pain as other slaves, but they were also subjected to rape, abuse, and pregnancy with a master's child.

In the scene (01:50:11,980 --> 01:51:43,371) Epps shoves Patsey on top of a woodpile in the back of the smokehouse. He comes to a halt, stands as though gathering his manhood, and suddenly swoops down on Patsey. He's rough and harsh. It looks like something between an awkward rape and a virgin attempting his first sexual encounter. Patsey does not respond in any way except for turning her head away from Epps and remaining as still as possible. If there is such a thing as defensiveness, she is vicious with it.

As in the scene, Patsey was forced to succumb to Epp's sexual and physical assaults as a female slave. She belonged to him not only as a tool of picking cotton but also for sexual pleasure. This inspires the jealousy that leads to the violence Epps whips her until she is unconscious.

According to Lehman, In the deepest recesses of the minds of white Americans, Negroes are associated with lowly and debased objects or with sexuality and violence. (Abielah, 2016) Also, African Americans were considered as a race that have bad behaviours such as laziness, stealing, or sexual transgressions.

Northup's story is driven by his sense of self. Northup's identity is more like a rich, well-liked, and skilled musician at the start of the story, before his enslavement. Not only that, but he also has the identity of a free man. His identity is forcibly removed after he is imprisoned: he is no longer known as “Solomon,” but rather as “Platt.”

He is now treated as a slave, and if he insists on being free, he is beaten until he stays silent.

*12 Years a Slave* grapples with the racism that fuels slavery and Solomon Northup's suffering. The narrative illustrates how racism is an instrument for human wickedness—a justification for a slave owner to be unrelenting, cruel, and inhumane. *12 Years a Slave* illustrates how racism is a vehicle for human wickedness. Solomon highlights that sometimes, racism doesn't even seem to be about skin colour as much as it's about slave owners feeling justified in their cruelty.

Treating someone unfairly to benefit from their work. Exploitation was usually done when a group had the power and the other was not. In the *12 Years a Slave* movie, exploitation was made to profit from Black. Slaves, who were black, were sold into the market and treated as property.

According to (Lee, 2014) White people's prejudice toward black people in the economic life emerged in the way whites think that blacks are the symbol of laziness, poor, homeless and incapability in running a good job. White people exploited the economy of black people.

## **Conclusion**

This research has been conducted and discussed the research problem of this research is "how is racism in the *12 Years a slave* movie by Steve McQueen". This research found 39 data about racism found in *12 Years a Slave* consist of 24 data from characters, such as white and black characters like Freeman, the Burch, black folks, (slave), slave dealer, and Epps family. The researchers found 7 data from setting, such as the prison, slave trader room, ship, farm, and the Epps House. The researchers found 8 data from themes such as religion, sexual assault, identity, racism and slavery, survival and freedom.

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