



## Racism in the novel “Dear Martin” by Nic Stone based on the perspective of W.E.B. Du Bois

(Rasisme Dalam Novel “Dear Martin” Karya Nic Stone Berdasarkan Perspektif W.E.B Du Bois)

**Abdul Basid\***

Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana  
Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia  
[abdulbasid@bsa.uin-malang.ac.id](mailto:abdulbasid@bsa.uin-malang.ac.id)

**Muhamad Syahril**

Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana  
Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia  
[m21.syahril@gmail.com](mailto:m21.syahril@gmail.com)

**Moh. Zawawi**

Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana  
Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia  
[zawawi@bsa.uin-malang.ac.id](mailto:zawawi@bsa.uin-malang.ac.id)

**Masrokhin**

Queen’s University Belfast, United  
Kingdom  
[masrokhin01@qub.ac.uk](mailto:masrokhin01@qub.ac.uk)



\*Corresponding author: Abdul Basid | email: [abdulbasid@bsa.uin-malang.ac.id](mailto:abdulbasid@bsa.uin-malang.ac.id)

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**Abstract:** Racist behavior to this day still occurs frequently in various parts of the world. Racist behavior appears no longer caused by differences in physical form, but has penetrated into differences in ideology to beliefs. This study aims to describe the forms of racist behavior in the novel “*Dear Martin*” by Nic Stone using W.E.B Du Bois’ racial theory. This study also reveals the factors affecting the emergence of racist act and understands the impact of racist act to the victims. The type of this study is descriptive qualitative study. The techniques of data validation use reading techniques and note-taking techniques, whereas the techniques of data validation use increasing persistence, triangulation, and discussion. This study shows that white people often carry out racism against black people in the United States. Racist behavior occurred in the form of undervaluing black co-workers, insulting black women, unfairly applying the law, and doubting the abilities of black students. Racist behavior arises because of differences in class and social status, differences in skin color, accusations of being the perpetrator of a crime, and allegations of affirmative action. Racist behavior has significant impact toward victims among individual, family, and society, such as loss of fighting spirit, trauma, considering all people from the majority race to be racist perpetrators, worrying about the safety of their families, growing feelings of hatred and revenge, and retaliating against behavior. Based on the results of these studies, the finding of this study is racist behavior tends to occur because someone thinks that he or his group is superior to others. Racist behavior can be minimized if every individual, family, community, and even the government implements the values of equality and upholds human values from an early age.

**Keywords**    **double-consciousness, novel, racial issues, racism, the veil**

**Abstrak:** Perilaku rasis hingga saat ini masih sering terjadi di berbagai belahan dunia. Perilaku rasis muncul tidak lagi disebabkan oleh perbedaan bentuk fisik, tetapi telah merambah ke perbedaan ideologi dengan keyakinan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan bentuk-bentuk perilaku rasis dalam novel “*Dear Martin*” karya Nic Stone dengan menggunakan teori rasial W.E.B Du Bois. Penelitian ini juga mengungkapkan faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi munculnya tindakan rasis dan memahami dampak tindakan rasis terhadap para korban. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Teknik validasi data menggunakan teknik membaca dan teknik mencatat, sedangkan teknik validasi data menggunakan peningkatan persistensi, triangulasi, dan diskusi. Studi ini menunjukkan bahwa orang kulit putih sering melakukan rasisme terhadap orang kulit hitam di Amerika Serikat. Perilaku rasis terjadi dalam bentuk meremehkan rekan kerja kulit hitam, menghina wanita kulit hitam, menerapkan hukum secara tidak adil, dan meragukan kemampuan siswa kulit hitam. Perilaku rasis muncul karena perbedaan kelas dan status sosial, perbedaan warna kulit, tuduhan sebagai pelaku kejahatan, dan tuduhan tindakan afirmatif. Perilaku rasis memiliki dampak signifikan terhadap korban di antara individu, keluarga, dan masyarakat, seperti hilangnya semangat juang, trauma, menganggap semua orang dari ras mayoritas sebagai pelaku rasis, mengkhawatirkan keselamatan keluarga mereka, menumbuhkan perasaan benci dan balas dendam, dan membalas perilaku. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian tersebut, temuan penelitian ini adalah perilaku rasis cenderung terjadi karena seseorang menganggap bahwa dirinya atau kelompoknya lebih unggul dari orang lain. Perilaku rasis dapat diminimalisir jika setiap individu, keluarga, masyarakat, bahkan pemerintah menerapkan nilai-nilai kesetaraan dan menjunjung tinggi nilai-nilai kemanusiaan sejak dini.

<b>Kata Kunci</b>	<b>kesadaran ganda, novel, masalah rasial, rasisme, jilbab</b>
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## INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of racism that often permeates various aspects of human life, such as government policy, culture, education, and social interactions. Racism occurs because a person or group considers others to be inferior or ignored based on their origin, race, skin color, religion, and gender, which results in social, economic, and political injustice and inequality (Beech et al., 2021). The problem of racism has occurred from the past until now. Recently, there has been a case of Anti-Asian sentiment due to the spread of COVID-19 in America (Chen et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2020), and there have even been insult, termination of employment, spitting on, and physical violence (Croucher et al., 2020). The problem of racism not only affects everyone’s welfare and human rights (Gourdine, 2019) and influences disparities in access to facilities and resources (Braveman et al., 2022).

The term “racist” is for people who adhere to racism, while racialism or racism itself is the belief that other communities are inherently inferior to one’s community (Gelles & Levine, 1999). Racist attitudes are part of a type of discrimination. The definition of discrimination according to Law No. 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights article 1 paragraph (3) states that discrimination is harassment, restriction, or exclusion that is directly or indirectly based on human differences based on ethnicity, religion, race, ethnicity, group, social and economic status, gender, language, and political beliefs (Lubis, 2018). So, it can also be interpreted that discrimination includes any behavior based on naturally created distinctions or societal categorizations unrelated to individual abilities or services (Köchling & Wehner, 2020).

Racist behavior is often related to race (Gelles & Levine, 1999). Race is a social construction (Schaefer, 2012). In another sense, race is a group of people who have one unity because they have physical and spiritual similarities to differentiate them from other groups (Back & Solomos, 2000). The concept of race is a group of people who are different from other groups in terms of physical characteristics, which are seen as something natural (Henslin, 2007). The line of explanation of race always gives advantages to people with more power and rights than others (Schaefer, 2012).

Racist behavior has inspired a novelist named Nic Stone to produce his work entitled “*Dear Martin*,” published on October 17, 2017. This novel depicts that white people think that black people do not have the same position as them. Black people were seen as a race created to be subordinate or slaves to white people and could not be equal to them. Black people are largely considered to be the cause of criminal acts and perpetrators of crime. This negative paradigm then encourages white people to behave racistly towards black people, which negatively impacts individual victims, families and society. In 2020, the novel “*Dear Martin*” was one of the nominees for the Lincoln Award, a literary award initiated by the Association of Schools, Libraries and Educators in Illinois, United States of America.

Facts about the novel “*Dear Martin*” and the issues raised are the main reasons researchers use this novel as an object. To reveal racist behavior in the novel “*Dear Martin*,” researchers use W.E.B. Du Bois’s theory, which is based on Karl Marx’s class theory (Fredrickson, 1995). Du Bois added to Karl Marx’s theory about race (Rabaka, 2009) by stating that the class oppression that occurred in America (capital owners and workers) occurred simultaneously with discrimination between the black race and the white race (Arisandi, 2015). The theoretical ideas put forward by Du Bois include the veil and double-consciousness (Bibi, 2022; Ferrell & Black, 2023; Thomas, 2021). The veil creates a clear separation or barrier between African Americans and whites (Besek et al., 2020; Fertik & Hanes, 2019; Ritzer, 2014). The veil, in its depiction, generally views other races as inferior to one’s own race,

and on the other hand, these races are also separated from other races. The following theoretical idea is about double-consciousness: African Americans' feeling by seeing and judging themselves through other things. This means the double-consciousness of African Americans who were born as Africans but became Americans who were discriminated against, insulted, threatened, and even persecuted by white citizens (Bois, 1903; Chaoui, 2023; Lynne, 2021).

The previous studies that has been conducted on racism and discrimination mainly discusses only one or two issues, such as discussing forms of racial discrimination and the impact of this discrimination on individual health (Williams et al., 2019), mental health (Cheah et al., 2020) and adolescent behavior (Bleich et al., 2019; English et al., 2020), or specifically for the mental health of children and adolescents (Cave et al., 2020), the relationship between racism, health (Williams et al., 2019), racial discrimination and trauma (Kirkinis et al., 2021), the impact of gender racism on women's reproductive and sexual health (Rosenthal & Lobel, 2020), and how structural racism influences health disparities between racial groups (Yearby, 2020). However, these studies have not discussed in detail the causes of discrimination and racism. Several other studies focus on social inequalities between racial minorities and the majority race, such as the psychological advantages that whites gain over blacks (Myers, 2019), as well as privileges and access to various resources and opportunities that are not available to black people and other minority groups (Aouragh, 2019). However, these studies have not discussed the impact of discrimination on individuals, families, and society. Other studies also elaborate on ways and strategies that can be used to overcome the negative consequences of racism and discrimination, such as the development of racial socialization interventions to reduce racial stress and increase racial coping abilities in black parents and adolescents (Anderson et al., 2019), how racial socialization in the family can help individuals experiencing racial stress and trauma (Anderson & Stevenson, 2019), cognitive behavioral therapy and body-centered trauma therapy (Comas-Díaz et al., 2019), and how religious involvement can protect individuals from these negative impacts (Lee et al., 2021), but these studies have not simultaneously discussed the forms of discrimination, the causes and impacts it causes.

The previous studies above have similarities and differences with this study. The similarity lies in the theme discussed, namely racism. The difference lies in the focus of the discussion, as in study conducted by Williams et al., (2019); Cheah et al. (2020); Bleich et al. (2019); English et al., (2020); Cave et al., (2020); Williams et al., (2019); Kirkinis et al., (2021); Rosenthal & Lobel (2020); and Yearby (2020) focus on discriminatory behavior and its impact on victims' health, Myers's (2019) and Aouragh (2019) focus on social disparities between majority and minority races, and Anderson et al. (2019), Anderson & Stevenson (2019), Comas-Díaz et al., (2019), and Lee et al., (2021) focus on efforts that can be taken to overcome the negative impacts of racism and discrimination. This study aims to find new findings related to racism with the object of the novel "Dear Martin" by Nic Stone (Stone, 2017). Specifically, this study wants to reveal forms of racist behavior in the concept of the veil and double-consciousness from W.E.B. Du Bois' racial theory, the factors that cause the emergence of racist behavior, and the extent of the negative impact it has on individuals, families, and the people who are victims of racist behavior in the novel "Dear Martin."

The discussion of racism in this study starts from the assumption that racist behavior occurs because of differences in class and social status between the majority race and minority race and a negative paradigm, where white people consider black people to be the culprits in the emergence of various forms of crime. Therefore, the issue of racism revealed in this study from the aspects of its form, causes of emergence, and impact simultaneously and in more detail has significant role in providing understanding to many parties: individuals, families, society, and the government so that they can understand the roots of the complex problem of racism. If all parties understand the roots of the complex problem of racism, the solution to the racist behavior around us can be minimized and solved.

## METHOD

The approach used in this study is literary sociology, which is an approach that analyzes and

understands literature from the social perspective of society (Ratna, 2004; Setiawan & Musaffak, 2020). This study includes descriptive qualitative study, namely study intended to gain a detailed understanding of the condition of an object and describe it regularly and thoroughly (Catania et al., 2021; Setiawan & Musaffak, 2019). Data was obtained from primary data sources by taking dialogue fragments in the novel “*Dear Martin*” by Nic Stone, published on 17 October 2017, totalling 224 pages. Secondary data sources are findings from data not directly related to the source, namely journal articles that prove or support study data (Basid et al., 2022). Data was collected using two techniques, namely reading techniques and note-taking techniques. Reading techniques collect data by reading conversations, words, sentences, and paragraphs related to direct speech in the novel “*Dear Martin*” by Nic Stone (Hamid et al., 2021). The note-taking technique was used to record the story’s setting described in the novel “*Dear Martin*” by Nic Stone (Sudarsi et al., 2022).

In ensuring the validity of the data that has been obtained, researchers carry out data validation steps in several stages, namely: (1) increasing persistence by reading the data that has been collected and understanding it continuously and repeatedly; (2) triangulation by cross-checking various sources, theories and different times; and (3) discussions with peers and experts who know matters related to the study theme (Basid et al., 2022). Then, the researchers analyzed the data through three stages, namely, *first*, data reduction by conducting an investigation using various information obtained and combining it and deleting data that did not match; *second*, presenting data or presenting study results to readers in the form of tables and interpretations by W.E.B. Du Bois’ racial theory so that they can be understood thoroughly; and *third*, drawing conclusions or verification using interactive analysis methods by inducing data interpretation by W.E.B. Du Bois’ racial theory and classifying them according to themes (Raskind et al., 2019).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Racism often involves believing that one race or ethnicity is superior to another. In other words, racism is a form of racist behavior or discriminatory attitudes that belittle, exclude, and differentiate a person or group of people based on a particular race or ethnic origin (Bañales et al., 2023). Racists usually believe that racial or ethnic diversity will threaten certain groups’ identity, culture, or supremacy, even though this view is contrary to human values and Human Rights principles, which emphasize that all people are born equal and have the same rights. One of the most significant factors causing racism is differences in physical characteristics, such as skin color, facial shape, or other characteristics that differ between one race or one ethnic group and another (Osei-Tutu et al., 2023).

### Forms of Racist Behavior in the Novel “*Dear Martin*” by Nic Stone Based on the Perspective of W.E.B Du Bois

Racist behaviour in the novel “*Dear Martin*” began when there was a negative paradigm of white people who saw that black people would always be a source of problems no matter how intelligent and genius they were. Justyce McAllister is one of the victims. Even though he was known as an excellent student and had many achievements, other students and white people at Yale University never considered him that way. Instead, they saw him as a potential criminal who would eventually end up in prison. Justyce, who was treated like this, felt depressed. To entertain himself, Justyce read a biography of Martin Luther King, Jr., a figure of equal rights.

Racism is based on race, a social construct used to categorize people based on similar physical and social characteristics, assuming a racial hierarchy that reflects the inherent differences between groups. Racism is a system of beliefs, practices, and policies that operate to benefit those at the top of the racial hierarchy. Individual factors that contribute to racism include racial prejudice and racial discrimination. Racism can manifest in various environments, such as cultural, social, and political environments, and be explicit or implicit (Haeny et al., 2021). Racist behavior can be experienced by family members, friends, acquaintances, or strangers and occurs in different contexts (Holloway & Varner, 2023). Historically and culturally, society is built on a racial hierarchy established through colonization that includes structure, history, politics, and thought. In violence cases, race and gender intersect, meaning that racial minorities and

women of color, such as blacks, are at higher risk of experiencing sexual and intimate partner violence, and black trans women are more likely to be targeted in hate crimes. Acts of violence are primary symptoms of structural and cultural racism that extend more profoundly. Beneath it is a pyramid of harassment, marginalization, and injustice in every society (Devakumar et al., 2020).

The form of racist behavior in the novel “*Dear Martin*” by Nic Stone, which researchers studied using W.E.B. Du Bois’s racial theory, consists of two forms: the veil and double-consciousness. This form of veiled racist behavior occurs because of differences in skin color, which causes white people to think less of black people, such as insulting a black woman carrying several of her children with the assumption that the woman’s children come from different fathers. The form of double-consciousness racist behavior occurs in the form of injustice in applying the law. This injustice can be seen in the case of the shooting of a black teenager by a white police officer who was free from the law. Another form of double-consciousness racist behavior is the attitude of white students who doubt the abilities of black students. White students do not believe that black students will have abilities superior to white students because white students feel that black students are significantly behind in education and cannot possibly compete with white students.

**Table 1.**  
**Forms of racist behavior**

<b>Types of racist behavior</b>	<b>Forms of racist behavior</b>
The veil	Underestimating black people Insulting black women
Double-consciousness	Unfair in applying the law Doubting the abilities of black students

### ***The Veil***

The veil creates a clear separation or boundary between African-American and white groups. The veil is displayed with a thin, fragile material so that each race can see that one race is separated from another (Ritzer, 2014). Referring to the table above, the form of veiled racist behavior in the novel “*Dear Martin*” by Nic Stone from the perspective of W.E.B Du Bois’ racial theory consists of underestimating black co-workers and insulting black women.

#### *Underestimating Black People*

Judging lowly is a form of veiled racist behavior. Low assessment behavior often occurs between the majority race and the minority race, the black and the white race, or from races with more power and privileges towards those below them. The majority race often looks down upon minority races because the minority race looks different in terms of skin color, hair, eyes, lips, ancestry, and so on (Henslin, 2007).

Low-rated racist behavior in the novel “*Dear Martin*” by Nic Stone is depicted by the character Mr. Julian. Mr Julian is the father of the main character’s best friend, Manny. He is black (African-American) descent. He often received racist behavior from his supervisor at the office. Even though he had been serious about completing his work and had fulfilled the qualifications and other requirements for promotion, he was always ignored because of his different race, namely black. This is in contrast to his white colleagues. Even though he is not very serious about his work and has insufficient personal qualities, his white colleague is still more recognized and prioritized by his supervisor.

This low rating also happened to a teacher who was a debate instructor in the EvSos class at Bres Prep School named Dr. Jarius Dray, who is known as “Doc.” When he met Justyce in his dorm room, Justyce was devastated and frustrated. Justyce felt his struggle to gain equal rights and be free from racism was impossible. Doc’s arrival in Justyce’s room was to strengthen and advise Justyce. Doc also shared his experiences and told Justyce about his struggles during his doctoral program. At that time, one of his doctoral advisors said that he would not be able to have enough qualities to fulfil all the requirements for a doctorate.

“Both of you know what I do for a living,” “but very few know my struggle to get there. It took me four years longer than average to secure my position because I was continuously overlooked for promotions. I worked much harder than many of my Caucasian colleagues but rarely received a fraction of the recognition” (Stone, 2017).

“Another quick story,” Doc says. “In grad school, I had this massive ‘fro. Usually wore it in cornrows. I’ll never forget the way my doctoral advisor frowned when I stepped into his office for the first time. Throughout my entire PhD candidacy, he was hypercritical of my work. Told me to my face I’d never succeed. Jus, if I’d listened to him, I wouldn’t be sitting here talking to you” (Stone, 2017).

Mr Julian’s attitude towards himself is incorrect because of the barriers that influence him, namely the general paradigm, which assumes that black people are not equal to white people. This paradigm causes Mr. Julian to evaluate all his subordinates with black skin objectively and give preference to those with white skin. Likewise, what happened to Dr. Jarius Dray, aka “Doc.” His doctoral supervisor belittled him, and it was assumed that he would never be able to complete all the tasks and obligations of obtaining a doctorate or PhD just because he was black. Therefore, the description of this story in the view of W.E.B Du Bois falls into the category of veiled racist behavior, where there is a form of separation in terms of dedication to work and the level of ability and quality between black people and white people.

### *Insulting Black Women*

Insulting is a form of veiled racism. This insult occurs due to differences between groups (Kapoor, 2019). Of course, most victims are women (Muyassaroh, 2021), especially if they have a different skin color. In the United States, the black race is often treated racistly by the white race; we can even find this behavior in films and novels that depict racist and discriminatory behavior in the United States of America. In colonial practices in the United States of America in the past, the slavery experienced by the African-American race could be evidence that white citizens had behaved very unfairly and discriminatorily (Lal, 2021).

The depiction of racist behavior in the form of insults contained in the novel “*Dear Martin*” by Nic Stone can be seen from the characteristics of the characters Jared and his friends. When Jared and his friends attended a festival, where Manny was also there, Jared saw a black woman with her four children. Jared made a derogatory joke about the woman by calling her Shaniqua, which means God’s. With this joke, Jared intended to insult the woman. Jared thought that the woman was an enslaved person whom anyone could molest and that the fathers of her four children differed.

When we saw this black lady with four kids, and this fool called her Shaniqua and made a joke about daddies, I couldn’t take any more, Jus. I called him on it, and he rolled his eyes. Told me to ‘stop being so fucking sensitive’ (Stone, 2017).

The joke made by Jared’s character shows that there is a veil covering his view of life, namely that black people are always low-class people, and whatever they do is despicable and not according to the norm. This view of life drives Jared to dare to make racist jokes to black women. In the view of W.E.B. Du Bois’s racial theory, this incident is a veiled racist behavior, where white people do not want to assume that black people are the same as them, namely getting married, living in families, having children, and obeying existing laws and norms in society.

### *Double-Consciousness*

The concept of double-consciousness promoted by Du Bois is a feeling experienced by African Americans who review and judge themselves through the responses or views of other people or other things. This means that African Americans have realized that they are descendants of Africans but were born in America. Native Americans did not fully accept their presence and would never consider them as

part of the Native American people. Therefore, African Americans were aware that by not being accepted, they would always receive racist behavior and discrimination from native Americans (Bois, 1903). African-Americans are sometimes also in a position between being perpetrators or victims, where, on the one hand, they are in the group that is the perpetrator of racism, and on the other hand, they are in the group that is the victim of racist behavior Based on Table 1. The forms of racist behavior above, forms of double-consciousness, include being unfair in applying the law and doubting the abilities of black students.

#### *Unfair in Applying the Law*

Racist behavior perpetrated by the white race against the black race occurs in various forms. The form of racist behavior that occurs can be in the form of racist behavior being displayed directly, and it can also be through other things, such as through the views of other people, objects, pictures, advertisements, symbols, and others (Kitsa & Mudra, 2019). In the theory of racialism based on the perspective of W.E.B Du Bois, anger is a form of double-conscious racialism, namely judging oneself through other people or other things (Chaoui, 2023). History has recorded that the African-American race in Europe has been denigrated and considered unequal to European ethnicities because of their skin color. Of course, this has implications for the emergence of many cases of racism, directly or indirectly, one of which is discrimination before the law.

An illustration of the story about forms of injustice in applying the law is seen in the debate between SJ and Jared in the EvSos class. SJ denied Jared's words, where Jared stated that equality before the law had been realized in their country. SJ denied this by showing evidence that when a white police officer murdered a black teenager named Shemar Charson in Nevada, the white police officer was free from charges only because the teenager he killed was black.

- Jared : Ah, here we go. Not every white person who kills a black person is guilty of a crime. Pretty sure the courts proved that yesterday.
- SJ : All the courts "proved" yesterday was that a white guy can kill an unarmed teenager and get away with it if the kid is black.
- Justyce : [Rubs his wrists again] (Stone, 2017).

Shemar Charson, an American citizen born of the African race, has been treated racistly by white citizens. The law has also acted racist and discriminatory in the case that happened to him. Shemar Charson was killed, and the white police officer was exonerated. As an African-American, SJ is aware of and understands this incident's roots. African Americans are gaining recognition and equality before the laws implemented and carried out by white people is not easy. So the chances are very little and almost impossible. In the view of W.E.B Du Bois' racial theory, what the SJ character understands is called double-consciousness, where he sees that even though the police have committed murder, the police are still free from charges. This is because the police officer is white, and the victim is black. SJ realizes that the white race will always be right and the black race will always be wrong before the law. The white race will never consider themselves equal to the black race before the law.

#### *Doubting the Abilities of Black Students*

We can still encounter racist behavior in everyday life, especially in countries with many tribes, races, religions, languages, cultures, and skin colors. Racist behavior often occurs when insulting or saying bad things (body shaming) about someone's physical appearance, such as the shape of their hair, eyes, skin color, and so on (Landor & McNeil Smith, 2019). Racist behavior also sometimes takes the form of demeaning or not recognizing the abilities of others who are more significant than themselves (racist perpetrators).

Jared is the best student from the best school with various facilities, namely Braselton Preparatory Academy in Atlanta. Jared is also a Baseball Team Captain. Jared felt he had extraordinary abilities, so he was accepted at Yale University. With all his abilities, he concluded that not all white people could study at Yale University, let alone people from the black race who came from rundown schools and did not have complete facilities. Therefore, Jared questioned the existence of black

students at Yale University. Jared did not want to admit that a black person from a lowly, rundown, and inadequately equipped school could study at Yale University like him.

Jared : Whatever. All I know is that no matter what college I end up at, when I see a minority, I'm gonna wonder if they're qualified to be there.

Everyone: [...]

Justyce : Damn, it's like that, Jared? (Stone, 2017).

Justyce, born African-American, was aware of Jared's racist behavior above. Justyce understands that the assumptions held by white people, like Jared, will not quickly disappear. Therefore, Justyce also questioned Jared's opinion. Justyce, born of African-American descent, knows very well that people like him who were born of African-American descent also have high abilities and intelligence even though he studied in a lowly rundown school with minimal facilities. The incident above is an example of double-consciousness, where Justyce, an African-American, realizes and understands that the white race still thinks that all people of African-American descent are people who do not have any academic abilities.

This study found two forms of racist behavior consisting of the veil, such as underestimating black colleagues and insulting black women, and double-consciousness, such as unfairly applying the law and doubting the abilities of black students. The findings of this study are by the racial theory proposed by W.E.B. Du Bois, where the form of racist behavior consisting of the veil, namely underestimating black colleagues and insulting black women, illustrates the existence of a separation or barrier between the black race, and the white race, namely in the form of assumptions, paradigms, or even beliefs of the white race towards the black race (Besek et al., 2020; Fertik & Hanses, 2019; Ritzer, 2014). The form of double-consciousness racist behavior, namely being unfair in applying the law and doubting the abilities of black students, is a portrait where when the black race receives racist and discriminatory behavior from the white race, the black race will automatically realize that in the eyes of the white race, the black race will never be the same. The black race will always be looked down upon, has no norms, and is always wrong (Bois, 1903; Chaoui, 2023; Lynne, 2021).

The findings of this study are in line with the findings of English et al., (2020), which show that African American adolescents experience racial discrimination at school, in social interactions, and their living environments and Bleich et al., (2019) who explained that African Americans still often experience discrimination in health, employment, access to public services, the legal system, and everyday life. The findings of this study are also in line with the findings of Cheah et al., (2020) which state that American families of Chinese descent are currently experiencing various kinds of verbal and physical discrimination and violence related to COVID-19, including negative stereotypes, social exclusion, and physical threats, Williams et al., (2019) which focuses on institutional racism, internal racism, and interpersonal racism, and Yearby (2020) which examines forms of structural racism in public policies, business practices, education systems, and laws that provide advantages or disadvantages to certain racial groups as the main factor in disparities.

Racism takes many different forms and occurs in all aspects of life. Racism can be anything based on naturally created separation or categorization of society that has nothing to do with individual abilities. This study contributes to explaining the recognition and understanding of racism and the relationship between racism and racial discrimination and health, which requires a more excellent attitude in overcoming it. The hope is that society can be helped in making policies to protect individuals, families, and society from the negative impacts of racism. In addition, it is also necessary to incorporate structural racism into the social determinants of health framework to address the health disparities produced by structural racism.



## The Causes of Racist Behavior in the Novel “*Dear Martin*” by Nic Stone Based on the Perspective of W.E.B Du Bois

Racism always leads to views that believe in the power and domination of one group over other groups or views that prioritize certain groups that are considered superior to other groups. Racists usually judge someone not by their abilities but by physical factors or body anatomy, heredity, origin, beliefs, and class. The cause of racism is often due to the legitimacy that a minority group is inferior to the majority group (Kubota, 2021). The paradigm of racism is sometimes deeply rooted in families and society because of societal doctrines and stereotypes that hold unfavorable views about a group of people (Banaji et al., 2021). Moreover, the loss of mutual respect and tolerance in society (Jones, 2023) and some policies and regulations that seem to favor one group also support racist behavior.

The causes of racist behavior that researchers found in the novel “*Dear Martin*” by Nic Stone using W.E.B. Du Bois’s racial theory on the type of veiled racist behavior are differences in class and social status and differences in physical characteristics. This factor led to humiliation and low evaluation by the white race towards the black race. The cause of double-consciousness racist behavior is caused by accusations that black people are the perpetrators of crimes and the belief that black people will not be able to have the same abilities as white people because of their low social and economic status. The government is considered to only prioritize access to education or employment for socially and politically non-dominant groups.

**Table 2.**  
**Causes of Racist Behavior**

Types of racist behavior	Causes of racist behavior
The veil	Differences in class and social status Differences in skin color
Double-consciousness	Accusation of being a criminal Alleged affirmative action

### ***The Veil***

#### *Differences in Class and Social Status*

Socioeconomic disparities can cause racist behavior (Farida & Andalas, 2019). Differences in class and social status can also lead to dissent and racist behavior from the upper class to the lower class (Laster Pirtle, 2020). The existence of inequality exacerbated by the emergence of class and social status differences, will further strengthen the legitimacy of racist behavior. Black people will always be considered the lowest class of human beings. Black people continued to be considered an utterly worthless part of social life. Therefore, white people may treat black people arbitrarily, such as being humiliated, insulted, sprayed with water, beaten, imprisoned, or even killed.

Trey looks back and forth between Jus and Manny. “Didn’t get it twisted, my dawgs. These white boys might be standing here next to y’all, but y’all still ain’t nothin’ but niggas to them, ya heard me?” he says. “Ain’t no amount of money nor intelligence can change that shit” (Stone, 2017).

One of the causes of racism in the novel “*Dear Martin*” is caused by differences in class and social status. Black people in America are considered a race or African descendant with a lower social status than white people in terms of economics, caste, descent or ethnicity. Even though the white characters, Jared, Kyle, Tyler, and Blake, invite the black characters, Justyce and Manny, to wear costumes that depict stereotypes by holding a Halloween party to show that equality in the 21st century has occurred in America, they still go too far—ultimately inviting anger from other black residents. After a few minutes, a group of black teenagers from the *Black Jihad* group arrived, one of whom was Trey, who immediately punched Blake in the face because he was wearing a *Klansman* costume (members of the Ku Klux Klan, which was an extremist movement that emerged in America in 1865 and supported racist ideologies such as anti-immigration and white supremacy). Then, Trey told Justyce and Manny that no matter how much they tried, even though they were smart and had an economy above the middle class, white people would still think of them as humans born of low class and social status. This is evident from the various racist behaviors received

by Justyce, Manny and several other black people. Examples include the incident experienced by Justyce, who was handcuffed by the police because he looked like a robber, and Manny and other black teenagers who were killed by the police because they thought they were resisting. One was even killed because he was carrying a cell phone that he thought was a gun.

### *Differences in Skin Color*

The form of racist behavior of the veil type that African-American descendants feel is caused, in part, by the white race's perception that they judge African-Americans with wrong judgment. The white race considered all African Americans delinquents just because their skin was black. The white race says that all criminal acts that occur must be black (Zhang et al., 2021).

“You keep your mouth shut.” The cop squats and gets right in Justyce's face. “I know your kind: punk like you wander the streets of nice neighborhoods searching for prey. Just couldn't resist the pretty white girl who'd locked her keys in her car, could ya?” (Stone, 2017).

When Justyce intended to help his ex-girlfriend, Melo, who was drunk by driving his car and taking her home, a police officer saw him and immediately came to him. The police thought Justyce would commit a crime against Melo, a white girl. Justyce explained that Melo was drunk, but the police were still suspicious of his statement. The police had seen Melo's condition directly, and the police knew that Melo was indeed drunk. Justyce is correct, no lie, but the police continue questioning Justyce because he is black. The police considered a black teenager not worthy of being with a white girl.

### *Double-consciousness*

#### *Accusation of Being a Criminal*

The cause of the emergence of racist double-consciousness behavior is accusations or allegations of criminals deliberately leveled by the white race against the black race. The white race accused the black race of committing theft. Accusations and suspicions of these crimes are one of the reasons white people mistreat the black race. The goal is for the white race to be free from punishment or indictment (Lavalley & Johnson, 2022).

...but the cop claims he caught Shemar trying to steal a car. A scuffle ensued (allegedly), and according to the police report, Shemar tried to grab the cop's gun, so the cop shot Shemar in self-defense (Stone, 2017).

When the perpetrator of the shooting (a white police officer) of one of the black teenagers was interviewed, he stated that the black teenager had been caught red-handed stealing. The shooter said that when he was approached and about to be arrested, the black teenager tried to fight back against the police, resulting in a fight. The police then shot the black teenager. Police believe the teenager was going to take the gun. In this context, the white police officer plays up the entire alibi: the black teenager committed theft and resisted arrest. This was done to justify his actions and influence the judge to free him from the law.

### *Alleged Affirmative Action*

Double-consciousness racist behavior can also be caused by affirmative action. Affirmative action is a policy of prioritizing non-dominant or minority groups so they have more opportunities to access education or employment (Banda, 2020). Affirmative action can be said to be preferential behavior. This unique behavior was, in fact, a blunder for the black race. The black race is increasingly legalizing their racist behavior because they believe that the black race does not deserve special behavior.

Oh, I certainly am. Let's observe, shall we? I'm ranked number two in our class, I'm captain of the baseball team, I do community service on weekends, and I got higher test scores than

Justyce...yet he go into Yale early action, and I didn't. I know for a fact it's because I'm white and he's black (Stone, 2017).

Jared does not accept that Justyce was accepted to Yale University while still suspended. Jared, who is of white descent, feels that affirmative action prioritizes minority people over people from the majority group. This affirmative action further convinces Jared's assessment that people from the black race are indeed as he initially suspected, namely that no one is intelligent and has always been of the lower class. Jared thinks all black people are accepted to study at Yale University because of special behavior. They were accepted not because of their abilities and capacities but because of their lowly attitude of wanting to be given special behavior.

The findings of this study state that the causes of the emergence of veiled racist behavior are differences in class and social status and differences in skin color, and the cause of the emergence of double-consciousness racist behavior is the accusation of the perpetrator of the crime and the alleged existence of affirmative action, which is in line with W.E.B.'s racial theory. Du Bois stated that the economic level (Farida & Andalas, 2019), supported by the emergence of differences in class and social status (Laster, 2020), has proven to be an essential cause of racial actions. Apart from that, people's opinions are too exaggerated, statements that their group is superior to other groups (Kubota, 2021), education and family and community doctrine (Banaji et al., 2021), as well as the loss of mutual respect and appreciation (Jones, 2023), thus becoming an essential factor in the emergence of racist behavior.

Racist behavior often occurs because of the view that the majority race is superior to the minority race, such as the findings of this study which show that racist behavior occurs because of differences in class and social status, differences in skin color, accusations of criminals, and allegations of affirmative action. The findings of this study are in line with study conducted by Kirkinis et al., (2021) which reveals that the cause of racist behavior is the existence of contextual factors, such as social and economic factors that influence individual experiences, Myers (2019) which states that the material benefits obtained by the dominant majority race in a system go beyond psychological wages and other aspects, such as economic, political and military forces that cause injustice and discrimination against racial minorities, Anderson & Stevenson (2019) who developed a racial socialization intervention program called EMBRace to improve the ability of black parents and adolescents to cope with racial stress and improve their overall well-being, and Anderson & Stevenson (2019) which presented a new concept, namely RECAST (Racial- Ethnic Socialization and Coping Anticipatory System Theory) which explains how individuals' racial experiences are formed and processed in their families, as well as how families can help individuals overcome racial stress and trauma by providing social support, through open dialogue, and teaching healthy stress management skills. The findings of this study are not in line with the findings of Aouragh (2019) which illustrates that the advantage of the majority race in society is having privileges and access to various resources and opportunities that are not available to racial minorities and other minority groups, while this study finds that one of the causes the emergence of racist behavior is affirmative action. Affirmative action is identified as a policy taken to prioritize minority groups over majority groups. Affirmative action for some people is considered special behavior; of course, if someone is successful or succeeds, it is not because of their capacity and ability but because of the privilege they have received (Banda, 2020).

This study explains that racism is often individual and related to larger social structures and contextual factors, such as public policy, economic power, sociocultural hierarchies, and history, that influence how people interact. Therefore, this study emphasizes that social, cultural, economic, and other aspects must be considered in enforcing laws and establishing public policies. This study also concludes that racial socialization interventions can help develop strategies to improve the well-being of black parents and adolescent victims of discrimination. Racial socialization can also promote mental and emotional health and help individuals experiencing racial stress and trauma.

**The Impact of Racist Behavior in the Novel “Dear Martin” by Nic Stone Based on the Perspective of W.W.B Du Bois**

Racism refers to practices that maintain or exacerbate unfair inequalities in power, resources, or opportunities across racial, ethnic, cultural, or religious groups that can be social determinants of health. Racist behavior not only impacts adults or parents but also has a broader impact on families, society, and even more on babies or young children. The impact of racist behavior on young children can be seen in the first five years of age. This is because the first five years of a child’s life is a period of rapid neurodevelopmental change and growth, which makes them more vulnerable to environmental factors, such as racism. This period is understood as the basis for optimal child development. Racist behavior that adversely impacts the well-being of the mother or caregiver can significantly damage and affect the infant, mother, or caregiver’s partner and their attachment system, ultimately leading to detrimental and long-lasting developmental consequences for the child. Therefore, understanding the effects of racist behavior on mental health in the first five years of a child’s life is very important in developing future interventions to prevent and reduce the consequences of racist behavior (Berry et al., 2021).

The impact of racist behavior in the novel “Dear Martin” by Nic Stone on individuals, families, and society based on W.E.B Du Bois’ racial theory is divided into two: the impact of racist behavior in the veil and the impact of racist behavior in double-consciousness. The impact of veiled racist behavior on individuals is in the form of losing the spirit to fight; in families, it gives rise to a generalized attitude, namely the assumption that all people from the majority race must have the same racist behavior; and towards society, it can foster hatred and revenge towards people who carry out the behavior. The form of double-consciousness racist behavior can have an impact on an individual’s mental health, such as experiencing trauma; it has an impact on the family, close relatives, and friends of the victim in the form of high levels of worry about the safety of their family from physical and verbal violence. The impact on society can be the desire of a minority group to retaliate against the racist behavior they receive with criminal acts.

**Table 3.**  
**Impact of Racist Behavior**

Types of racist behavior	The impact of racist behavior		
	Individual	Family	Public
The veil	Losing fighting spirit	Assuming everyone from the majority race is a racist	Growing feelings of hatred and revenge
Double-consciousness	Experiencing trauma	Worried about his family’s safety	Responding to the racist behavior received

**The Veil**

*Losing Fighting Spirit*

Perceiving and assessing other people as inferior to oneself or considering oneself superior to others is a form of veiled racist behavior. Suppose someone continuously does this to other people, let alone forcing themselves to continue doing the same thing to other people. In that case, the victim will experience long-lasting negative impacts, such as feeling insecure in various life contexts, being very disappointed, and not having pride in oneself, which can even make a person despair and lose direction in their life (Barajas-Gonzalez et al., 2022).

Which brings me back to my original point: what was my goal with the Be like Martin thing? Was I trying to get more respect? (Fail.) Was I trying to be “more acceptable”? (Fail.) Did I think it would keep me out of trouble? (Epic Fail.) really, what was the purpose? (Stone, 2017).

Justyce is a black African-American who often experiences racist behavior. Justyce first experienced racist behavior when he was in high school. Justyce thought that the racist behavior he received would stop by itself when he entered university. Justyce was wrong. Justyce continues to receive racist behavior from new people around him, one of whom is Jared. Justyce feels that the

burden he has received is enough, and he has also tried to prove the quality of his performance, but the people from the white race around him still think that what Justyce is doing is meaningless and has no effect on them—the white race. Justyce felt tired, shocked, and disappointed. Justyce’s dream of being like his idol, Martin, the fighter for justice and equality, disappeared. Justyce even questions his existence and the purpose of his life.

#### *Assuming Everyone from the Majority Race is a Racist*

Racist behavior will also have an impact on the families of victims who receive racist behavior. The victim’s family will assume that other people who have the same skin color, hair, eyes, or nationality will definitely have the same behavior, and will equally behave in a racist manner. They will all be generalized by people who are persecuted, humiliated, or treated with violence and injustice because of racial differences (Rhizky, 2020).

- Justyce : She’s my debate partner, Ma. I’ve mentioned her plenty of times  
Mama : Hmph. I saw how she was looking at you. More on that girl’s mind than *debate*-  
Justyce : Can we not start with this at my best friend’s funeral, please?  
Mama : I’m not starting with anything, Justyce. Just sayin’ watch yourself with that one. That’s all.  
Justyce : She’s a good friend, Ma.  
Mama : And you’d do well to keep it that way (Stone, 2017).

When the black race first received racist behavior from the white race, the black race would observe how the white race behaved. When the black race experiences racist behavior from the black race, again and again, the black race will genuinely understand and generalize that the white race has always behaved racistly. This is what happened to Justyce’s mother. Justyce’s mother knows very well how, in high school, Justyce often received racist behavior from the white race, even at university. Justyce’s mother also saw that the person who shot Justyce’s friend, Manny, was also from the white race. Because of the events that continuously happened to Justyce and Justyce’s friend, Manny, Justyce’s mother concluded that all people from the white race must behave racistly.

#### *Growing Feelings of Hatred and Revenge*

Suppose society continues to see and witness racist behavior and discrimination by people considering their race superior to others. In that case, society will feel hatred and revenge towards the racist perpetrators. This is because society has empathy for the victims of racist behavior. Also hatred and resentment in society arise because people feel hurt, angry, and sad (Doharty, 2020).

Arson was our initial suspicion due to the number of threatening phone calls and letters Mrs. Tison has received during her husband’s detainment. We’re now able to confirm that this fire was started from the outside (Stone, 2017).

The depiction of the hatred of people from various races, ethnicities, religions, and nations towards racist perpetrators can become a headline in a news story. This can be seen from the data presented above that the news media depicted in the novel “*Dear Martin*” highlight various incidents of racism. One thing shown in the news was the behavior of a white police officer named Garret Tison. Tison became a target and an outpouring of anger throughout white and black American society. They dislike and hate the racist behavior carried out by Tison. For them, Tison’s actions were too outrageous; they could no longer be tolerated, so they invited their anger by coming in droves to justice enforcers to defend the victim and demand justice for Tison. However, a small part of the community also hated Tison and then expressed their emotions by burning down his house.

#### ***Double-consciousness***

##### *Experiencing Trauma*

The racist behavior the black race has received from the white race, such as insults, insults,

physical violence, and even murder, has left deep emotional wounds and trauma. People of the black race feel afraid when they are outside their homes. They feel worried when they are in public places or crowds because they realize that they are different from other people in terms of race or ethnic minorities. They feel afraid of becoming victims of bullying. They concluded they would not be safe outside the house (Abadi & Muthohirin, 2020).

“Niggas getting’ shot for carrying candy and cell phones and shit. Can you imagine what woulda happened to me if I’d had my cell phone out that nigt? I could be dead, dawg. And for what?” He swigs again just to feel the burn (Stone, 2017).

Justyce felt traumatized by the murder case committed by a white person against a black person, Tavarrius Jenkis, in Florida. Tavarrius Jenkins was shot dead by a policeman while he and his friend were walking. Despite his position, Tavarrius Jenkins wanted to take his cell phone out of his pocket. The police assumed that Tavarrius Jenkins would take the gun from inside his clothes. This murder case, due to a trivial matter and a misunderstanding, was very traumatic for Justyce. The reason is that Justyce was once questioned by a policeman when he had good intentions of dropping off his ex-girlfriend, Melo, who was white and drunk.

#### *Worried About the Safety of His Family*

Every family member, including black families, must have strong relationships. If something terrible happens to one of the family members, the other family members will feel worried and anxious. The concerns of black families often occur because their children or one of their family members receive racist behavior from the white people around them. Families of victims who experience racist behavior feel worried and afraid if something untoward happens to their child again (Ridwan & Sofianto, 2019).

I’m afraid, son. This world is hard enough for a boy like you without the extra obstacles. That man almost killed you, Justyce! And what for? What were you doing wrong? Listenin’ to some music he didn’t like? (Stone, 2017).

After losing his son, Manny, Manny’s father was very worried about all the other family members. Manny’s father is also worried about Manny’s other friends, including Justyce. The incident experienced by his son, Manny, was very unexpected. This incident left deep wounds on Manny’s father and all his family members. Manny’s father hopes that this traumatic event will never happen and will never happen to anyone. For Manny’s father, it is enough for Manny to experience it; do not let Manny’s friends, including Justyce, experience it.

#### *Responding to Racist Behavior Received*

The racist behavior received by the black race from the white race has often happened and has been going on for a long time. People from the black race who were initially silent about being treated arbitrarily gradually became annoyed and wanted to retaliate against similar behavior. People of the black race have had enough fear, worry, and suffering. People of the black race felt angry. Therefore, people from the black race intend to respond to the racist behavior of white people with crimes, such as killing them (Wiratraman, 2021).

In our top story this morning, a mere forty-eight hours after a mistrial was declared in the proceedings against him, former APD officer Garret Tison was found dead inside his cell at the Clarke Country Jail (Stone, 2017).

The anger and revenge of people from the black race over the murder of Manny and Justyce have reached their peak. The racist behavior that occurs cannot be resolved before the law. Therefore, people from the black race took revenge on Manny and Justyce’s killers directly, namely by killing a

police officer named Garret Tison. Garret Tison is the perpetrator of the murders of Manny and Justyce. This murder incident, apart from proving the anger and revenge of black people towards white people, also shows the distrust of black people regarding the laws carried out by white people.

The findings of this study state that the impact of racist behavior in the veil on individuals is in the form of losing the spirit to fight, on families in the form of the assumption that all people from the majority race must have the same racist behavior, and on society it can foster feelings of hatred and revenge towards people who engaging in racist behavior; and the form of double-consciousness racist behavior towards individuals in the form of trauma, towards families in the form of high levels of worry about the safety of their families, towards society in the form of a desire to retaliate against racist behavior received by committing crimes is in line with Du Bois' racial theory, which states that the impact of this racist behavior varies, such as making a person despair and losing direction in their life (Barajas-Gonzalez et al., 2022), generalizing a person's character based on race (Rhizky, 2020), the victim's family feels worried and afraid if something happens to family members (Ridwan & Sofianto, 2019), provoke public reactions, such as hurt, anger and sadness (Doharty, 2020), and return racist behavior to people who have done it (Wiratraman, 2021).

The findings of this study show that the impact of racist behavior can be in the form of loss of fighting spirit, experiencing trauma, considering everyone from the majority race to be racist, worrying about the safety of their family, growing feelings of hatred and revenge, and retaliating against racist behavior received in line with the findings of Comas-Diaz et al., (2019) which shows that experiences of racial discrimination and violence can cause racial trauma in individuals. The findings of this study are also in line with the findings of Cave et al., (2020) which explain that racial discrimination can have an impact on the health of children and adolescents, such as depression and anxiety, as well as physical problems, such as obesity and high blood pressure, Williams, Lawrence, Davis et al., (2019) who found that racism can have a significant impact on a person's health, including high blood pressure, depression, anxiety, and chronic stress which damage the body and disrupt hormonal balance, Lee et al., (2021) which found that racial discrimination can cause a cortisol/DHEA imbalance, and Rosenthal & Lobel (2020) which examined that racism can produce high levels of stress and pressure in Black and Latina women in the United States, and affecting their reproductive and sexual health.

## CONCLUSION

The form of racist behavior found in the novel "*Dear Martin*" by Nic Stone, based on the perspective of W.E.B Du Bois, is veiled racist behavior, which consists of underestimating black people and insulting black women, and racist double-consciousness behavior consisting of unfairly applying the law and doubting the abilities of black students. The factors causing the occurrence of racist behavior under the veil are differences in class and social status and differences in skin color, while the factors causing the occurrence of double-consciousness racist behavior are accusations of being the perpetrator of a crime and allegations of affirmative action. The impact of racist behavior in the veil is losing fighting spirit, experiencing trauma, and considering everyone from the majority race to be racist, while the impact of double-consciousness racist behavior is worrying about the safety of one's family, growing feelings of hatred and revenge, and retaliating—racist behavior received.

Understanding racism will always consider other groups lower than one's group. Racism occurs in the United States of America, between black people and white people, and in various countries, including Indonesia. Among the triggers for racist behavior are the polarity of majority and minority groups and differences in genetics and outlook on life, such as differences in physical characteristics in skin color, hair, and eyes, as well as differences in beliefs and politics. Forms of racist behavior, in general, are insult, discrimination, classification, harassment, injustice, social and economic inequality, violence, and murder. Whatever the form, racist behavior will have a terrible impact on the individual, family, and society that experiences it. Therefore, to address racist behavior and the impact it will have on individuals, families, and society, researchers provide statements that support W.E.B. Du Bois's theory in overcoming racist behavior, namely: (1) every individual and

society should realize that every individual has the same rights in all matters of life without discriminating against or favoring one's race; (2) the government should have a solid determination to uphold justice without interference from anyone and realize that all people of any race have the same position before the law; and (3) every individual, parent, school teacher, social institution and government institution should teach children the valuable values of social life in order to reduce and prevent cases of racism and discrimination.

Although this study has comprehensively expressed at the forms of racist behavior, the causes of racist behavior, and the impact of racist behavior on its victims, this study still has limitations. The first limitation is that this study is only based on one theory, namely W.E.B. Du Bois' racial theory. The second limitation is that the impact of racist behavior on its victims only focuses on the social and educational fields, without looking at cultural, economic, and political aspects. Therefore, further studies can examine the phenomenon of racism using an interdisciplinary, systemic, critical, and reflective approach and many scientific disciplines, such as psychology, anthropology, and political science. Further studies could also investigate factors that can strengthen individual resilience to experiences of racism and public policy to understand the relationship between public policy and systemic and structural racism, racism and education to understand how racism influences students' experiences in school and how education can be used as a means to combat racism, and racism and the media.

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