

**RACIAL DISCRIMINATION TOWARDS THE HAZARAS AS REFLECTED IN
KHALED HOSSEINI'S *THE KITE RUNNER***

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Abstract

Khaled Hosseini's novel entitled *The Kite Runner* is an American bestseller novel that represents racial conflict between the Pashtuns and Hazaras, two different races and ethnics in Afghanistan. The aims of this study are to find out the causes of racial discrimination, to analyze examples of racial discrimination, and to analyze the impacts of racial discrimination as depicted in *The Kite Runner*. Sociological approach and theories on racism and racial discrimination are used in this study. The result of this study shows that racial discrimination in *The Kite Runner* is caused by social structural factors and social psychological factors. Pashtuns and Hazaras differ in terms of religious beliefs, cultural practices, social status, and physical appearances. Pashtun as the majority race and ethnic in Afghanistan is Sunni Moslem while Hazara is Shi'a. Other reason why the Hazaras have been discriminated by Pashtun is their appearance that look like Chinese people. The Hazaras are also seen as the weakest and poorest race in Afghanistan, so that they are easily subjected to be killed, insulted, and tortured by Pashtuns. Moreover, racial discrimination in *The Kite Runner* causes some bad impacts to psychological health as well as to society. In *The Kite Runner*, it not only causes some bad impacts to Hassan's psychological health but also causes a plan to commit the genocide, slavery, and oppression act toward the Hazaras. Therefore, it can be concluded that racial discrimination is harmful to the people and society because it teaches people to make judgments about others in terms of group-based expectations or standards.

Keywords: Racism, Racial Discrimination, Pashtuns, Hazaras.

1. INTRODUCTION

Racial discrimination is one of the worst social problems that still exists until now. Racial discrimination often happens in developing countries that have diversity in terms of social, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. The more diverse a country's religious population, the more violent its domestic conflicts tend to be. Such conflicts occur more often

in developing countries than in developed countries. Afghanistan is one of the developing countries which suffer from conflict and war during its modern history. Although Afghanistan is an Islamic state that upholds the ties kinship, the conflict and discrimination in this country still happen.

The existence of racial discrimination portrayed by the Hazaras in *The Kite Runner* makes it interesting to be analyzed. The story of this novel could show how unfair and destructive the racial discrimination could be to human being as well as society. By analyzing and understanding this topic, it will help people to avoid any misconceptions and unnecessary prejudice in daily life. Therefore, “Racial Discrimination towards the Hazaras as Reflected in Khaled Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner*” becomes the title of this thesis.

1. 2. Research Problems

Racial discrimination is analyzed in this thesis in order to learn how destructive the practices of racial discrimination could be. Therefore, there are some research problems to analyze in this thesis:

1. What are the causes of racial discrimination in Khaled Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner*?
2. What are examples of racial discrimination in *The Kite Runner*?
3. What are the impacts of racial discrimination in *The Kite Runner*?

1. 3. Objectives of the Study

According to the research problems mentioned above, there are some purposes of this study. They are:

1. To find out the cause of racial discrimination as depicted in Khaled Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner*.
2. To analyze examples of racial discrimination in *The Kite Runner*.
3. To analyze the impacts of racial discrimination in *The Kite Runner*.

1. 4. Methods of the Study

There are two methods that the writer used in writing this thesis, which are research method and method of approach.

1.4.1. Research Method

The writer uses library research by using close reading to analyze *The Kite Runner*. Thus, the writer conducted the research to get the factual data and information by taking the sources from novel, books, magazines, internet, and other related sources and focusing on the specific details of a passage or text in order to get some deeper meaning in it.

1.4.2. Method of Approach

The writer applies a sociological approach and psychological approach to analyze how racial discrimination is represented in the novel. Sociological approach is used to analyze the literary work as social reflection. Meanwhile, psychological approach is used to analyze the effect that modern psychology has had upon literary works.

2. BIOGRAPHY OF KHALED HOSSEINI AND SYNOPSIS OF *THE KITE RUNNER*

2.1. Biography of Khaled Hosseini

Khaled Hosseini was born on March 4, 1965 in Kabul, Afghanistan. His father was a diplomat in Afghan Foreign Ministry, and his mother taught Persian literature at a high school in Kabul. When he was five years old, his family moved to Iran. In 1973, they came back to Kabul, when Afghanistan became republic. In 1976, his family moved to Paris. Instead of returning to Kabul which had been destroyed after the invasion of the Soviet Army in Afghanistan, they decided to move to United States and lived in San Jose, California.

Hosseini graduated from high school in California. He continued to study in Santa Clara University and earned a degree in biology.

After graduated from college, Hosseini decided to become a physician. Therefore, he attended the University of California-San Diego's School of Medicine, and completed his M.D. in 1993. He practiced his medical residency at Cedars-Sinai hospital of Los Angeles and became an internist. In March 2001, while practicing internal medicine, Hosseini began writing his first novel, *The Kite Runner*. This novel published by Riverhead Books in 2003 and became an international bestseller. It sold in 70 countries and remaining more than a hundred weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list. The novel has been translated into more than 40 languages, and adapted into a film with the same title *The Kite Runner* in 2007.

("Biography of Khaled Hosseini." *List of Works, Study Guides and Essays*. Grade Saver. Web. 8 Nov. 2015. <<http://gradesaver.com/author/khaled-hosseini>>)

2.2 Synopsis of *The Kite Runner*

The Kite Runner is an American bestseller novel which tells us about an unforgettable story of a friendship between two boys who grow up in Kabul, Afghanistan. Raised in the same household and sharing the same wet nurse, Amir and Hassan grew up in different social class, race, and ethnic. Amir was the son of prominent and wealthy Sunni Pashtun man, Baba. Meanwhile, Hassan was the son of Amir's father's servant, Ali. Hassan and Ali are a Hazara, an ethnic minority in Afghanistan. As an ethnic minority, The Hazaras were not allowed to attend school. Therefore, Hassan never learned to read. He also lived in the mud hut at the bottom of Amir's garden which is different from Amir who lived in a luxurious home.

After winning the kite tournament, Amir discovered Hassan get beaten and raped by Assef and his two friends. Amir did nothing to help Hassan. He just run away and pretended not to know what happened. Later, he did not tell Ali and Baba about the truth. Amir worried if Baba knew how bravely Hassan defended Amir's kite, and how cowardly Amir acted. He

worried if Baba's love for Hassan would grow even more. Finally, he forced Hassan and his father to leave from Amir's house by accusing them for stealing Amir's money.

Years later after Hassan and Ali left, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. It forced Amir and his father Baba to move out from Afghanistan to Pakistan and end up living in America. Amir then married Soraya, but they remained childless even after 15 years of marriage. Shortly after they get married, Baba died because of lung cancer. One day, Amir got a call from Rahim Khan who is dying in Pakistan. Rahim Khan asked Amir to come to Pakistan. Through him, Amir knew that Hassan was in reality his half-brother, the child from Baba's affair with Ali's wife. After knowing that Hassan and his wife had been killed by the Taliban, Amir hesitantly went back to Afghanistan to rescue his nephew, Sohrab, from Taliban. In the face of challenging obstacles, Amir decided to bring back Sohrab to America and adopted him.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter contains the explanation of the theories used to analyze *The Kite Runner*. The theories are divided into two parts which are related to intrinsic and extrinsic elements of literature.

3.1. Intrinsic Elements

Intrinsic elements are the elements that build up the literary works. There are only three intrinsic elements that are discussed in this study: character, setting, and conflict.

3.1.1. Characters

Character is an important element in a novel. Character is a person, thing or any figure represented in a literary work that the writer creates to play some role in the story of the novel. According to Kennedy and Gioia, a character is "presumably imagined person who

inhabits story” (1983: 45). Character is one of the important elements in a literary work that the readers want to see their struggle to pursue the goals. According to Potter, character of a story can be divided into protagonist and antagonist characters (1967: 7). People often see protagonist as a good character, and antagonist as the bad one who cruel and evil towards the protagonist. The author of the novel uses many ways to show the characters and makes some characterization of them. Characterization is the way how the author of the novel presents the character, how the author describes the character in the story. Through characterization, a character’s personality can be seen by its action, behavior, speech, the appearance, the environment where the character lived, and also what others say about the character.

3.1.2 Settings

Setting is the time and place where the action occurs in literary works. According to Meyer, “Setting is the context in which action of a story occurs” (1990: 107). Setting is also an essential part in literary works. It influences character’s personality, motivation and attitude shown in literary works. Meyer classifies setting into three types. It generally includes place, time, and social environment that occur in the story (Meyer, 1990: 107). Setting is not only indicate to time and place of the story is made, but also highlights the character behaviour, the attitude in the community, stereotype, or even a lifestyle of people.

3.1.3. Conflicts

Conflict is a kind of disagreement between the characters that moves the story. Perrine in *Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense* defines conflict as “a clash of actions, ideas, desires, or wills” (1988: 42). By adding conflict, the story will be more thrilling and interesting. Therefore, conflict is an essential element in the development of the plot. Meyer divides conflicts only into two types: internal conflict and external conflict (1990: 45). Internal conflict is a conflict that takes place in character’s mind. In internal conflict, a

character must deal with his mixed feelings or emotions. Meanwhile, external conflict is a struggle between a character and an outside force.

3.2. Extrinsic Elements

In this sub chapter, there are three extrinsic elements that are discussed: racism and racial discrimination, the causes, and impacts of racial discrimination.

3.2.1. Racism and Racial Discrimination

Racism is unfair treatment of people on the basis on race, color, and religion. According to Macionis, racism is “the belief that one racial category is innately superior or inferior to another” (2011: 326). Basically, people who are in dominant races are expected to be the superior, while the minorities are thought to be inferior. These dominant races will hate and avoid certain groups of people that belong to different races. The concept of racism is often associated with prejudice and discrimination against the minority group. Prejudice is making a judgment about a person or a group of people based on their race, religion or class without knowing them personally. Tischler defines prejudice as, “an irrationally based negative, or occasionally positive, attitude toward certain groups and their members” (2010: 222). Discrimination means treating someone unfairly because of a personal characteristic such as their sex, race or age. The word discrimination is often used to represent the actions of a dominant majority group in relation to a weak minority group. The members of majority group turn their own unacceptable feeling into a discriminating act toward the minority group.

3.2.2. The Causes of Racial Discrimination

The cause of racial discrimination is the belief that some racial groups are inferior to others. According to Lauer in *Social Problems & The Quality of Life*, there are two factors

that cause racial discrimination. It is supported by social structural factors and social psychological factors (2004: 222). An important social structural factor that contributes to the problem of racial discrimination is institutional racism. Institutional racism is a social structural factor that causes the racial discrimination practices. This form of racism is conducted by political and social institutions such as governments, corporations, religions, or educational institutions with the authority to keep the minorities stay in the lower levels of the stratification system. Meanwhile social psychological factors are supported by negative stereotype and prejudice that occur in the society.

3.2.3. The Impacts of Racial Discrimination

Racial discrimination has a significant impact both on the people who experience it and the society. As for the human being, racial discrimination may cause someone to become anxious, depression, paranoid, helpless or hopeless, frustrated, low self-esteem, loneliness, sadness, and fearful. Racial discrimination causes negative effects not only to psychological health but also to society. According to Macionis, racial discrimination causes genocide or ethnic cleansing, slavery and oppression. It also causes tremendous moral, cultural, and economic suffering to a country. In conclusion, it negatively affects to society (2011: 328).

4. RACIAL DISCRIMINATION TOWARDS THE HAZARAS AS REFLECTED IN KHALED HOSSEINI'S *THE KITE RUNNER*

4.1. Analysis of Intrinsic Elements of *The Kite Runner*

In this section, the analysis of intrinsic elements is done by looking at some intrinsic aspects that a novel has. The analysis covers three intrinsic elements: characters, settings, and conflicts in *The Kite Runner*.

4.1.1. Analysis of Characters

There are a lot of characters in *The Kite Runner*, but only three main characters are analyzed in this thesis: Amir (a Sunni Pashtun boy), Hassan (a Hazara boy, Amir's best friend, half brother as well as Amir's servant), and Assef (a half German and Taliban Pashtun boy, Amir's neighbor).

4.1.1.1. Amir

Amir is a protagonist character in *The Kite Runner*. He can be identified as the protagonist of the novel because the story of this novel revolves around Amir's life. Amir is a Pashtun boy, a majority and wealthy race in Afghanistan. He comes from a rich family. His father (Baba) is one of the richest merchant in Kabul. Since Amir is a Pashtun, he has pointed nose with dark hair, eyes and high cheek bones. Basically, Amir is a good and smart boy. He is an educated boy who loves to read poetry. Instead of playing soccer, he prefers to read poetry and write a story. It makes his relationship with Baba not too close. Baba thinks that Amir is not being manly enough. Baba hopes that Amir was athletic and brave like him.

Amir is also racist towards Hassan. He uses his position as a master to control and manipulate his servant, Hassan, in order to reach his selfish goal: getting all of Baba's approval and attention. Amir seems to let Hassan to get raped by Assef, so he can take the prize kite to Baba. Amir still believes that Hazaras live only to serve Pashtuns.

4.1.1.2. Hassan

Hassan is Amir's best friend and half-brother, as well as a servant to Amir's family. He is a Hazara, a minority race and ethnic group in Afghanistan. Since Hassan is a Hazara, he has round face, broad nose and slanting. His eyes are narrow and look like gold, green, sapphire. His ears are tiny, and his chin is pointed stub. Because Hassan's characteristic that looks like Chinese people, he is often discriminated and called *flat-nosed Babalu*¹ by others.

¹ A monster with flat nose (Hosseini, 2003: 42)

Hassan is an extremely loyal, trustworthy, and forgiving boy. It can be seen from his attitudes towards Amir. He is always there when Amir needs him, “Sometimes, up in those trees, I talked Hassan into firing walnuts with his slingshot at the neighbor’s one-eyed German shepherd. Hassan never wanted to, but if I asked, *really* asked, he wouldn’t deny me. Hassan never denied me anything” (Hosseini, 2003: 4). Hassan always protects, helps and is obedient to Amir even after being betrayed by him. He never denies what is commanded by Amir. Hassan also never fights back when he becomes the victim of racism. He realizes that he comes from the lowest race and social status in Afghanistan.

4.1.1.3. Assef

Assef is Amir’s neighbor. He is a brutally cruel and arrogant boy who often torments children with his power and authority. Since his mother is German and his father is Pashtuns, Assef has blue eyes and blond hair. He idolizes Adolf Hitler for what he had done in eliminating the Jews. Thus, he believes that Afghanistan should be just for Pashtuns. He does not see the Hazaras as equal to the Pashtuns. Assef’s cruel act can be seen when he and his friends, Kamal and Wali, discriminate and rape Hassan because Hassan refuses to hand over the kite for his freedom. Therefore, it can be concluded that Assef represents an antagonist character in this novel because of his behavior.

4.1.2. Analysis of Settings

In this section, there are three types of setting in *The Kite Runner* that are analyzed in this thesis: setting of place, setting of time, and setting of social environment.

4.1.2.1. Setting of Place

The setting of *The Kite Runner* is divided into three distinct places by following the life of its main character. The first is when Amir and his family still lived in Kabul, Afghanistan. At the time, there was no war in Afghanistan. The second is when Amir and

Baba move to California, America. This setting makes it clear the purpose of Amir to live in America. He wants to hide away his past life in Afghanistan. By moving to America, Amir and Baba hope they will live peacefully. The third is when Afghanistan is under the Taliban regime (Shi'a). The author of this novel creates settings like before and after Afghanistan. Afghanistan has turned into an inhabitable place to live, the destroyed place where many corpses lie down on the street and many buildings are shattered. In other words, Afghanistan has turned into an unsafe country.

4.1.2.2. Setting of Time

Setting of time in *The Kite Runner* begins in the winter of 1975 when Amir and Hassan were still teenagers, "I became what I am today at the age of twelve, on a frigid overcast day in the winter of 1975" (Hosseini, 2003: 1). The novel remains in Amir's home country until early 80s, when the Soviet Union invades. Toward the end of the book, it sets in the present time in August 2001 when Amir returns to Afghanistan once more to rescue Sohrab, Hassan's son.

4.1.2.3. Setting of Social Environment

Despite the different times and places, the social background of these settings remain the same: dominated by the rules and norms of Afghan culture. Afghan society is very strict and conservative. There is a class and race order. Hazaras are at the bottom as a servant or peasant class, while Pashtuns are at the upper as a master. As the highest race, Pashtuns can live in a big and luxurious house. They also can get higher education. Some of them are going abroad to get better education. Furthermore, Pashtuns also have a habit to hold an extravagant party in order to show their position as the highest and wealthiest race in Afghanistan. This condition is highly contrasted with Hazara's life. The Hazaras have to live in misery. The only house that they have is a little mud hut. They are also uneducated since they do not have a chance to go to school. Thus, they can only work as a servant.

4.1.3. Analysis of Conflicts in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*

The conflict in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* can be divided into two types: internal conflicts and external conflicts. The internal conflicts in this story are more experienced by Amir and Hassan. The first one is the conflict between Amir with himself. Amir is trapped in many dilemmas because of his relationship with Baba. Even though Amir deeply loves his father very much, he feels that he does not get enough love and attention from his father. Amir also deals with another internal conflict because of differences status from Hassan. Amir considers Hassan as a best friend, but at the same time, Amir still treats him like a servant. Hassan also deals with internal conflict in this novel. Hassan's internal conflict happens when he suddenly becomes a quiet person after he was raped by Assef. He does not want to go out from his room, even when Amir asks him to play, "Ali paused with a log in his hand. A worried look crossed his face. "Lately, it seems all he wants to do is sleep. He does his chores--I see to that--but then he just wants to crawl under his blanket" (Hosseini, 2003: 88). All he wants to do after the incident is just sleeping in his room and does not want to be disturbed by anyone even his father and Amir. Hassan has to deal with the shame and guilt that he must overcome.

Meanwhile, the external conflict happens between Sunni Pashtuns and Hazaras, Sunni Pashtuns and Taliban Pashtuns, and also between Taliban Pashtuns and Hazaras. The conflict between Sunni Pashtuns and Hazaras happens because of the differences in race and religious belief. The conflict between Sunni Pashtuns and Taliban Pashtuns happens because of their differences in religious beliefs. Pashtuns are Sunni, while Pashtuns Taliban are Shi'a. Sunni Pashtuns also believe that Taliban's ideology deviated from Islamic law. Meanwhile, the conflict between Taliban Pashtuns and Hazaras happens because of their differences in opinion. Even though both Taliban Pashtuns and Hazaras are Shi'a, the Taliban still hated and accused the Hazaras for collaborating with one of their enemies, the Iranian army. They

think that the Hazaras are not loyal Afghans. Therefore, the Taliban massacred and killed the Hazaras in order to make Afghanistan “the land of Pashtuns. As portrayed in *The Kite Runner*, the Taliban killed Hassan and his wife, Farzana. The Taliban thought that all Hazaras are not worthy living in a big house.

4.2. Racial Discrimination towards the Hazaras as Reflected in Khaled Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner*

In this section, the analysis of racial discrimination researches the causes, examples and impacts of racial discrimination as depicted in *The Kite Runner*.

4.2.1. Causes of Racial Discrimination as Depicted in *The Kite Runner*

In *The Kite Runner*, racial discrimination is caused by social structural factors and social psychological factors. Social structural factor is influenced by the way the society views the Hazaras people. The Hazaras’s physical appearance becomes important in this case. Genetically, Hazaras are said to be related to Mongols and the Uygurs of Western China, which give them a flat-nose and Chinese features. Their appearances are different from Pashtun who tend to be fairly light-skinned, pointed nose with a variety of eye colors, and high cheek bones. “They called him *flat-nosed* because of Ali and Hassan's characteristic Hazara Mongoloid features. For years, that was all I knew about the Hazaras, that they were Mogul descendants, and that they looked a little like Chinese people” (Hosseini, 2003: 9). The Hazaras are thought to have several similarities with the Mongols, including physical appearance, language, and kinship system. In other words, the Hazaras is a Mongol-Persian blend.

The differences in belief and cultural practice also become social structural factors in racial discrimination. Though Pashtuns and Hazaras are both Muslims, they have different beliefs. Pashtun is Sunni, while Hazara is Shi’a, “the reason of Pashtuns had oppressed the Hazaras that Pashtun is Sunni Muslims, while Hazaras is Shi’a” (Hosseini, 2003: 8). The

disagreement between Pashtuns and Hazaras began after the Prophet Muhammad, the founder of Islam died. Sunni believes the Muslim should elect the next leader. They all wanted Abu Bakar, a friend of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, to be the next successor. However, other Muslims which are Shi'a wanted Ali Bin Abu Thalib, the Prophet's cousin in law to be the next successor². This disagreement causes tension between them.

Meanwhile, social psychological factors that cause racial discrimination are prejudice and stereotype that happens in society. It is clearly stated that the economy and social status between Pashtuns and the Hazaras in *The Kite Runner* are different. Hazaras people live either on the streets or in the servants accommodation of the families they serve, while Pashtuns live in a big luxurious house with many servants and expensive things on it. Therefore, Pashtuns are considered as the strongest and richest race, while Hazaras are considered as the weakest and poorest race in Afghanistan. As depicted in *The Kite Runner*, the Hazaras were labeled as the nasty and dirty servant class. These perceptions still influence the way of thinking of the Pashtuns people. They still consider the Hazaras people less than human, so that the Hazaras do not need any privilege that the Pashtuns have. All of these prejudices lead to negative stereotypes that the Hazaras are poor, stupid, slave, and disabled. Hassan and Ali are suitable with those stereotypes. Hassan has a cleft lip and Ali has leg polio. They also work only as waitress, beggar, and servant.

4.2.2. Examples of Racial Discrimination in *The Kite Runner*

Discrimination plays major role in *The Kite Runner*. Discrimination in this novel is based on the racial inequalities between the Hazaras, the socially, politically and economically oppressed minority with the Pashtuns people, the majority race and ethnic in Afghanistan. The Hazaras are seen as dirty and part of the lower class in Afghanistan. They

² Shaista Wahab and Barry Youngerman, *A Brief History of Afghanistan* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2007), 57.

are the poorest race in this country, so that they can be easily discriminated and oppressed. In *The Kite Runner*, Amir finds that the Hazaras have been brutally suppressed by the Pashtuns when he encounters information about the Hazaras in the history book. Throughout this book, Amir knows that the Hazaras are not equally treated and often disrespected in society. Pashtuns are always stereotyped and insulted them as “*mice-eating, flat-nosed, load carrying donkeys*” (Hosseini, 2003: 10) due to the differences in their physical appearance and social status.

The discrimination can also be seen in education sectors. The education for the Pashtun is not the same with the education for the Hazaras. In *The Kite Runner*, the only children that are allowed to go to school and continue their education are the wealthy Pashtuns (Amir). Hazaras (Hassan) are denied the right to go to school so they do not have a chance to continue their education. The only option is to work as servants. It can be seen that Amir uses his knowledge to make Hassan feel dumb and inferior. Many Hazaras, like Hassan and Ali, are illiterate and do not have a chance to learn how to read and write. Hassan never gets a proper education. Therefore, Amir has to read a book or poem to Hassan. Amir takes an advantage of the fact that he is a Pashtun and Hassan is a Hazara by making him look stupid. Hassan does not know what a word means, and he believes whatever Amir says. Amir uses that to look down on Hassan because it makes Amir feel powerful and superior. Amir even forces Hassan to do whatever he wants. To eat dirt is an example. Hassan is forced to be loyal and protect Amir whatever and whenever the situation is. As a master, Amir also wants to be called “Agha” to strengthen his social status. In this case, Amir, as a Pashtun, believes that Hazaras exist only to serve them, no matter what.

Sexual abuse also becomes the common act to discriminate Hazaras. Sexual abuse is about dominance and control of other people through humiliation and destruction. This act can be seen when Assef and his two buddies rape Hassan. Assef hates Hassan so much just

because he is a Hazara. Assef believes that Hazaras have no right as they are beneath them. Assef thinks that Afghanistan should be purified of the Hazaras and kept only for the Pashtuns. He believes that Afghanistan is the land of Pashtuns. Only the pure and real Afghans can live in this country.

4.2.3. Impacts of Racial Discrimination as Depicted in *The Kite Runner*

Racial discrimination causes some bad impacts both on the individuals who experience it and on the society. As for the individual, racial discrimination causes some bad impacts to psychological health. In *The Kite Runner*, racial discrimination affects Hassan's mental health. Hassan is indeed helpless when being raped. He has to endure all the indignity by himself. Sexual abuse affects Hassan very much on the inside, yet he does not show how his feeling on the outside. Hassan chooses to ignore what has happened to him and continues his life as if nothing happened. This accident is very hard for Hassan. He pretends to be silent of this moment forever. In Hassan's case, Hassan has turned into someone who does not have any confidence due to discrimination that he receives. He also looks thinner and tired because of the harassment over his life.

As for the society, racial discrimination causes mass genocide, slavery and oppression. There is no genocide act in *The Kite Runner*, but racial discrimination causes a plan to commit the genocide act towards the Hazaras. As the majority group, Pashtuns always believes that Afghanistan should be home to only Pashtuns. Therefore, they make Hazaras as the subjects of "ethnic cleansing" in order to make Afghanistan "land of Pashtuns." Another impact of racial discrimination is slavery and oppression. Although there is no slavery in this novel, the Hazaras are still treated and oppressed like slaves in their own country. Every wealthy Pashtun family has their own Hazara servant. Hazara servants are not paid and do the work only for food to eat and a place to stay. This condition is depicted in Hassan and Ali's

life as a servant. Hassan still has to become a servant to Amir even though they are basically best friends and half-brothers. In conclusion, Hassan, the Hazara is oppressed by Amir, the Pashtun.

5. CONCLUSION

Amir, Hassan, and Assef are the main characters who build the plot in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*. Amir is the narrator and main protagonist in this novel. He is the son of wealthy Pashtun man, Baba, while Hassan is the son of servant, Ali. Amir and Assef is a Pashtun boy, the majority race and ethnic in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, Hassan is a Hazara, a minority ethnic and race in Afghanistan. The Hazaras are considered as the lowest race due to their physical appearances, religious beliefs, and social standing. The Hazaras are often subjected to be discriminated in Afghanistan society. Therefore, Hassan is being discriminated, abused and insulted by Assef and other people in this novel.

Other incidents related to racial discrimination also represent conflict in *The Kite Runner*. This novel deals with the issue of racial discrimination in Afghanistan as depicted in the story between Amir, Hassan, and Assef. This racial discrimination is caused by the social structural factors and social psychological factors. Social structural factors are influenced by the differences of physical appearance, religious beliefs and cultural practices between Pashtuns and Hazaras. The Hazaras's physical appearances are different from Pashtuns since they are a Mongol-Persian blend. They are also different in religious beliefs. Pashtun is Sunni, and Hazara is Shi'a. Meanwhile, social psychological factors are supported by prejudice and stereotype that happened in society. In *The Kite Runner*, the Hazaras considered as the weakest and poorest race and ethnic in Afghanistan so that they have negative stereotypes like poor, slave, illiterate and disabled. Therefore, Hazaras are often disrespected and discriminated in society.

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