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**A LITERARY ANALYSIS OF THE VIEWS OF RACIAL  
DISCRIMINATION USING A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH  
BASED ON THE BOOK THE HELP BY KATHRYN STOCKETT**

**Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Bachelor in English**

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## Dedication

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this research paper was to analyze the views of racial discrimination portrayed in *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett, which was used for the base of this paper. This investigation was carried out by identifying the life experiences of the individuals presented in the book, analyzing the state and repercussions that racial discrimination was in them, surveying adults to obtain their life experiences and views regarding racial discrimination, and finally comparing the views and experiences from the book with the one the current adults had.

To achieve the goal of this investigation, various steps and processes happened. First of all, the reading of *The Help* with careful attention and analysis. Moreover, research was done utilizing other resources such as other books and investigations; As well as the analysis and views of other investigators, including their theories to support the bases if this research. Finally, the information obtained from the sample group via a survey, to obtain their valuable insides.

## Resumen

El objetivo de la presente investigación es analizar las opiniones sobre la discriminación racial de acuerdo a lo que se muestra en el libro *The Help* de Kathryn Stockett, el cual es la base para esta investigación. Esta se llevó a cabo identificando las experiencias de los personajes presentados en el libro, analizando el estado y repercusiones que tuvo en ellos la discriminación racial, aplicando una encuesta en adultos para obtener sus experiencias de vida y opiniones respecto a la discriminación racial y finalmente comparando las opiniones y experiencias del libro con las de los adultos actuales.

Para lograr el objetivo de esta investigación, se aplicaron varios pasos y procesos; En primer lugar, la lectura del libro *The Help* con cuidadosa atención y análisis. Además, la investigación se realizó utilizando recursos adicionales como otros libros e investigaciones; Así como análisis y opiniones de otros investigadores, incluyendo sus teorías para sustentar las bases de esta investigación. Finalmente, información obtenida a través de una encuesta a un grupo de adultos a través de una encuesta, para extraer valiosas opiniones y experiencias.

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## Chapter I

### Introductory Framework

Society plays a big part in the development of an individual. Humans get easily influenced and affected by society and their interactions and experiences with it. People's personalities and behaviors can be shaped by society unfortunately, racial injustice is a struggle present in society; Racial discrimination, just like any other type of discrimination, can also come from society, and the effects that it has on someone, the sociocultural background that a person may have. Individuals who exhibit abusive behaviors towards others may behave this way because of scenarios or influences from their upbringing. As racial discrimination can grandly affect an individual's life, it is important to analyze the effects that it has in our current society, from a sociocultural approach.

Any discriminatory behavior, like racial discrimination, can result in a major change for an individual. It can result in physical, emotional, and psychological trauma. Many different authors have created works centered on the topic of discrimination, and racism, just like the book *The Help*. In this book, the author showed a detailed inside into the lives of black people back in the 60s; where black people had no rights and were not considered as part of society. The novel shows the hard stories of black women raising white children, as well as the moment when they decided to be brave enough and tell their own raw stories as working as the help.

By mainly showing the point of view of the black workers, the book shows the injustice that black people suffered and how these affected their living conditions and behaviors. This research investigates racial discrimination and how this affected and modified the lives of the victims, focusing on the experiences of the characters in the book. Moreover, this paper also analyses

themes, concepts, methodologies, and theories that can help with the objectives of the research. Furthermore, the researcher gathered data from a targeted audience of adults, through a survey, to obtain opinions, points of view, and experiences regarding racial discrimination. The researcher analyses the adult's inputs to determine the effects that racial discrimination has on people.

This research paper also seeks to shine a light and spread awareness regarding racial discrimination; Nowadays, racism and discrimination are often frowned upon, and our society tends to mask this abuse with comedy, not taking it so seriously. However, any type of discrimination is abuse, and it leaves an imprint on any of its victims. Something changes in a person who is a victim of discrimination, it can be from the way they speak, and dress, to changing their entire personality and behavior, hiding their true selves. Therefore, this paper hopes to provide a clear understanding of the implications that discrimination has on people.

In the book *The Help*, Kathryn Stockett drafted a story that gave a raw inside look into the lives of black people back in the 60s, showing realistic events that some people experienced in the past. By the main character of the story being a black woman, who was employed in a white household, the author showed realistic themes and symbols. The author represented the struggle of black people, the ambition, desire, mistreatment, abuse, and living struggle. *The Help* shows a message of abuse and discrimination towards black people, and how this abuse has an impact on their lives and can change a person completely. Therefore, it is safe to say that with this work, Kathryn Stockett showed a reality for many people of color, the abuse and discrimination that they went or go through which is many times disregarded.

## **1.1 Problem Statement**

The goal of this work is to show awareness of the racial discrimination in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett, and how are these views present today; Are we seeing a change or are there still some of these discriminatory actions happening in our current time. The racial discrimination shown in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett gives an inside into how people of color were exploited and not treated as part of society. This type of discrimination affected the quality of life of those at the time; However, in some scenarios, we can see this discrimination is still affecting today's society.

In the book and some cases today, racial discrimination gets in the way of people's lives. These people, affected by social discrimination, are sometimes unable to complete simple tasks like getting a job, going shopping, and going to school because of these discriminatory behaviors in society.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Investigation**

### **1.2.1 General Objectives.**

1. To analyze the views of racial discrimination in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett, and how these actions affected people's quality of life in the story.
2. To analyze the views of racial discrimination today and compare them to the case of those in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett.

### **1.2.2 Specific Objectives**

1. To analyze in detail the lives of those in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett, and how much was racial discrimination a part of their lives.

2. To identify how much did discrimination affected the quality of life for those in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett, and how did they deal with it.
3. To analyze today's society and investigate how much in racial discrimination present in our time.
4. To identify how much those racial discrimination affects today's society and compare it to society present in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett.

### **1.3 Justification of the Study**

This investigation will show the effects of racial discrimination in society and how much this affects one's life and quality of living; how much of the 'normal lifestyle' is not possible because of racial discrimination. The book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett gives a good view of how racial discrimination was present back then and how people were not treated like people at all but more like a toll to help those at the top of the social chain, this work is to show awareness of racial discrimination and its effects by investigating how much does racial discrimination affect society people's mental stated and their day to day, and how much is racial discrimination present in today's society as well as much does this type of discrimination is affecting people nowadays.

How is the lifestyle today, for those people of different races, compared to the once living at the time of the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett? Are these people still not being treated like part of society? Are they able to perform normal tasks and live their lives just like the others? Or are we still struggling with opportunities not being the same for people of color? The goal of this investigation is to show the weight that racial discrimination has, how tough was for those living at the time of the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett, and how much of those discriminatory

actions are still happening today. With this work of investigation, the views of racial discrimination today will be analyzed and compared to how the situation was back at the time of the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett.

This work will be of use to those who want to take a look into the racial discrimination present at the time of the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett and for those who want to take a deep dive into the day-to-day lives of those living in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett; and how did these people deal with the racial discrimination. Moreover, this investigation is to help those interested in today's look at racial discrimination, how much is racial discrimination present in our days and how much is racial discrimination affecting today's society. Furthermore, this work will analyze today's society and what are their views on racial discrimination; Consequently, this investigation will offer a comparison for those interested in how the current state of racial discrimination is compared to the situation of those living at the time of the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett. This investigation will show the conditions that the society in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett was living in, and how they dealt with the racial discrimination that was present in their day-to-day lives.

Furthermore, this investigation will also investigate today's society analyzing how much is racial discrimination present today, showing today's views of racial discrimination, and comparing the level of racial discrimination present in the past with today's society. This work will be of use to show the development of society; In the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett people of color were not treated like people at all, they were not considered part of society, so with this investigation, the past state of racial discrimination will be compared with today's society; by comparing both these periods then we can determine how much did society advance.

This investigation will expand the impact of social discrimination, and it will provide awareness of how much social discrimination affects the quality of life; by reminding society of the past scenarios and how different people were treated before just by having a different skin color than others. This investigation will show how racial discrimination was looked at in the past, at the time of the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett; and how they think about equality, same-life opportunities, and rights for everybody. Furthermore, this investigation will also provide an analysis of how racial discrimination is looked at in our current society; How do we currently think about equality and same-life opportunities and rights.

Moreover, this investigation will provide a comparison of today's society with the society of the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett; This investigation will compare people of color's life quality, as well as their rights, educational and job opportunities, and how much are they a part of society now, compared to the past at the time of the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett. This work will be of use for referencing the impact that racial discrimination has on people's lives in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett, and how much of that discrimination is still happening today. With this work, there will be awareness of the injustice that people suffer in the selected book; this work will be proof that racial discrimination happened and whether is still present today it is something that affects people's lifestyles.

#### **1.4 Antecedents**

The work "Historical Events In Jim Crow Laws Era As Reflected in Kathryn Stockett's Novel The Help" by Khoirun Nisa (2019), mentions the relationship between literature and history, mentioning that literature often reflects the author's social and historical experiences. It

mentions that literature serves as a mirror of real life, allowing authors to talk about social conditions and issues. Furthermore, the work also mentions nonfiction and fiction literature, nonfiction being based on facts and fiction being a product of the author's imagination. Moreover, this investigation highlights how literature represents real-life situations and events. It mentions that novels can provide insights, recommendations, and inspiration for improving life and society. It also discusses racism shown in literature, particularly in the context of the Jim Crow Laws era in the United States.

The chosen novel for this investigation is "The Help" by Kathryn Stockett, which is set in racially segregated Jackson, Mississippi, during the 1960s. This novel is used to explore how racism operated during that period and how it shows the historical events of the Jim Crow Laws era in the United States.

This investigation delves to focus on three historical events of the Jim Crow Laws era. The first event is "The Reconstruction" (1865-1877), after the Emancipation Proclamation, the nation grappled with the question of full citizenship for newly freed Black people. The Reconstruction period wanted to reorganize Southern states after the Civil War, provide means for readmitting them into the Union, and define how white people and Black people could coexist in a post-slavery society. Black and white teachers, missionary organizations, and churches worked to provide education to the emancipated population during this time.

The next historical event mentioned in the investigation is "The Rise of Jim Crow Laws" (1887-1900): This era saw the legal implementation of laws that enforced segregation in all public facilities for Black people. Facilities for black people were often of lower quality than

those for whites. These laws aimed to maintain white supremacy, and violence was used against Blacks who violated these rules.

The last historical event mentioned is "Challenging Jim Crow" (1900-1960): During this period, Black people began to challenge Jim Crow laws by forming organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). They organized marches and protests to fight for their rights. However, they faced violent opposition from groups like the Ku Klux Klan.

The result of these historical events in the novel is evident through the conversations and narratives of the characters. Khoirun Nisa mentions that Kathryn Stockett portrays the dangerous and fearful conditions that existed during that time in the United States, as reflected in the experiences and emotions of the characters in the story.

Back in 2012, the Costa Rican news outlet La Nacion released an analysis of the movie adaptation of *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett. In this article the author mentions that the story takes place in a period of injustice and discrimination against the Black race in the United States; they mentioned how a journalist decides to investigate the treatment of domestic workers, Black women, in the homes of white women in that period.

They discussed not only how Black women had to do the work but also how they had to bear the responsibility of educating and raising the children, especially the daughters of white wives. The author highlights how these babies, are raised by these black women but they grow up to become adults who repeat the same discriminatory patterns against their Black servants. The text mentions that the story offers a scenario where human warmth is overwhelmed by intolerance. It

is mentioned that the story is a defined social function, and it does not evade its ethical responsibilities

The author mentions that *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett is a well-known type of story as “Something must change within us when we do.” They mentioned how this type of story and situation of medieval servitude is experienced by Latinos in the United States, among others; Comparing the situation of the story with the different discrimination that other races suffer when going to first-world countries and having to start their journey with jobs of “low-class.”

Carolyn M. Tampi, from Manado State University, investigated concepts of freedom in Kathryn Stockett’s *The Help*.” The objective of this research was to explore the conflicting notions of freedom in "The Help" by Kathryn Stockett and to understand the causes and effects of these clashes. The research mentions that the conflicting concepts of freedom are evident in the story, and this leads to consequences such as discrimination, resulting in mistreatment and segregation of black individuals, including limitations on their use of public facilities. Carolyn discusses the context of clashing concepts in society, emphasizing the interactions between diverse groups and individuals. She mentions that conflict arises from the diverse needs and interests of these individuals, which then can lead to clashes in various aspects.

This research discusses the relationships between African American maids and their white employers in Jackson, Mississippi, and the racial discrimination in society during that era. She mentions how the story highlights issues like looking down on people's social status and imposing rules on individual freedoms; later, she touches on the historical context of literature and the rise of the popular press. It mentions how literature serves as a reflection of human life, providing insights into real-life experiences.

Moreover, the research discusses the causes of these clashing concepts, including the Jim Crow laws that enforced racial segregation and the different residential environments that separated white and black communities. These laws and residential divisions led to limitations on the rights and opportunities available to black individuals, resulting in minimum education and restrictions on their freedom.

Carolin mentions that in the book, the effects of these clashing concepts include limitations on rights, minimum education opportunities, changes in attitude among characters, and secret joys. Finally, this research explores the clashing concepts of freedom in "The Help" and provides awareness of racial discrimination and segregation during the 1960s. It emphasizes the importance of literature in reflecting societal issues and highlights the power of storytelling in challenging prevailing norms and prejudices.

Fhatmawati. MSof The Faculty of Adab and Humanities UIN Alauddin Makassar (2012), investigated "RACIAL INJUSTICE IN KATHRYN STOCKETT'S THE HELP". In this investigation, they wanted to explore the various aspects of racism, the types, causes, and the connection that the story has to real life for the conditions that black people were living in back in the 1960s. The author wanted to mainly focus on racial injustice using the sociological approach, they mentioned how this approach focuses on understanding the literature as a reflection of our society; the investigation mentions the diverse types of sociological approaches to literature emphasizing the importance of reflecting and influencing social issues.

This investigation wants to explore racism in the story "The Help" by Kathryn Stockett, with a focus on the historical context and the relation to the real conditions that black people were living in back in the 1960s. The author concluded that the story reveals several forms of racial

injustice, scenarios like prejudgment, expulsion, and discrimination. She mentions that the lower-class status of black people, being looked like a minority and the stereotypes can contribute to the discrimination.

Furthermore, the author mentions that the story draws a comparison between the racial discrimination in the novel and the real conditions that black people face in America; mostly referencing Jim Crow's laws which created a separation between white and black people, she also mentions how this story also reflects on the context of the civil rights movement back in the 1960s.

Back in 2018 Carolin Elisabeth Stallinger investigated “Racial Discrimination, Gender Stereotypes, and Historical Contexts in Kathryn Stockett’s *The Help*”; in this investigation, Carolin aims to analyze the mammy stereotypes and their portrayal in this novel; she explores the characteristics and the history of the “mammy” figure and the relationships between the mammies and their white charges and children.

In this paper, Carolin points out how African American women were perceived as the people who are naturally in charge of the white children. The white women in the novel are indifferent mothers who prioritize their interests over their children. Carolin mentions how the story highlights the mistreatment that white women give to their children and how is not limited to one family but is something recurrent among all mothers in this story. Overall, the author discussed the mammy stereotype contrasting it with the deception of white mothers in the story and challenging the image of selfless devotion.

Carolin concludes her investigation by mentioning that Stockett's motivation for authoring this novel was her desire to spread awareness of the hardships of black people during this era,

wanting to educate white readers about racial discrimination. She mentions the dynamics between white employers and their black maids, when the maids displease the white lady she can exert power and have consequences for her black employee; She mentions how this behavior is influenced by intersectionality where white women may work against black women, resulting in not only racial but also gender discrimination in the novel.

### **1.5 Scope**

This investigation aims to analyze the views of racial discrimination, focused on the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett since this novel portrays the injustice and mistreatment that black people faced in America back in the 1960s. With this investigation, the researcher analyses the views of racial discrimination of black people in the book, also the researcher aspires to analyze the current view of racial discrimination today. Ultimately, the researcher analyses and compares the views of racial discrimination in both the novel and today to find similar behaviors in the current times and to spread awareness of the current state of racial discrimination.

## Chapter II

### Theoretical Framework

This report will be analyzed under the sociocultural approach, this will offer an inside on the relationship between literature and culture, emphasizing society and its interpretation of literature. The goal of this work is to show awareness of the racial discrimination in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett, and how these views are present today; As well as compare those views and conclude if we are seeing a change in their views and some of these discriminatory actions still present and happening in our current time and with our current society.

This investigation aims also to show the effects of racial discrimination in society and how much these actions affect one's life and quality of living; as well as how much of the 'normal lifestyle' is not possible because of racial discrimination. The book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett gives a good view of how racial discrimination was present back then and how people of color were not treated like people at all but more like a toll to help those at the top of the social chain; this work will help show awareness of racial discrimination and its effects by investigating how much does racial discrimination has affected society and people's mental state, as well as their day to day routines and actions, and how much is racial discrimination present in today's society as well as much does this type of discrimination is affecting people nowadays; How is the lifestyle in today's society, for those people of different race and people of color, compared to the ones living at the time of the book; are these people still not being treated like part of society?

With a sociocultural approach, this work reflects on the values and beliefs of society, and how literature connects to the sociocultural debates; being a tool that allows authors and the audience to respond or challenge ideas and events of controversial thoughts as well as mistreatment and social injustice. Moreover, this approach also focuses and gives importance to the author's background, social status, experiences, and beliefs. It is known that a person's upbringing and life experience will determine their character; it is known that interpretation is different for every person, the way that they look at things and how their theories are built is different for everyone; therefore, a reader's interpretation will depend on their life experience, and this is the same for the author's, as their life experiences will affect and shape their literary works.

This investigation will expand the impact of social discrimination and it will provide awareness of how much social discrimination affects the quality of life; by reminding society of the past scenarios and how different people were treated before just by having a different skin color than others. This investigation will show how racial discrimination was looked at in the past, at the time of the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett; how they think about equality and the same life opportunities and rights for everybody. Furthermore, this investigation will also provide an analysis of how racial discrimination is looked at in our current society; and how we currently think about equality and same-life opportunities and rights. Moreover, this investigation will provide a comparison of today's society with the society of the book.

## 2.1 Literary Theories and Approaches

There are plenty of interpretations when it comes to defining “literature;” one of them, according to Lumen Learning (2014):

Literature, in its broadest sense, is any written work. Etymologically, the term derives from Latin *litaritura/litteratura* “writing formed with letters,” although some definitions include spoken or sung texts. More restrictively, it is writing that possesses literary merit. Literature can be classified according to whether it is fiction or non-fiction and whether it is poetry or prose. It can be further distinguished according to major forms such as the novel, short story, or drama, and works are often categorized according to historical periods or their adherence to certain aesthetic features or expectations (genre).

This previous definition focuses on “literature” being a more of written expression than anything as it said, “writing formed with letters,” it mentions how it includes all books and writings.

Furthermore, it also mentions how “literature” is also shown in spoken or sung texts, this being originated even earlier than some of the written texts. However, when it comes to songs, movies, TV shows, video games, and paintings they are usually not considered literature because they are not written works; but informative written works like newspapers, scientific journals, and religious texts, are not considered literature, so we can see that what can be considered literature is written words but only the ones that are considered art.

Following the previously discussed paragraph paints a clear example of this distinction is something really common in society; this is when a person spends most of their time reading

books and novels they will be praised and looked at as someone very intellectual and knowledgeable, for being able to read such extended texts and also enjoying the process of completing a reading of a novel, they will be look at as academically superior.

On the other hand, if a person enjoys spending his time watching movies or series; even though these series or movies are based on novels, they are lazy and like someone with less academic capabilities just because they are not reading the novels; therefore, they are not appreciating art. This is quite common because art is fancy, art is intellectual, classy, elite, and superior. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2007) commented “the high value placed on making and consuming art – appears to be essential to it, and artworks can have considerable moral and political as well as aesthetic power;”, the social status that art has is powerful and it can mold one’s status. Therefore, if a person is interested in art, in this case literature, they will be looked at as more intellectual.

Consequently, because written literature is considered art, this will have a higher intellectual value and position; by being considered art, written literature will be praised above all of the other fields of literature, as it is a type of art that the more intellectual people are interested in; and as Dictionary.com (2007) defines it “Usually, literature is defined as being “of interest” or having importance,” literature is for that selected group of people that finds interest and joy in author’s ideas, plots, and creativeness; and for those that can emerge themselves in the different worlds, and stories that these authors create; Literature is for those intellectual that appreciate and enjoy the art of words.

Moreover, literature helps society express ideas, emotions, and stories. It is a space that offers a wide range for humans to show their creativity and expression. Literature includes a

variety of genres and forms, like fiction, dramas, non-fiction, poetry, essays, etc. Literature is a form of communication, it reflects values, experiences that some might have had, someone's beliefs, and events of a particular period; literature is a time capsule that offers insights and evidence of humanity and at the same time it offers entertainment as well as it can take many forms, from poems to philosophical theories and human knowledge.

When theories are brought up, they are often used to explain what something is, this "thing" that is trying to be explained will already have been investigated and there is data on it. Theories are commonly used in many fields, such as science, mathematics, philosophy, social studies, and more; but all these fields have something in common, and that is using theories to predict events and outcomes. According to the American Museum of Natural History, in the science community "Theory" is the opposite of what people think, they define it as "a well-substantiated explanation of an aspect of the world that can incorporate laws, hypotheses, and facts." As mentioned, a theory not only explains known facts but also allows people to make predictions of what they should observe if a theory is true. Theories can be evaluated, evidence needs to be collected to be compatible with the theory, if this evidence does not align with it, then the theory can be rejected.

Moreover, as Dictionary.com defines it "In technical or scientific use, Theory, principle, and law represent established, evidence-based explanations accounting for currently known facts or phenomena or for historically verified experience"; in scientific or technical fields, a theory is not such a thing as a "guess", in these fields a theory is more like something to be proven and/or prove of something; it is going to be based on research, test, and even experiments that help

build and explanation. In the scientific fields, theories are used to prove a “guess” by being the total opposite of a “guess.”

However, this does not mean that the scientific fields do not have to make “guesses” or “hypotheses,” as Dictionary.com mentions:

In both technical and nontechnical contexts, theory can also be synonymous with hypothesis, a conjecture put forth as a possible explanation of phenomena or relations, serving as a basis for thoughtful discussion and subsequent collection of data or engagement in scientific experimentation to rule out alternative explanations and reach the truth.

There is always the chance, if not for more cases, that an investigation starts with a “theory” or a “hypothesis”, this is what gives birth to start the investigation, the curiosity and the desire to know the technical and/or scientific explanation and nature of something.

As Dictionary.com mentions:

In these contexts of early speculation, the words theory and hypothesis are often substitutable for one another: Remember, this idea is only a theory/hypothesis; Pasteur's experiments helped prove the theory/hypothesis that germs cause disease. Certain theories that start as hypothetical eventually receive enough supportive data and scientific findings to become established, verified explanations. Although they retain the term theory in their names, they have evolved from mere conjecture to scientifically accepted fact.

It all starts with the “theory” of how the curiosity and desire to prove that theory; the main difference is that in the technical or scientific fields, a large number of tests, experiments, research, and investigations are involved in proving whether or not a theory is correct.

Moreover, when it comes to the popular and more “informal” understanding of a “Theory”, is more looked at as a “guess” or a “hunch” about something, and it won’t usually have much evidence; In this scenario and space a “theory” won’t need evidence, test or any sort of proof as it is naturally just a thought, opinion or an idea. As the scientific fields utilize theories as something to be proven, the non-technical and more common fields of society utilize theories for discussions, and judgment, for an informal deduction of an idea, and/or to share their views on a specific topic.

Furthermore, in a non-scientific use, theories are often used to mean just an idea, speculation, or hunch, with the theory being the more common choice, to express a thought, opinion, and/or view on a specific subject, without focusing on whether or not this theory is right or truthful; On the other hand, in the technical and/or scientific fields, the goal of a theory is to prove if it is wrong or right, therefore this field will involve more of an investigation, experiments, and tests to prove the truth of their theories.

However, either way, whether or not we are referring to theories in the technical/scientific or in the most common and informal thought of a “theory”; either way they are used to provide explanations, whether the theory is a guess or not, this depends on the area that we are working in and whether this field needs more of a technical theory or not, if its science there will be more investigation, facts, and it’s going to involve more tests than the casual “theories” as these are just thoughts.

Looking and defining literature as “any expression by written work, spoken or sung texts, to express ideas, emotions, and stories.” Putting that together with the idea and definition of “Theory” being “an idea, speculation, hunch, investigation, tests, facts to make meaning, predictions of events and outcomes”; we can define “Literary theory” as the theories and ideas that a literature work can show. Vince Brewton from the University of North Alabama defines literary theory as:

The set of concepts and intellectual assumptions on which rests the work of explaining or interpreting literary texts. Literary theory refers to any principles derived from internal analysis of literary texts or from knowledge external to the text that can be applied in multiple interpretive situations.

Literary theory is the interpretation that a piece of literary work is given, it is how literature is read and analyzed, the meaning that readers give to the work, and the theories that they create.

Moreover, a literary theory is a criticism of a literary work, it is an interpretation but also an examination of a piece of literary work; Every single time that someone reads, hears, or sees a literary piece there is going to be an interpretation, understanding and analysis given to the piece. There are many interpretations of what exactly is literary theory, State College Area School District briefly defined it as “different approaches to studying literature.”; this is a good short and sweet definition as it is known that literature and its “meaning” are open to the reader’s interpretation, not every reader is going to have the same ideas, thoughts, and conclusion when reading a literary work; therefore, it makes sense when it comes to interpret and analyze a work of literature to be the same, different analyzers and readers having different theories regarding a piece of literary work. The School District briefly extended “Essentially, literary theories are

lenses that a reader can apply to view a text in a new light.”, with different literary theories a literary work can be interpreted and analyzed in different ways and different fields; School District follows by mentioning “Included are a number of focus questions that you can use when you’re reading a text with this lens.”, they mention that these are text-based, author-based, society/context-based, and reader-based.

Following, to expand on the different focus questions; When it comes to a text-based approach, this one will mainly focus on the text itself and it will avoid be influenced by anything else such as historical facts and information for example, its main focus is finding the literary elements, how those elements work together and how they help convey the theme of the literary work; it all comes down to the literary work itself, the text and nothing besides it.

Next, when an author approach is utilized, the main focus of the analysis is going to be the author, their life, and experiences; This approach will look at the author’s life story, their emotional and psychological impacts and if they influenced their work, School District mentions “Biographical criticism relies on a close examination of character and motivations and their symbolic meanings (impulses, desires, feelings) that might be linked with the author”, an author’s life and their upbringing a lot of time as a big impact in their work.

Furthermore, a theory with a more society/context-based focus is going to analyze society, its nature, and beliefs, and feminism plays a big part in this focus as it is usually one of the biggest fields where character might be ignored, patronized, demeaned and usually these characters are being sexualized, mistreated and very stereotypical; This theory analyzes the symbols used in a literary work, social structure and even gender structure, for example what is the position of women in the story, and how are they portrayed.

Moreover, the School District explains:

“These critics may focus on many things: sexual stereotypes including men as oppressors and women in subservient positions, women overcoming oppression, patriarchal vs. matriarch systems, intimacy in relationships, independence and dependence, images of women’s bodies, language differences between women and men, the psyches of women, and the culture that shapes women” (p.119)

Finally, with a reader-based approach, the reader can focus and analyze the emotional connection that a literary work can deliver, as well as how this piece connects with its readers. It is known that not all readers will react the same to a literary work, however, they will all react; Some actors might create their literary works to provoke some type of emotion in the readers, the School District explains “Sometimes authors do not write works to be analyzed but works in reaction to an experience. Readers are expected to react emotionally to such a work.,” some literary works and done just with the intent of delivering emotions.

As an author might have an idea that they want to express, it is well known that the final interpretation and impression of the piece will be given by the reader and/or the public; as it doesn’t matter the author’s intent, the readers have their thoughts, up brings and life experiences which will affect how they interpret a work of literature. Every work of expression will try to express a basic feeling. However, it is always going to be open for the public to give its meaning to the piece. These interpretations are created with theories, theories that merge the emotions, meaning, and hunches delivered to the audience, and these can be and are most likely different for everyone.

A literary theory can vary depending on the public's emotions, beliefs, and ideas when reading, listening, and/or seeing a piece of literary work. MasterClass (2021) mentions "Literary theory examines a cross section of literature from a specific era, geographic location, or from writers of specific backgrounds or identities to draw conclusions about the similarities and differences in similar kinds of literary works.", a literary theory can focus its analysis in a specific aspect of the work too to then have a conclusion of a specific idea of the era of that literary work. Moreover, to complete a literary theory the literary work is dissected, and various aspects are inspected, aspects as the plot, the characters, the symbolisms, and the themes.

Furthermore, when creating a literary analysis different contexts are also taken into consideration, and variants like historical and cultural aspects are reflected to have a better understanding of the meaning of the literary piece. Consequently, with a literary theory, the readers can also be analyzed, as when they are exploring and interpreting the literary piece a lot can be discovered about them, their beliefs, and values, and these factors will conclude how their interpretation of the literary work can be influenced; this meaning that a reader's interpretation of a literary piece will be influenced by their experience, beliefs, and perspectives, as a reader will look for how to relate their own experiences to the literary piece, and therefore to create their final thoughts, conclusions, theories and feeling about the author's work, after seeing/hearing/reading the literature piece.

### **2.1.1 Marxist Criticism Theory**

The Marxist Criticism theory looks at and helps analyze the relationship between literature and the socioeconomic and political factors of the literal work. Karl Marx founded this theory, he proposed that the economic structure of a society has a profound influence on the culture and

history of humanity. Therefore, with this theory, Karl wanted to demonstrate how much literature shows economic and class differences and the different powers in society.

Following, this theory analyses the economic and social conditions that mold culture, and this is the basis for literal analysis; This theory explores how the socioeconomic status of a literary piece affects the characters and the themes. The focus of the Marxist Criticism Theory is the class struggle and its criticism, the differences between social classes, working classes, and economic classes; its critics how the literary piece was able to portray the struggles and the dynamics between these different classes. Marxist also mentions “Ideology,” StudySmarter commented “Ideology is a Marxist term that refers to dominant ideas that exist in a culture. Our culture is shaped by various kinds of ideologies. For example, religious ideologies, political ideologies, ideologies regarding art, culture, language, and so on.,” This explains that ideology also influences how people think about these aspects and how culture and society are shaped by popular thinking ideologies.

Marxist Criticism also mentions “false consciousness,” this theory explores how literature may have this “false consciousness” and how it may consist of ideas that help keep control over the working and lower class, this prevents people from seeing the truth of social and economic realities. With these perspectives, literary works can help expose the social injustice and the exploitation that the lower and working class go through. This theory looks for characters and themes that provide awareness of these social and economic issues, it wants to examine and critique the real world and the struggles of the working class.

Finally, the Marxist Criticism theory helps analyze and interpret a literature work when it comes to the socio-economical struggles of society, and how literature can help to create awareness to reflect and respond to these issues.

### **2.1.2 Postcolonial Criticism Theory**

The Postcolonial Criticism Theory takes an approach to analyze literature when it comes effects of colonialism and the effects it had on culture and literature; as well as how literature reflects these effects. One of the main ideas of this theory is the recognition of the historical and cultural impacts of colonialism, how usually colonizers imposed their cultures, and how literature conveys these cultural fusions and the challenges that these societies went through. The University of Washington commented “Typically, the proponents of the theory examine the ways in which writers from colonized countries attempt to articulate and even celebrate their cultural identities and reclaim them from the colonizers.”

Moreover, they also examine ways in which the literature of the colonial powers is used to justify colonialism through the perpetuation of images of the colonized as inferior. However, attempts at producing a single definition of postcolonial theory have proved controversial, and some writers have strongly critiqued the whole concept. We can see how this theory dives into the relationship between colonizers and the colonized in literature; It explores the impacts of colonization and the aftermath of this in the literary pieces, it talks about the themes of culture, identity, and the consequences of colonialism.

Moreover, StudySmarter (2019) mentions how the purpose of this theory is to address and examine literature produced in countries previously colonized, they mention “Through critically

examining such literature, postcolonialism seeks to deconstruct the Western literary canon, which has traditionally favoured white voices.” The Postcolonial Criticism Theory shows the power dynamics in the colonial debate, as well as approaches the importance of language and linguistics identity. Often, author of this generation will use their literature to give a voice to those marginalized societies and to show their perspectives, challenges, and aspirations. The University of Washington mentioned that “postcolonial literature is often (but not inevitably) self-consciously a literature of otherness and resistance and is written out of the specific local experience.”

The Postcolonial Criticism Theory helps explore and understand how literature is involved with complex postcolonial events and societies. This theory gives a broader understanding of literature, history, the politics of colonization, and the history of the postcolonial era. Moreover, it expands on the postcolonial literature and the effects that colonialism had on societies, their cultures, and identities. StudySmarter (2019) commented, “Said also explored how Europe and the West often portrayed the Middle East through false, romanticized images.” Through this exploration, it discussed the interaction between knowledge and power, arguing that a correlation exists between misrepresentations of the Middle East in literature and art and the justification of colonialism and imperial policies and how these misrepresentations help justify the narrative that colonized people needed to be civilized. Concluding, the historical and political context is the main character of the Postcolonial Criticism Theory, as well as considering the impact of colonization and decolonization, and of course, the aftermath of these events on the literary works; analyzing the themes of identity, and cultural identity.

### **2.1.3 Social Impact Theory**

The Social Impact Theory focuses on the impact and influence that literature has on society; this theory explores the idea of how literature can shape and challenge society, its behaviors, and beliefs, all because of their perspectives and literal analysis.

StudySmarter (2019) commented:

Social impact theory attempts to explain conformity alongside other group behaviors, such as obedience to authority, majority and minority behavior, and social influence. Social impact stems from the individual's perception of events to feel influenced even if others do not intend to influence them.

Literature often plays a part in shaping society, and it is a powerful way to bring awareness of different social problems, historical conflicts, injustice, and discrimination; authors can use their literary works to get readers to think and reflect on these issues, and therefore create empathy and discussions regarding these social issues.

This theory shows the power that literature must challenge norms and conventions, literature encourages readers to rethink their beliefs and attitudes encouraging social change. Furthermore, literature then has a great potential to inspire society and act for this social change, this is created by inducing empathy, providing awareness, and motivating readers to talk about social injustices; Some ways authors can do so is by creating histories of struggle and resilience to then have their audience advocate for change to help these communities. Moreover, the Social Impact Theory also discusses the cultural impact in literature, which reflects on the values, identities, and

customs of diverse cultures. Literary work that focuses on these cultural influences often participates in cultural movements.

Following, this theory also touches on the social impact; and how it comments on historical and political events. It often provides insights, lessons, and perspectives on history and political and social events. It does not only examine the literature pieces, but it also examines how readers may interpret these pieces and how they respond to them. It is known how diverse groups may have different reactions and interpretations towards a literary work, and this can be a result of their different beliefs, experiences, and backgrounds.

The International Journal of Organization Innovation, in their work “A Social Impact Theory Perspective On Consumers’ Intention To Adopt Recycling In China” (2020) commented:

We postulate that several factors of social influences are positively related to consumer’s ethical beliefs. Specifically, we argue that immediacy, supportiveness, and persuasiveness are three antecedents of consumers’ ethical beliefs, which would further influence the purchase intention of recycling products. (p.5)

Finally, the Social Impact Theory highlights the relationship between literature and society. This theory puts emphasis on how literature can help reflect, and how it can motivate people to get involved in fighting social issues, it has the power to motivate change, challenge current norms, and bring people together to get rid of social injustice.

### **2.1.4 Sociocultural Approach**

This report will be analyzed under the sociocultural approach, which will offer an inside on the relationship between literature and culture, emphasizing their interpretation of literature. A sociocultural approach reflects on the values and beliefs of society, and how literature connects to the sociocultural debates; allowing authors and the audience to respond to or challenge ideas or events. Moreover, this approach also gives importance to the author's background, social status, experiences, and beliefs as this will affect and shape their literary works.

The Sociocultural Approach provides the reader with a look into the author's sociocultural beliefs and status which help create the themes and characters of their works. Furthermore, with a sociocultural approach, the author can challenge social norms and create discussions to reevaluate cultural practices; cultural identity and diversity are also discussed with this approach. It allows the author to express experiences and thoughts about a certain social event; at the same time, creating a space to interchange knowledge and provide more insight into investigating diverse cultures and communities.

Furthermore, this approach helps examine and critique the social hierarchies. It analyzes literary works on how they show and challenge these social structures and issues; This gives a space to act against social injustice and to advocate for social equality. Finally, the sociocultural approach helps understand and analyze the literary work in the view of the relationship between texts and society. It gives literature the credit of being a critic, a reflection, and an encouragement for social movements. This approach, besides encouraging social justice, and providing awareness for social issues and injustices also celebrates cultures, values, and

traditions; Moreover, it is a reminder of the powerful relationship between literature and society and how literature is also a way to human expression.

## **2.2 Themes, Symbols, Motifs**

Themes, Symbols, and Motifs are an important part of a literature analysis. It is also important to know the definition of one and each of these terms along with some examples of how they are different and their part in a literary work.

### **2.2.1 Themes**

In a literary work, a theme is the main idea or concept of the work, it helps to put all the elements of the story together. An author will include different ideas or topics in their work, these provide an insight into the condition, society, and world that the author created. The themes that an author creates can be used to address issues or events, they provide a big picture of the concept of the literary work. Following, some themes that can be found in the book “The Help” by Kathryn Stockett are Racial Injustice, Resistance, Social Class, and Activism; these will be analyzed later in the literary analysis.

### **2.2.2 Symbols**

In literature, the symbols are the objects, characters, and settings that carry meaning more than just their literal meaning; Authors will utilize symbols to represent the concept, idea, or theme of their work. Symbols help add more depth to the interpretation of a literary piece, this will engage the readers to the text, as they are meant to create emotion and connections for the reader. Some symbols found in the book “The Help” by Kathryn Stockett are the book written by Skeeter, the separated bathrooms, and Minny’s pie; these will be analyzed later in the literary analysis.

### **2.2.3 Motifs**

In literature motifs are elements, patterns, themes, and symbols that are recurrent, and that contribute to the coherence of the work. These can be images, words, symbols, or themes that will help develop the themes and ideas of the literary work. Motifs will help create a bigger sense of continuation and structure in the story; they can also be used to highlight some aspects of the characters and story. Some motifs found in the book “The Help” by Kathryn Stockett are motherhood, writing, eating, and cooking; these will be analyzed later in the literary analysis.

### **2.3 Author’s biography: Kathryn Stockett**

Kathryn Stockett was born in 1969 in Jackson, Mississippi; she grew up with her grandparents. They had an African American maid named Demetrie, who played a key role in raising Stockett and was a source of comfort for her. Demetrie passed away when Stockett was sixteen.

Stockett attended the University of Alabama and graduated with a degree in English and Creative Writing. She then moved to New York and worked in magazine publishing and marketing for sixteen years. Kathryn Stockett was living in New York during the 9/11 crash of the Twin Towers, which had a profound impact on her. She began writing *The Help* because of this experience. Stockett felt homesick and upset after the tragedy of 9/11. She began writing in Demetrie’s voice to comfort herself. This made her think about Demetrie and the difficult life she must have lived. *The Help* developed from this speculation.

It took Stockett five years to complete *The Help*. She also struggled to get it published, having sixty rejections before a literary agent would accept her story. When *The Help* was published, it was an enormous success, popularizing Stockett’s name in literary circles. In the

first two years alone, Stockett's novel sold seven million copies and spent 100 weeks at the top of the New York Times's Bestsellers List. *The Help* has been translated into forty-two different languages, and Stockett's novel spawned a film adaptation in 2011 starring Emma Stone, Octavia Spencer, and Viola Davis. This became a box office hit.

## **2.4 Plot**

*The Help*, Kathryn Stockett's debut novel, tells the story of black maids working in white Southern homes in the early 1960s in Jackson, Mississippi, and of Miss Eugenia "Skeeter" Phelan, a 22-year-old graduate from Ole Miss, who returns to her family's cotton plantation, Longleaf, to find that her beloved maid and nanny, Constantine, has left and no one will tell her why. Skeeter tries to behave as a proper Southern lady: She plays bridge with the young married women; edits the newsletter for the Junior League; and endures her mother's constant advice on how to find a man and start a family. However, Skeeter's real dream is to be a writer, but the only job she can find is with the Jackson Journal writing a housekeeping advice column called "Miss Myrna." Skeeter knows little about housekeeping, so she turns to her friend's maid, Aibileen, for answers and finds a lot more.

Aibileen works tirelessly raising her employer's child (Aibileen's seventh one) and keeps a tidy house, yet none of this distracts her from the recent loss of her son who died in an accident at work while his white bosses turned away. Two events bring Skeeter and Aibileen even closer: Skeeter is haunted by a copy of Jim Crow laws she found in the library, and she receives a letter from a publisher in New York interested in Skeeter's idea of drafting the true stories of domestic servants.

Skeeter approaches Aibileen with the idea of writing narratives from the point of view of 12 black maids. Aibileen reluctantly agrees, but soon finds herself as engrossed in the project as Skeeter. They meet clandestinely in the evenings at Aibileen's house to draft the book together as the town's struggles with race heat up all around them. Aibileen brings in her best friend, Minny, a sassy maid who is repeatedly fired for speaking her mind, to tell her story, too. Hearing their stories changes Skeeter as her eyes open to the true prejudices of her upbringing. Aibileen and Minny also develop a friendship and understanding with Skeeter that neither believed possible.

## Chapter III

### Methodological Framework

In this chapter, the methodology being used is presented, as well as the researcher's approach, the research design, the source of the information, the analysis categories, the instruments used to collect the data, and the process of collecting and analyzing the data. This chapter helps the reader to further understand the process of this research by reviewing the methods used to help achieve the research result.

#### 3.1 Research Approach

The research approach for this work consists of observation, collection of data, and then analysis of that data, this will help the researcher have a broader understanding of racial discrimination, and those affected by it. The International Journal of Organization Innovation, in their work "A Social Impact Theory Perspective On Consumers' Intention To Adopt Recycling In China" (2020) commented:

We postulate that several factors of social influences are positively related to consumer's ethical beliefs. Specifically, we argue that immediacy, supportiveness, and persuasiveness are three antecedents of consumers' ethical beliefs, which would further influence the purchase intention of recycling products. (p.5)

Therefore, the researcher will investigate the different points of view of society when it comes to racial discrimination and analyze if their backgrounds and beliefs affect their views on the topic.

To be able to conduct this investigation, it is necessary to sample a population to collect the data, and then to analyze the different views from the different individuals. The main objective of this investigation is to analyze the different views when it comes to racial discrimination, and how it is looked at compared to the time of the book *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett. An analysis of the book is done to understand the status of racial discrimination in the story, then a group will be surveyed to analyze their views and opinions on the topic, by these the researchers can analyze and compare the past status of racial discrimination with the status.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The researcher design means the plan tough out to collect data; The method selected is based on the problem statement and the objectives. For this investigation, the research design used is phenomenology design; this design focuses on firsthand experiences and on the understanding of experiences and points of view of the group that is being analyzed. To conduct this design is necessary to interact with the subject that is being analyzed, this is done by asking them questions and listening to their opinions and experiences regarding the topic that is being investigated. To successfully implement this design, is important for the investigator to listen to the subject's opinions and experiences with a clear and non-biased mindset and be open-minded regarding the subject's opinions and inputs.

This research analyses the views of racial discrimination as well as the repercussions caused by it, based on the book "The Help" by Kathryn Stockett, and compares those views with today's society and their views on racial discrimination. This is being done through a survey of a group of people to know their experience and their view of racial discrimination.

### **3.3 Information Sources**

Information sources are necessary for the development of this investigation. Sources are necessary for an analysis. To have a better understanding of the terms and main topic, the main source utilized for this investigation is the analysis of the book *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett, as well as the sample of the population as its primary sources. Furthermore, it is important to include secondary sources in an investigation, this being facts and materials known and transmitted by others. Following, tertiary sources like reference materials, textbooks, dictionaries, and websites are also useful. In this investigation, tertiary sources will be used to provide definitions and additional information on the topic being researched.

### **3.4 Analysis Categories**

Analysis categories are analytic conceptualizations developed by the researcher to organize the results or discoveries related to a phenomenon or human experience under investigation (Hernández et al., 2018, p.474). These categories will provide an outline for the investigation, it helps the researcher advance and analyze with more ease in the investigation. Along these analysis categories, the main and general topics are divided and refined. These analysis categories will be linked to the research's primary sources. It is necessary to understand the functionality of the analysis categories to be able to obtain the wanted results in an organized way. In this investigation, these categories originate from each of the research's main objectives

### **3.5 Data Collection Instruments**

The Data Collection Instruments are a crucial part of the development of this investigation. These sources are the tools used to gather data and have an efficient analysis for this research. The Data Collection Instruments are divided into three categories: primary, secondary, and tertiary sources, such as the following.

### **3.5.1 Primary sources**

According to Hamed Taherdoost (2022):

Data that is not published yet and is the first-hand information which is not changed by any individual is known as primary data. Researchers can obtain a deep understanding of the subject these sources, as it is useful to obtain insights and it facilitates informed decision-making. These approaches are vital in various fields, including market research, social science studies, and scientific investigations, offering a reliable source for building analyses and conclusions.

Primary methods of data collection help gather data from the source, raw data. They are designed to collect original data that has not been interpreted. With primary sources of data, the investigation can obtain a more authentic feel, as it uses information that has not been analyzed or interpreted by anyone before, directly creating a bias on the view of the author of the investigation, which helps to obtain credibility. This research uses the analysis of the book *The Help*, as well as the sample adult population as its primary sources.

### **3.5.2 Secondary sources**

According to Hamed Taherdoost (2022):

Secondary data is the data gathered from published sources meaning that someone already gathers the data else for another reason and can be used for other purposes in a research as well. In all papers, the literature review section is based on secondary data sources.

It refers to sources that have already been analyzed and published by someone else. Secondary sources are books interpreted by other experts, as well as documents, reports, and

statistical data. Even though secondary sources are not raw data, and in comparison, with primary sources, they have been already analyzed and interpreted by someone else; For this reason, it is important to include secondary sources, as they include information and analysis that has been previously studied by experts about the topic. Regardless of it not being added information, secondary sources provide references to build new investigations and studies. For this analysis, it is results to acknowledge the definition of secondary sources as these are used to build the basis of the investigation.

### **3.5.3 Tertiary sources.**

As stated by the University of Minnesota Crookston (2015), tertiary sources are:

Sources that index, abstract, organize, compile, or digest other sources. Some reference materials and textbooks are considered tertiary sources when their chief purpose is to list, summarize or simply repackage ideas or other information. Tertiary sources are usually not credited to a particular author.

Tertiary sources involve the use of already existing works about information from primary and secondary sources, presenting the information in a simpler or summarized format. These sources are useful to obtain concepts and terminology to help gain context and direction for the investigation. For this investigation, tertiary sources will help provide definitions and additional information on the topic being analyzed.

### **3.6 Collection data process and data analysis:**

The collection data process consists of applying instruments to gather information relevant to the study; It is important to have an organized plan with the steps to follow, as well as sources and methods that help lead to them. It is important to have a clear understanding of which are the

sources for the data-collecting process, where can these sources be found, the method being used to collect the data, and how will the data be analyzed. For this investigation, the data collection process is developed from three main sources.

The first source is the investigation being held about the topic. The researcher's analysis of previous investigations, articles, and books is used as a guide for the current investigation. Moreover, external sources such as theoretical and conceptual knowledge. The second source used for this investigation refers to the book "The Help" by Kathryn Stockett, being used as the main source of information. The entire base of the investigation is built around the theme of racial discrimination presented in the book. The elements of the book provided the investigator with valuable views and information for the investigation.

The final source of this investigation is a sample group of adults, as the subject of the investigation. By gathering the adult's views and experiences with racial discrimination, the investigation is being provided with new experiences, views, and perspectives. The main toll for this investigation will be surveyed with the target audience being adults, as the analysis of the book "The Help" by Kathryn Stockett will provide an outline for views to analyze in the survey provided to the population. The data will be collected by sharing several questions with the subjects, these questions are built to get inside on the different experiences and views when it comes to racial discrimination in current society; as well as to list their different opinions and comparisons about the scene of racial discrimination through the years. The survey will be shared with people of different ethnicities and different generations; the goal being to obtain as many experiences and views as possible.

The data will be analyzed by gathering all the data collected from the survey and building a comparison of the different views, experiences, and opinions about racial discrimination in the current society. Following, different views, experiences, and opinions will be compared to that people of color were living in, in the book “The Help.” This comparison will be done with the help of the analysis of the book “The Help” by Kathryn Stockett. Once the comparison and analysis of the information gathered is done, we will see if the state of racial discrimination has changed over the years.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Data Analysis**

In this chapter, the researcher searches to analyze the literary work. To fulfill this, this chapter implements the theories presented in Chapter II, and the methodology presented in Chapter III. This analysis is supported by the researcher's investigation which provides literary theories, obtained from the investigation's instruments, literary analysis, as well as symbols and themes presented in the book. The present chapter involves a three-way investigation, which encloses information from the literary work, experts' proposals, and investigator's analysis.

#### **4.1 Approaches to the investigation**

The definition of an approach is "a way of considering or doing something" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024). When it comes to an approach in literature, they are used for "understanding the role of historical context in interpretation as well as the relevance of linguistic and unconscious elements of the text." (Brewton, 2024). Thanks to those definitions, literary approaches can be understood as how an investigation is conducted, as well as how the investigator analyses and utilizes the different elements of the literary work and how their worn interpretations are built. The literary approach chosen by the investigator provides a clear idea of the goal of the investigation; It offers views of the topic which will help build a clear analysis.

For this investigation, a sociocultural approach was selected which is best fit for the topic and objectives analyzed in the literary work. The sociocultural approach was chosen as the goal of this investigation is to see the impact and different views that society has when it comes to racial discrimination. This approach involves analyzing the cultural values, beliefs, social facts,

history, behavior, and events of the individuals, giving emphasis to society and their interpretation of literature.

As mentioned by Wertsch (1997):

Sociocultural analysis helps in the understanding of how mental functioning is related to the various cultural, institutional, and historical contexts. It is believed here that much of the fragmentation within and between disciplines can be traced to the bureaucratic forces that shape our lives.

Therefore, this investigation used the sociocultural approach to gather and analyze the views of racial discrimination in the current society.

## **4.2 Theories vs Literary Work**

The following presents an analysis of selected parts of the literary work, which are supported by literary theories. This part seeks to deliver an analysis by utilizing analysis tables. The theories, quotes from the books, and the researcher's interpretations will be included in the tables. The goal of these analysis tables is to provide a visual of the comparisons, which allow us to identify between the theories and quotes.

### **4.2.1 Book Analysis**

As mentioned in Chapter II, the research is based on three literary theories: Marxist Criticism, Postcolonial Criticism, and Social Impact theories. The following tables show each theory as well as quotes from the books and the respective interpretations from the researcher. With these tables, the researcher attempts to show the connection the theories have with the book, the "Researcher's interpretation" column explains that in detail; The first table contains the

Marxist Criticism theory, the second one includes the Postcolonial Criticism theory, and the third one encloses the Social Impact theory.

*Table 1.* Quotes from the book *The Help*, as well as the Marxist Criticism Theory and the researcher's interpretation.

Literary theory	Quotes	Researcher's interpretation.
Marxist Criticism Theory	<p>“Miss Hilly say, “I don’t think you ought to be joking around about the colored situation. Not if you want to stay on as editor of the League, Skeeter Phelan.”</p> <p>(Chapter 1, page 20)</p>	<p>Different social classes have different “power” in society. In this scenario, Miss Hilly, a high-class woman, married to a man who is perceived as rich and successful, has a higher position among all the women in this story. She is followed and looked at as the “perfect” wife. Miss Hilly shows Skeeter her higher position by letting her know that if she ever were to go against her thoughts and the ideas of</p>

		<p>the town, she would be isolated from the town, and this would affect her work opportunities. In this scenario, we can see that right or wrong does not matter, the only thing that matters, and what has power is the social rank that someone has. If someone is from a wealthy household, they will be more respected, they will be followed, and most importantly, they will be heard.</p>
	<p>““Do you ever wish you could... change things?” she asks.</p> <p>And I can’t help myself. I look at her head on. Cause that’s one a the</p>	<p>A lower-class person is invisible, or at least they should act that way if they want to survive in this story. The help should not have a say in any matter they cannot even react to any scenario in from of a</p>

	<p>stupidest questions I ever heard. She got a confused, disgusted look on her face, like she done salted her coffee instead a sugared it.</p> <p>I turn back to my washing, so she don't see me rolling my eyes. "Oh no, ma'am, everthing's fine."</p> <p>(Chapter 1, page 22)</p>	<p>white person. Any problem, inconvenience, or mistreatment that they have never be spoken about or shown. The help is just that, as they are from an exceptionally low class, they have no power, therefore, they are nobody.</p>
	<p>"“I spec you gone have to go in the bushes, back a the house,” I hear myself say, but I wish it weren't me. “Dog's back there, but he won't bother you.”</p> <p>“Alright then,” he say.</p> <p>“Thank ya.”</p> <p>(Chapter 2, page 34)</p>	<p>In this scenario, Aibileen, being a black woman herself, must let the black worker know that there is no place for him to go to the bathroom, as black people cannot use the same bathroom as white people. Aibileen must direct the black man to do his</p>

		necessities in the bushes, where the dogs are. Besides being a race issue, this part of the story shows how low-class people must take hard jobs and perform with no less than minimal needs. No place to go to the bathroom, not being able to drink from any glass but from a disposable paper cup and being treated as not humans.
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*Table 2.* Quotes from the book *The Help*, as well as the Postcolonial Criticism Theory and the researcher's interpretation.

Literary theories	Quotes	Researcher's interpretation.
Postcolonial Criticism Theory	"So Jackson's just one white neighborhood after the next and more springing	In this part of the story the writer displays the image of how the black community is placed and what their housing situation is like.

	<p>up down the road. But the colored part a town, we one big anthill, surrounded by state land that ain't for sale. As our numbers get bigger, we can't spread out. Our part a town just gets thicker.”</p> <p>(Chapter 2, page 24)</p>	<p>The black people are isolated, not being taken as part of the town, nor their needs being taken into consideration. While the white part of the town is constantly being expanded, more families moving in resulting in more houses being built; the black people are living in worse conditions, they cannot build more houses as they cannot expand their land. Black people are not being considered as part of society, for their basic right of housing is not met. Is not the white's problem, for it's not their situation then it means is not a problem.</p>
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	<p>“Which reminds me a what I don’t want a think about, that Miss Leefolt’s building me a bathroom cause she think I’m diseased. And Miss Skeeter asking don’t I want to change things, like changing Jackson, Mississippi, gone be like changing a lightbulb.”</p> <p>(Chapter 2, page 39)</p>	<p>Aibileen expresses “Mississippi, gone be like changing a lightbulb.” This shows how impossible and how far the idea of changing racism is. Black people cannot even imagine a future or the possibility for this scenario to change. The problem is so deep, and too buried in their reality, that they do not even take time to imagine a scenario where things are different. Is it very difficult to image a world where your skin tone is respected, and looked at as equal, when every single day you see, hear, and experience racism, and every day you are being reminded that your skin tone is not equal</p>
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		to the rest, that by just the color of the skin that you were born with makes you diseased, a slave and not worthy of basic human rights.
	<p>“I figure she won’t eat food from a colored grocery store and I reckon I don’t blame her, with the potatoes having inch-long eyes and the milk almost sour.”</p> <p>(Chapter 3, page 62)</p>	Once again, the writer paints a picture of the living state of black people. Not only being isolated from the main town and being unable to expand their land; but also, being given the worst food, the one in the worst condition, the fresh food, the best one goes to the white people.

*Table 3.* Quotes from the book *The Help*, as well as the Social Impact Theory and the researcher’s interpretation.

Literary theories	Quotes	Researcher’s interpretation.
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<p>Social Impact Theory</p>	<p>“Four years my daughter goes off to college and what does she come home with?” she asks.</p> <p>“A diploma?”</p> <p>“A pretty piece of paper,” Mother says.</p> <p>“I told you. I didn’t meet anybody I wanted to marry,” I say.”</p> <p>(Chapter 5, page 77)</p>	<p>Skeeter is a woman who did not let her future be written by her mother. From the start she ambioned to work in what she loved, writing. Skeeter is a representation of a person who by the influence of her passion and academic upbringing, puts her ambition first, not paying attention to what is common for her position as a woman. She expresses that she is not going to marry someone just because she is at the age to do so, that is not her priority; Her academic upbringing has influenced her to put her career first, as is the only thing that is clear in her head, and the rest will come</p>
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		<p>later. Nowadays, with women being more educated and pursuing more careers, we can notice the same thing in young women; they rather work hard and advance in their educational and professional life, more than have a family and dedicate their life to just being a wife and a mother.</p>
	<p>“ . . . here you are twenty-three years old and I’d already had Carlton Jr. at your age . . .” Mother says. “ (Chapter 5, page 79)</p>	<p>Skeeter’s mother is often seen nagging at Skeeter for not being like the other young women or even her at Skeeter’s age; She hopes Skeeter gets married and has a family as that is what is expected of a 23-year-old woman at that time.  Skeeter’s mother did not have the same upbringing</p>

		<p>as Skeeter, yes, she is an educated woman, but she does not have the same ambition as Skeeter; as to why she thinks that not being married and with kids at the age of 23 years old, means that Skeeter is late and that she is not going to be respected by the other women of the town, and by society.</p>
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### 4.3 Themes, Motifs, and Symbols

To complete this literary analysis, it is necessary to know and understand the concept of a variety of literary terms. In literature themes, motifs, and symbols are always going to the present, therefore, it is necessary to be knowledgeable of the definition, the differences, and examples of one and each of these terms.

#### 4.3.1 Themes

When it comes to literature, “themes” are defined as “A theme is a central, unifying idea. It is the bigger issue that emerges as the characters pursue their goals.” (J.T. Bushnell, 2021). The themes are going to be the topics that the writer explores throughout the entire literary work. Themes often reflect human nature, life, or universal experiences. In a literary work, a theme can

be conveyed using characters, a setting, a dialogue, the plot, or combining all these elements. A theme can be a simple moral or message or a more complicated look into society. To provide some examples, in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series the theme is explored in good vs evil; However, more on the contrary, in Romeo and Juliet by Shakespeare explores the theme of forbidden love. Essentially, themes are the main part of a literary work, as it is the main idea that the author is trying to express.

*Table 4.* Fragments or quotes from the book *The Help* as well as themes in the book and the researcher's interpretation.

Themes	Quotes	Researcher's interpretation.
Racial Injustice	<p>“Miss Hilly talk slow, like she spreading icing on a cake. “You just tell Raleigh every penny he spends on that bathroom he’ll get back when y’all sell this house.” She nod like she agreeing with herself. “All these houses they’re building without maid’s quarters? It’s just plain dangerous.</p>	<p>Racial injustice is the main topic of this story. The book is set in a time when slavery was over. Black people are still not looked at as people, they are seen as just maids, workers, and people who are dirty and carry diseases. Ironically, those diseased people are the ones taking care of and raising the children of white people and preparing their meals.</p>

	<p>Everybody knows they carry different kinds of diseases than we do. I double.”</p> <p>(Chapter 1, page 20)</p>	<p>Black people are looked at as not part of society and as dirty, except when white people need someone to do the jobs that they do not want to do. Throughout the story, racism and racial injustice are shown, basically in every interaction and conversation. Black people cannot talk to white people unless they are asked to or is about a shore, they cannot use the bathroom inside the home of a whiter person, they cannot use the same plates, glasses, or silverware as white people, they cannot shop at the same grocery store, they cannot go to the same</p>
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		hospital, schools nor live in the same neighborhood.
Resistance	<p>“That’s Minny Jackson at Lakewood eight-four-four-three-two. Hang on, what’s that?” I get a cookie and give it to Mae Mobley, feel nothing but delight at the devil in me. I am lying and I don’t even care.</p> <p>I tell Miss Celia Foote, “She say don’t tell nobody bout her tip on Minny, cause all her friends want a hire her and they be real upset if they find out she give her to somebody else.”</p> <p>(Chapter 2, page 42)</p>	<p>In this scene, we see the first “rebellion” from Aibileen. She lies to Miss Celia to find Minny a job, as she has been wrongfully accused of stilling by Miss Hilly and therefore fired. Aibileen takes the risk of lying to Miss Celia as she knows that Miss Hilly has spread the false rumors of Minny stealing so that Minny cannot find a job as the maid of any other house. Luckily for Aibileen, Miss Celia does not speak to Miss Hilly or any other woman of the town for that matter, so she can take advantage of that and lie by saying that Miss Leefolt</p>

		<p>recommends Minny to help at her house. Aibileen is tired of seeing how the whites can do and undo the help lives just by spreading rumors and getting rid of their jobs like nothing.</p> <p>Minny's situation has affected Aibileen a lot, as Aibileen is a woman who does not dare to break any rules or mess with any of her bosses.</p>
<p>Social Class</p>	<p>“She telling everybody in town I’m stealing! That’s why I can’t get no work!</p> <p>That witch done turned me into the Smart-Mouthed Criminal Maid a Hinds County!”</p> <p>(Chapter 2, page 35)</p>	<p>Once again, the power of the social class is shown with Miss Hilly. This character is always displaying how her position and social status allow her to do anything. She has been seen manipulating and influencing the minds and decisions of the other</p>

		<p>women of the town; as well as now, spreading rumors to make sure that the maid who did her wrong, is never going to be able to find a job ever again.</p>
<p>Activism</p>	<p>“I hope you don’t mind me coming by,” she say. “I just . . . I didn’t know where else we could talk.”  (Chapter 7, page 136)</p>	<p>Skeeter seems to be the character that started the change in this story. From always remembering the black woman that raised her, to noticing the minute details and displays of racism, to approaching the help and treating them as people; Skeeter is the symbol of activism in this story. The start of the idea of the book was something that came up to Skeeter to just get a job first, but as soon as she saw what this story could do for the black</p>

		<p>community, she was invested. She approached the help first to hear them out and to offer them an outlet to express themselves, and even though she was rejected at first because of fear, she never let the idea die, and was always up for a change.</p>
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#### 4.3.2 Motifs

In literature, motifs are “a repeated pattern—an image, sound, word, or symbol that comes back again and again within a particular story.” (Liz Delf, 2021). Motifs are meant to be noticed, they draw attention by being repeated throughout the story, the author wants these elements to be noticed as they will help create a bigger sense of continuation and structure in the story. Motifs are elements, patterns, themes, and symbols also used to highlight some aspects of the characters and story; these can be images, words, symbols, or themes. As an example, in “The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe, death and decay are a common motif in the story, being represented by decay, niter on the walls, and skeletons everywhere.

Table 5. Fragments or quotes from the book *The Help* as well as motifs in the book and the researcher's interpretation.

Motifs	Quotes	Researcher's interpretation.
Motherhood	<p>"I give her a good hug. I reckon she don't get too many good hugs like this after I go home. Ever so often, I come to work and find her bawling in her crib, Miss Leefolt busy on the sewing machine rolling her eyes like it's a stray cat stuck in the screen door. See, Miss Leefolt, she dress up nice ever day. Always got her makeup on, got a carport, double-door Frigidaire with the</p>	<p>The element of motherhood is shown plenty of times in the story, as is one of the main tasks of the help, raise the white people's children. In this story, white women are busier with social events than taking care of the children, it is the norm to have them help raise your children. The mothers are not involved in knowing their kids, their preferences, and their schedules, and do not even teach them how to go to the toilet. The irony of it all is that black women are raising these children; however, they grow up to</p>

	<p>built-in icebox. You see her in the Jitney 14 grocery, you never think she go and leave her baby crying in her crib like that. But the help always know.”</p> <p>(Chapter 1, page 15)</p>	<p>become just like their parents and mistreat black people. With the years, these children forget that black women were the ones who fed them, and changed them, and most of the time, they were the only ones who showed them affection like Mae Mobley, they were never held, cuddled, or hugged by their mothers.</p>
Writing	<p>“I hadn’t wanted to insult Aibileen when she told me her idea. I tried to urge her out of it, over the phone. “Writing isn’t that easy. And you wouldn’t have time for this anyway, Aibileen, not with a full-time job.”</p>	<p>Writing is a main element in this story. We see desire, ambition, hope, resistance, and activism being represented by writing. First off, we are told that Aibileen tents to write her prayers instead of saying them, and that many people ask to be in her prayers book as they tend to come</p>

	<p>“Can’t be much different than writing my prayers every night.”</p> <p>It was the first interesting thing she’d told me about herself since we’d started the project, so I’d grabbed the shopping pad in the pantry. “You don’t say your prayers, then?”</p> <p>“I never told nobody that before. Not even Minny. Find I can get my point across a lot better writing em down.”</p> <p>(Chapter 12, page 197)</p>	<p>true. Aibileen was also told by her teacher to keep writing, as she had to drop out of school and go to work, this was something that she could still do to never lose something at which she was good. Later on in the story we are told that Aibileen’s son wanted to be a writer, he was interested in deep meaningful books, and he wanted to write a book himself about how it was working for white people; we can see that the more he was interested in literature, he read, investigated, and therefore he wanted to make a change with this own book. Lastly, we see writing as a main element</p>
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		<p>with Skeeter, her whole purpose is to share her stories, and thanks to that she was able to reach out and provide a space for other people to tell their stories. Even though the help might not be able to speak, writing provided a space for them to safely speak their truths.</p>
<p>Eating and cooking</p>	<p>“I pull out the bacon for Mister Johnny’s lunch, get the skillet out to fry.</p> <p>Mister Johnny’s eyes are clear and wide. He’s smiling with every part of his</p> <p>face. I fix his sandwich and wrap it in waxed paper.</p> <p>Finally, somebody I get</p>	<p>In this book, black people are isolated, they cannot do anything outside of their community besides work, and at the end of the day they only have each other.</p> <p>The women are taught to cook and clean from a noticeably early age. For the black community, cooking was a special bonding moment for the</p>

	<p>the satisfaction of feeding.”</p> <p>(Chapter 10, page 186)</p>	<p>family, every dish was made with a lot of attention put into it; a satisfying meal was a reward. For white people, a meal is just a necessity to live, something you must do, but do not eat too much or they will get heavier; dieting was more their goal. Miss Celia’s husband, a black woman raised Mister Johnny when he was a baby, once he tasted, Minny’s cooking, all those memories came back. In this story, community, cooking, and food hold memories, it holds tradition and community.</p>
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### 4.3.3 Symbols.

In literature, symbolism is “the idea that things represent other things. What we mean by that is that we can look at something — let’s say, red — and conclude that it represents not the color

red itself but something beyond it: for example, passion, love, or devotion. Or maybe the opposite: infidelity. The color red can also represent blood.” In other words, symbols are the objects, characters, and settings that carry meaning more than just their literal meaning. Authors use symbols to represent the concept, idea, or theme of their work; It helps to add more depth and interpretation of a literary work, they are meant to create an emotional connection with the readers. To give an example, in the book "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee; the mockingbird, besides its general meaning, symbolizes those hurting others is a sin as well as innocence.

*Table 6.* Fragments or quotes from the book *The Help* as well as symbols in the book and the researcher’s interpretation.

Symbols	Quotes	Researcher’s interpretation.
Skeeter’s book	<p>“Aibileen?” I whisper.</p> <p>She’s quiet a second and then she blurts it out. “What if—what if you don’t like what I got to say? I mean, about white peoples.”</p> <p>“I—I . . . this isn’t about my opinion,” I say. “It doesn’t matter how I feel.”</p>	<p>In this story, Skeeter’s book represents the change and revolution of the help. So far, the help has not dared to say a thing against whites, what is like working for them, and all the mistreatment that they received. However, once Aibileen agrees to give her stories to Skeeter, there is</p>

	<p>“But how I know you ain’t gone get mad, turn around on me?”</p> <p>“I don’t . . . I guess you’ll just have to . . . trust me.” I hold my breath, hoping, waiting. There is a long pause.</p> <p>“Law have mercy. I reckon I’m on do it.”</p> <p>“Aibileen.” My heart is pounding. “You have no idea how much I appreciate—”</p> <p>“Miss Skeeter, we gone have to be real careful.”</p> <p>“We will, I promise.”</p> <p>(Chapter 9, page 161)</p>	<p>no turning back; this is the turning point, this is where the help starts talking, where they realize that someone wants to hear them and that this situation is not normal. Skeeter’s book represents free expression, it represents that there is a chance for change, that it is not as impossible; that Mississippi, might change, like changing a lightbulb.</p>
Separated bathrooms	<p>“I just . . . I have to ask you. What changed your mind?”</p>	<p>The mention of the separate bathrooms in this story,</p>

	<p>Aibileen doesn't even pause. "Miss Hilly," she says.</p> <p>I go quiet, thinking of Hilly's bathroom plan and accusing the maid of stealing and her talk of diseases. The name comes out flat, bitter as a bad pecan."</p> <p>(Chapter 9, page 162)</p>	<p>represents how isolated and violated the black people were. This situation was the start of it all, for years the help was told by their mothers and grandmothers to not use the same plates, cups, or silverware as the white people, to use the guess bathroom when the white people were not looking, and only if extremely necessary; However, now getting called dirty and disease carrier is another level of mistreatment. Besides being quick out of the house if in need to use the toilet, black people were being assaulted if they used the wrong bathroom accidentally. The writer showed that the</p>
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		<p>switch in Aibileen's mentality happened when she was given her bathroom, which is when it all began. The separate bathroom shows the injustice and the breakout point for black people in this story.</p>
<p>Minny's pie</p>	<p>"Can we do a chocolate pie this time? I love chocolate pie."</p> <p>I grit my teeth. "I don't know how to cook no chocolate pie," I lie. Never.</p> <p>Never again after Miss Hilly."</p> <p>(Chapter 10, page 165)</p>	<p>The pie that Minny gives to Miss Hilly is the biggest representation of resistance and rebellion against the mistreatment and abuse she received. This pie is another breakout point in the story. Minny not only risked her job, but she risked her own life, reputation, and lifestyle to stand her ground to show that she is no longer going to be toyed with; She stated that she can also act, and</p>

		<p>that, if necessary, she can defend herself and demand respect. The pie shows the rebellion that Minny had against her abuser, it shows that she has rights and that she would defend her pride even if that would cost her job.</p>
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#### 4.4 Survey Analysis

For this investigation it was crucial to gather information from a certain target, adults, to get their input, thoughts, opinions, and experiences when it came to racial discrimination; The information was collected through a survey. The input gathered from this group of people was a major source of information for the conclusion of this investigation. The sample was gathered from a group of adults, from the age 18 to 60+, the questions asked were focused on the topic of racial discrimination and injustice, gathering their experiences and points of view. The survey was created with the platform “Google Forms;” through this platform, 10 questions were created in a way in which the adults could easily explain their views and experiences regarding the topic. Once the questions were created, a link was created and shared with the participants for them to answer the questions; Every participant, once they received the link to the survey, was able to answer the questions from any device they had handy (smartphone, table, computer).

Immediately after the participant completed and sent out the survey, the results were available to the researcher.

*Table 1.*

R/1	Cuando una persona es tratada distinta a otras solo por su raza
R/2	Discriminar a una persona por su etnia
R/3	Intolerancia o comentarios despectivos hacia personas de una raza, etnia o color diferente.
R/4	Cuando una persona es tratada de manera no beneficiante debido al color de su piel, idioma nativo y/o costumbres culturales.
R/5	Mostrar rechazo hacia las distintas razas
R/6	El trato diferente hacia personas de diferente etnia, raza
R/7	Tratar a alguien de manera diferente por su raza
R/8	Ver a las personas de manera diferente por temas de color
R/9	Diay para mi es como lo de los que son gueis

*Table 1 En su opinión ¿qué es discriminación racial? Source:*

*researcher's survey*

This first table shows how nine participants defined racial discrimination. Eight of the nine participants describe this type of discrimination as being driven by the color of the skin of a person, as well as their ethnicity. Moreover, those 8 participants mentioned that racial discrimination is shown as the way those people of different skin tones are treated, compared to others the indifference in which they are treated, the comments that those people receive, and by being rejected and perceived differently just because of their race and skin color. Additionally,

one participant out of the nine, expressed that racial discrimination is like how gay people are mistreated, meaning homophobia and racism have similar factors when it comes to discrimination. Thanks to these results, we can see the idea that these subjects have of racial discrimination; it can be stated that they see racial discrimination as a behavior started by the mistreatment and isolation of a group of people because of their skin tone and ethnicity.

Figure 1



*Figure 1 ¿Alguna vez has sido testigo de discriminación racial? Source: researcher's survey*

This figure stated that seven out of the nine subjects that participated in the survey have witnessed racial discrimination. Only two participants said to had never witnessed a scenario of racial discrimination. This information comes from actual people and their real experiences, as this is a reliable source. Thanks to his results, we can see that most of the subjects know and have experienced the existence of racial injustice. Just like in the book *The Help*, even though some have not experienced racial injustice themselves, does not mean that it does not exist.

Table 2.

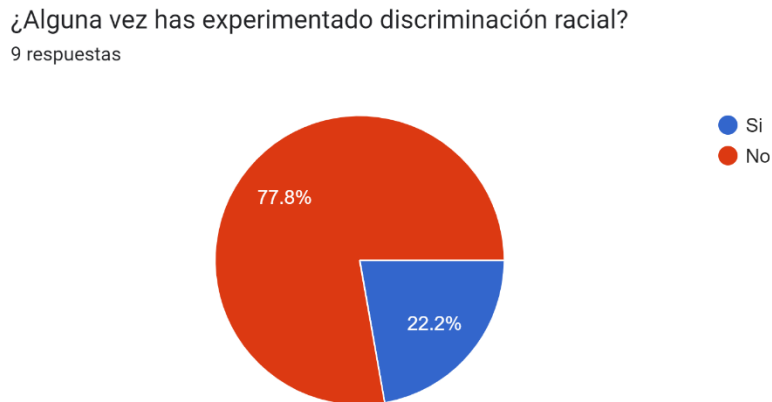
R/1	Personas siendo negadas a entrar a lugares.
R/2	Apartar a una persona por su apariencia
R/3	Compañeros en la escuela, colegio y Universidad recibían bullying por su nacionalidad.
R/4	Comentarios despectivos hacia la persona
R/5	Tanto en escuela como el colegio, el típico bullying, en el trabajo la diferencia de oportunidades
R/6	En mi escuela discriminaban una niña

*Table 2 En caso de responder "Si" a la respuesta anterior, ¿podría describir el incidente?*

*Source: researcher's survey*

This table shows the firsthand experiences of those subjects that have witnessed racial injustice. In these narrations, the subjects mentioned how racial discrimination was mainly found in schools and at work. They mentioned how racial discrimination was done and shown in diverse ways, from being denied entrance to places, and the different support and opportunities given in education, to degrading comments and bullying being done because of someone's appearance and nationality. This table provides real-life scenarios and experiences from the subjects, providing a dependable inside of the topic. Just like the book analysis, it is shown that people suffer from racial discrimination in diverse ways, from living rights to verbal abuse, all because of their appearance, ethnicity, and skin tone.

Figure 2



*Figure 2 ¿Alguna vez has experimentado discriminación racial? Source: researcher's survey*

This figure stated that seven out of the nine subjects that participated in the survey had never experienced racial discrimination. Only two participants mentioned to have experienced racial discrimination. This information comes from the real experiences of the participants, for this is a reliable source. Thanks to his results, we can see that in our current society, most of these participants were not victims of racial injustice. In a year and a setting like in the book *The Help*, we see that the number of people who have experienced racial injustice is more as this is set in a setting where human rights apply only to those with white skin.

Table 3.

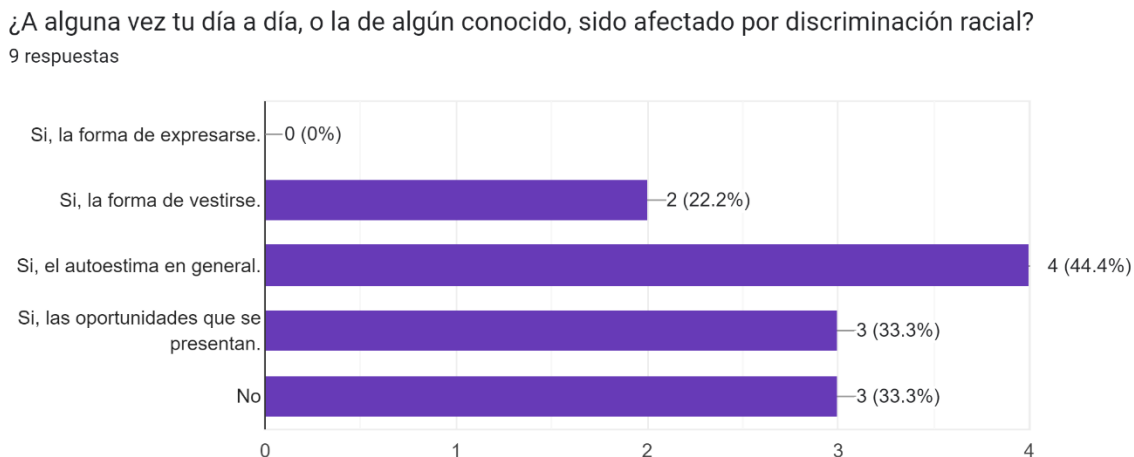
R/1	Me han negado el ayudar a alguien por no ser hablante nativa del inglés,
R/2	Si en mi escuela se ve mucho eso

*Table 2 En caso de responder "Si" a la respuesta anterior, ¿podría describir el incidente?*

*Source: researcher's survey*

This table shows the firsthand experiences of those subjects who have experienced racial injustice themselves. In these comments, the subjects mentioned how racial discrimination was present for them in school and a working scenario, being mainly shown with verbal abuse. They mentioned how racial discrimination was done face to face, being confronted regularly with comments insulting their looks and their ethnicity. This table provides the subject real-life scenarios and experiences, it helps to provide a reliable source of information on the topic of this investigation. This table shows how people can be discriminated against, in the book analysis we mentioned people being isolated, mistreated, and verbally abused just like these subjects explained themselves.

Figure 3.



*Figure 3 ¿A alguna vez tu día a día, o la de algún conocido, sido afectado por discriminación racial? Source: researcher's survey*

This figure provides an inside on the diverse ways in which racial discrimination has had an impact and how it has affected their day-to-day lives. This figure shows that six out of the nine subjects had been affected by racial discrimination at some point. While three subjects, thirty-three percent, expressed that they had never been affected by racial discrimination, the other six expressed that they ended up modifying their daily life because of racial discrimination. Twenty-two percent of the subjects expressed that they had to change how they dressed themselves because of racial discrimination; and this was shown in the previous tables, where the subjects mentioned that a way in which racial discrimination was presented, was in degrading comments regarding looks.

Moreover, forty-four percent of the subjects mentioned that their self-esteem overall was affected by racial discrimination, this is an obvious effect that any type of discrimination can have on a person, as they are being mistreated for who they are. Finally, the last thirty-three

percent of the subjects expressed how racial discrimination has impacted their day-to-day life in opportunities with which they were presented. In the analysis of the book, we can see that black people were denied a lot of opportunities related to education and work; now thanks to the input of the participants we can see that this is something that is still happening nowadays, because of their skin tone and/or ethnicity some people are still frowned upon and not treated equally as others.

*Table 4.*

R/1	Un poco. Por dicha no es tan extrema como hace 60 años, pero todavía de dan ocasiones de discriminación simplemente por alguien ser de una raza diferente
R/2	Sí
R/3	No es distinta pero consideraría que hay menos y hay más lucha en el presente.
R/4	Sí.
R/5	Si
R/6	Es un poco más distinto, claramente, pero aún hay que mejorar muchas cosas
R/7	Si
R/8	Hoy día es la misma, solo que más solapada
R/9	No

*Table 4 ¿Cree usted que la discriminación racial es distinta a hace 60 años? Source:*

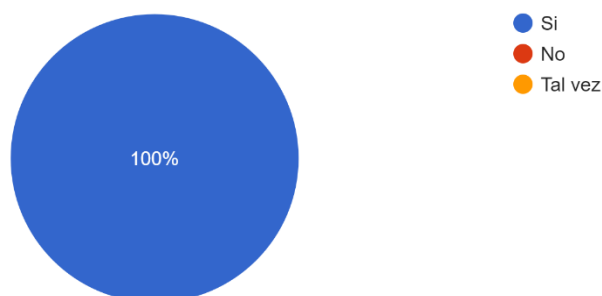
*researcher's survey*

In this table we gather the inputs and views of the subjects when it came to racial discrimination; They were asked their opinion regarding whether racial discrimination is different now, from sixty years ago, the time in which the book *The Help* is set. Four out of the

nine subjects strongly stated that racial discrimination is different from what it was sixty years ago. On the other hand, the other five subjects had a different opinion; From those five, one subject strongly stated that the situation is no different from what it was sixty years ago, and the other four had various opinions. The first subject stated that sixty years ago the setting of racial discrimination was very extreme and even though it is still present, is not as bad. The third subject stated a similar comment, saying that the situation is not as bad and that people now fight for their rights more. The sixth comment mentioned how it is different from sixty years ago, but that there is still a lot to fix. Finally, the eighth participant mentioned how there is still racial discrimination present, but that nowadays is more overlooked.

Figure 4.

¿Cree usted que la discriminación racial aún es un problema presente en nuestra actualidad?  
9 respuestas



*Figure 4 ¿Cree usted que la discriminación racial aún es un problema presente en nuestra actualidad? Source: researcher's survey*

In this figure, the subjects were asked if they think that racial discrimination is a problem that is still present in our current society. All nine subjects expressed that they do think racial discrimination is a current issue. Just like in the *book The Help*, it seems that racial

discrimination is still a present issue, by the previous comments and experiences, we can note, and the results show that people are still being affected by racial discrimination, they are still being mistreated, abuse, and put aside because of the skin tone. However, in comparison with the book, thankfully nowadays people can defend themselves, set their ground, and fight for their respect and peace, and most importantly people of color have more rights than the setting of the book, as well as more freedom and a better living state.

*Table 5.*

R/1	Respeto, la gente tiene que superar esa idea de que las personas no son personas solo por tener otro color de piel, todos tenemos los mismos derechos y el color de piel no cambia eso.
R/2	Educación desde el kínder
R/3	Creo que todo comienza y se puede combatir en la educación de toda persona desde temprana edad.
R/4	Que las personas entiendan que todos somos humanos y que las diferencias solo hacen la experiencia de vivir más interesante.
R/5	Enseñar el respeto desde pequeños
R/6	La educación, tomar medidas en caso de discriminación en los trabajos, e igual manera en cualquier ámbito de la vida
R/7	Educar a los demás de las diferencias culturales
R/8	Educación
R/9	Diay sería poner un alto a todas esas personas que salatiman abotras

*Table 5 ¿Cuál crees que sea la solución para combatir la discriminación racial? Source: researcher's survey*

In this final table, the subjects were asked what they think is the solution to racial discrimination. One out of the nine subjects expressed that people who discriminate against others should be stopped completely. Two subjects out of the nine expressed that respect is the answer, they believed that people should understand that all humans are equal and that being different makes life more interesting. Finally, the other six subjects expressed that education is the solution to racial discrimination, that this issue can be fought if from an early age kids are taught respect, as well as what to do if they ever experience racial discrimination in a work setting or anywhere.

## Chapter V

### Conclusions and Recommendations

In this chapter, the conclusions from this investigation are shown. Furthermore, the researcher will present the results concluded from the subjects. Moreover, the research question stated at the beginning of the thesis will be presented to answer it with the data collected with the help of this investigation. Lastly, the researcher presents some recommendations regarding the topic of this investigation, which could be of help to any other researchers.

#### 5.1 Purpose of the Conclusion

The purpose of the conclusion shown in this chapter is to present the results of the analysis done with this paper, to try and achieve an ending for this investigation. In this concluding chapter, the researcher's goal is to present the results of the investigation, obtained in previous chapters, as the objective is to answer the question and problem stated at the beginning of the paper. In other words, the objective of this conclusion is to answer whether the objectives stated at the beginning of the paper were able to be answered with the data that was collected and analyzed. Furthermore, with this conclusion, the researcher's objective is to analyze and compare the views regarding racial discrimination in the book *The Help* with the current society, in hopes of finding a difference when it comes to discrimination.

#### 5.2 Conclusions

At the beginning of Chapter I, it was defined for this investigation, that two general objectives were added as well as four specific ones. The basis of this investigation is the objectives; therefore, each chapter, as well as this conclusion followed the ideas stated in those objectives. In this chapter, the researcher develops the objectives and provides the results

obtained from the data collected and analyzed. To provide a closing statement for one and each of the objectives, this will be rewritten and presented once again; the analysis that was conducted will be presented as well as the results obtained.

### **5.2.1 To analyze the views of racial discrimination in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett, and how these actions affected people's quality of life in the story.**

As analyzed in the previous chapter, the views of racial discrimination in the book *The Help* was not in favor of people of color. It was normal to isolate and discriminate against black people. They were looked at as just helpers, and workers, they were mistreated, assaulted, looked at as dirty and as disease carriers. Nobody looked at this situation as an abnormality, except for black people themselves, and nobody would step up for the injustice that this community was receiving. Furthermore, how their actions affected the quality of life of the black people in the story was major. The entirety of the quality of life of the black community was affected; Black people were isolated to a further part of the town, they could not buy more land to expand their housing, and they had to travel long distances to get to the main town and their jobs, they could not shop for the food at the same stores as white people; therefore, they had their own "black people" market, however, the quality of the food was not the best with products almost expiring.

This first objective was completed by analysis of the treatment and living conditions of black people stated in *The Help*. To complete this analysis, theories were used as well as scenarios presented in the book. With this investigation, the living state of the black people in the book was analyzed. The researcher identified the main scenarios relevant to the investigation; the main scenarios were the separated bathrooms, the firing of Minny, and underpayment.

### **5.2.2 To analyze the views of racial discrimination today and compare them to the case of those in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett.**

As stated in a previous chapter, in the book *The Help* the life of black people was extremely affected by racial discrimination, they lack the most basic human rights. Through a deep analysis of the book, the researcher gathered the main conflict shown in the book, as well as how racial discrimination affects the day-to-day behavior of people of color; as well as to how white people act toward black people, and how society views discrimination in that time setting.

This second objective was successfully achieved by gathering information from subjects of the current society, with a ten-question survey. The researcher analyzed the data gathered which included their thoughts and views regarding racial discrimination, as well as their firsthand experiences and if racial discrimination has ever affected their lives. Furthermore, with the information gathered from the subjects, and the scenarios gathered from the deep analysis of the book, the researcher was able to compare the experiences, opinions, and views regarding racial discrimination.

### **5.2.3 To analyze in detail the lives of those in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett, and how much was racial discrimination a part of their lives.**

In the book *The Help* the lives of black people are shown in detail, the book starts with the point of view of Aibileen, a black worker for a white household. The story switches characters so the reader can know the living state, experiences, mental state as well as thoughts and ambitions of black women helping in white households. The book also gives us the perspective of one white woman, who experiences *The Help* from the other end. The book shows in detail the different scenarios, what the white people think, how they see the situation, and what is the norm

for them; as well as the perspective of the black women, the help, to have a whole different living, mentality, and experiences.

This third objective was achieved with a detailed analysis of the book. The researcher analyzed each character and scenario shown in the book, each interaction and action that involved some sort of discrimination; As well as a deep analysis of each character themselves, to successfully unravel their thoughts ideologies, beliefs, and views regarding society, race, and social status; to find an answer for the actions.

#### **5.2.4 To identify how much did discrimination affected the quality of life for those in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett, and how did they deal with it.**

As mentioned in previous chapters, racial discrimination defined the lives of black people. They were not looked like part of society, they were mistreated, assaulted, and isolated. As this behavior was normal for this society, nobody would do anything to challenge this discrimination. Black people have lived like this for basically their whole lives, more than 3 generations; it was their normal, their destiny. The black community was shaped by racial discrimination, the place where they lived, where they shopped, the hospital that they went to, everything was designated to just them in a part of the town far from the white people. Black people would deal with this discrimination by just letting it happen, for they could not do anything about it. If a black person were to talk back to a white person to simply defend themselves, they would be not just fired, but then the white people would make sure that they won't be able to find another job; and that is the best-case scenario, as in any other circumstance they could also be assaulted to almost getting killed.

This fourth objective was completed by analyzing the living and behavior of black people in *The Help*. To complete this analysis, theories were used as well as scenarios presented in the book. With this investigation, the living state of the black people in the book was analyzed. The researcher identified the main scenarios relevant to the investigation, such as black women getting fired without a reason, black people being called dirty, and them getting assaulted for accidentally using the wrong bathroom at a white people's house.

#### **5.2.5 To analyze today's society and investigate how much in racial discrimination present in our time.**

In the book *The Help* racial discrimination was the most present factor in the life of black people, they lack the most basic human rights. The main goal of this investigation was to compare the state of racial discrimination shown in the book, with the stated of racial discrimination in our present time; As well as to compare society's view regarding racial discrimination in the time setting of the book *The Help*, and compare it with the views that society nowadays has regarding racial discrimination.

This fifth objective was successfully achieved by gathering information from subjects of the current society, with a ten-question survey; The researcher analyzed the data gathered which included their views and experiences regarding racial discrimination, as well as whether racial discrimination has ever affected their lives. Furthermore, with the information gathered from the subjects, and the scenarios gathered from the deep analysis of the book, the researcher was able to compare the experiences and views regarding racial discrimination.

### **5.2.6 To identify how much those racial discrimination affects today's society and compare it to society present in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett.**

As analyzed previously, racial discrimination can affect how a person presents themselves, the way they behave and how they live their day-to-day lives. In the book *The Help*, racial discrimination was a present factor in the day-to-day lives of black people. They were not able to be themselves when they were out of their houses. In the book, black people could not speak freely, they could not be comfortable, nor could they meet their basic needs without there being a restriction created by white people. The goal of this objective was to analyze both the presence of racial discrimination in the timeline of the book and our current society; As well as to see the effects that racial discrimination had in the book and compare it to the effects it has in our current time.

This sixth objective was completed by gathering information from subjects of the current society, with a ten-question survey. The researcher analyzed the data gathered which included their experiences regarding racial discrimination, and how it affected their lives or the lives of someone close to the subjects. Furthermore, with the information gathered from the subjects, and the scenarios gathered from the deep analysis of the book, the researcher was able to compare the experiences regarding racial discrimination and the repercussions it had in their lives.

### **5.3 Restatement of the Research Question**

The main goal of this investigation was presented in the introductory framework; This main objective was to analyze the views of racial discrimination in the book *'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett, 2009*. After completing the research, the main objective mentioned in Chapter I was answered; therefore, the research question on which the investigation was centered was resolved. In this investigation, the researcher was able to analyze the views of racial discrimination by

utilizing a literary analysis as well as the views and experiences adults had in our current society, as a way to obtain the results needed to answer the question stated at the beginning “How much those racial discrimination affects today’s society and compare it to society present in the book 'The Help' by Kathryn Stockett.”

Thanks to the analysis, the researcher was able to conclude that racial discrimination is still present today and the effect that it has on people. Furthermore, the research shows that social discrimination is present in diverse ways, from verbal abuse, and lack of opportunities, to mistreatment. Moreover, the researcher pointed out that this way of racial discrimination affects today’s society in diverse ways, from the way they present and express themselves, and job opportunities, to their self-esteem overall. Nowadays racial discrimination is not as extreme as in the time of the book, and people can stand their ground, and ask for their rights; However, with this investigation, the researcher pointed out that people still see racial discrimination as an active issue, and that the solution to this is respect, tolerances and teaching this since an early age. Luckily, black people have a voice nowadays, and in most places, they are treated as equal people contrary to the book, where they were looked like just workers.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

At the end of an investigation, it is useful to add any recommendation as it may be helpful to future researchers. This part includes recommendations that the researcher has gathered, to help any future investigators of the same topic. Next, the researcher provides two main recommendations for future analysis, as well as a recommendation regarding the specific topic of the book.

First off, it is crucial to have clear what is the question that the researcher would like to answer with their research. By having a clear idea of the main question, it will be easier for the researcher to state the objectives of the paper. Moreover, having clear objectives will help the searcher to produce ideas and have the information needed to develop the paper. Along with the clear questions and objectives, it is easier to know what sources you would need and where to look for them; this way the process of data gathering will go so much smoothly.

The second recommendation is about time management. When doing research, the investigator should be aware of how time-consuming is going to be. Being precisely organized with the time will help the researcher complete the investigation with less pressure. A good practice for time efficiency is dividing the things that need to be done, coming up with your topic, question, and objectives, then noting what information needs to be gathered, and what sources will be used. If all of the steps are clear, there will be a step by step process which will make the investigation run smoothly. Moreover, the most important detail is being aware of your time; running out of time can cause stress and error, which is why it is important to divide the time efficiently and be organized.

Lastly, *The help* is a book with very deep stories, filled with feeling, ambition, and suffering. The book offers a view of a lifestyle that many people have never experienced, many never even thought about. A recommendation for future investigators of this book is to pay attention to the character's feelings, it can be easy to get distracted by all the injustice that is presented but investigate each little personality trait as it tells what each character was, is, and aspires to be. Hopefully, this paper will be useful not only for future researchers, but also for readers and anyone interested in the story, in the topic, and who wants to actively change the world either their world or those that surround them.

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## Appendixes

### 6.1 Tables

Literary theories	Quotes	Researcher's interpretation.

Themes	Quotes	Researcher's interpretation.

Motifs	Quotes	Researcher's interpretation.

Symbols	Quotes	Researcher's interpretation.

### 6.2 Survey Questions

1. Edad
  - a. 18-24
  - b. 25-35
  - c. 45-60+
  
2. En su opinión ¿qué es discriminación racial?
3. ¿Alguna vez has sido testigo de discriminación racial?
  - a. Si
  - b. No

4. En caso de responder "Si" a la respuesta anterior, ¿podría describir el incidente?
  
5. ¿Alguna vez has experimentado discriminación racial?
  - a. Si
  - b. No
  
6. En caso de responder "Si" a la respuesta anterior, ¿podría describir el incidente?
  
7. ¿A alguna vez tu día a día, o la de algún conocido, sido afectado por discriminación racial?
  - a. Si, la forma de expresarse.
  - b. Si, la forma de vestirse.
  - c. Si, la autoestima en general.
  - d. Si, las oportunidades que se presentan.
  - e. No
  
8. ¿Cree usted que la discriminación racial es distinta a hace 60 años?
  
9. ¿Cree usted que la discriminación racial aún es un problema presente en nuestra actualidad?
  - a. Si
  - b. No
  - c. Tal vez
  
10. ¿Cuál crees que sea la solución para combatir la discriminación racial?