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Essay

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## **Moonlight Film Analysis**

### **Introduction**

Berry Jenkins directed a film in 2016 which made a record business due to the beautiful concept and ideas it carries. In this movie, a boy named Chiron who processed the gay characteristics was shown in such a way that he was abused and mocked for the traits he naturally carried. Although his father acknowledged him but refrained to be open with anyone because homosexuality was strongly condemned in African American society (Prayuda et al., 2020). This paper aims to throw light on the issues which are faced by the current society such as, masculinity, homosexuality, drug dealing, and prostitution, etc., with clear intention to show how black society residing in the United States of America is intolerant towards homosexuality.

### **Discussion**

*The Moonlight* is a film that reflects how the African –American community treats homosexuals. This film tells the story of a boy named Chiron who experienced bullying because he is considered gay by the people around him. The story of the film shows how the young lad struggles for his identity and how he makes efforts to prove his innocence. This film portrays different aspects of masculinity in society and the role of stereotypes was critically evaluated. The film is an insight into how a person becomes a victim of the orthodox stereotypes and how badly it all impacted the lives of the victims (Maghfiroh, 2017).

The content of the masterpiece *Moonlight* depends upon some of the important issues which are faced by every society in the world and especially the African American community which claims discrimination openly in the American society. This movie revolves around the issues of masculinity, race, sexuality, identity, family, and love. The young boy Chiron continues

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his life struggles to himself and for this, he has to face different situations and problems in his life. This movie shows the life of a boy in all the important life stages starting from a kid to a young boy and an adult. His life continued to prove his sexual identity. The continued exploitation and bullying made Chiron's life so hard (Prayuda et al., 2020).

Homosexuality is the main concern of this movie. Homosexuality means the romance or attraction or sexual behavior between the members of the same sex or gender. It is also called male-male attraction or female-female sexual behavior (Prayuda et al., 2020). This film portrays Chiron as a growing gay. For the very first time, he noticed the word "Faggot" which his mother used to insult him after knowing the meaning of the term that "it is used to make gay people feel bad". He asks his father, "“What’s a faggot? ... Am I a faggot?”" to which his father replies, "You could be gay, but you can’t let nobody call you no faggot" (Maghfiroh, 2017). Although his father told him that being gay is not bad it's quite natural but still, he should not tell anyone about this. Here the story depicts the conservative black culture that feels bad about this sexual identity.

African American society condemns homosexuality and this type of relationship. They are less tolerant of this concept. Traditionally the black community lacks the representation of homosexuals. They promote that masculinity lies in getting their sexual satisfaction from the opposite gender. In a study conducted on black Americans by Adhytama (2019), the results revealed that almost 80% of the people are against this type of sexual behavior. The situation is quite embarrassing among African Americans if someone is considered gay (Adhytama, 2019). This was the main reason that Chiron's father restricted him to hide his sexual identity because the African community has always been enslaved in the past so taking decisions to orient their lives in a direction of their choice was totally impossible for them. The new changes the world adapted after the revolutions and different movements, so the Afro Americans were less acceptable to any

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change. They were less confident in gaining flexibility towards any change. They remain to stick to their traditions is that they think, once something is bad it became a part of their culture. So by remaining in the cultural domain Chiron was unable to discuss his sexuality concerns with those he felt comfortable with (Adhytama, 2019).

Another concern along with sexual identity is masculinity. In the movie, it is shown that Kevin who is a schoolfellow of Chiron beats him up on observing Chiron's homosexual characteristics. Kevin does this to save his image in the public and to show his masculinity traits. It same happens in current society. The facts are denied because they are set traditional and no flexibility towards any sort of reality is accepted. There are two signs to prove masculinity in society. First, a man should have strong vocals so that he could bully someone in a louder voice, and second, he should be physically strong. He could beat anyone to set his dominance. (Maghfiroh, 2017).

Further in the movie, it is shown that Chiron isolates him from society. He creates his own world. He had two options either to compromise his sexual identity or to leave the community. Firstly he tried to balance both but he could not make it for so long. Finally, he decided to leave society. This act disconnected him from all the social activities. This film strongly advocated the history of the black Americans when slavery was abolished and they were brought into the mainstream of life. They did not know how to flourish with society. Their adjustment, jobs, skills, etc. became a huge problem. They chose manual labor at that time. From then till now they are considered as the second citizens in society. The movie beautifully showed the life struggles of a black boy to get a prestigious place in society(Adhytama, 2019)

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In the final scene, it is shown that Kevin brought food for Chiron and this shows that they both were not only comfortable with each other but also had their sexual experiences with one another. Chiron confessed to Kevin that he is the only guy he touched. They had several years of physical and emotional relationship. The concluding scene of the movie addressed many stereotypes which are present in our society to date. This proves the stereotypes totally wrong who claimed that men are emotionless and heartless. They are not just a piece of flesh but they can feel emotionally down. The relationship criteria are not only confined to the opposite sex but homosexuality is also an attractive concept. It is to deal with the person one is more comfortable with (Flory, 2019).

I think the movie *Moonlight* is one of the beautiful concepts that show the real image of society in very basic ways. It revolves around the life cycle of a boy as a kid, teenager, and adult. Drug dealing and prostitution are considered social taboos which should not be practiced. The social neglect by society due to some natural phenomenon is very hurtful. The showoff of masculinity is very common in every society and people can do anything to prove it right in the society. Being in an emotional relationship with anyone is possible. The social changes should be adapted openly. The movie is one of the best pictures which reflects the social issues with a pivotal end.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, the chronicles of Chiron's life raise the curtain from the difficulties and struggles to prove his sexual identity which is bullied in his community. This movie did not only address the stereotypical concerns of the society but also gave confidence to the discriminated African-Americans that they are also the actors of the society and they can participate in every

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field they desire. This movie is a clear message to them to adopt different concepts like homosexuality which is an obvious and natural fact. It is a small film of a very long journey which needs to be understood.

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