

**Tribhuvan University**

**Upshots of Stigma in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird***

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University  
in partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master  
of Arts in English**

**by**

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**Letter of Recommendation**

Mrs Anita Budathoki has completed her thesis entitled “Upshots of Stigma in Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird*” under my supervision. She carried out her research from 10<sup>th</sup> June. 2018 to 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019 A.D. I hereby recommend her thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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**Letter of Approval**

This thesis entitled “Upshots of Stigma in Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird*” has been submitted to the Central Department of English Tribhuvan University. It has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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### **Abstract**

The research concerns on the issue of stigmatization of the black in the white dominated society with reference to Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird*. It has explored the white's power exercise to redefine the black. The white reinforces power over the black and imposes derogatory images by associating with social evils to the black. The colour appearance is politicized with good and bad aspects in relation to society. The protagonist Tom is defiled as immoral and uncivilized and he is generalized to the entire black community. The white society preconceives as to the black with social evils. Due to the preconception, Tom Robinson is victim of the white society. By establishing a negative perspective upon the black, the white dominated society generates knowledge and constructs truth. The social power exercise stigmatizes and generalises the black community as inferior, uncivilized and evil. The stigma theory discusses about disability as a social perspective and race is also sign of disability in community wherein one group determines and defines other. The novel unfolds upshots of stigma through the stigmatized protagonist Tom. But the victim of stigma is not limited to the dominated black community; the dominant whites are equally affected by the upshots of the stigma they imposed on the blacks.

### **I. Upshots of Stigma in Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird***

This research examines stigma as social construct and its upshots with reference to Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. A society exercises power, defines truth and redefines knowledge. Truths are made and distorted according to the interest of the dominant group. With reference to the novel, being the black member is socially inferior. The society differentiates between the black and the white. As racial discrimination, the white are generally defined as superior and the black are inferior. The truth is constructed though the both races are equal. On the basis of existing knowledge, the society treats the black as other in society. The white dominated society defines the black with unfair social aspects. *In To Kill A Mockingbird*, Tom Robinson is a member of black community, has to be victim of society being a black boy. The novel portrays American society wherein the white and the black have different social status because the society practises colour politics and creates difference between the white and the black. The white as privileged group recreates and stigmatizes black colour as symbol of inferiority and reinforces it as social truth. The society decides constructs roles and performance on the basis of the white and the black colour. The constructed truth inferiorizes the black community which begins from socialization. Even the black community internalizes colour stigma as their racial weakness in the society. The created social stigma or disgrace obstructs them to feel equality and even they acknowledges the difference as inborn phenomena. This study reveals a kind of constructed and internalized stigma obstructs and problematizes the life of black community in American society. In the context of this novel, the black colour is taken as sign of inferiority therefore it mitigates their power and performance in society.

Tom represents a member of black community. Though being an ordinary man, he is accused of being rapist. This knowledge is preconception and prejudice in case, the boy belongs to the black community. Tom individually a moral and fair character however, the racial discourse renders him to be an evil. The white society makes him evil and guilt because the society understands black as evil, immoral and sinful one.

Tom represents Mockingbird which embodies only fair characters but the Tom has been victim of racial issue. He is victimized by colour politics. *To Kill a Mockingbird* introduces the Southern part of American society where majority is the black. The protagonist of the novel, Tom Robinson as a black character, has to be victim even if he is an innocence man. The white community think that the black colour is one of the sign of disgraces and inferiorities. Being a member of stigmatized black society, he is accused of being a criminal. His racial identity and colour covers his personal and individual identity. His individuality is not free from racial identity as the white community defines. He cannot make his individual identity because of his racial background. The society recognizes him as a black member rather than his individual talent and difference. The black appearance or skin colour is problematic or it has been stigmatized with negative meaning. His individual quality, talent and nature are not representative of his personal identity but the stigmatized identity always recreates his image and identity. The society defiles black colour with evil and corrupted nature.

The theory of stigma redefines or mitigates to border mass of people as far as possible that creates and recreates various forms of discriminations. For example in *To Kill a Mockingbird* Tom Robinson in particular comes to be the protagonist despite the fact that he is stigmatised bitterly and ultimately killed. However, the

readers or the mass of audience realise that it was an injustice. Tom Robinson is a black man who works as a raper but he is an innocent man but the society sees him as criminal because the social discourse defines the black as inferior and criminal. On the basis of prejudice, the society treats and defines colour people. Due to the harsh treatment of her father the sympathy and empathy towards Tom Robinson come to be so high in degree that the stigma as a black, handicapped and raper imposed on him by the superior white community is superimposed by love and compassion towards him.

A powerful society creates and generates truth and discourse on the basis of power. The majority creates discourse upon minority. To exercise and generate power, majorities create discourses. The novel introduces racial issues and exposes blackness as a social stigma. The society creates partiality between the white and the black and white is supposed to have been superior because of social discourse. The white community has generated knowledge to create inferiority and superiority by which the society exercises societal power. The knowledge about black has been associated with negative concepts which change people's concepts to judge black in society. The colour is misinterpreted or associated with negative knowledge like uncivilized, immoral, dishonest, criminal and evil functions which is predominately prevalent in the mindset of the society. According to the societal norms and values the society exercises power. The prevalent discourse about black reinforces social stigma and disgrace. Paul Gilroy states:

Racism argues that racism is a form of extreme prejudice and is a manifestation of the psychological process of social perception. A prejudice is a form of extreme stereotype and a stereotype is an attitude of the one person towards another individual or group. Prejudice is a form of group stereotypes



and the formation of group stereotypes is a product of the formation of attitudes. (1)

Under the conditions of plantation slavery, black slaves were commonly thought to be docile, superstitious, easily satisfied, and servile; while during the present post-industrial phase of capitalist development, blacks are more often viewed as parasitic, angry, ungrateful, and dangerous. Thus the inter-relatedness and dynamic character of forms of social consciousness makes it difficult to pin down the content of an ideology once and for all.

The significance of the study is contemporary world politics which is based on religion, caste, ethnicity and culture. It is a way of creating power and ruling of society. A society primarily defines or redefines as such ideological thought in society that creates power and truth over any particular group. This kind of politics is existed today throughout world. Paul Gilroy restates:

Prejudice is forms of group stereotypes and the formation of group stereotypes is a product of the formation of attitudes. Prejudices are linked to ego defence- the adoption of attitude that serves to bolster the self-esteem of the individual holds them. (1)

It explores how power serves to illuminate oppression and the situation compels white to reconcile in Post-Apartheid South Africa. Transformation of power works as a mode of oppression which explores the theme of racism through characterization which progress with events. It gives the power to black people because they want to take revenge over white people.

Harper Lee is a renowned author of America who has produced literary works. Majorly she raises societal issue of the contemporary society, therefore, her literary writings are based on reality and non-fictional, though it seems narrative work.

Among many works, the novel *To Kill A Mockingbird* is a remarkable one which addresses racial complexity of contemporary society. In fact she reveals humanitarian disaster between the white and the black in America. The major character Tom is an example and representation of the black victim as he undergoes various complicated situation and several threaten in society by dint of being a black member of the same society. Atticus Finch as a rescuer or mediator between black and white community who wants to change existing norms and values, but he suffers racial torture and realizes inferiority of black is difficult to change in society. All black members feel prejudices and unfair treatment in mixed society; therefore, black members unite in a single place. Because of racism American society does not pacify social issues. Because of social injustice, inequalities and discriminations cause the conflicts and disharmonies in the society. M. Pullock views upon it:

Racism is the overarching societal paradigm that tolerates, accepts, and reinforces racial inequalities, and is associated with racially unequal opportunities for children to learn and thrive. Racial inequalities result in the discriminatory treatment of people of minority status. For instance, individuals from historically marginalized racial groups may be perceived as less worthy or less intelligent than those from the majority culture. (12)

He has focused on practices which have been for many years. Even after post colonial period, racism did not minimize whereas it is politicized. It causes the trouble and conflicts in American society.

But, the white society victimizes them by inflicting as an uncivilized creature. The protagonist Tom is accused of rape though he is an innocent but because of his black origin, white community accused him. His personal image does not work, existing concept regarding black is defiling so he is blamed as a criminal. Atticus

fighters against this accession but white community forcefully prove as a criminal and shot by death.

Scout Finch, daughter of a judge of white community, undergoes unexpected accusation because she supports her father's decision to favour a black man. Her father defends an innocent's case just being a judge, but the white change decision and truth. Tom is accused of rape a white girl and is imprisoned.

The white society practices colour and its societal values. The divided society interprets both the white and the black colour. The black colour is misinterpreted as an evil and uncivilized. Due to the power exercises the blacks are taken as criminal. The society accused blacks without proofs because the preconceptions about black assume them as criminal. The society is strategically biased because of racial practice.

The novel has been studied applying several perspectives however; the researcher has forwarded new research insight. Unlike the researcher's standpoint, many critics observe the novel from perspectives. The novel narrates the re-presentation of own self. The novel is read and re-read by many critics who have found many interpretations over it. The novel narrates author's own world. One of the critics David Loch puts forward his insight upon this novel as he says:

*To Kill a Mockingbird* focuses on that gut instinct of right and wrong, and distinguishes it from just following the law. Even the titular quote: Shoot all the blue jays you want, if you can hit but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird is in itself an allegory for this message. Being in itself a generic message, the idea of 'doing what's right' obviously has a different meaning depending on when and where you're reading the book. If you take 1960,

when the book was written, America was in a state of ethical development as social inequality was - very - gradually being overcome. (12)

According to this critic this novel only shows about moral judgement between right and wrong. It is societal evaluation of humanity. This is human judgement according to humanity and society creates discourse what is right and what is wrong. It is not personal belief that decides what is right and wrong but the society or community determines the moral attributes.

Another critic Adams Phoebe puts a bit different viewpoint upon this novel. He simply observes realism in fictional text as his claim that fictional work also is based on reality. Because of influence of contemporary socio-political factors, the author cannot go beyond from reality. Therefore, he observes this novel:

*To Kill a Mockingbird* is a more successful piece of work. It is frankly and completely impossible, being told in the first person by a six-year-old girl with the prose style of a well-educated adult. Miss Lee has, to be sure, made an attempt to confine the information in the text to what Scout would actually know, but it is no more than a casual gesture toward plausibility. (98)

The author analysis is about realism in fictional work and his claim is that even fictions are not totally outcome of authors' imagination and emotion but the author also works out contemporary socio-political factors as well.

Reading this novel a critic Stephen Metcalf immensely relate the fictional story with a particular event of America which happened after 1930 when economic depression caused frustration and depression. The society was badly affected by economic downfall which resulted tension and racial conflict in the Alabama's society. He further extends his perspective:

Harper Lee's novel, an autobiographical story of a young girl in Depression-beset Alabama, has become an inescapable fact of America's civic religion. In addition to being taught, by one reliable estimate, in three quarters of America's public schools . . . and is consistently ranked in reader surveys as the most influential book in Americans' lives, after, of course, the Bible. *To Kill a Mockingbird* is a type of literature Americans are most comfortable abiding, because it makes them most abidingly comfortable with themselves, a point Mallon takes to be fatal to its artistic ambitions, such as they are. (18)

His insight in this novel shows series of events in that of particular case study of Alabama where racial debate caused restlessness. Even the author hit the particular event and dramatized in fictional representation.

A critic Keith Waterhouse simply exposes a racial tension and racial violence in American society.

The innocent childhood game that tumbles into something adult and serious is a fairly common theme in fiction, but I have not for some years seen the idea used so forcefully. Pretty soon we are in the adult game, based on the same fear and fascination of the dark: the ugliness and violence of a Negro's trial for rape and the town's opposition to the children's father for defending him. Miss Lee does well what so many American writers do appallingly: she paints a true and lively picture of life in an American small town. And she gives freshness to a stock situation. (3)

Overall discussion of critics it is better conclude the ideas that novel has got abundant critical response on this novel. Many critics have come across with new subjects or issues in this novel. However the researcher goes through new perspective as an autobiographical criticism. This criticism explores and probes the authorial self in his

writing. This research aims to find black colour as a social stigma in Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird* in which the research explores the writer's idea of social stigma. The research applies stigma as a theory in order to expose societal practice.

The stories of stigma can be the source of empathy and constructive energy. It can change the society by creating the positiveness. It can create better society which can show a villain hero and hero villain can make dead memorable and live dead. It has power to bring consciousness in people to.

The research particularly shows how social power play constructs truth. The racial practice between white and black cause's racism concept and blacks are supposed as minor, inferior and unequal to white. It is only white interpretation but it has been truth for the society. Racism as a stigma is social construction because of discourse of white. The society determines black position and presents them as other. The novel contextualizes American society that interprets racism is equal to physical disability because it is considered as insufficient quality for equality. It means black skin is a kind of physical challenge which is not equal with others. The race-based American society creates discrimination and interprets the black race. Whiteness as a race is socially intensified and is interpreted with power. It means whiteness is central power against black race. The white and the black racial complexity in western society have been rooted over long time. This concept has progressively been developed in western society. In course of practicing colour complexity, the black colour was taken as physical default. The white dominated society uses black colour as a disability which is less quality to be equal with the white colour. In this respect, the society compares black colour with physically challenged people.

The term stigma refers to a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance or a person. It is a social, cultural and psychological construct which is

associated with negative value and attribute of the society. It comes to the existence because of social hierarchy of our society. This term cannot be confined to a particular society or social group but to any condition or circumstance where we find out the newness or think we are different from others in capacity or ability or in physicality.

*To Kill a Mockingbird* addresses situations related to the Southern United States in 1930. The protagonist, Tom lives in white society in Maycomb, Alabama. Maycomb is a small and beautiful city of black people but it is dominated by whites. It is setting of this novel, shows a white dominated community where racial identity is practiced. The society distinctly keeps different concept relatively black and white. To defile black people, the society associates their identity with defiling works and uncivilized practice. One of the major characters, Atticus, being a white member, supports black's side, but he has to be victim of the society. Even her daughter has been victim in school as well as outside.

Scout and his father fights for cleansing black stigma but the society is unable to accept change in society. Atticus is defends Tom Robinson, a black man, who is accused of raping a white woman. Scout and Jem have to tolerate a barrage of racial slurs and insults because they support Tom who is accused of rape. Tom is convicted even though Atticus proves that Tom could not have possibly committed the crime of which he is accused. Due to his racial identification, he was accused of committing crime. Atticus tries to explain to them about the jury's decision.

Scout Finch a small child of school age but she learns how the society discourses racial stigma. She learns it from school days being a daughter of an attorney of the white community, faces racial discrimination, deception, and hatred. Her father defends against an innocent man's case as a protector of law, as an

attorney, but the other whites in the society trouble and torture being to black. Tom is accused and imprisoned for raping a white girl who later on is killed for not having proof, and also because of supremacy of racism.

The social practice misinterprets black colour as a lack of social values. It shows here that having black skin a person cannot compete with the white colour. In course of exercising power in human history, different social practices generate differences and taboos. In the same way, racism was remarkable stigma for creating differences because having black skin the society does not provide equal values. Like a disable person, the society recognizes as a disable person. Mostly, the white people created discourse on the basis of colour. The racism affected the society and the blacks were marginalized. The society developed racism as a disability that was deprived from social opportunities. As a result the society again continues racial conflict in society where the white and the black undergo misunderstanding and racial tension. Race is a social construct derived mainly from perceptions conditioned by the event of recorded history, and it has no basics in biological reality.

Due to these sorts of mentality difference on the basis of socially constructed matter, powerful or non stigmatized people, stigmatized people are psychologically, socially and mentally isolated and marginalized in their lives. They are treated unequally in the community of non-stigmatized group at any time in any context. The people who are in minority in population, inexperience, illiterate and suffering from poverty, they are living in stigmatized position in life through out that the history.

The novel introduces a reputed white family who belongs to high middle class. The white society interprets black colour with negative marks and taken as social disgrace. Harper raises the white and the black relation in society in *To Kill A Mockingbird* which shows the black suffering and inequality. Regarding racism she



argues on how black race is compared to physical disability. In course of creating power, white projected black as other or equal to physical impaired. The novel projects black characters that do not have the major role. Tom is an example and representation of the black victim as he undergoes various complicated situation and several threatens in the society by dint of being a white member of the same society. Tom suffers from racial torture and realizes racial stigma. Even though he holds a reputed position, the white society does not respect him. All black members feel prejudices and unfair treatment in the mixed society; therefore, black members unite in a single place. But, the white society victimizes them by inflicting as an uncivilized creature. Tom is one of the black men who is accused of rape. Atticus fights against this accession but white forcefully prove him as a criminal and is finally shot to death.

The novel explores racism and racial discrimination remained in society, due to which the society undergoes problems and discrimination. It tries to reveal how racial issue becomes evil power of society. On the basis of race and colour the American society practices discrimination and difference. The white community defines the black colour as a difference. The deep rooted racial concept causes negation and disharmony. Internally, society maintained the racial distance between the black and the white people. It is deeply rooted mindset that causes discrimination in society. Jem, a white man, says, "Around here once you have a drop of Negro blood that makes you all black" (44). It is prevalent idea of the society. The society is not ready of change perspective toward black.

In this regard, it has become necessary to understand the concept of the norm in the prevalent society because anyone can be stigmatized at any time. The concept of normalcy is again social; it is not fixed and shaped by cultural, historical and social forces. "Normality becomes the supreme goal for many stigmatized individuals until

they realize that there is no precise definition of normality except what they would be without their stigma" (225). A man is stigmatized because he fails to represent the majority of the population. That is why Lerner J. Davis says, "The concept of the norm, unlike that of an ideal, implies the majority of the population must or should somehow be part of the norm" (13). Ultimately, average then becomes paradoxically a kind of ideal, devoutly to be wished. In this way, the various extremes of human traits as tallness, shortness, height, intelligence, ambitiousness, strength would have been seen as errors. Such differences are therefore stigmatized in the long run. In a way, the construction of normalcy divides the total population into standard and non-standard sub-population as well as conceiving norm and non-norm.

Stigma is a human construction, which legitimizes the negative attributes to the human differences. The process of stigmatization occurs only when the social control component is imposed or the undesired different ness leads to some restriction in physical and social mobility. Besides, it also restricts access to the opportunities that allow an individual to develop his/her potential. In addition, stigmatized people are segregated, Ignored, neglected, and isolated by social participation. Race is a social construct derived mainly from perceptions conditioned by the event of recorded history, and it has no basics in biological reality. Regarding the concept of racism white reinforce it for dividing society and maintain white power in society. And it flourished largely in colonial period when people of different places encountered with each other. It carried multiple themes including postcolonial racism. It turns racial spotlight on individual behaviour. It intensifies how the African black attempts to create meaning and purpose in their life. The only way to have meaning or value is through their own choices and actions that is, they are willing to make them and to take responsibility for them. This is what makes uniquely human, what makes stand

out from the rest of existence. For this reason, the society defines existing no values.

The concept stigma is about social construct in relation to societal practice. Unlike physical reality, the concept is social representation which is associated with gender, race and other societal interpretation. Regarding race, the theory discusses based on the black and the white social relationship. The society in relation to social practice between the black and the white reinforces racial differences. The white power interprets black with certain knowledge and discourse and it is reinforced with values. As such values are added on the basis of social power and practice.

This research emphasizes to the representation of black colour is considered as a disability in society. In course of exercising Harper Lee's *To Kill Mockingbird* brings racially complicated interrelation between the black and white. The racial practice as a social construct is exercised. The racial practice causes social hierarchy between white and black. The race is considered a subject in black and white community where racial practice decides white and black social position. Racism politicizes and creates division between two races. *To Kill Mockingbird* addresses black colour as other because this colour difference is matter for society. Lee projects racial suffering and then she can project the issues.

The major character of the novel is Tom who is presented as a different among rest of others. He does not feel comfort and secure in white dominated society. The society does not provide equal position whereas he has to bear violence and inequality just being a black appearance. Just being a black member of community, he loses many opportunities. Black colour is racial stigma which stops them being equal and independent.

This plot of the novel develops on the basis of appealing of racism. Racism is very influential issues and it is subject matter of American society. The concept of stigma is associated with social interpretation and power relation. Tom is from black community in which society he feels that black colour is equal to handicapped because the society does not provide equal position to black people. The colour itself represents sign of default. The society understands that the black colour is socially handicapped condition.

The society in which Tom is represented as a black member of the same community and he represents black's representation in white dominated society. Tom is individually and personally innocent and honest character. But the society does not recognize him as an individual character but he is taken as a black member of the community.

Well if you don't want me to grow up talking' that way, why do you send me to school? Atticus looked at me amused. Atticus said that he was defending a Negro by the name of Tom Robinson. He lives in the settlement beyond the town dump. He goes to Calpurnia's church and she knows his family well. She says that they are clean living folk. There are people who say I shouldn't defend him. If you should not be defending' him, then why are you doing it? For a number of reasons, said Atticus. The main one is, if I did not I couldn't hold up my head in town, I could not even represent this county in legislature; I couldn't even tell you or Jam not to do something again. (20)

This line explains about white discourse toward black who have preoccupied concept. White society dominantly makes readymade idea regarding black. The individual identity of black does not make anymore concept whereas holistic concept determines black identity.

Disability is a socially constructed from the biological reality because our cultures idealizes the body and demands that we must have control upon it. Able-bodies thus dictate upon the disabled body and their knowledge always silenced and invalidated. Moreover, the nature of disability has often very little to do with the individual's capabilities and true characteristics. A small child, Scout Finch, daughter of Atticus learns racial difference from the same society, as she says, "One day I was in town with Jem and I overheard people talking about Atticus and how he was defending Tom Robinson who had been accused of raping a white woman. I went home and asked Atticus what "rape" meant. He said it was carnal knowledge of a female by force and without consent. I did not know what he meant by" (31). This kind of social behaviours and characters internalize concept of racism. Finch learns and knows black are inferior rather than white. The society justifies the fact.

The stigma and stereotypes are the cause of discrimination. Disability is not the cause at all, that the social reaction to disability is the cause. Susan Wendell says:

The power of culture alone to construct a disability is revealed when we consider bodily differences-deviations from a society's conception of a "normal" or acceptable body-that,, although they cause little or no function or physical difficulty for the person who has them, constitute major social disabilities" (44).

Social structure therefore draws the artificial line that separates "disable people" from others. Disability is therefore, seen as otherness and discriminated from the majority of society.

Being disabled is being different. "To be disabled is to face experiences which are different to those of non-disabled people. For many people it involves institutionalized and segregation from the mainstream of the community in education, work, housing and other activities. Prejudice and discrimination are based on the appearance. People are

judged not on their ability but on the way they look and disabled people are marginalized because they look different. The difference is caused by disability. Discrimination results when this difference triggers off the negative attitudes towards disability that are held by the other person. Most importantly, the attitudes towards disability are not formed accidentally. They are the obvious outcome of that values competition between people. People are judged according to their success in education, work, and marriage, the ability to produce (healthy) offspring, creativity, and beauty. As a result of segregation, disabled people have fewer opportunities to acquire the skills necessary for a good job and their education is substandard.

Tom understands pain of being a black. From his early school days, he experiences discrimination and partiality. He always gets torture from his friends. Even he has taken moral lesions by his father. It is Tom experience in society where he learns and experience black as other and social defect. Tom experiences having black origination should live secondary level life. Even being a innocent and honest, he cannot escape from racial stigma because of colour complexity. In the novel, Atticus teaches her daughter to how the colour is practice in society, "I certainly am. I do my best to love everybody... I'm hard put, sometimes—baby, it's never an insult to be called what somebody thinks is a bad name. It just shows you how poor that person is, it doesn't hurt you" (109). Atticus teaches other and shows the power of language, not only as a way to shame those who do not the racist line, but also to set the terms of the debate. Racists use "nigger-lover" to suggest that a person is trying to give African-Americans special rights, but Atticus points out that all he's arguing for is equality, loving everybody the same.

The society interprets social phenomena on the basis of contextual reality. Similarly the colour division between the black and the white becomes social

interpretation because the white power interprets the black on the basis of physical colour. Due to the practice of colour difference it becomes social division in long run. The white community interprets the black colour with negative attitude and characters but it becomes a socially accepted discourse and knowledge. The abuse of power on the part of the perpetrator and the helplessness experienced by the victim are hallmark characteristics of interpersonal violence. The desire for justice becomes a part of the social dissatisfaction.

The research presents black colour as a social default which is prevalent even after post war period when people have come away from barbaric racial age however the race was taken as inhuman practice in the society. The novel is set on the background of such racial discrimination. The racial discrimination and inequality become causes of social unrest which is associated with antagonistic relationship between black and white. The social colour complex invokes the social tensions which dominates racial freedom and identity in the society. Black people have long been suffered from racial injustice which provokes resentments against white people. As the black people manifest their repressed anger through social behaviours similarly white people never apologize in front of black people whereas the domination retains in the society.

Atticus Finch, father of Scout Finch, having a reputed position and belongs to white community fights against evil concept of society. Their experience in society and black position shows black colour is considered as a symbol of evil and default. Atticus presents societal view at black colour its impression upon society:

I'm black that doesn't mean you talk that way when you know better, said Jem. It's right hard to say, she said. Suppose you and Scout talked colour-folks' talk at home it'd be out of place, wouldn't it? Now what

if I talked white-folks' talk at church, and with my neighbours? They'd think I was put on airs to beat Moses. (31)

Atticus's shows black colour as socially taken as weakness. Since history of civilization, the colour concept has been inserted in mind. The white colour is associated with positive values whereas black colour with negative values. It causes dark side of black colour. As a result, the society does not expect any positive thinking with black people. For this reason, Atticus fights against racial stigma, even being a white man he expects to change black identity in society. For the sake of society and black he Even his daughter finds her father feelings and experience. Even having a prestigious position he fights against existing racism. The only alternative way for black is to fight against exploitation and domination.

Stigma is a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance or a person. It is a social, cultural and psychological construct which is understood as of negative values and attributes of the society. Stigma is condition, attribute, or behaviour that symbolically marked off the bearer as culturally unacceptable or inferior with the consequent feelings of shame, guilt and disgrace. In other words, it is a social process related to personal experience characterized by exclusion, rejection, blame or devaluation that results from experience of anticipation of an adverse social judgment about a person or a group. In any society, stigma has a negative connotation and its discrediting effects are very adverse. Goffman writes:

It is also called a failing, a shortcoming, a handicap. It constitutes a special discrepancy between vital and actual social identity for example the kind that causes us to reclassify an individual from one socially anticipated category to a different but equally well-anticipated one, and the kind that causes us to alter our estimation of the individual upward. Note, too, that not all undesirable attributes



are at issue, but only those which are incongruous with our stereotype of what given type of individual should be. (204)

It is thus, a social categorization that legitimates the negative attributes because differences are highlighted than similarities.

No individual in this world is exactly alike. The variations in shape, size, skin, colour, gender, cultural background can be stigmatized at any time. That's why, Erving says, "Stigma is equivalent to understand different ness" (217). First, any human differences serve as the preliminary requisite to be stigmatized. Secondary, to be stigmatized is an inescapable fate as this process depends upon cultural and historical background. "No one really ever knows when he/she will acquire a stigma or when social norms might change to stigmatize a trait she/ he or already posses" (Coleman 226). In this sense enigma in the social factor and it becomes necessity of non-stigmatized groups. Those possessing power of dominant group in the society determine the concept of stigmas, which human differences are desired and which are not. So, the stigmatized people are always marginalized from the mainstream of the community simply because they do not relate to the norm of a specific culture and thus possess an undesired difference from what the norm anticipates.

Lee touches human empathy and sympathy in his writing. Human beings have human feelings such as; love, hate, attraction, distraction, revenge and sympathy but the society intensifies and practice as such issues on the basis of certain differences. This particular concept of black governs and decides black's identity in society. Attitudes about race and origin are discourse of society and it generates idea in mind. Jem in the novel discusses on discourse of colour origin and social discourse:

Half white, half colour. You've seen 'em, Scout. You know that red kinky-headed one that delivers for the drugstore. He's half white. They're real sad.

Sad, how come? They don't belong anywhere. Colour folks won't have 'em because they're half white; white folks won't have 'em because they're colour, so they're just in-between, don't belong anywhere. But Mr. Dolphus, now, they say he's shipped two of his up North. They don't mind em up North. Yonder's one of em. (44)

Negative attributes related to stigmatized people are thus cast down from the social periphery. For instance, the black people in society are marginalized simply because the black colour is associated with abnormal symbol which cannot fulfil the pre-requisite for being normal. In this way, they are used as the objects of the entertainment rather than the subjects and their contribution is seen as inferior. Not only this, they are given less priority in the other jobs too. People do not suspect on their capability to work, but on their difference. They do not represent with the majority of the population with such attributes; they are deprived and marginalized in every sector. Here Lerita M Coleman says:

Stigma often results in a special kind of downward mobility. Part of the power of stigmatization lies in the realization that the people who are stigmatized or acquire stigma to lose their place in the social hierarchy. Consequently, most people want to ensure that they are counted in the non-stigmatized majority. This of course, leads to more stigmatization. (218)

Different ideologies are constructed by the society to prove that the stigmatized people are fundamentally inferior to the so-called beings. Nevertheless, they were even regarded as less than humans-the other. Thus, stigmatized groups are not treated on equal grounds. Here Erving Goffman opines:

We construct a stigma-theory, an ideology to explain his inferiority and account for the danger he represents, sometimes rationalizing an animosity based on the

differences, such as those of social class. We use specific stigma terms such as cripple, bastard, and moron in our daily discourse as a source of metaphor and imagery, typically without giving thought to the original meaning. (Goffman 205)

Thus, stigmatization appears to be uncontrollable because any human differences serve as the basis for stigma. Moreover, it also manifests the underlying fear of being stigmatized as anyone can be stigmatized at any time. Stigma is therefore, non-stigmatized people's necessity in order to feel good about themselves. They possess tales of superiority thereby enslaving the concept that stigmatized people are fundamentally inferior. Likewise, non-stigmatized people convey a sense of inferiority to stigmatized people as invisible, non-existent or dead through social avoidance and social-rejection. By taking the protagonist from black or stigmatized group and by involving the readers on the problem, Lee has attempted to bring the black people in centre i.e. in power. The images of black people and their culture and environment are dominant in the text. Although, Lee has created many dimensions, he has taken a side i.e. the point of view of writing which is totally stigmatized.

The protagonist of this novel Tom bears social prejudices and injustices because of his black identity but not because of his individual character. Individually he is kind, generous, moral and innocent man but his default is racial origination. Due to which he is blamed as rapist. In fact, he is innocent and everyone knows the fact however, he is accused of this crime. This following extract clarifies:

The state has not produced any evidence that Mayella was ever raped. Their two witnesses, Mayella and Bob Ewell, didn't have their stories straight. The defendant is not guilty, but somebody in this courtroom is. I have pity for Mayella, but she has accused an innocent man to get rid of her own guilt. She

feels guilty because she liked a black man and tried to kiss him. Our society does not allow this. Now she seeks to destroy him so that she doesn't have to face her own guilt. She must destroy the evidence of her offense. Tom did not rape Mayella. All he did was try to get away when she kissed him. Don't let your prejudices get the better of you and make you think he's guilty just because he's black. (70)

This extract carries feeling of Tom who is unheard in society because of vulnerable position of black community. Personally he is innocent and faultless but white community imposes them infliction. In fact, white boys rape the girl but fault is imposed to Tom.

The novel therefore is a discussion of hierarchy, domination, social exclusion and segregation of poor people. Two races are obvious in the novel, white people and black. Different forces in the society which support the creation of stigma and devalues the black people thought out the text. The white who live in the town are power holder people. It is cited in the text as, " understand that people have been giving you a hard time about the fact that I'm defending Tom Robinson, but to do something like this to a sick old lady is inexcusable. I strongly advise you to go down and have a talk with Mrs. Dubose. Come straight home afterward" (21). But stigmatized people too have choices as to whether to accept the stigmatized condition and the negative consequences or continue to fight for more integration into non-stigmatized communities. Here the protagonist, Tom violates social norms and personal values and overcomes from the stigma of race.

Being so called stigmatized person of the powerful society Tom speaks strongly against social hierarchy and domination. It is a crucial point in the novel. His inner choice "you'll have to keep your head about far worse things because that's

when Tom Robinson's trial will be. I know it's not fair to you and Jem, but sometimes we have to make the best of things, and I have to defend Tom Robinson because it's the right thing to do" (27). It is powerful in the text. Here, the protagonist breaks the social norms and values and he devalues the colour that brings happiness and non stigmatized position in the society. He proves that racial gratification makes people unhappy unkind, injustice and invites sorrow in life. Like as after achieving the pearl, he enters into the world of fear danger and sorrows or mourning and removes stigma from his life.

Scout Finch is a small character as well as narrator of the novel, feels black color as a disfigured form. As she can know and find difference between the white and the black, even she is enforced to do so. Atticus, Scout's father is also a member of the white society; however he works for the sake of racial equality. He wants to establish racial equality and equity between the black and the white. The society defines meaning of black and white. Atticus tries to cleanse the word and teaches positive meaning of the word to his daughter. But the society and existing values of the black is different. As Atticus says to his daughter:

I was ready to punch Cecil Jacobs in the face. He had announced in the schoolyard the day before the Scout Finch's daddy defended niggers, Atticus?" I asked Atticus, "Do you defend niggers, Atticus?" Atticus replied, of course I do. Don't say nigger, Scout. That's common. What everybody at school says? From now on it'll be everybody less one. Well if you don't want me to grow up talking' that way, why do you send me to school? Atticus looked at me amused. (20)

This line clearly exposes the existing values of black in society. This society is ruled by majorities as well as power. The majority determines power in the society. The

white is dominant group which determines and defines truth, power, and knowledge of others. The same case is for black who are treated as an inferior and weaker in society. Scout understands that black is inferior and weaker than the white. She learns when she sees outer environment.

The Black race is taken as stigmatization because it appears lack in bodily appearance which the society seldom desires. In order to understand the disabled body, one must return to the concept of the norm because society desires for the hegemony of normalcy. Unable to perform any social function due to lack in physical appearance is perceived to be an error or fault in the prevalent social circumstances. In other words, disability is stereotyped with negative attitudes. Again, the concept of stigma is social construction. "Thus, stigma is a powerful social construct within most existing societies and because we are presented with conflicting images of it, disabled people have been placed into the role of abnormal outsiders whose lives and experiences are hidden from the 'normal' majority" (46). It is therefore a broad term that clusters ideological categories as sick, deformed, ugly, old, afflicted abnormal which disadvantage people by devaluating bodies that do not confirm to certain cultural standards.

Disability therefore refused to be normalized, neutralized or homogenized. In this sense, disability functions to preserve and validate such privileged designations as beautiful, healthy, normal, fit, competent, and intelligent all of which can claim such status and reside within these social identities.. In this regard, disability is shaped by history, defined by particularly, and negates the stable physical state of being. In short, the concept is considered as abnormal. It is a social reality than biological reality. Here, Lerita M. Coleman opines:

Society thus exhibits a structural amnesia about a particular category of people, who, because they do not fit into the hegemonic discourse of 'normality' are

excluded, separated and socially disempowered. The social and cultural apartheid is sustained by the existence of a build environment which lacks amenities for the disabled and solely caters to the needs of the mere complete able bodies 'other'. This social disregard coupled with experiences of social, economic and political subjection deny the disabled voice, a space, and even power to disrupt these deeply entrenched normative leads that deprived them their social presence and any semblance of identity. (16)

In this way, stigma studies centres on the concept of the normal aspect of life. A person with disability is rejected from the social discourse because they are considered in some way defective. Somehow, stigma relates to the majority of population as perfect. Perfection is thus always desired by the society in terms of physical, emotional, and intellectual states.

In the novel, it is found that all black and white people have enmity when their behaviours are performed in the society. Black people have revengeful instincts; the traumatic past experiences invoke them to take revenge with white people. Tom due to the racial background she undergoes discrimination and segregation. He has social reputation because she belongs to one of reputed family but it is insignificant in white community. The community mistreats White people are powerful in the society; the social hierarchy between black and white create a distinct social difference in terms of power and relation. Even having social honourable position, Atticus loses his position because of the racial feelings. The antagonistic relationship between black and white separate them.

Atticus and I talked. He said, "Scout, when summer comes you'll have to keep your head about far worse things because that's when Tom Robinson's trial will be. I know it's not fair to you and Jem, but

sometimes we have to make the best of things, and I have to defend Tom Robinson because it's the right thing to do. I couldn't live with myself if I didn't do the right thing. Even though other people might think I'm wrong for defending a black man, I know that it's right. (27)

White people assume black people as lower or inferior in the society therefore Along with emergence of black power in the society they start to take revenge with white people by giving them torture.

The society pursues equal relation to man whom he is described physically but at the same time Scout has understood her position in society. Her father lodge a complaint against, Finch is brought before a society committee where she admits her guilty as being a black character. He refuses to express any repentance. Though, she is innocent however she is treated as other:

They don't belong anywhere. Colored folks won't have 'em because they're half white; white folks won't have 'em because they're collared, so they're just in-between, don't belong anywhere. But Mr. Dolphus, now, they say he's shipped two of his up North. They don't mind 'em up North. Yonder's one of 'em." Jem told us, "Around here once you have a drop of Negro blood that makes you all black. (43)

She is victimized by racism but personal cause is not responsible for the relation with society. Her desire to be an independent girl is difficult for society.

The white community wants to maintain powers by dominating black people. When black people get social freedom or relief from age long white unjustified and inhuman slavery then white people feel regressive in the society. The desire to have power over black people causes assault upon black people unlike black people wants



to take revenge with white people who have been cause of their suffering for years.

Due to the revengeful intension both races create unrest in the society.

Atticus might not like it if he sees us, said Jem. We knew there would be a crowd but we had not bargained for the multitudes of people. We overheard conversations about my father. thinks he knows what he's doing," one said.

Ohh now, I wouldn't say that," another said. Lemme tell you something' now,

Billy," a third said, "you know the court appointed him. to defend this nigger.

Yeah, but Atticus aims to defend him. That's what I don't like about it. (44)

The central character Scout Finch is victim of the colonized and oppressed. Racism is a form of extreme prejudice and is a manifestation of the psychological process of social perception. A prejudice is a form of extreme stereotype which consist an attitude of one person towards another or group. Prejudices are forms of group stereotypes, and the formation of group stereotypes is a product of the formation of attitudes. Prejudices are linked to ego- defence- the adoption of attitudes that serve to bolster the self-esteem of the individual that holds them.

The societal beliefs of racism do not pacify the society whereas it provokes racial antagonism because of sense of revenge in both black and white race. Black people have sense of revenge at the same way white people let it continue their age long domination. This defeated temperament of Finch who wants to his position by exploiting black woman. Finch responses to him:

The Negroes waited for the white people to go in and then they climbed to the balcony where they were to sit. We couldn't find a seat anywhere and were going to have to stand by the wall. We ran into Reverend Sykes. He edged his way and told us that there was not a seat anywhere downstairs. Do you all reckon it'll be all right if you all come to the balcony with me? Gosh, yes, said

Jem. Happily we sped ahead of Reverend Sykes to the staircase. Four Negroes rose and gave us their front-row seats. (44)

This line clearly expresses the predicament of a black that has been represented by Finch. She is harassed forcefully however she responds against white people. This reality defines black are represented as other in society. They are taken as an abnormal character and they cannot be equal having black skin though they have good education and other things. This response influence further relation. It can be deduced that the post-apartheid and civil rights movement in society of racism has considerable historical and moral violence and its disruptive consequences.

The novel *To Kill Mockingbird* dramatizes Tom's realization of black position in society. It is related to the socio-political shifts underway in American society. The blacks could not vote or hold certain jobs or live near whites. 'Segregation' denied blacks many basic rights and compelled them to live in separate areas and go to different schools. In different ways, the whites exercised their power over the blacks. In brief, apartheid consisted of numerous laws that allowed the ruling white minority in South Africa to segregate exploit and terrorize the vast majority of blacks.

The novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* is set in civil rights movement in America, which is fated to be read as a political portrait. But the fascination of it is the way it both encourages and contests such a reading by holding extreme alternatives in tension, salvation, ruin. This characterization of violence by both the 'white' and the 'black' man parallels feelings in post-apartheid South Africa where evil does not belong to the 'other' alone. By resisting the relegation of each group into positive and negative poles Lee portrays the whole range of human capabilities and emotions. The novel takes its inspiration from American contemporary social and political conflict.

Lee portrays racist social practice which depicts social practice. It clearly exposes expectation of racial equality and respect after post war but the society equally treats similar discrimination between black and white. The racial freedom and racial equality seems impracticable in the society then which creates problem at making the society harmonious and perfect. The intention of having racial vindication becomes uncatchable and unattainable things in the African society. The internalization of racial feeling works at making discrimination in the society and the more the discrimination the worse the intensity of vindictiveness. The racial discrimination reinforces racial conflict and racial politics in society. White people have still sense of superiority by taking position in society because of ego-centric feeling of white people. It leads a kind of internal conflict between them. As a result, the inner hostility has existed between black and white people though it is believed that it is no more in the society. All people have felt social equality and no more any racial differences. But Lee has intended to show internal feeling of black and white.

The novel presents a stereotypical representation of blacks in white dominated society. The research probes the racial tension which is prevalent in white dominated American society. The racial discrimination and inequality become causes of social unrest which is associated with antagonistic relationship between the black and the white. This feeling of colour complex invokes vulnerability of blacks. The society is not parallel and equal because of white powerful position. As the black people manifest their repressed anger through social behaviours similarly white people never apologize in front of black people whereas the domination retains in the society.

Because of racial feeling in the society, black and white have social hierarchy. With the help of power exercise and practice black colour is considered as other. The society understands black colour is a physical deformity so black are not equal to the

white. The novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* shows black skin colour is social disgrace or permanent scar for the society. Having black colour no any black man can be equal to the white. These governing thoughts always relegate the blacks. This kind of existing thought and concept interprets that to be a black is a kind of weakness and physical lack. By resisting the relegation of each group into positive and negative poles Lee portrays the racial representation caused social stigma of society. In the novel Tom basically struggle against the racial identity because he himself internalizes the stigma of race which is created by the society of white. He thinks that if he saves the racial identity he can save his race from the evil, he can save his family from ruin and he his tribe from famine and starvation. He is ready to accept any kind of blame for the sake of his racial identity. The novel presents black colour as an equal with disability. The preconception, white had constructed, governs white thought, as a result the society treats black as other. Lee presents racial mindset in American society which represents the black colour as other or sign of disgrace which is associated with negative values.

Racism is key source of division between the white Americans and African Americans. Society where inferiority and superiority is practised and affected by violence, hatred and criminal activities, both the dominant and dominated groups of people come to be the victim of upshots of stigma. Even oppressor undergo threaten and social deformity. It does not mean that oppressor take advantage from oppressed group but even they are affected by it. The novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* presents serious consciences of stigma created by racism and the victim of inequality is both the whites Americans and African Americans equally. The upshots of stigma are often destructive up to the dominant groups.

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