

THE RESISTANCE OF MICROAGGRESSION AND ASSERTION IDENTITY IN THE NOVEL THE ONLY BLACK GIRLS IN THE TOWN

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Abstract—

Afro American Literature has consistently addressed the issue of identity crisis, starting with the slave tales of the 19th century (1830-1861), which gained popularity for their exploration of the servile society. Since their inception, Afro-American writings have established the principles of dominant culture. Writings have been provoked by the experiences of black individuals. Microaggression has served as a crucial tool for Afro-American writers, like Brandy Colbert, to depict the social environment, portraying racial discrimination, prejudice, and social stigma. This article provides an analysis of the microaggressions and the assertion of identity in Brandy Colbert's book "The Only Black Girls in the Town," as well as the experience of chronic pain that arises from being black in a society dominated by white individuals. Contemporary critics and authors have mostly emphasised the process of reading and interpreting the contextual significance of a work. While it may be true that the author's personal background and circumstances do not have a direct impact on interpreting the meaning, it does not necessarily entail that we should completely disregard the writer. As readers, we may have an inclination to explore a writer's biographical and social background, as well as the prevailing cultural and intellectual climate of the time.

Index Terms—Afro American Literature, racial discrimination, microaggression, The only black girls in the town

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I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a communication system that individuals employ to convey their thoughts and emotions to one another. In accordance with Mogeia, "Language is a communication tool for human life." Language is employed to communicate sentiments, emotions, ideas, and desires to one another (Mogeia, 9). Brandy Colbert intended to elucidate the detrimental effects of microaggression on its victims, particularly women, through this novel. Even in the contemporary era, where individuals have already developed a more comprehensive comprehension of equality, numerous instances of prejudice persist throughout human history. The novel "Only Black Girls in the Town" describes the experiences of African Americans with prejudice and the potential for black girls to experience a loss of self-confidence as a result of microaggression. It is a conviction that certain ethnicities are superior to others. As Boyle put it, "Microaggression is an ideology that establishes certain races or ethnic groups as the dominant group over others on the basis of physical, cultural, and economic wealth, resulting in inequality in which the superior race dominates and controls the inferior race" (Boyle, 112). Alberta, who is twelve years old, has resided in the small California community of Ewing Beach since she was an infant. She has maintained the same closest companion, Laramie, since she was nine years old.

However, as Alberta prepares to enter seventh grade, she experiences an unusual sensation that "things are changing too quickly and not quickly enough."

Her two fathers continue to maintain that she is not eligible to participate in surfing competitions until the following year. Additionally, Alberta's eighth-grade neighbour, Nicolette, remains as unkind as ever. This further complicates matters when Laramie begins to associate with her.

Alberta and her parents are favourably astonished when a Black mother and her 12-year-old daughter, Edie, move into the bed-and-breakfast across the street. On the up side, this is a positive development. Alberta will no longer be the sole Black pupil in seventh grade in a town where the majority of the population is White, as she states, "even most of the tourists are White."

The two girls maintain a cordial relationship, despite the fact that Edie harbours nostalgia for Brooklyn, the neighbourhood of New York City where she was raised, and appears to have no interest in Alberta's preferred pastime, surfing. When Edie discovers a box of journals in her new bedroom, she invites Alberta to assist her in reconstructing the narratives contained within them and determining the authorship of the journals from 65 years ago. Alberta and Edie conduct their investigation in secrecy, with the intention of resolving the enigma without the assistance or interference of adults. Throughout the book, journal entries are interspersed,

encouraging readers to attempt to ascertain the secret that was concealed for an extended period of time.

In "The Only Black Girls in Town," author Brandy Colbert observes Alberta as she navigates additional transformations over the course of two months. For example, Alberta is uncertain about what to anticipate when her biological mother, Denise, arrives to reside with her a few weeks prior to her expected delivery.

Alberta acknowledges that she is maturing and endeavours to perceive those in her vicinity with greater clarity than she had previously. In addition, she desires to be acknowledged for the individual she is developing into. How will she navigate the inevitable misunderstandings that arise when attempting to maintain an existing friendship while establishing a new one? Alberta is occasionally required to navigate challenging waters; however, it is advantageous to possess an abundant supply of waves and an exceptional support system.

Victims of microaggression frequently experience tension and a decline in self-assurance in this novel. The researchers have elected to investigate the subject of microaggression due to the abundance of instances of prejudice that have been identified. One such incident occurred in Minneapolis, United States, in May 2020, when a white police officer fatally shot a black individual. After his death, the Black Lives Matters movement took to the streets to demand justice for George Floyd and other black individuals. Demonstrations and protests against police misconduct and prejudice were incited in nearly every city in the United States and around the globe as a result of this incident. The researcher aims to increase readers' awareness of racism and microregression in order to foster mutual respect, as racism is a prevalent issue in the present day.

II. RELATED WORKS

A literature review is a concise analysis of prominent academics and researchers. In this part, the researcher presents a review of existing literature on the same problem in order to provide evidence and support for the research results of the current study. In his study paper, Rodrigues (2007) discussed African culture, including its beliefs and practices, and emphasised Achebe's innovative portrayal of African culture. The primary objective is to provide education to Africans, nevertheless, Achebe initiated a novel practice of adopting the language of the colonisers. Thus, he discovers a potential avenue for the creation of African literature. However, it is worth considering the issue of English language texts in Africa, since their official usage has significantly declined in terms of their impact on social, political, and linguistic aspects. This research provides a plausible explanation for the use of the English language, highlighting the painful inability of Africans to express themselves verbally. They kept silent due to their perception of inferiority in the presence of white Americans, resulting in the suppression of their voices. Lewis (2017) wrote an essay titled "Gender, Race, and Violence." An in-depth analysis of trauma in *The Colour Purple* argues that gender and race are the fundamental factors behind the brutality and suffering experienced by Celia, Sophia, and Squeak, three female characters in Walker's novel. Although

violence does not always lead to internal conflict, it often does. This critical evaluation mostly focuses on trauma associated with violence. The investigation focuses on the examination of identity categories, namely female and African American, as stimulants for targeted violence. An analysis is conducted on their oppressive functions. Consequently, the notion of identity-based marginalisation becomes more widely accepted and the idea of double discrimination is elucidated. This article explores the implications of intersectional analysis. The connection between female and African American identities is unveiled, exposing a startling correlation. Gender and race have an impact on an individual's vulnerability to trauma. Walker's narrative exemplifies the portrayal of pain associated with gender and ethnicity in literature. The book aims to evoke the emotions associated with trauma, while also portraying trauma in a concrete manner via various acts of physical and sexual violence. To understand Walker's functioning, take into account the following: In order to fully understand trauma, it is necessary to first appreciate the overall psychological symptoms associated with it. From a psychological standpoint, if an incident leads to someone's demise or poses a significant risk of death or severe physical harm, it is categorised as a traumatic event involving death, major bodily damage, or the potential for serious bodily injury. The individual mentioned is a 7-year-old named Walker. Dawson (2012) argued that the protagonists in both *Heart of Darkness* and *House of Leaves* are compelled to face elements of their suppressed pasts due to uncanny repetitions, leading to horrific situations. Both Conrad's character Marlow and Danielewski's character Johnny Truant have suppressed pasts that are the result of a series of horrific events rather than a single catastrophic incident. These were uncovered throughout the course of the inquiry. Both *Heart of Darkness* and *House of Leaves* depict trauma as repressed events. Repressed emotions and distressing memories may lead to psychological trauma for an individual. *Katabasis* refers to a descent into a state of extreme suffering or torment. Both Conrad and Danielewski challenge traditional beliefs by depicting their characters trapped in darkness or succumbing to freezing temperatures, symbolising a plunge into despair and a subsequent return to hope. Both works use colour to emphasise the repeated occurrence of traumatic experiences. In McCarthy's work, *U*, (2006), there is a significant focus on the psychological traumas experienced by both the father and son. Conversely, the father has several reasons to experience distress. Initially, he has personally seen the deterioration of the world: he has seen firsthand the rapid and significant changes that have occurred in both the environment and society. Civilization is nearing the point of total annihilation, as the last traces of life slowly emerge to the surface, leading to a gradual and ultimate extinction. In addition, he has experienced the loss of his wife, who, given the circumstances, has chosen to take her own life. Ultimately, in a society ravaged by brutality, the father is compelled to protect and provide for himself. He lived in uncertainty, unsure whether he and his kid would survive each day. In the narrative, there is a moment when he tries to make a guess. "How many days until death?" Is the number ten? The narrator states. Is the number ten? There will be few remaining. The user's text is simply "(p6)". This is the

manifestation of psychological stress experienced by a parent due to his inadequate mental capacity to cope with the present circumstances. He encounters immense calamity in his life; the harshness of the natural environment and the suicide of his wife have a profound impact on his mental state. In their study titled "Racial Microaggression in Everyday Life," Sue et al. found that white Americans often adopt certain attitudes that marginalise or diminish the experiences of black individuals or those belonging to minority groups. Racial microaggression refers to the purposeful or inadvertent acts of neglect or discriminatory behaviour forced on black individuals, which represents a very detrimental condition for them. This racist mentality stems from microaggressions, which have detrimental effects on the well-being of black individuals, leading to a loss of self-control and exposure to biased treatment. White Americans perpetuate racism against black individuals while simultaneously seeing themselves as superior and well-behaved. However, they fail to adhere to any norms or regulations pertaining to the rights of black people. This leads to the occurrence of racial microaggressions. The point (P, 6). Machado Gomes "Exploration of trauma and the process of healing in Toni Morrison's novels *The Bluest Eye* and *Home* (2019)" The text discusses several forms of traumatic situations and describes the experiences of different characters. Additionally, it explores the consequences of these events, revealing that some individuals are capable of recovering from trauma, but others are not. Thus, the conclusion of *Home* is characterised by a more positive and distinct tone compared to that of *The Bluest Eye*. "Doharty *I Felt Dead*" is a film released in 2018. Students' encounters with Black History education are primarily characterised by several forms of racial microaggressions, such as microinvalidation, micro-insults, and micro-assaults. This study investigates the influence of an optional Black History module in an English secondary school. Doharty's *I Felt Dead* (2018) addresses the same concerns as well. The term "white supremacy" refers to a political system and power structure that grants socioeconomic privilege and unequal distribution of wealth and opportunities to those who identify as White in the U.S. This creates microaggressions against Black individuals. Bilal, et al. (2020) assert that black women experience traumatic situations and are inherently seen as inferior to males. They lack equitable social rights. Black women in the United States are often seen as the personal possessions of their masters. They lack the entitlement to vote. Alternatively, they may fall prey to various forms of violence, including physical, mental, or sexual abuse, inflicted against them by either their masters or their spouses. This scenario causes people to experience trauma. The status of African American women in the United States is very unfavourable. They experience sexual assault and are exploited by being sold without clothing. They are compelled to do this as their regular regimen. The individuals in question were subjected to coerced sexual intercourse by their owner as well as by other individuals who were also enslaved. Meanwhile, women were often regarded only as childbearers and confined to domestic duties in the kitchen. From a cultural standpoint, women, particularly black women, had a lack of opportunity and were subjected to double victimisation. They were first oppressed as women and then

faced additional mistreatment due to their race and skin colour, resulting in social, moral, and sexual assault. Residing at the intersection of racial, socioeconomic, and gender disparities might intensify the instances of sexual assault experienced by black women. Prior to commencing my study, I thoroughly reviewed many research publications and papers to ascertain that no prior work has been conducted on the specific subject I have chosen for my present research. The researcher aims to emphasise the occurrence of microaggressions and trauma experienced by black Americans as shown in the chosen text of Brandy Colbert novel, *The Only Black Girls in the Town*. Contrary to that, some researchers examine many ideas in this book. They analyse themes such as racial prejudice against black Americans and delve into the portrayal of gendered and violence. However, the present study distinguishes itself by delving further into the topics of microaggression and trauma experienced by black Americans. Prior to this, no one in Pakistan had brought attention to the plight of black Americans' lives in such a manner. The new study is intriguing and enlightening because of its distinctiveness from previous studies.

This research focuses on Brandy Colbert's work to identify the characteristics of micro-aggression and trauma experienced by Black Americans. The study examines these issues through the lens of Micro-Aggression Theory. Additionally, it will illuminate the problems and circumstances that contribute to the marginalisation of individuals. This hypothesis is based upon three primary components. The components in question are micro-assault, micro-insult, and micro-invalidity. This book explores the perspective of white Americans towards black Americans. This study employs a qualitative research approach to examine and elucidate the micro-aggressions and trauma experienced by Americans. The researcher utilises textual references to emphasise these experiences. *The Only Black Girls in the Town* centres on Alberta, a compassionate 12-year-old girl living in the quaint hamlet of Ewing Beach, California, with her fathers. Alberta is the only Black female student at her school, resulting in many instances of bullying and microaggressions. This work has been honoured with several accolades, such as the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the 2016 National Book Award. Therefore, in this study, the researcher has investigated the phenomenon of microaggression, which refers to subtle forms of psychological aggression that might lead to trauma. Whitehead's other important work includes his first book "Black People, but Everyone." Currently, there are movements emerging to advocate for the victims of this harmful phenomenon, since it not only impacts the individuals directly affected but also has negative consequences for the surrounding environment. These movements have led to widespread rallies, some of which have even culminated in chaos.

III. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

In the 1970s, Professor Chester Pierce, a psychiatrist at Harvard University, used the term "microaggression" to describe the acts of scorn and disrespect that he saw against black persons, as well as the insulting conduct shown by white folks towards African Americans. A microaggression, as defined by Merriam Webster's dictionary, is a subtle and often unconscious comment or conduct that expresses a biased attitude towards an individual who belongs to a marginalised group. The term "microaggression" denotes covert instances of bias or discrimination aimed against disadvantaged communities, such as handicapped persons and those experiencing poverty, notably African Americans. Microaggressions limit individual freedom and cause emotional suffering. Atrophy is a consequence of using aggressive language, specifically referring to the use of derogatory words directed at someone. Psychologist Derald Wing Sue defines microaggression as concise, routine exchanges that communicate disparaging signals to certain persons due to their affiliation with a particular group. Sue et.al. categorised microaggressions into three separate types: microassault, microinsult, and microinvalidation. Multiple categories of microaggressions exist. Microaggressions refer to minor encounters or acts, whether intentional or unintentional, that express animosity against marginalised groups. They epitomise a kind of prejudice. Trauma, originally derived from the Greek phrase for "severe physical injury," now pertains to psychological injuries in contemporary use. According to the definition given by Merriam Webster, trauma is a very difficult or painful experience that results in enduring psychological or emotional problems. A trauma is a state of disturbed mental or behavioural functioning that occurs as a result of severe psychological or emotional stress or physical injury. Webster's Dictionary, which was released in the year 1828. The classification of trauma is primarily divided into three categories: acute trauma, chronic trauma, and complicated trauma. Acute trauma arises from a single event, but chronic trauma stems from recurring episodes of domestic violence or abuse. Complex trauma, however, is the result of several events, including interpersonal interactions. This research specifically examined the implementation and outcomes of the microaggression theory. The principles of micro insult, micro assault, and micro invalidation are closely intertwined with that worldview. This theoretical framework analyses several perspectives on the novel, with a special emphasis on microaggressions. The existence of the only black women in the village has been observed and understood through the lens of microaggression. This book delves into the impact and consequences of microaggressions, psychological trauma, the manipulative actions of white men, institutional racism, and the prejudiced conduct of white folks in the workplace. The text is curated by a diverse group of literary specialists who provide varying viewpoints on these subjects. The book seeks to examine and evaluate the deliberate victimisation of black African Americans by white folks, use the notion of microaggression as a framework to understand its effect and consequences. The term "micro insult" denotes instances of disrespectful behaviour or mistreatment that include the conveyance of derogatory signals, either via spoken or non-verbal means, towards the targeted individual.

The researcher further examines and analyses the impact of microaggressions on mental well-being. Sues (2010) observed that racial microaggressions, which are connected to aversive racism, often transpire without the conscious comprehension of persons who have good intentions. Within the framework of Aversive racism, individuals of African descent in the United States experience abuse and a devaluation of their value by white Americans who belong to a different social group. Dovidio's second chapter on the idea of microaggression focuses on the effects and outcomes of aversive racism and implicit bias microaggressions. Aversive racism is a kind of racial microaggression that is especially common among white Americans, who are one of the predominant ethnic groups in the United States. They diminish the value of African Americans, whether intentionally or unintentionally. This kind of bias has a substantial impact on those of African descent. Discrimination and the system of segregation in the United States of America are persistent and ceaseless. The disposition of white Americans towards black Americans is seen to be unwavering. The community has a limited number of black females, and white people's portrayal of black Americans clearly demonstrates aversive racism. The main character of the work, Alberta, often faces intense bigotry, which is the main reason for his physical and mental suffering. The main character of the story could no longer escape the severe mistreatment by white persons, who thought they had the power to exert control over black Americans. Traumatic experiences are very painful events that deeply disrupt an individual's mental and emotional well-being, as well as their capacity to function in their everyday life. The citation "Foa, et.al, 2008" is given. since said before, microaggression plays a vital role in the development of trauma since it directly affects an individual's emotional well-being. Microaggression causes emotional suffering, which might include the recall of terrible memories. The main character of this story, Alberta, faces a difficult situation as the only African American girl in the neighbourhood. In the latter chapters of the novel, Alberta and Eddie secretly carry out their inquiry, with the goal of solving the mystery on their own, without any help or interference from adults. It has been shown that microaggressions and the attitudes of white folks have caused harm and led to a loss of identity among black individuals.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher picked the theoretical framework of Microaggression Influence and Assertion Implication for analysing the chosen text of "The Only Black Girls in the Town" by Brandy Colbert. The novel's protagonists articulate the experiences of black individuals in the United States, including their encounters with racial discrimination and their efforts to combat racism. The narrative also explores the profound effects of such mistreatment on the mental well-being of its victims, often resulting in their inability to endure. The story depicts instances of racism that arise not just from white individuals with racist beliefs, but also from members inside the black community. Black individuals often develop a sense of self-perception influenced by racism, since they internalise societal norms that prioritise white ideals. The reason for this is because people may have varying

perceptions of the same item, as Tania pointed out: "Each person may have a different perception of a single object compared to others." Each person must also possess distinct experiences that impact the process of perception. Hence, perception is subjective, even when individuals are confronted with the identical item" (Tania, 30). White individuals exhibiting racism due to their perception of possessing inherent advantages. White supremacy is an ideology that assigns white people to the top position in the social hierarchy. This is a belief in the superiority of the white race over other races and the idea that they should exert dominance over them. The phrase "white privilege" refers to the phenomenon where individuals who are white are granted advantages and preferential treatment, particularly when it comes to attaining high-ranking positions. Delgado and Stefanic (as stated in Ugorji, 34) describe "white privilege" as the many social advantages, perks, and courtesies that individuals of the dominant race enjoy. Put simply, this may be seen as a kind of commonplace racism as the idea of privilege is based on the notion of disadvantage. All individuals who are classified as white possess certain features, such as having fair complexion, blue eyes, and blonde hair. The term "White" as used to individuals is a political, economic, and legal construct that was devised by colonial slave owners with the intention of distinguishing impoverished Europeans from Africans. This distinction granted privileges to Europeans while also establishing a system of chattel slavery for Africans. The categorization of white individuals based on their social status is divided into several classes: the ruling class, the middle class, the working class, and the poor whites. The dominant class, situated at the apex of society, has the authority to govern and manipulate the primary economic and governmental assets. The distinguishing factor between the non-ruling class and other races lies in the fact that white individuals possess distinct advantages compared to black individuals. Despite being subject to the authority of the ruling class, they yet have a feeling of superiority towards black individuals. Furthermore, individuals of Caucasian descent see themselves as emblematic of purity, cleanliness, and worth. Meanwhile, the colour black is often linked to concepts such as immorality, dirtiness, uncleanliness, and worthlessness. Micro-aggression is a phrase that was introduced by professor Chester Pierce in 1970 to refer to the acts of insults and subtle offences that he saw being directed at black individuals. This study used a theoretical framework to help the reader understand the subject matter and concerns presented by the researcher, while also offering recommendations for addressing these issues. In the chapter titled "The Only Black Girl in Town," the researcher conducts a thorough analysis of the physical and emotional mistreatment inflicted against African Americans of black descent by those of white ethnicity. In this chapter, the narrative revolves on a little girl who is prohibited and subjected to mistreatment just because of her skin colour. She had a dark complexion, which became a barrier and subjected her to mistreatment, preventing her from confidently participating in society. White individuals, referring to themselves, used the phrase "white supremacy" to assert their belief in their own superiority and to portray black people, particularly African Americans, as inferior or alien. In this narrative, the main character experiences discrimination

based on their race. Alberta, a seventh-grader, loves her fathers and enjoys living in her seaside town in California. However, she becomes thrilled when Edie, who is the same age as her, and her mother relocate to the bed and breakfast across the street. This change means that Alberta's family is no longer the only Black home in the neighbourhood. As Alberta becomes acquainted with Edie, who longs for her previous life in New York and her father, her friendship with best friend Laramie faces some tension, particularly when Laramie forms a close bond with eighth-grader Nicolette, who has racist views. Meanwhile, Edie and Alberta meticulously examine diaries discovered in the attic of Edie's new home. These journals recount the story of a young African-American lady who pretended to be white in 1950s California. Colbert adeptly intertwines a well-known story of middle-school friendships facing challenges with specific instances of ongoing racial microaggressions. For instance, on Edie's first day, the vice-principal inquires if Edie and Alberta are cousins, highlighting the subtle forms of racism. Alberta's narrative thoughtfully explores how Edie's presence enables her to openly discuss and confront issues of race. The remarkably literary diaries may seem unlikely, yet their subjects are closely related to contemporary investigations of family dynamics and examinations of personal identity. This is a successful combination of being easily accessible and having a keen understanding, which will attract a large number of readers. Another kind of racial discrimination against black individuals is segregating them in uphill dormitories while white individuals are given dormitories located downhill. In the story, the heroine Alberta faced rejection due to her unattractiveness and endured several insults directed at black people based on their physical features. Brandy, the author, asserts that racism is not limited to interactions between white individuals and black individuals, but also exists inside the black community. Black superiority may also arise due to socioeconomic disparities within the black community. This concept emerges when some black individuals get fixated on the lives of white people, leading them to internalise racism. Perceptions of individuals might be shaped by their perspectives on the culture and lifestyle of white people. In order for marginalised black individuals to attain equitable treatment, they are expected to assimilate into white cultural norms, since exhibiting more deference will ostensibly shield them from the effects of racism. According to Johnson, racism is not just something that affects black people, but it is also perpetuated by black people. According to Johnson, black people are instructed to dress in a tidy way, exhibit excellent etiquette, communicate effectively, and abstain from engaging in sexual and other immoral behaviours. They believed that by emulating the characteristics and behaviour associated with the societal perception of an exemplary white individual, individuals of black ethnicity would be able to escape the negative effects of racism and racial prejudice. They underestimate black individuals who are categorised as belonging to a lower socioeconomic level. Alberta's preoccupation with cleanliness stems from her desire to attain the same status as white people, who are seen as valued and untainted. However, her fixation just resulted in her adopting a frigid and merciless demeanour. The work portrays racism in the form of microaggressions, rejection, insults, and violence

perpetrated by individuals of white ethnicity. Micro-aggression may be classified into three distinct forms. Terms such as micro-insult, micro-assault, and microinvalidation are used to describe subtle forms of offensive behaviour, aggression, and disregard that may have a significant impact on individuals. A micro-insult refers to a verbal remark that is intentionally delivered to indicate rudeness or injury towards those who are black or belong to minority groups. A micro-assault refers to a kind of communication, either spoken or nonverbal, that displays a repugnant attitude towards an individual, undermining their identity or showing disrespect for their cultural background, whether it is done deliberately or inadvertently. Microinvalidation refers to subtle actions or behaviours that inflict psychological injury or dismiss the sentiments and emotions of black people. The researcher examines these three categories of micro-aggression in order to achieve his aims or address his inquiries. The researcher examines the occurrences of micro-aggression in the book "The Only Black Girls in the Town." The novel's protagonist, Alberta, encounters a micro-assault when he discovers a collection of documents in the attic. The analysis revealed a distinct and disparate treatment system for black and white kids. They are seen as being of African descent and lack self-esteem. Regardless of the commitment and sincerity of black people, their allegiance has no significance to them. Various strategies were used to generate micro-aggressions among the black African American community. Microinvalidation refers to the act of undermining an individual's emotional and psychological self-worth and emotions. In general, it was discovered that Black Americans were subjected to mistreatment, resulting in the portrayal of horrific experiences in the book. The novel "The Only Black Girls in Town" intricately intertwines themes of adolescence, unravelling a long-standing enigma, and evolving relationships. This middle grade tale was captivating from start to finish. While our personalities may vary, many difficult circumstances they encounter resemble my own previous experiences. The unveiling of the riddle highlights an often disregarded aspect of history that warrants significant discussion. The story also explores the challenges that arise with navigating transition, particularly in the context of middle school friendships. The tale depicts the significant character growth of Albert and Edie as they navigate and overcome many challenges in their relationships.

V. CONCLUSION

After doing the investigation, researchers have identified two primary conclusions. The first conclusion is the presence of racism shown in the novel "The Only Black Girls in the Town". Due to the inherent advantage of white individuals, they often see themselves as superior than black individuals. This idea then leads to many manifestations of racism, including rejection, verbal abuse, and physical aggression, as shown in literature. The story depicts instances of microaggression perpetrated by both racist white individuals and members of the black community who have internalised racism against their own community. Secondly, the effects of racism on mental health may be categorised into two aspects:

harbouring animosity and resentment towards others, and experiencing self-loathing due to a loss of self-assurance.

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