



An Insight into the Postcolonial Feminism using Abdullah’s Short Story “ashes to ashes and dust to dust”

Maimoona Moin*, Maheen Fatima**

* Lecturer, Department of English , Jinnah University for Women, Karachi, Pakistan amnain90@gmail.com

** Lecturer, Department of English, Jinnah University for Women, Karachi, Pakistan maheenshahid215@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Submitted 13.01.2023

Accepted 19.05.2023

Published 30.06.2023

Volume No. 10

Issue No. 1

ISSN (Online) 2414-8512

ISSN (Print) 2311-293X

DOI:

Keywords: oppression, patriarchy, post-colonial feminism, gender, power, marginalized

ABSTRACT

Postcolonial feminism is a collection of numerous ideologies aimed at explaining, initiating and preserving social, economical, political and legal rights of women in post-colonial settings. Many literary figures have put down their minds on paper to elaborate the themes of postcolonial feminism; Shaila Abdullah is one of those writers who have painted the miseries of feminine bodies in postcolonial milieu. This study concentrates on one of the short stories of Shaila entitled “ashes to ashes and dust to dust”, to explore the notions of oppression, power, hegemony and patriarchy through gender lens. Under the light of postcolonial feminism, the paper examines the protagonist of the story, ‘Dhool’ and investigates the relations and interactions between opposite genders to analyze impact of patriarchal society on the lives of feminine segments of society. The analysis depicts that the instances of patriarchy are universalized in the text, which dominate the physical and psychological state of the genders, specifically females. Through the demonstration of the courageous opposition of the character Dhool against patriarchy, the writer symbolizes the traces of feminism among postcolonial women. However, the overall journey of Dhool in the story validates the prominence of male power which makes her identity and physical presence devalued as well as makes her appearance not more than an object for men to fulfill their desires.



Introduction

The term sex is now expanded; it’s not just only considered in biological terms rather a social phenomenon (Commodore, Lockett, Johnson, Googe & Covington, 2020). In contemporary societies; gender is understood in terms of the assigned roles, responsibilities, and position that individuals need to play. It is observed that individuals are conditioned to function uniquely in the variant circumstances (Ross, 2011). Likewise, the social construct of gender in the modern time is reflected through literature. The areas of research study is evident that literature sketches the existing social realities, perceptions, notions and beliefs in terms of race, socio-economic status, and specifically gender (Hambur & Nurhayati, 2019; Goodman, 2013). Hence, literature is a mirror of societal prejudices, traumas, and discrimination against various cultures, sex and races consequently making them marginalized.

Moreover, in modern societies short story is considered as one of the supreme genre of literature as it provides reader with the affairs, conditions, subjugations and calamities in society in shorter span (Roychoudhary, Srivastava & Dwivedi 2016; Pasco, 1991). The genre of story writing become eminent all around the world likewise Pakistan and other South Asian countries. Additionally, there are multiple male and female writers in Pakistan who write in English and raise their voices against the injustice, social oppressions, the notions of patriarchy, and exploitation of working class in the postcolonial settings (Nair,

2020; Tanvir & Amir, 2018; Lodhi, Khalid, Mehmood, Rasool, Akbar & Amir, 2019). Shaila Abdullah, a prominent contemporary Pakistani female writer is the author of novels and numerous short stories. Shaila's works encapsulate the aches face by the women on the basis of gender and the dealings of society (Roychoudhary, Srivastava & Dwivedi, 2016). The present study revolves around one of her short story "*ashes to ashes, dust to dust*" taken from "Beyond the Cayenne Wall: Collection of Short Stories" (Zainab, Jadoon, & Nawaz, 2017). "*ashes to ashes, dust to dust*" is an esteemed work which pivots around the agonies of a woman in postcolonial settings in the context of South Asia.

The paper is remarkable as it imparts deep insight into Shaila Abdullah's work "*ashes to ashes, dust to dust*" in post-colonial settings. It probes the miserable life style of a woman in the domestic affairs. The woman in the story is a victim of dual oppression and sufferings in terms of her own husband and the dominant masculine figures of the society. The survival becomes strenuous when peace, respect, and rights are not guaranteed to the individuals in the patriarchal organization of society (Pakri & Anandan, 2015).

Objective

- The study aims to unveil the physical, social, emotional and psychological discomforts encountered by an Asian woman during the course of life in the male oriented society.

Literature Review

A cultural and political movement that aimed to protect women by serving them equal and legal rights termed as Feminism. In its historical perspective, from nineteenth century till present time, the movement is layered in three waves. Initially, white western women supervised the movement by campaigning for legal women rights and physical sovereignty. Later in the second wave, women from other races joined the movement, and woven the work place prerogative issues in the existing crusade; however, it also stood against erotic oppression prevailing in the western society. In its third wave, the movement further expanded and proposed post-colonial feminism that foregrounds on domestic violence observed in third world countries (Judith, 1989). Besides establishing the women rights in the society, feminists brought numerous social and philosophical theories that shed light upon gender differences and focuses on power relation between genders, such theories explored the subjects like; inequality, chauvinism, otherness, oppression and patriarchy (Hunnicut, 2009).

Feminists examine the term gender in terms of inequality from every perspective; whether social, physical or legal not just biological. Turner (1988) states that feminism; essentially the theory of patriarchy explores the concept of women oppression in terms of male dominancy by highlighting the division of gender roles in a society and its association with social suppression; additionally, patriarchal structures serves as the driving force for female oppression in the society. Bonnie Fox (1993) called this theme "a most poorly theorized aspect of gender inequality" (p. 321) because some researchers view this phenomenon through psychological lens and some use family theory to provide the theoretical description (Hunnicut, 2009). However, while sketching the theoretical grounds, Goldberg (2007) states that the concept of patriarchy is closely linked with the social roles of gender; where each gender on the basis of its sex is restricted to observe a code of conduct that must be socially accepted. In such social system, women are expected to reside at home to perform domestic duties; whereas, the male gender is allowed to pursue professional responsibilities. This distribution of tasks, based on gender, grant male a freedom to advance their social and personal activities outdoors; also to enjoy their control over home being an authoritative figure mainly over women, signifies their sense of superiority and dominancy. Literature further verifies the existence of a social system that aids patriarchal society such as; Roach (2010) while examining "the story of romance" highlights the instances of male superiority even in a simple romantic love story; at first, romantic literature seems as a pleasant display of the lives of two love birds but on its deeper analysis the reader will evident the existence of a masculinist culture which projects a woman under the protection of man, to some extent it is a notable depiction of man control and power over woman. While examining the novel "fasting, feasting" of Anita Desai, Sood and Jan (2018) emphasize over the existence of patriarchal social structures in post-colonial settings and literature by highlighting the representation of female submission and male supremacy in the novel.

The undeviating definition of patriarchy is "the rule of father"; whereas in the view of feminists the concept of patriarchy is a composition of six elements which serve as the source of female exploitation within the society (Rawat, 2014). Firstly, the element of household which understate the contribution of women in handling domestic responsibilities; secondly, paid employment which points out the gender discrimination at workplace, in terms of the nature of job and salary; thirdly, the state itself who supports the patriarchal interests of the society; fourthly, male violence on female which is believed as a part of a society and without any resistance accepted by the state as well; then the acceptance of heterogeneous sexual

relations, clarifies an important notion of patriarchy that is the resistance against homogeneous sexual relations; lastly, the patriarchal society imposes the cultural differences upon two genders such as; their language, clothing or behavior in public domain (Walby, 1990 cited in Rawat, 2014).

In reaction to the concepts defined under the term of patriarchy, feminist theorists constructed certain new images of the social world around them such as; oppression, otherness, marginalized and centrals. Among these, oppression is another paramount concern of feminism, whose traces are linked with the theory of patriarchy (Omvedt, 1986). It is interpreted as the serious instances of bigoted discrimination inside the society (Zutlevics, 2002). Under the banner of feminism and patriarchy, the theory of oppression perceives women as an embodiment of suppression; the female gender is discerned as the centre of exploitation in every term (Johnson, 2004). Noticeably, second wave of feminism observes the feminine protest against oppression by identifying it as one of the attributes of patriarchal society. The considerable themes of the theory of oppression are; bride-immolation, marital rape, discarding her property share, eradicating liberation and privilege at all levels in social structure and sexual ferocity; this section of the movement strongly presents the oppressive third world women in Asian society. The revolutionaries of feminism clearly portray their opposition towards ill treatment of women; thus it openly challenges the theory of patriarchy which is considered as the foundation of female oppression in the society (Johnson, 2004). In response to such claims of Asian feminism, just like western capitalist societies, the traditional Marxist mindsets of Asia with male leadership declare every sort of feminism as “pretty-bourgeois” and reject patriarchal concepts as an anti-Marxist propagation manoeuvre (Omvedt, 1986). In the beginning, the subject electrified the emotions of all other groups residing in South Asia specifically in India, numerous social and political activist fiercely came forward to debate over the counter argument from Marxists, they asserted that feminist reformers falsified the intentions of patriarchy by ignoring it’s links with caste, class and economical structures of the society. In response, feminists further presented the term “dualism” which declared capitalism and patriarchy as two different parallel entities in a social system (Elizabeth, 2013), which aims to exploit women not only through male dominancy but on the grounds of caste and class system as well (Carter, 2015). Torkashvand and Jamili (2014), while examining the occurrence of such themes in post-colonial English literature reflects that the subjects of oppression and patriarchy are universal and delineate the notion of masculine preponderancy in the post-colonial literature, which authenticates the tremendous influence of feminism over society.

Besides above, the feministic and patriarchal approach has influenced the genders to execute their roles in certain fashion which has shaped the human conditions in binary opposition within the social structure (Donoghue, 2013). It further invokes the spirit of self and others among genders, this binary of self and other appear as an accepted allotment in post colonial settings (Schalk, 2011). Consequently, it contemplates their view to look each other as two opposites which further evokes the impression of ‘otherness’. Mansoor (2016) states that the heterogeneous division of a society, splits it into central and marginalized zones which further stimulate the oppression from the center to the periphery. These structures of suppression exercise at all levels such as; societal, personal, and institutional or even governmental level (Ratts, 2017). White (1991) asserts that oppression can also assist the oppressors to revolt against centers, a notion of feminism views this concept under the light of patriarchy, it suggests that the oppressed women can only obtain their rights through repulsive attitude; this ultimate rebellion can bring the fundamental rights back to the females of the society.

Postcolonial feminism is essentially involved in the portrayal of woman in a western location or in the settings which were once colonized by the western countries. Tepeciklioğlu (2013) states that the word ‘post’ in post colonialism indicates the time after the period of colonization which is mainly marked as the end of colonization; however, it does not announces the end of the struggles. Post-colonial theories depict the struggle of men, who battle hard to achieve better living standards (cited in Ari & Toprak, 2019). On the contrary, postcolonial feminism presents the complicated living conditions of woman of the society, who deteriorate from dual colonization, the parallel struggles she is engaged in, is postcolonial oppression and the other is patriarchal oppression of a male dominant society. Postcolonial feminism stands to liberate the woman from these two suppressions, it stresses over the maltreatment of a patriarchal society with a woman inside and outside the home such as; marital rape, restricted discourse, child marriages, absence of rights, work place oppression on the basis of caste and class etc. It also exerts pressure on the post-colonial theory and its constant projection of the necessity to observe gender roles and issues; however, the postcolonial feminists question the nature of postcolonial theory as a male oriented phenomenon, which has not only eliminated the female concerns, but manipulated them too (Tyagi, 2014).

The current study unfolds a tragic journey of a female character “Dhool” in a post colonial text written by Shaila Abdullah, the character suffers from the societal and patriarchal oppression; meanwhile her survival is presented as a contribution to her modified version; eventually, her painful sufferings win and

affirm the patriarchy as the cause of her tragic end. While reviewing the given literature (Roach, 2010; Sood & Jan, 2018; Torkashvand & Jamili, 2014), it has been established that none of the researchers has analyzed the given story under the light of postcolonial feminism. Thus, the present research fills the research gap by analyzing the prominent themes of feminism such as; oppression, patriarchy, self-vs. others, central vs. marginalized by implementing the postcolonial feminism; as it examines the women oppression in the postcolonial settings (Tyagi, 2014).

Research Methodology

The present study is qualitative in nature which aids to gain deep insight of the text (Silverman, 2020). Content analysis is employed as a research tool to study the text as it is a pliable way to interpret the ideas behind text (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2015). Feminist analysis is utilized as a theoretical framework for procuring the results from the selected text in postcolonial settings (Hooks, 2000). It aids to view the text in terms of marginalized and centralized individuals. The notions of patriarchy and social abuse to the female character will be unfolded. The gender lens is applied to unfold the elements of oppression, resistance and imbalance presented in the chosen text (McPhail, 2003). It aids to locate the components in society which disrupt the notion and harmony of society.

Findings

“Ashes to ashes, dust to dust” is penned down by Shaila Abdullah which discloses the agonies of a woman in the patriarchal society. “*Dhool*” is the protagonist of the story which remains the centre of attention for the readers. The role of Dhool is extended from being a housewife to the bread winner to her children. She is a sign of sacrifice in the story in both the phases of life; a young unmarried sweet voiced girl and then a responsible or even burdensome housewife. She is a sufferer of social abuse and oppression of patriarchy. The story also possesses the elements of resistance on the part of protagonist when she tries to save her daughter from the vicious male dominated world. Dhool as a loving motherly figure stands against the cruelty to protect her daughter and tries to shield her from the evil of society. The resilient nature makes her the victim of the sexual abuse by the maltreatment of male. At the end, Dhool is left with nothing as she lost her daughter as well as honor and all her efforts go in vain. Consequently, the patriarchs win in enforcing the suppression.

The gender treatment holds the prominent position in the theory of feminism which accelerates the concept of patriarchy (Fitri & Suparti, 2017). The ill-treatment of society is also reflected through the story in the ways of victimizing the female characters. Dhool and Tala (her daughter) are exploited in the hands of her father and husband. Dhool holds the duty of maintaining the relationship and family life even at the risks of her honor and life. She maintains the equilibrium of life with her four children who seems whole world to her. The story questions the assigned gender roles in the system of patriarchy where man behaves as the supreme figure and supports the family socially and financially (Lerner, 1986). The under discussed text delineates the absence of suggested norm because Dilawar (Dhool’s husband) spends the whole day in roaming. He never fulfils the socially assigned roles of earning and supervising the family in terms of gender.

“...Home was a fortress of refuge for him only at times when his cronies screamed murder at his inability to pay back the money he owed to them...”. *It reflects the notion that all the burdens are places on the shoulder of a woman, from looking after the children till earning the bread for them.* Moreover, the patriarchs’ approach pronounces that the one who brings home the bacon is superior to the one who stays at home and takes care of home and its habitants but the story depicts the contradiction to the stated notion (Bokhari, 2018). Dhool is forced to carry out all the duties although she is not given the status and respect in society. The socially allotted roles of woman are toughly practiced as they are not given the privileges, relaxation, and leniency in their households whereas man can be easily forgiven (Haj-Yahia, 2005). In the patriarchal societies, women feel secured under supervision of male whether it is son, father, or husband (Lerner, 1986). Similarly, after being deceived by the other male oppressor, she gains the strength to take stand against the repressors from her son as it is exclaimed that “...as long as her little spindly legged savior was by her side, no harm could come to her...”. The idea sketches the conditions of a woman in postcolonial settings; who is in dire need of a male support to survive in a male dominant society. It depicts that the gender roles are vital in postcolonial era, without which a woman’s survival is not possible.

The practice reflects the prejudice against the particular sex hence creates imbalances. In addition to the above, the concept of slavery is noteworthy while focusing feminism and patriarchy in the post-colonial settings as the dominant man behaves like the colonizers and seek for ruling the woman in divergent ways (Lerner, 1986). Dilawar’s presence at home consistently pressurizes Dhool to act like a slave. He always considers himself as a central figure and completely dependent on Dhool for fulfilling his desires. He wholly takes the charge of house and the environment which can be seen from the text “...he expected Dhool to

be a slave that tended to his every need...” The striking feature presents the ways of supremacy and dominancy adapted by colonizers which has become a part of the postcolonial practices.

Moreover, woman subordination and suppression is the main proponent of patriarchal society where woman is hurt in terms of power relations, institutionalization, group dynamics and male oppressors (Sultana, 2010). The notion is also outlined in the story where repression is clearly seen while looking at Dhool’s character. She grapples socially and financially in the society to settle her life. The discrimination and powerlessness is portrayed as she is abiding by the societal laws, norms and her personal choices are not worth mentioning for the husband. The sufferings in patriarchal context are wider in nature as it incorporates the physical, social, emotional, sexual and psychological abuse (Neuenfeldt, 2015). Dhool does not get the chance to enjoy her childhood as she has been loaded with the responsibilities of her younger siblings. She never prioritizes herself in life rather she devotes her life for others. She serves as an epitome of sacrifice in the oppressive society and still remains subjugated. The name “Dhool” also proposed her mental discomfort as it means dust which doesn’t hold prominence in individual’s life as she asserts *“she would forever be a particle of dust in the vast expanse of the universe.”* Tara; her elder daughter faces the same aches like her mother. The psychological and emotional desires of these ladies are not fulfilled due to the oppressive ways of society as their childhood has been spoiled. They never taste the joyfulness and glee of girlhood hence suffers psychologically. The text is evident of the idea that *“Dhool lamented the fact that the girl had been forced to let go of her childhood early in life to take on adult responsibilities”*. She is a dejected person as she suffers great emotional turmoil. The freedom of action, expression and speech are restricted which results in psychological sufferings as she claims that *“...Dhool felt her heart slowly turn to stone”*. She is realistic enough and knows the bitter truths of society therefore; she always tries to suppress her dreams which accelerate her emotional aches.

Furthermore, social and sexual abuse remains the dominant perspective in the postcolonial feminist studies where women are suppressed, tortured and exploited (Ahmed, 2009). The present text confirms the notion of social and sexual abuse from the centralized persons like Billa. Women are often threatened by the dominant group in the society whenever she decides to stand against the subduing (Hamid, 2019). Dhool is duped by the male antagonists and encounters social and sexual harassment when she steps out to earn money. Women are provided with the low salaries and derogatory jobs like rag pickers for economical suppression (Rind & Larik, 2016). The marginalized group often faces social abuse and physical violence. Billa is sketched as opponent for females as he is representing the whole male dominant society which tries to subjugate the woman. The name Billa has certain implicit meanings as it constructs the image of animal having sharp claws that can act fiercely. Shaila gives perfect name to the antagonist in depicting the social and sexual abuse which woman faces in the daily tyranny. He tries to approach Dhool various times. His annoyance multiplies on her resistance. The text depicts the idea that instead of affirming securities the patriarchal society becomes a threat to woman. Dhool as a resilient being strives to enter the restricted area of Billa to earn the handsome amount in order to feed the children and improved living conditions but unfortunately she becomes the bite of Billa’s lust. The text delineates the idea as *“Her predator was long gone, inflicting upon her the kind of punishment that had mutilated her spirit or whatever was left of it”*.

Furthermore, marriage without girl’s consent is a common norm of patriarchal societies where all the decisions are taken and imposed on the woman. The conviction of “us” vs. “others” is seen as a remarkable characteristic of feminism (Clausen, 2016; Cloke, Cloke & Little, 1997). The gender is treated in terms of peripheries vs. centers, and dominant vs. marginalized individuals. The practice is commonly visible in the handling of cultural affairs like marriage in the selected text. The two marriages are settled among the male members of family while women are treated as others and their opinions are not taken into account. The female opinion is suppressed in both weddings affair. Dhool and Tara seem unaware about their roles as a wife as they are in their early ages. They are not mentally and physically ready for the customs. Dhool sings the nuptial songs at mock weddings of dolls and assumes wedding as a kind of celebration or event but she is completely unaware that she is bound to spend her entire life with a man whose only quality is just being a good fisher man. The burden on her heart can be noticed when she exclaims that *“she did not imagine that that union would forever silence the little singing myna inside her heart”*. Dhool’s mother is well aware that Dilawar is sensible enough and knows that he is not a worthy person for her daughter as she asserts *“Dilawar did not look like a compassionate man”*. Unfortunately, she can’t raise her voice as the marriage is planned by her husband. The marital relationship is very strange for her and she doesn’t expect such closeness on wedding night. Sex is considered as a taboo subject for girls and they are fully unaware of it. The way she is treated by her husband makes this experience even worse and she feels sexually abused. The text declares her emotions as *“...he threw her off the bed in disgust, and slowly and gradually Dhool learned. Sex wasn’t something she’d ever enjoy...”* She is emotionally detached from her husband as she is never

treated gently. The manly mastery makes him dominant even in this intimate and pleasant relationship and it is only governed by his ways. Like colonizers, he takes the rule over her body, suppresses her, and never considers about her wishes. Besides above, woman is subjugated in the process of reproduction as well. The woman in the patriarchal society is asked to give birth to the male child in order to strengthen the family status (Mudau, & Obadire, 2017). Likewise, it is expected from Dhool. When she gives birth to the son, Dilawar feels content but unluckily the son (Paryal) is grown up as the disabled child. The blames are placed on the woman even if it is not her fault. Dilawar feels that his son doesn't possess those so called manly qualities which are required in the culture of patriarchy as the text suggests that "*the birth of a daughter followed by a disabled son and then two more daughters disappointed him and hurt his manhood*". Consequently, Dhool suffers all the traumas and her personality is brutally shattered. On the other side of the coin, Dilawar wants to repeat similar story when he decides to marry his daughter with the person who is near his sixties. At this moment of wedding too, the freedom of choice and speech is not provided to the marginalized ladies (Tonsing, & Tonsing, 2019). Dhool resists the decision and gets frowned on this suppressive act as she begins kicking her husband to repel the announcement "*Dhool started raining him with powerful blows that threw him off balance and then began kicking him toward the door.*" The repel against the social oppressors is just possible due to motherly love that she holds for her daughter, Tara as it is expressed in the text "*...her children's love her driving force...*". Although her resistance doesn't bring the fruit but at least as a woman takes stand against the formulated norm of society. The above analysis and textual instances dismantle the elements of feminist theory more specifically agonies of patriarchal society. The elements are strongly tied to one another and vividly portrait the designation of woman in the postcolonial settings.

Conclusion

The deep analysis of the selected text "*ashes to ashes, and dust to dust*" confirms the strength of Shaila's attitude towards feminism in the post-colonial settings. The phenomenal characters depicted in the story truly present the picture of patriarchal society where contrasting treatment is done on the basis of genders. Shaila has strengthened the idea of feminism by assigning the influential names to the characters like Dhool and Tara whereas male antagonist is referred as Billa. The result discloses the themes of patriarchy, injustice, oppression, violence, social and sexual abuse which are the remarkable features of feminist theories. Shaila; as a postcolonial Pakistani female writer truly delineates the agonies and aches of a woman under the control of brutal oppressors. The woman is contemplated to be a sacrificial animal in society where rights are constrained and obedience is anticipated (Rawat, 2014). The findings signify the projection of a paralyzed relation of a daughter and father; between Dilawar and Tara adds more bitterness towards the portrayal of a patriarchal society in the story. It is a painful truth yet a depiction of a traditional violence against women. The margin of a marginalized portion is questioned here, which not even can save a daughter from her father.

Interestingly, the writer depicts a spark of feminism in the story, when a subordinate marginalized character, makes efforts to resist the societal oppression emerging through centre; her courageous instances to make her survival possible in the society exemplifies the feministic approach of the character 'Dhool'; who being a motherly figure takes a stand for her children and to run her home smoothly; it not only provides an insight of the binary relation of self and others but also portray a feministic illustration being a marginalized piece of a patriarchal society (Sood & Jan, 2018). In her slight transformation period she tries hard to push the agonies of life by breaking her shackles of shyness and introvert identity, also the awareness of life supervises her to live a life with multidimensional aims. This limitless rebel towards the realities of life and society truly paints her in the colors of feminism, which stand for their legal rights of living (Sharma, 2018).

The story; specifically, the vivid portrayal of the character of "Dhool" along with her agonies authenticates the existence of a social system with oppression against woman, her survival as a marginalized subject further validates the theme of a binary opposition in terms of marginalized and centralized societal portions again points out an important element of feminism; however; her little rebellion efforts demonstrate the true revolt of feminism against a male-dominant society.

Gender roles and oppression is a significant expression of the theory of patriarchy, under the banner of feminism, while the male violence is served as a social mechanism to control the subordinate of the society. According to the feminist activist patriarchal approach of a society directly foster the gender-based oppression. In postcolonial settings, violent attitude of males inside and outside the home is considered as a patriarchal outlook. Shaila has masterly portrayed the hardships of a woman surrounded by patriarchic. By implementing the theory of postcolonial feminism on the Shaila Abdullah's short story; "*ashes to ashes and dust to dust*", it is found that the woman of postcolonial time is still a centre of man's barbarism, the woman

is found oppressed under the excessive practice of male power in the society. Additionally, not only the misconduct of the males of the community but woman's struggle and toil to make money and maintain their tough homely affairs add duality in her responsibilities. It demonstrates the struggle of a marginalized gender against centre. Fearless instance of Dhool for her children demonstrates that whatever the circumstances are, a woman can emerge as a strong body for her children, she can serve an umbrella to her child and this is what motivates her to stand against oppression, patriarchy or centre. It gives her self-definition but the intense power of patriarchy deals her with brutality such brutality results in a shattered soul. The story mocks over the postcolonial patriarchy where the relations like; husband and father show no mercy, as they are shown psychologically sick being; on the contrary, the treatment of a mentally disabled son towards her mother prescribes an emotional and loveable bond between a mother and a son; both serve as the protectors of each other; this portrayal suggests that only a mentally challenged man can show no harm in the midst of the patriarchy. On a positive note, the existence of a mild natured son serves as a ray of hope for the rest of the oppressed souls.

References

- Abdullah, S. (2005). *Beyond the Cayenne Wall: Collection of Short Stories*. iUniverse.
- Ahmed, Z. (2009). Pakistani feminist fiction and the empowerment of women. *Pakistaniaat: A Journal of Pakistan Studies*, 1(2), 90–102.
- Ari, T., & Toprak, E. (Eds.). (2019). *Theories of International Relations II*. Eskişehir: Anadolu University Press.
- Bokhari, S. S. S. (2018). Gender presentation-in post-colonial literature: diasporic writer–Bapsi Sidhwa,(Solemn feminist paradigm). *IJAR*, 4(1), 377-381.
- Carter, J. (2015). Patriarchy and violence against women and girls. *The Lancet*, 385(9978), e40-e41.
- Clausen, M. (2016). Disrupting Female Stereotypes: The Feminine Difference and the Challenge of Patriarchal Norms in Margaret Atwood's *Cat's Eye*.
- Cloke, P., Cloke, P. J., & Little, J. (Eds.). (1997). *Contested countryside cultures: Otherness, marginalisation, and rurality*. Psychology Press.
- Commodore, F., Lockett, A. W., Johnson, A. C., Googe, C., & Covington, M. (2020, January). Controlling images, comments, and online communities: A critical discourse analysis of conversations about Black Women HBCU presidents. In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 78, p. 102330). Pergamon.
- Elizabeth, A. (2013). Challenging the binary: Sexual identity that is not duality. *Journal of Bisexuality*, 13(3), 329-337.
- Fitri, N., & Suparti, E. (2017). ANALYZING THE PORTRAYAL OF PATRIARCHAL OPPRESSION TOWARDS THE FEMALE CHARACTERS IN JK ROWLING'S THE CASUAL VACANCY: A REFLECTIVE POST-FEMINIST CRITICS. *CaLLs (Journal of Culture, Arts, Literature, and Linguistics)*, 2(1), 43-52.
- Goodman, L. (2013). *Literature and gender*. Routledge.
- Haj-Yahia, M. M. (2005). On the characteristics of patriarchal societies, gender inequality, and wife abuse: The case of Palestinian society. *Adalah's Newsletter*, 20, 1-6.
- Hambur, F. M., & Nurhayati, N. (2019). Feminism thoughts in 20th and 21st century literary works: A comparative study. *EduLite: Journal of English Education, Literature and Culture*, 4(2), 183-193.
- Hamid, M. (2019). Exploring the "Other" in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows*. *Submission Guidelines and Subscription*, 15, 12-18.
- Hooks, B. (2000). *Feminist theory: From margin to center*. Pluto Press.
- Johnson, A. G. (2004). Patriarchy, the system. *Women's lives: Multicultural perspectives*, 25-32.
- Lerner, G. (1986). *The creation of patriarchy* (Vol. 1). Oxford University Press, USA.
- Lodhi, M. A., Khalid, F., Mehmood, I., Rasool, F., Akbar, F., & Amir, M. (2019). Social and Physical Entrapments of Women in Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice-Candy Man* and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*.
- Mansoor, A. (2016). "Marginalization" in third world feminism: its problematics and theoretical reconfiguration. *Palgrave Communications*, 2(1), 1-9.
- McPhail, B. A. (2003). A feminist policy analysis framework: Through a gendered lens. *The Social Policy Journal*, 2(2-3), 39-61.
- Mudau, T. J., & Obadire, O. S. (2017). The role of patriarchy in family settings and its implications to girls and women in South Africa. *Journal of Human Ecology*, 58(1-2), 67-72.
- Nair, S. S. (2020). *Shaila Abdullah's Saffron Dreams: A Tale of Trauma and Travail*.
- Neuenfeldt, E. (2015). *Identifying and dismantling patriarchy and other systems of oppression of women*:

- Gender analysis, feminist theology, and the church in mission. *International Review of Mission*, 104(1), 18-25.
- O'Donoghue, D. (2013). 'The otherness that implicates the self': towards an understanding of gendering from a theory of proximity. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26(4), 400-413.
- Omvedt, G. (1986). "Patriarchy:" the Analysis of Women's Oppression. *Insurgent Sociologist*, 13(3), 30-50.
- Pakri, M. R., & Anandan, R. D. (2015). A Feminist-Postcolonial Analysis of Power and Ideology in Ayaan Hirisi Ali's *Infidel*. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 208, 197-202.
- Pasco, A. H. (1991). On defining short stories. *New Literary History*, 22(2), 407-422.
- Ratts, M. J. (2017). Charting the center and the margins: Addressing identity, marginalization, and privilege in counseling. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 39(2), 87-103.
- Rawat, P. S. (2014). Patriarchal beliefs, women's empowerment, and general well-being. *Vikalpa*, 39(2), 43-56.
- Rind, Q. A., & Larik, A. (2016). *Treatment of Women in Nadeem Aslam's Novels*. *Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics*, 18, 98-105.
- Roach, C. (2010). Getting a good man to love: Popular romance fiction and the problem of patriarchy. *Journal of Popular Romance Studies*.
- Ross, K. (Ed.). (2011). *The handbook of gender, sex, and media*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Roychoudhary, M., Srivastava, M., & Dwivedi, J. (2016). Dismantling Patriarchy: Postcolonial theme in the Short Stories of Namita Gokhale and Shaila Abdullah. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ENGLISH: LITERATURE, LANGUAGE & SKILLS*.
- Schalk, S. (2011). Self, other and other-self: going beyond the self/other binary in contemporary consciousness. *Journal of Comparative Research in Anthropology and Sociology*, 2(01), 197-210.
- Sharma, S. (2018). From Alienation to Self Realization: Highlighting the Theme of Identity Crisis in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*. *1 INDIAN WOMEN NOVELISTS IN ENGLISH*, 88.
- Silverman, D. (Ed.). (2020). *Qualitative research*. Sage Publications Limited.
- Sood, S., & Jan, Y. (2018). Representing Gender Identity and Patriarchy in Anita Desai's Novel *Fasting, Feasting*. *1 INDIAN WOMEN NOVELISTS IN ENGLISH*, 27.
- Sultana, A. (2010). Patriarchy and Women's Subordination: A Theoretical Analysis. *Arts Faculty Journal*, 1-18.
- Tanvir, O., & Amir, N. (2018). Deconstructive Analysis Of The Short Story "Saleema" By Daniyal Mueenuddin. *Journal of Linguistics & Literature*, 1(1), 106-125.
- Taylor, S. J., Bogdan, R., & DeVault, M. (2015). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guidebook and resource*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Tonsing, J. C., & Tonsing, K. N. (2019). Understanding the role of patriarchal ideology in intimate partner violence among South Asian women in Hong Kong. *International Social Work*, 62(1), 161-171.
- Torkashvand, N., & Jamili, L. B. (2014). Power and Patriarchy: Oppression of Women in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. *Journal of Novel Applied Sciences*, 3(4), 416-423.
- Tyagi, R. (2014). Understanding postcolonial feminism in relation with postcolonial and feminist theories. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 1(2), 45-50.
- Zainab, N., Jadoon, A., & Nawaz, M. (2017). The Culture of silence and secrets: Repressions and psychological disorders among Pakistani housewives in fiction. *Global Language Review*, 2(1), 114-129.
- Zutlevics, T. L. (2002). Towards a theory of oppression. *Ratio*, 15(1), 80-102.