



**Female Racial and Linguistic Exploitation Through Economics: A Marxist Feminist
Analysis of Kamila Shamsie’s Selected Works**

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Abstract

Regardless of quality education, alteration of conservative era into modernization and escalating the streamers of gender equality, women are still standing at the verge of being victim of cruelty, injustice, malice, forced marriages, sexual violence and hatred. The law enforcement agencies themselves become part of exploiting women’s rights, co-modifying them and reinforcing the stereotype in this patriarchal society. When discussing the fate of women it matters less whether they are the women of East or West. Culture change, place change, traditions and values change, but the thing that never change is the behavior of community towards women. However, women are going to become abandoned or protagonist, it depends upon the inner courage of women. For an instance, women become helpless and start feeling them as the caged birds that can never flew independently. On the other hand, some women refuse to become the part of darkness and decide to become spark in nightfall. Moreover, Pakistan is land of tremendous examples about such women. Since the dawn history of human beings, subjugation towards the identity of women’s status has been observed in different communities and cultures. Additionally, this subjugation is deeply rooted and exists on a large scale in Pakistani society. Therefore, this proposed study is the splendid reflection of this acrimonious datum by ascertaining our point of view with the bounteous examples from the stories of “Burnt Shadows”, “Broken Verses” and “Home Fire” by Kamila Shamsie. This study will be a milestone for presenting the women’s condition in Pakistan and clearing the depiction that in developing countries like Pakistan, women are only victims of cruelty. For this purpose, Marxist’s interpellation theory was used to enlighten the feminist, race and language analysis by using the primary and secondary sources for data collection. Results concluded on the basis detailed analysis of all the novels explain that the systematic flow in the lives of women that is hidden in the generosity of world that can rampant the prestige of humanity up to great extent.

Key Words: Marxist Feminism, Women Condition, World War, 11 September



1. Introduction

High qualification, countless fields of study, limitless opportunities for work, latest technology and marvelous innovations are the basic tools of present era (Collins and Halverson, 2010). However, while discussing the women conditions, there is still darkness in both eastern and western world. Forced marriages, sexual violence, forced labor; brutality and gender discrimination are the terrible realities of women lives, without differentiating them as eastern or western women (Doezema, 2001; Forster, and Bruley, 2019). Every woman wants to live at her full by enjoying all the equal rights to men. They want freedom, kindness and polite behavior. It is well known misunderstanding that women of eastern world including Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Turkey are being the victim of cruelty while the women of western world are enjoying their privileges at fullest (Ginsburg, 1991; Marsman, 2003). However, many researchers have explained the fact that reality is opposite to this. Discrimination is found in every society and every culture, as there is still need of improvement (Lila, 2001; Weber, 2003). Discrimination is having the same meaning as do the patriarchy. Patriarchy is the culture where all rights are bestowed with the leader of the family and that remain the father. So, power remains stuck with the males and every deed or task would be performed with the permission of man (father). This phenomenon highlights the fact of gender discrimination. However, this spectacle disturbs the social behavior, religious attributes, economic standards, cultural values, political esteem and ultimately, downfall of the world starts. Therefore, authors try to aware the people by writing the fictional stories on these types of topics to alarm the situation. Similarly, in our research we have used two stories to explain the point of view of these authors about the social and economic conditions of the women in Pakistan (Keifer-Boyd, and Smith-Shank, 2006; Khan, 2017; Suharni, and Ekalestari, 2019).

Throughout the history of world, many writers with their philosophy of lives and their artistic languages have defined the nature of human beings with the help of different genres of literature; thus literature has to be considered as the mirror of the society (Akhtar et al., 2019; Sheikh et al., 2019). World has produced numerous writers for instance William Shakespeare, Thomas Hardy, Jane Austen, Oscar Wilde, Robert Browning, Christopher Marlowe, E.M. Fosrter, Thomas Gray, and so on who contribute their lives to solve the issues of common people through their literary works which are the production of their keenly observation. Similarly, Pakistani society has produced several writers such as Fatima Bhutto, Kamila Shamsie, J.J Baloch, Azhar Noonari, Allama I.I. Kazi, Amar Jaleel and so on, who share their philosophical knowledge in their works to give voice to the suppressed people. Kamila Shamsie is also Pakistani writer who talk about women's rights and how women are suppressed by fallacious norms of society. Human beings are divided into multiple classes, mainly high class and low class (Bashir and Guzzo, 2019; Iftikhar and Awan, 2019). In every class, people face many socioeconomic and political problems and have grave influence on them.



However, people are also classified in terms of gender. This classification is socially constructed where men and women are being mentioned. From the emergence of the world to now, the influence of men over women is overwhelmed (Gill et al., 2018). Man is regarded the supreme creature on the face of the earth. He is regarded as the bread winner of a family. Men also participate in worldly affairs, for instance, business, science, technology and so on. On the other hand, women are bound in domestic work. Their social significance is not appreciated in a patriarchal society (Rafay et al., 2016; Umer et al., 2016). They are restricted to serve their males and tend children and animals. It describes that women are likely treated animals because their rational faculty is disregarded in a male oriented society. In South Asian Society, the statuses of women under male dominated society were also marginalized, and their lives and wishes were controlled by their men (Khan et al., 2018). Meanwhile, they were also oppressed and colonized by the colonizers at the time of colonization. Their due rights were not shared with respect to men at that time. The role of women was not extended or equal to men. This suggests the idea that women were subjugated by the hands of men before and after the time of colonization. The exploitation of women is also practiced in the existing conditions (Shah and Khurshid, 2019). In Pakistan, women are sexually abused and being massacred into every nook and cranny.

In Pakistan, the conduct of men towards women is highly condemnable. Women are suffering in every walk of life. They are deemed as an object and puppet and are also forced to do everything with the will of men (Ansari, 2019). Their will against male in every form like a mother, sister, and wife is controlled by men. They are deprived of their rights in every institution of a society. The rights of education, matchmaking, are the most prevalent problems in Pakistan are hurdle in the path women empowerment. Women are deemed fragile being and a matter of respect and reverence for men in a male based society of Pakistan. Women are also used an object in viable hoardings and societal gatherings where beauty of women is used to sell things in a hefty amount (Hongdao et al., 2018). However, the products of industrialists and market holders are used with the tag of women's portraits in order to attract countless customers. It sounds that women in every business of life are misrepresented and they are used as a center of men's benefits. Moreover, the attitude of men in a patriarchal society is used to exercise the power for controlling and suppressing women to present women as slaves and worthless creature who are mainly created to worship and serve men (Awan, 2017; Hansen, 2019). The status of men in an androcentric society reveals that women are not born free to enjoy the countless blessings of nature in the world. With respect to biological division, women are equal partner of a society to enjoy blissful blessings of God but socially constructed taboos and dogmas are shackles of women freedom. Thus, women are suppressed by men to exert the domination and make them dependent in every way of life. However, in some instances women become stronger and courageous than before whenever, they are being exploited. Then, they become unbeatable in every walk of life. However, there is no researcher or scientist who has illuminated this



marvelous aspect of women's life. Thus, our current research is a milestone to unveil this important facet of Pakistani women's life.

2. Literature Review

In Pakistan, women have remained under the influence of men. Women's' sentiments are also controlled by men in Pakistani society. Women are treated as pet animals who only obey the hegemonic commands of their husbands without their assent (Rind and Sangi, 2016; Khan, 2020; Mcnojia, et al., 2020). Although broadcasting is considered as an important tool to bring awareness in a society, the Pakistani social media presents the negative image of women by manipulating their status in order to suppress their voice (Ali and Ab ul Hassan, 2016; Farooq et al., 2020). In commercial trade, the bad picture of woman which creates the negative image in a society has been showed to mesmerize the attention of clients. The depiction of women in advertisements shows that women are worthless creatures having no role to participate in worldly affairs (Huda and Ali, 2015; Zafar and Arafat, 2016). Women must not be discriminated on the basis of ethnicity, caste, gender or any other patriarchal norm that preaches their subjugation.

Habib et al., (2013) had done research on the novel, *My Feudal Lord* in 2013. The novel describes the personal life of Tehmina Durrani who faces multiples problems in her home caused by her husband. In her home, she is bitterly treated and served like a slave by her husband named, Ghulam Mustafa Khar. She depicts her life as a poor creature who cannot share her sentiments and emotions to her husband. She also criticizes her husband who is a towering political personality who protects rights of public but is entirely failed to give her due rights of a wife. She has written the novel mainly to highlight sufferings and woes of women in third world countries like Pakistan.

Similarly, Bag and Roy, (2012) elucidates that women are mentally tortured and their lives are controlled by male dominated society of India, and they have no authority to express their own wishes. The identity of women has been shown in miserable conditions in the research. The researchers have depicted the picture of those women who are forcedly sent to brothels without their consent, such types of suppression with the identity of women has been displayed to show the atrocity of male oriented society towards women. In India, thousands of child abuse cases have been recorded in which teenager girls have been thrown to prostitutions forcefully. Women in India and throughout the world is also subjugated in the name of arrange marriages. The researchers also display the negative role media in which women are indirectly subjugated through erotic advertisements. In my view, this negative role and picture of woman used by the researcher must have minimized in order to focus more of the reason and crime. Media uses the identity of women as a tool to get the attention of clients by portraying dark side of women. Biased media helps to make strong male-centered society by depicting women as a tool of



attention. The researchers indicate that biased media and domestic violence towards the identity of women is a part of women subjugation.

Pakistani women are strongly affected by the rigid and traditional dogmas where they are under the mercy of men. Vani, the most critical practice in Pakistan in which women are handed over to other family without their will just to compensate a murder of opposite party (Baghal et al., 2019; Shah et al., 2019). This traditional practice is a hot debate in Pakistani society particularly in Pathan tribe where women are handed over like animals in a busy market in a fixed price. The law of jungle in a society is mainly exercised to control women. The lack of education in third world countries like Pakistan is a huge problem of women sufferings. It can be overcome by prescribing equal rights of human beings without making differences in terms of gender differences (Munir and Akhtar, 2014). The researcher has taken out a qualitative analysis.

Umer et al., (2016) in their research study has evaluated education, culture and its authorization. Culture and education in the modern era play an important role to make a developed and great nation. The researcher analyzed in his study how the education has been gendered by male dominated society of Baloch tribes in which women are not allowed to get education though it is their basic right. Gendered view of education is one type of women subjugation which has been discussed by the researcher. According to the researcher, Baloch people consider themselves brave, and callous, but women are treated as weak creation. They rule their ladies and daughter under their commands and do not allow them to acquire the proper education. They always try to keep women under the sole of their shoes as they cannot get education and empowerment. Such type of women suppression and gender biasness can be observed in different parts of Balochistan, Pakistan.

Islamic and universal laws are treasured and used as means to treat women equally without gender disparity. They sternly prevent to violate it but men do not follow because they entertain their power and influence over women. Researchers have analyzed that traditional rules are deadly formulated just to exploit the status and dignity of women (Bangash, et al., 2019). Women are not allowed to go against the set of constructed rules because it hurts the feelings of men's prestige and honor. The researchers of this article further expound that women are not asked to marry with their will and are forcedly married in Pakistan which is a deadly sin. If women go against the set of norms are killed out of honor (Bangash et al., 2017). These killings are very common in backward area of Pakistan where women are in yoke of slavery. The practice of honor killing by men is merely to seek prestige and dignity which is completely ill practices (Moghissi, 2005; Lodhi and Siddiqui, 2014).

Roy's novel, *The God of Small Things*, displays the concept of androcentric society. The researcher evaluates the feminist perspective of the novel to show the hegemony of men over women in the southern part of India. The researcher in his research discusses that women's



concept as Other, because their lives are controlled by will of men (Tickell, 2003). The concept of other can be observed at the time colonization when women also were oppressed and colonized. Similarly, women in the southern part of India have no freedom and their lives are censored by their men who implement rigid dogmas and cultural restriction over them as they always live under the dominance of men (Dingwaney Needham, 2005). Actually, these all fabricated rituals which can be seen in the novel are made by male-centered society to oppress the status of women. The researcher shows stereotypical and biased approach of south Indian males who think that those women who reject the proposal of arrange marriage, they are disgrace. Same thing happens with Ammu, a mouthpiece character of Roy, when she rejects arrange marriage everyone consider her a disgrace women and daughter and she seeks for divorce in the novel (David Saldívar, 2007; Roy, 2009). Not only she has been considered as disgraced daughter, but also she has no permission to continue her study. Such type of suppression gives birth to evilness in the society and it becomes dangerous for the identity of women. On the other hand, Chacko is free from all the restriction of society, he marries a lady whom he likes and he gets education from abroad. These physical gendered biasness are used to treat women as poor creation and they are subjugated every corner of the world. In this research, both white and black woman must have been highlighted as the target of oppression as both are being criticized either for their ethnicities or for their gender.

Male dominated society and old traditions strongly affect the status of women unfortunately the both mentioned aspects can be seen in Pakistani society where status of woman is in danger (Shaikh et al., 2019). Male oriented society and old traditions are the product of lack of awareness and misinterpretation of religion in which men have been shown as hegemonic identity of world. Basically, these are fabricated laws which are made for self-interest to control women; such misinterpreted concepts are mostly observed in Pathan tribes where women have wishes and desires (Ahmed and Wahab, 2019). In some Pathan tribes, father gives their girls to resolve blood without their consent which such action shows that women are treated as pet animals. Pathan tribe calls it Vani means to hand over a girl to resolve the blood, but it is worthless act of Pakistani society. This act has ruined the lives many teenager girls and women and their rights have been suppressed in the name of fallacious honor (Munir and Akhtar, 2014). However, the researcher must also present a methodical solution to the deep-rooted problem that exists in the society at such a large scale.

3. Objectives

- The current research aims to critically analyze exploitation of women`s status in Pakistani society under the light of Kamila Shamsie`s novels, “Burnt Shadows”, “Broken Verses” and “Home Fire” by using Feminist approach.
- Present study purposes to provide the courageous model for the women of conservative society to believe themselves and raise their voice against cruelty.



- The research intends to evaluate suppression of women's identity with the help of Kamila Shamsie's novels, "Burnt Shadows", "Broken Verses" and "Home Fire" as a literature of women subjugation

4. Research Questions /Hypothesis

- How does Kamila Shamsie portray the exploitation of women's status in Pakistani Society with reference to her novels, "Burnt Shadows", "Broken Verses" and "Home Fire"?
- How does the writer express the suppression of women's identity in her respective novels being a case study of philosophy of feminism and social subjectivity?
- How do Pakistani women cope with the hardships of societies and struggles for provision of prosperity by accepting various bad names?

5. Purpose of Study/Justification/Significance of the Research

Until now innumerable research has been done to highlight the poor condition of women in Pakistan, however, no one has put the spotlight to highlight the other aspect of life of Pakistani women. The current research task carries its own importance as the philosophy of Marxist feminism and subjugation aims to destroy negative stereotypes of male oriented society about women. Current research is helpful for the readers to provide the clear depiction about feminism along with sufferings of women. Moreover, this study will also act as courageous model for the women of conservative society to believe themselves and raise their voice against cruelty. The current research is significant enough to unveil how the identity of women has been suppressed before and after annexation throughout the history of mankind. The research is fruitful for researchers who conduct their research works in the relevant domain. It is also helpful to understand the significance of women status and to strengthen voice of suppressed women in male based society.

6. Research Design

Our research area is related to the qualitative frame work as it comprised of the study of human nature and life attributes. Therefore, following the Strauss and Corbin, (1998) definition for qualitative analysis we have used it for explaining our words and phrases that are used in the selected novels. Additionally, Marxist Feminist approach is used to explain the data analysis as this approach is highly supportive for explaining and interpretation of the women condition with respective to the living societies.

6.1 Data Collection

Data collection is comprised of 2 sources named as primary data source along with secondary data source. Our first source is consists of above mentioned marvelous novels:

- "Burnt Shadows"
- "Broken Verses"



- “Home Fire”

Similarly, the later mentioned source is encompassing of all the papers and research articles that play a supportive role for explaining our theme of research including the background of above mentioned novels. Furthermore, various libraries work and notes were also included to ease and enlighten our research after reading the publications and novels time and again.

7. Model of Analysis

As our research comprised of three novels that are written in context form, following the descriptive data analysis technique of Hakim, (2004), descriptive analysis was made to differentiate the lives of Pakistani women. Additionally, Marxist Feminism and Social Subjugation is philosophical theory; it contains different aspects such as awareness of socio-economic, political and basic rights of women in andocentric society. Feminist approach talks of the suppressed people who are controlled and their rights are snatched. It claims that the status of women has been undermined in the third world countries. In the essay *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus*, the author advances towards the concern of social subjectivity amidst the social building this is raised conferring to the ideologies of capitalist system. Furthermore, he portrays creation’s gendered interpretation of existence in which he claims that capitalist male dominated society has familiarized established gender, gendered education, gendered careers and so on. He tries to display the miseries of lower class throughout the world in his philosophy. These elements are helpful to evaluate selected data from concerned novels. The characters of all the three novels, “Burnt Shadows”, “Broken Verses” and “Home Fire” are analyzed under the light of methodology. The method has assisted to evaluate the status of women from all the selected of novels, and it is helpful to understand the concept of double marginalization of women’s identity in Pakistani Society.

7.1 Data Analysis

By following the descriptive data analysis technique of Hakim, (2004), data has elaborated. Kamila Shamsie, a young enthusiastic writer, has the power to beautifully describe the positive as well as negative aspects of our society, more specifically Pakistan. She is well own for being the passionate writer of present era. In her selected novels, she has described the untold realities of various areas of Pakistan, where women are being the victims of cruelty, discrimination, hatred and vindictiveness. Following heartbreaking context is from the novel to clear the picture:

7.2 Data Analysis for “Burnt Shadows” by Kamila Shamsie

As she was dying, Hiroko's mother had called the Chairman's wife to her bedside with a single request: protect my husband against himself. There was even less place in wartime Japan for an iconoclastic artist than for magazines about modern girls. For a long time, The Chairman's wife had carried out her promise, persuading her husband to regard Matsui Tanaka's outbursts against the military and the Emperor as a symbol of a husband's mourning that was so profound it had unhinged him. But in the spring, Matsui



Tanaka had been walking past a neighborhood house and saw the cherry blossom festooning it to commemorate the sacrifice of the fifteen-year-old boy who had died in a kamikaze attack. Without saying a word Hiroko who was walking silently beside him Matsui Tanaka darted forward, pulling out a book of matches from the pocket of his trousers, and set fire to the cherry blossom. Seconds later he lay bloodied on the ground. [.....] and the next day three things happened: the military police came to take her father to prison, the principal of the school where she taught German told her she was dismissed,[.....]the Chairman was waiting to tell her she had been conscripted to work at one of the munitions factories”. (Burnt Shadows by Kamila Shamsie, 2009, pp. 13,14)

The above explained text citation explains the poor condition of women; the author explains that women remain suffering in every era of life. Sometimes, they remain cry for their respect and sometimes they beg for the life of their loved ones. The above explained text citation is the prettiest example of this bitter reality. The main character of the story suffers a lot from the very start and then, after sometime become the hard stone in front of all hardships and restrictions. Once, the woman who was crying for mercy and shelter, become strong enough that she feels useless to be supported in any field of life. . The entire nation was under severe subjugation under British rule including male and female, yet man had a liberty to do whatever they wish. However women did not have such choices inside or outside the home. Women deteriorated by two sides, first, the patriarchal nature society in sub-continent and secondly all people were under British colonialism. A meek creature cannot demand anything; even basic needs were left unfulfilled. There was big difference between the education of a boy and a girl, a girl is educated in confined environment and is being thought Islamic education. However, boys are sent to boarding schools and colleges, they are provided them special consideration. Male members of society were allowed to choose their desired and pertinent field, while girls were deprived from such prosperous and privileged activities. Women were forced to marry to those who are completely unfamiliar to her, the same was done to her mother, at the age of thirty, and she got married to haughty and aggressive natured man, who already divorced more than three wives. A male member of society has a right to get marry several times, however, a woman’s thought of getting married is deemed as a sin. How unusual that notion is where women are completely exploited even in marriages. So, Marxist feminist is condemning such unworthy and inappropriate practices, and she is demanding equal rights at every cost.

7.3 Data Analysis for “Broken Verses” by Kamila Shamsie

The next day it's Virginia Woolf who wafts through. Hers is acuriously insistent presence; take your eyes off her for a moment and the next thing you know she's rearranging your syntax as though it were cutlery improperly laid out for a seven-course



meal with some foreign dignitary who disdains your nation's table manners.” (Broken Verses by Kamila Shamsie, pp. 26, 27)

Similarly, the other novel of our study is highly significant for explaining the phenomenon of Feminism. The author explains well the poor condition of poor both physically and mentally. She says that women are designed to work from dawn to dusk both in homes as well as in offices. However, the only thing that they get in return is the disrespect, bad words and bad eyes that try to x-ray them by crossing their covers. Moreover, she explains well the dilemma of the society towards women. She says that during the war and other disasters the most helpless and poor creature that affected the most is women. They become afraid to lose respect, being attacked by the warriors to fulfill their grubby desires by crushing the innocent women. In addition, the men used to threat them that they will harm to their men, if they did not do whatever they say.

7.4 Data Analysis for “Home Fire” by Kamila Shamsie:

Furthermore, the third novel is the prettiest example that explains beautifully the worse condition of women in every era. She says with heavy heart that it is the disgusting fact of the society that they become happy and celebrates the birth of boys and become morn out when heard the news of birth of baby girl. Following quotation is the disheartened fact for explaining this bitter and sad fact about our society.

“For girls, becoming women was inevitability; for boys, becoming men was ambition” (Home fire by Kamila Shamsie, Pages 16)

Therefore, it is well known fact that women were suffering a lot in every walk of life. However, even after the change of time, nothing changes for women. The above explained context is a clear example of conservative thinking of men towards women. They are agreed to sacrifice the life of women in the name of respect and honor. They are considered nothing but the useless material that can be used according to the mood of men otherwise they must remain quiet whatever they are suffering through.

8. Conclusion

All articles are the acrimonious representation of the women condition in eastern and western worlds. There is countless difference on the name of culture such as dress, food and religion, however, the thing that is common is cruelty for women. Nevertheless, they pass through the same set of destitutions. Women are still facing many adversities in all over the world by different ways. They are the victims of both physical and spiritual violations. They work at home from dawn to dusk and then being beaten up by the males of their houses. They take care of homes, relations, and children, as well as well work in the offices. There is neither any shelter nor any good reward for them. Therefore, it’s not wrong to say that there is no differentiation



that these are the women of eastern or western world. Both eastern and western world are failed to secure the basic rights of women. There is immediate need to take certain steps that safeguard the women's right all around the globe. There is need to let them realize their inner strength and make them realize that whenever, they recognize their forte they can beat the whole world. Today, women are working in every field of life; however they face the difficulty of being harassment at all place of work. They are unable to accomplish the respect that is their right. To move freely and enjoy the freedom is basic requisite of every human being. They need to wear, eat and live peacefully in every corner of the world. However, somewhere they are compelled to get marry with the hatred person and somewhere; they are being compelled to live as prisoners. The alarming situation becomes when they become the victims of beasts who either throw acid to them or make them target of rape. Every moment, news remains echoing of either suicide attempts by women themselves to get rid of basted life or they are being murdered on the name of ego and respect. There is neither world of kind nor generosity for the most fragile creature of the world. However, both eastern and western world is at the verge of destruction, if we have to save them, we have to give the women their appropriate position and rights to live with dignity in the world of generosity.

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