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Information and Inspiration: developing an online approach towards the empowerment of autistic women and girls.

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ABSTRACT

Autistic girls and women have long constituted a marginalised group, within a marginalised population. Caught within an intersection of autism and gender stereotyping, barriers to accessing education, employment, health care and social inclusion are emergent themes, with little recognition, support or practical resources in place.

The Right Click online programme, funded by the Scottish Government, was grounded in earlier research by the team and involved autistic women and girls from the outset. Its initial aim was to gather information, adding to the knowledge-base and identifying areas for research and resources focus. Underpinning throughout was the goal of making this previously invisible population visible, offering them a voice and then listening.

The other aim identified as 'inspiration' responds to emerging evidence about the effects of diagnosis of autism/Asperger' syndrome; for young people especially, but also in all age groups. This raises increasing concerns about issues of stigma and narratives of negativity around autism and how these things impact on self-esteem, confidence, life-choices, individual and personal outcomes. Positive role models, narratives of success, peer support are the key.

What was core to the Right Click project was that it should be grounded in the experiences of autistic women and that what was developed would be cogent, supportive, life-enhancing; certainly about increasing knowledge and disseminating information, but more, presenting a positive, outcome-oriented resource, designed to inform, inspire and empower.

Keywords: *Women, intersectionality, autism, innovation*

Background: girls, women and autism

Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) is an encompassing term to describe a widely heterogeneous population that ranges from individuals with severe challenges, including Learning Disabilities, and co-existing conditions such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and others, to those with more subtle-appearing issues. Until recently, it was believed there were far more males than females, with a ratio of approx. 4:1 (Fonbonne, E 2003); this is changing.

Recent research has highlighted difficulties in identification including that: i) girls and women with relevant characteristics may be diagnosed with other conditions or disorders eg social phobia or borderline personality disorder (Attwood, T 2007) ii) most previous research has involved male participants iii) as yet, there are few studies of gender differences and available findings are inconsistent (Van Wijngaarden-Cremers PJM et al 2014) iv) it has been suggested the tools used to assess females may not be not appropriate (Westman Andersson et al 2014). An alternative interpretation might be that clinicians applying the available assessment tools must use their professional judgment with few trained

in, and knowledgeable of, the female presentation in autism (NICE available: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/>).

It is becoming increasingly understood that more women may be on the autism spectrum than previously thought and that many females with normal to high intelligence could be overlooked or misdiagnosed because they do not present a classically understood (i.e. male) phenotype. The 'swan' analogy has been used to describe spectrum females: "appearing to glide smoothly across the surface of life, while desperately paddling under the surface just to stay afloat" (Ludlow, P 2005).

Girls are under a great deal of pressure to conform to societal expectations of femininity in terms of appearance, mannerisms, language and interests. Beyond the aetiology of autism and sex specific manifestations, cultural expectations may influence both the social expectations on each ASC individual and the coping mechanisms available to them. For example, aggressive behaviours in adolescent boys with AS may provide the trigger for assessment and diagnosis. However, such behaviour is less likely to be observed or identified in girls (although not necessarily absent) (Stewart, C 2011).

Emerging evidence indicates that girls and women on the autism spectrum often develop a range of coping strategies that mask the myriad of difficulties they face in day to day life (Bargiela, S, Mandy, W and Stewart, R 2016). This seeming ability to 'cope' may:

1. leave women isolated and vulnerable
2. complicate the diagnostic process
3. restrict access to services or support.
4. When they hit difficulties or 'crisis points' in their lives, their difficulties may be misunderstood and they may be dismissed or misdiagnosed.

Spectrum girls and women have reported that they may appear to be coping, but are not really or at a great cost in terms of health and wellbeing; they may be anxious, sad or vulnerable, feeling threatened, but unable to articulate how they feel, too overwhelmed by their emotions or too frightened as a result of a combination of their communication issues and previous negative experiences of how people have responded to them (Source: SWAN: Scottish Women's Autism Network (SWAN) available online: <http://www.swanscotland.com/>). It should not be underestimated how hard they may be working just to try to meet expectations, fit in, and 'pretend to be normal' (Willey, LH 2015).

Spectrum girls and women do have experiences in common with spectrum boys and men. However, while school bullying may be generic, the form is specific. Girls are under pressure to conform to societal expectations of femininity. They are vulnerable in specific ways and social expectations may have particular meaning for autistic females where girls are assumed to be more socially motivated, more nuanced, and with social inclusion and sexual attractiveness as priorities. There are specific transitional issues relating to girls and women e.g. onset of puberty, managing menstruation, pregnancy, motherhood. Women on the autism spectrum experience lower quality of life outcomes than non-spectrum women. (Source: Autism in Pink research project <http://autisminpink.net/>)

While clinical observation has described autistic girls as being difficult to identify as their interests often mirror those of their peers but with greater intensity (Gould and Ashton-Smith 2011), gender stereotyping begins early in life and their environment is as important as their neurological 'make-up' at birth (Hines 2004). Girls may identify gender-specific or 'safe' or subjects to which they may turn their focus. Adult spectrum women report being judged and criticised for being un-feminine (Flaherty 2002) or exhibiting 'male' traits. Many describe how their most comfortable platonic friendships throughout their lives have been with males. Spectrum women have been found to have elevated incidence of "tomboyism" (Baron-Cohen, S 2008).

Prevailing narratives of autism, autism stereotyping and gender stereotyping intersect to make autistic girls and women not just 'invisible' within the community but in many ways 'invisible' to themselves. Feelings of stigma, disrupted self-identity (Goffman, E 1963) and poor self-esteem have profound consequences, described as internalised pain and disabling beliefs or 'psycho - emotional disablement' (Milton, D 2012). A conference held by the National Autistic Society in London, Nov 2016, involved a panel of autistic women discussing 'What defines 'success' for an adult autistic woman?' The participants were asked to submit a written summary on this question beforehand. The summaries and the presentations, while representing the individual voices of 6 women, were thematically congruent: success was defined as retrieving a sense of self-identity, authenticity, being 'true to oneself'.

Facilitating the authentic autistic female voice

A research study completed in 2011 focused on girls with Asperger's syndrome and anxiety (Stewart, C 2011). Commitment to retrieving lived experience as a valid source of data (Smith, DE 2004) required methodological flexibility and some methodical inventiveness. The first was addressed by situating the study within a pedagogical model of hermeneutic phenomenology (Van Manen, M 1990). The second, in order to facilitate the girls' - who by definition may have some challenges in communication - authentic voices, was addressed by training in and using computer-based interview software, *In My Shoes* (Calam, D et al 2002). Interviews were conducted with girls with Asperger syndrome and anxiety and also carried out with the girls' mothers. There was also an online 'diary' facility for the girls to rate and comment on their daily experiences. Data was transcribed and analysed. The key theme identified for the girls' experiences was 'Where can we be what we are?' (Stewart, C 2011; Stewart, C 2012)

Key findings:

Where can we be what we are? The girls were uncomfortable in most environments; the school environment represented profound challenges for the girls.

Only a breath away - This theme referred to the mothers' struggles of the past, in terms of gaining a diagnosis for their girls, the current challenges involved in parenting them and their fears for the future, the girls' and theirs.

Cloaking and masquerading - spectrum females as 'actors'. They may be more articulate and develop better social (imitation) skills (possibly not - a recent study presented at IMFAR 2017 suggests that by adolescence, girls are losing their abilities to 'mask' within a social context).

Sensory processing issues: these are profoundly, pervasively important, may lead to sensory overload and monotropic (coping) behaviours (Murray, D 2005).

Girls are vulnerable to:

- Somatic symptoms associated with high levels of anxiety e.g. headaches, insomnia, GIT problems
- High-risk behaviours
- Anorexia nervosa (Gilberg, C 2005)
- School refusal
- Self-harm
- Suicide (Stewart, C 2011, 2012, SWAN)

The study inspired the founding of SWAN: Scottish Women's Autism Network, a peer-support body runs by autistic women for autistic women. SWAN's stated aims from the outset are two-fold: 1. to provide peer-support, recognition and community for women either previously diagnosed or becoming aware of their identity as autistics and 2. to improve awareness of autism in girls and women, to build on the

knowledge-base and to raise levels of understanding within society Over 5 years of SWAN, qualitative and empirical data has been collected in the form of ethnographic and lived experience accounts.

The reflective comments below on feminist studies are congruent with challenges for the autism community, within which girls and women have been historically a marginalized group within a marginalized population:

'The challenge for feminism is to produce a social science that recognizes and understands the biological, without taking biological characteristics as a given and a biology that takes full account of the fact that human beings are pre-eminently social and cultural creatures who, in shaping the world around them, also shape themselves' (Harrison 2006, p35)

There is a challenge in addressing the needs of individuals who may be to a greater or lesser extent handicapped within the pro-social and increasingly synthetic environmental contexts demanded for inclusion within society while asserting competency and access to full citizenship. Many autistic people now look to social models of disability to help address this challenge. Intersecting with the previous 'invisibility' of autistic females, effective research, strategies and service provision, all of which are woefully inadequate for autism generically (Source: 'The Autism Dividend' National Autism Project (NAP) 2017 available online: <http://nationalautismproject.org.uk>) are almost non-existent for autistic females.

Reframing the challenges and creating alternative narratives: The Right Click Programme for Women and girls.

In response to an increased awareness of the range of issues affecting spectrum women and girls, charity Scottish Autism gained funding from the Scottish Government in 2015 to develop an online resource for women and girls. Building on an existing model previously developed by Scottish Autism, the Right Click programmes are free and designed to be accessed in people's own homes at times to suit their schedules. The Right Click programme for Women and Girls was given the working title of 'Information and Inspiration'.

Information was certainly one of the goals of the project, gathering information, adding to the knowledge-base, highlighting areas where more research is needed, and resources should be focused. The other goal is defined as 'Inspiration'. This goal is a response to emerging data on how a diagnosis of autism or Asperger's impacts on young people especially, but on any age group, and concerns regarding ways in which stigma, and prevailing narratives of negativity around autism, impact on self-esteem, confidence, the making of life choices and individual and personal outcomes (Huws & Jones 2008). What was crucial to the Right Click team was that the resource should be underpinned by the lived experiences of autistic women and that what was developed would be cogent, supportive, life-enhancing; certainly about increasing knowledge and disseminating information, but more, presenting a positive, outcome-oriented resource.

The project involved autistic women and girls from the outset. Grounded in earlier research the areas covered within the Right Click online survey arose out of many interviews and group discussions held over a period of years. These areas were then expanded and developed through the project itself, which used mixed methods.

An online questionnaire survey of 28 questions included quantitative, multiple choice and open-ended, self-report items A snowballing method was used to disseminate the questionnaire through existing networks, such as SWAN: Scottish Women's Autism Network, autism charities such as National Autistic Society and via individuals with large personal networks within the autism community. In total there were

74 responses. 5 focus groups were held, with autistic women, women who are mothers, parents of girls and school students. The focus groups were recorded, the data then transcribed. Some data has been reported in categorical sets under headings of 'Areas of need identified' and some analysed thematically.

Areas of need identified

- diagnosis
- education (school and post-school)
- friendships
- employment
- pregnancy, childbirth
- parenting/motherhood
- health and well-being incl. mental health
- Self-management skills (for stress, anxiety, sleep issues)
- leisure
- getting older (menopause and old age)

Filmed interviews were conducted with a range of practitioners and academics and the films presented verbatim on the Right Click resource. Academic presentations were also filmed and specialist advice on, for example, eating difficulties, bra-fittings, sexual health, self-care and personal grooming are also on the resource. Crucially and perhaps the most innovative aspect of the resource is that there are many filmed interviews with autistic women who include educators, academics, trainers and presenters, authors, administrators, mothers and grandmothers, of a wide age range and background. These films provide participants in the programme who are autistic, peers and role-models, a shared sense of identity, community and empowerment.

Typical responses to the resource:

"I wanted to say a massive thanks to your and all your colleagues for the brilliant, inspiring Right Click online program. I've been watching it whenever I can and have found it so useful and enlightening."

"...has provided accessible information to a wide range of people. Through the use of short and accessible videos potentially stressful and confusing situations are explained and common behaviours explained"

Conclusion

A 'majoritarian narrative' of autism disempowers and diminishes the life choices and quality of life of young autistic people (Snow, C 2013). Asperger's own definition of an 'autistic intelligence' (Asperger, H 1944) that is unconventional and creative is the basis for an argument that:

"the triadic impairments of social interaction, communication and imagination [sic: DSM IV] are better described as qualitatively different ways to interact, communicate and process information which do not coincide with conventional ones" (ibid p15) (Stewart 2011)

Looking to disability, citizenship or human rights models and challenging the 'normalcy' perspective definitions of autism as deficit and impairment, not only in terms of the criteria for ASC but as internalised beliefs held by autistic people themselves, a disability studies perspective supports an opportunity for people on the spectrum to reframe both their challenges and their strengths and abilities (Bumiller, K 2008, Stewart, C 2016).

Reflecting feminist research narratives that include concepts of 'studying up' and taking cognizance of Spivak's question 'Can the subaltern speak' (Spivak GC 1988), prevalent ontological and epistemological principles, 'the power of the knowledge and narratives of science' (Becker, S. & Aiello, B 2013) which in autism are located primarily within either medical or psychoanalytic models, are under increasing interrogation by the autism community. Autistic advocacy and peer-groups are supporting self-awareness, identity, and confidence (Silberman, S 2016) which in turn is driving a shift in perspective in both autism research and in practice. Research funding grant requirements for example increasingly ask for evidence of autistic involvement in proposals not only as participants but as mentors, reviewers, co-authors. Autism research charity, Autistica UK, recently appointed an autistic post-doctoral researcher as their head of science. The National Autism Project, a privately-financed 3 year project to assess existing research evidence and practice in the UK appointed an 8-strong autistic advisory panel, 2 of which are also on the project's team of 'experts' (5 of the 8 NAP advisory panel are women and one a transgender man) (NAP 2017). This shift has taken place in tandem with an increased visibility – and vocalization - of autistic females.

From its launch in August 2016 to end April 2017, over 500 people have accessed the Right Click programme for Women and girls; participants have included an even spread of autistic women, family members (many parents of girls) and professional practitioners. There have been many opportunities to present arising from the programme, ranging from local parents' groups, Autism Europe Congress 2016, the Scottish Autism Strategy Conference 2017 and the IV International Conference on Advancement in Women's Studies, Toronto 2017. There is an extended project underway based on the aspects of the research pertaining to spectrum mothers; a poster on this research was presented to IMFAR in San Francisco May 2017. Underpinning all is an emphasis on lived experience, facilitation of the authentic female autistic voice, and making visible this previously invisible population.

Not only as a response to a shifting paradigm within autism research and practice, but as a leading proponent of what may be more broadly perceived as a social movement, the Right Click programme was created to empower autistic women and girls, through information and inspiration.

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Muslim jurists' Opinions on Modern In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) Practices: Its Health and Social Implications on Mothers

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Abstract

Fertility is the natural ability to produce offspring or the state of being fertile, which reflects the ability or the natural quality of reproducing animal offspring. In the normal circumstances, fertilization takes place in a natural way, as long as the couple is health, having sexual intercourse and without using preventive measures and practices. However, in the instances in which fertilization cannot be achieved by means of natural intercourse, assisted fertilization by means of artificial insemination and IVF are sought by infertile couples. While fertilization by means of sexual intercourse of married couples seems to be acceptable, fertilization through assisted reproductive techniques and related practices has raised various legal, health social and moral debates across the globe. Like other jurists and legal professionals in the world, Muslim jurists have addressed the legality of artificial insemination as well as health and moral dimensions of assisted reproductive techniques and related practices. They have exhibited a keen interest in this subject, but provided diverse and contrastable opinions on the permissibility of artificial insemination and IVF practices. This paper uses comparative and textual analysis, and aims to address Muslim jurists' legal opinions on health and social implications of IVF on mothers. In the meantime, the paper aims to compare the legal opinions Muslim jurists to that of their counterparts in elsewhere of the world.

Keywords: *in vitro fertilization, health, honor, legal opinions, ethical values*

Introduction

Two of the five major principles of the Islamic Divine Law, are protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*) and protection of the honour and the dignity of the current and posterior generations (*hifz al-nasal*). The former aims to preserve life, hence all forms of suicide, genocide, homicide and other forms of taking human life are prohibited, unless it is life-for-life which should be done in the court of law after due process of fair and just legal trails. The later principles are set to ensure dignified and healthy family lineage, wherein adultery, fornication and other forms of illicit relationships are prohibited, so that the existence and dignity rights of both the existing and future generations are not risked. Through and within these and other founding principles of *Islam*, modern *Muslim* jurists addressed the social and ethical concerns of biomedical practices like IVF. On the one hand, in line with the Islamic conception of knowledge expansion, *Muslim* jurists have generally seen the modern advances in biomedicine as a positive thing, however they have agreed that these practices should be governed by norms of what *ought* to be done, not what *can* be achieved, on the other hand. This is so because, in the Islamic perspective, life is a positive thing in itself, hence having children for married couples is very much encouraged. Based on this prolife outlook, biomedical practices such IVF that are set to assist childless married couples to have children are therefore seen as a positive thing. In addition, among the basic teachings of *Islam* is to seek medical treatment of given ailments, hence IVF and other medical treatment of given diseases like infertility are welcomed. In doing so, *Muslim* jurists however noted that these practices

should not violate principles of safety and sanctity as well as the honour of the patients. Among many ethical and social concerns raised in this regard is, given the fact that pregnancy and fertilization are traditionally assigned to Almighty, God, are scientists and healthcare professionals who are involve IVF, becoming a playing gods? Does IVF violate the dignity of the families involve by unveiling their honour (*Awrah*), particularly during collection of sperm or ovum? Are IVF practices safe in terms of the health implications of the both the intended mother and the children born as a result of this process? Is it free of human errors, such as giving wrong fertilized eggs in the wrong recipients, complications that will lead to legal and social challenges?

Background, Concept and Practices of IVF

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, n.d.), the process to determine global infertility prevalence rates is rather complicated. This is because male and female factors equally contribute to infertility. At the moment, the available estimations only address the female aspect based on the outcome of pregnancy diagnosis and/or live birth. The National, Regional, and Global Trends in Infertility Prevalence Since 1990: A Systematic Analysis of 277 Health Surveys (Mascarenhas et al. 2012) shows the overall burden stays high and unchanged when compared to the previous report in Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), a collaborative effort by ORC Macro and the WHO (2004). The evaluation of DHS found that 25% couples in developing countries are affected by infertility.

The first WHO Strategic Approach workshop in 2013 performed a rapid assessment on awareness, support, and management for fertility care. They said, “*the unmet need for couples and individuals who desire children but require assistance is of emerging interest worldwide.*” WHO has collaborated with the International Federation of Fertility Societies (IFFS) to monitor trends in global fertility care policies and practices. This non-governmental organization (NGO) is in official relations with WHO and issues a triennial IFFS Surveillance Report. The report gives view about assisted reproductive technology (ART) and associated fertility care practices, emphasizing changes in ART worldwide (Ory, 2016).

Begin with research articles in 1999 and 2001 discussing various issues, the IFFS later published surveillance reports starting 2004 onwards. The report aims to depict and record the situation as it existed, highlighting global IVF development and progress. After more than a decade, the reports indicated that the IVF generates greater interest and concern among religious leaders, bioethicists, and the public at large. It can be appreciated that there are more tension and reservation concerning the IVF treatment than any other medical interventions stemmed from various stances of the ART.

Originally known as ‘test tube baby’ method, the IVF involves mixing prepared sperm and ovum (egg) in a dish in the laboratory. The female ovaries are first stimulated with hormones to produce several follicles-containing eggs. The eggs are retrieved and mixed with sperms that can lead to embryos generation in vitro (Nagy et al, 2012). The birth of the world first test tube baby, Louise Brown (female) in 1978 marked dramatic advances in IVF (Ginsburg & Racowsky, 2012; Simpson, 2017; Woods, 2008) and the world of fertility changed forever. The IVF helped women with tubal issue, severe endometriosis, unexplained infertility as well as couples with male factor infertility to have child. In 2012, it was estimated that more than five million children had been born globally using IVF and other assisted reproduction techniques (Adamson, Tabangin, Macaluso, & Mouzon, 2013). The number shows that the IVF has been widely practiced and accepted after more than four decades since its inception.

IVF can be performed if only there are more than one million motile sperm in the post-preparation sample. If the number of motile sperm is lesser than a million, intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) treatment is preferable for the couple. ICSI may be performed if the chances of fertilization are low. This is done by injecting the sperm directly into the egg. The following paragraphs summarize the IVF treatment based on common procedure available for public on website, published by Harley Street Fertility Clinic (HSFC), United Kingdom (see details on the website) and Medline Plus. The HSFC is licensed and regulated by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) (Centre

#0333) and Care Quality Commission (ID 1-175812943) in the United Kingdom. IVF procedures can be divided into five steps.

The first step involves the stimulation of ovaries. Normally, a woman only produces one egg every month. However, the production of eggs can be boosted using drug stimulation. The stimulation starts with the down regulation of the pituitary-ovarian hormones. The hormones are shut down using a drug namely gonadotrophin releasing hormone (GnRH) agonist. Total suppression is achieved less than two weeks. Ultrasound scan and blood test will be done to confirm the down regulation. Then, follicles stimulating hormone (FSH) will be injected daily for 12 to 16 days to boost egg production. The process is called superovulation. The GnRH agonist is continually being administered during this time. Injections of GnRH and FSH will be stopped once the Human Chorionic Gonadotrophin (HCG) injection is prescribed for eggs maturation. Another option in IVF treatment is female's natural cycle which excludes the use of drugs stimulation with no side effects. However, only one mature egg is produced in every month which can be retrieved.

The second step in IVF procedure is egg retrieval. The eggs will be collected after the maturation. Usually, a minor surgery, called follicular aspiration, is done to remove the eggs as an outpatient procedure. The woman will be given medicines so she does not feel pain during the procedure. A suction device connected to a thin needle will be inserted into ovary and eggs-containing-follicles through vagina. During the process, the physician will be using ultrasound images as a guide. The device will pull the eggs and drain each follicle, one by one. The process is then performed on the other ovary.

The third step involves insemination and fertilization. Most of the time, semen sample is freshly prepared on the day of egg collection. However, the semen can be frozen if the partner is not available during the day of the treatment. The insemination or mixing sperm together with the best quality eggs is done in a cultured medium in the laboratory. The mixed eggs and sperms are then labelled and incubated in an environmentally controlled chamber. The sperm enters or fertilizes an egg mostly after a few hours of insemination. The presence of two pronuclei from the egg and sperm indicates the occurrence of fertilization.

The fourth step is embryo culture. A successful fertilization may lead to the formation of an embryo after 48 hours. Fertilized egg divides and becomes an embryo. Normally, two to four cells can be observed at day 2 after the formation of embryo. While, at day 3 the number should increase to six or eight cells. The embryos will be graded based on the cellular outline and fragmentation. Embryos with regular outline and minimal or no fragments are chosen for transfer to woman's womb.

The final step involves embryo transfer. The number of embryos to be transferred depends on the discussion with the couple. The transfer of embryo to the woman's womb may be conducted 3 to 5 days after egg retrieval and fertilization. The procedure is done while the woman is conscious. A thin tube or catheter containing the embryos is inserted into the womb through the woman's vagina and cervix. Pregnancy will result if an embryo sticks to lining of the womb and grows. Several embryos may be transferred into the womb in one time, which can lead to twins, triplets, or more. The remaining embryos in good quality will be frozen for future use or donated.

The woman is advised to continue taking the progesterone supplementation if the pregnancy test is positive. After more than two weeks, an ultrasound scan is arranged. The progesterone is continued until 12 weeks of pregnancy if the scans are normal. However, the prescription of the progesterone supplementation is stopped once the pregnancy test comes negative. The couples may consult their counselor and doctor for future treatment. Interestingly, the technique also allows the woman past their menopause age to get pregnant (Parks, 1996).

In some cases, pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) can be done to screen a genetic disorder in an embryo. The PGD is done about 3 to 4 days after fertilization if the parents have a higher chance in passing hereditary disorder onto the child. A single cell from each embryo will be removed and screened for specific genetic disorders. Then, the parents may choose which embryo to be implanted. This can lower the chance of passing genetic disorder to the next generation.

Muslim Jurists' Opinions on Health and Social Implications of IVF

Like their counterparts around the world, *Muslim* jurists addressed social, health and ethical dimensions of IVF. They have agreed on certain aspects of IVF, however differed on certain other dimensions of these practices. For instance, because IVF for unmarried couples violates the honour and the purity of family lineage, *Muslim* jurists have unanimously prohibited this type of IVF (Mohd Litfi, 2006; Zakaria, 2006). However, with regards to IVF for married couples, there are some jurists who, due to various reasons, opposed to it, while others permitted it for married couples with a continuing marriage contract but with certain conditions (Abu Zayd, n.d.; al-Bar, 1987). The opinion of the contemporary *Muslim* jurists on IVF is well illustrated in series of researches on various contemporary issues, including biomedical issues and practices, from the perspective of the Islamic law and jurisprudence (Arif, 2011a, b) written by professor Dr. Arif Ali Arif.¹ In this series which consists of various volumes, professor Arif, presents an important discussion on certain biomedical issues through and within the Islamic jurisprudential maxims. He addresses the discussions about ethical issues related to health and social implications about IVF in volume 4 of this series. Another important series which includes variety of important academic works on biomedical issues from Islamic *Fiqh* perspective is the journal of the Islamic *Fiqh* Academy (*Majalah Majma'a al-Fiqh al-Islamiyyi*, 1988a,b) of the Organization of the Islamic Countries, in Jeddah. The journal consists of scholarly researches and academic papers written by leading cotemporary *Muslim* jurists and scholars, who attended the international *Fiqh* conferences organized occasionally by the Islamic *Fiqh* Academy on various raising *Fiqh* matters, including bioethical issues like IVF, organ transplant, tissue engineering, surrogate mother and test tube babies, stem cell researches, cloning and ethical concerns about the scientific researches involving human subjects. Besides employing other Islamic references of the subject, the paper uses articles of these series.

Anti IVF

Among *Muslim* jurists, there are those, like Abdullah b. Zaid Ala Mahmoud and others who due to safety and sanctity of the body as well as certain social norms prohibited all forms of artificial insemination, including IVF (Hamza, 2007; Arif, 2011b; al-Bar, 1986). This group of jurists mentioned a number of reasons for the prohibition of IVF that are:

First, in the view of these jurists, IVF is prohibited because practices of artificial insemination contradict with some Qur'anic verses on fertilization and child bearing. This is so because, it implies an intervention and to some extent rebellion act against the natural laws of Almighty, God. As illustrated in the Qur'anic verses 49-50, chapter 42, it is He who creates whatever He will; He makes whomever He want fertile and bestows male or female children according to His Will, and makes barren whom He Wills. In the view of anti-artificial insemination *Muslim* jurists, these verses establish the fact that the ability to fertilize and process of having children is in the power of Almighty, God. As He is who makes whom He wills fertile, and He makes infertile (barren) that He wills, we ought not to interfere God's business in fertilization and reproduction. Hence, man of science should not to interfere with the natural course of birth and reproduction, which should be achieved by means of normal sexual intercourse of married couples. Therefore, according to the view of these scholars, if there are married couples who cannot achieve fertilization through sexual intercourse, such infertility is destined by God, therefore man of science should not interfere the destiny of God. For we ought not to interfere the business of God, IVF is prohibited.

Second, the group of *Muslim* jurists also raised concerns about the process of sperm and ovum collection from the intended parents, which might violate certain social norms, particularly the potential

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violations of *Awrah* (privacy of the body). This is so because, in *Islam*, man and woman are not allowed to unveil their *Awrah* to non-relative person; however, the process of receiving the egg from the intended mother or the sperm from the intended father involves unveiling the privacy of the body in the presence of non-*Mahram* such as medical doctors and nurses who are not among the relatives (*Mahram*) of the intended father and mother of the fertilized egg. IVF therefore seemingly involves violation of the privacy of the body, which is not permissible in *Islam*. Hence, for whatever that leads to prohibited things are prohibited in *Islam*, in the view of these jurists, IVF is also prohibited because it leads to violation of privacy of the body.

Third, another major reason of prohibiting IVF in the eyes of this group of jurists is the safety of the intended mothers and the kids born as a result of this process (Hamza, 2007; Arif, 2011b; al-Bar, 1986). As this process involves, machine assisted fertilization that is achieved in the laboratory dishes, in the eyes of this group of *Muslim* jurists, its health implications on the infants born through artificial insemination, as well as, the health effect of this process on the mother whose uterus has hosted the fertilised egg is not yet clear. In line with the traditional wisdom that dictates to be safe than sorry, this group of jurists give priority to safety over intended benefits of IVF. Hence, they raise serious concerns about the side effects and health risks of IVF on the intended mother's reproductive system, the growing embryo and the infants born as a result of this process. This group of jurists cited some early studies of IVF (Mayo Clinic Staff, n.d.), which suggested that this process might leads to premature delivery and low birth weight, or to other health risks such as ovarian hyper-stimulation syndrome, miscarriage, birth defects, ovarian cancer, egg-retrieval procedure complications, which might damage the bowel, bladder or blood vessels of the intended mother. Similarly, children born as a result of artificial insemination might in the future develop diseases which are unknown. In both instance, IVF involves greater health risk than the intended benefits. Hence, based on the traditional wisdom that dictates prevention is better than cure, artificially assisted fertilization should be prohibited, so that the health of future generations is not risked.

Fourth, another reason of prohibiting this process according to this group of jurists is that, this process risks the sanctity of the family lineage (*nasal*). An essential objective of the Islamic law is protection of *nasl* (family lineage) which should be achieved by means of dignified sexual intercourse between man and woman who are bounded by marriage contract. However, in the cases whereby fertilization and pregnancy is achieved by means of IVF, a process which involves stimulating multiple follicles, egg retrieval to get the eggs, fertilizing the egg in the laboratory and embryo transfer to the uterus, needs to be carefully examined. As this process involves a complicated procedure which human beings play a crucial role, family lineage between the child and the intended parents is determined by the witnesses and certifications of the medical doctors and nurses. This group of jurists contend that this process carries with it a potential implicit risk, particularly in the cases whereby a medical doctor or the nurse, who lacks professional ethics, may dishonestly testify that the fertilized egg belongs to different parents (Arif, 2011b; al-Bar, 1986). Similarly, it is also possible that human errors might take place during the process of insemination, fertilization and implantation of the fertilized egg into the uterus, in such a way that medical doctors and nurses might wrongly pickup, the wrong egg or sperm and fertilize it, then implant it into the intended mother's womb. In this case the intended parent would think that the fertilized egg is theirs, although, due to human errors, the intended mother is not genetically related to the embryo. Thus, as artificial insemination places the purity of family lineage at the mercy of human errors, it should be avoided.

Fifth, another reason of disapproving IVF in the view of this group is related to the methods of getting the sperm of the intended father. The process of getting the sperm might involve sexual arousal of the male so that his sperm is received. However, they raised the concern that sexual arousal (*tahyeej al-gharizah al-jinsiyyah*) that is required to receive sperm sample to fertilize the egg might occur in the presence of non-*Mahram* individuals such as medical doctors and nurses. According to the Islamic etiquettes of public decency, sexual arousal in the presence of non-*Mahram* is undesirable. Therefore, in the instances in which sperm collection involves sexual arousal of the intended parents in the presence of non-*mahram*, IVF then becomes undesirable, and thus should be avoided. Based on the above mentioned reasons this group of *Muslim* jurists prohibited the practices of IVF.

Pro IVF

Unlike the anti IVF view mentioned earlier, which is not a popular opinion among *Muslim* jurists, majority of *Muslim* jurists permit it for married couples with a continuing marriage contract (*'aqd al-nikah*), however imposed certain conditions which are set to guide the process of achieving safe and sound IVF for married couples. In presenting their opinion on social and ethical issues of IVF, these jurists have adopted a two steps approach. In the first phase, they have debated the relevance as well as the way anti IVF jurists interpreted related evidences. In the second phase, this group of jurists permitted IVF but imposed certain conditions for the permissibility of IVF.

With regards to the first phase, this group of *Muslim* jurists, sought to understand the true meaning and the relevance of the given evidences to the issue in hand. For instance, this group of jurists has contested the manner anti IVF jurists interpreted the Qur'anic verses 49-50, chapter 42 (Hamza, 2007; Arif, 2011b; al-Bar, 1986). While acknowledging the fact that, as reflected in the abovementioned verses of the *Qur'an*, it is He who creates whatever He will; He makes whomever He want fertile and bestows male or female children according to His Will, and makes barren whom He Wills. However, the word infertility (*'uqm*) mentioned by this verse, needs to be thoughtfully analysed. This is because as mentioned in the most of the exegetes of the *Qur'an* (*mufasirun*), the word infertility (*'uqm*) mentioned in the verse implies permanent disability to reproduce, whereby a permanently infertile person cannot reproduce in the normal sexual intercourse, nor can he or she reproduce with the help of modern medicine and technology. In this case, the Qur'anic phrase "*wa yaj'alu man yasha'u 'aqiman*" i.e., He makes barren whom He Wills", mentioned in the *Qur'an* applies only to those who are permanently infertile.

With regards to those who can achieve fertility by means of IVF, these are actually fertile people "but there are certain curable diseases or blockages that are preventing the given couple's ability to fertilize. Hence, by means of therapeutic treatment, medical doctors are removing such an obstruction, and thus assisting the couple to reproduce. This process does not however, violate the Will of Almighty, *Allah* (*s. w. t.*), indeed it is He Who created the egg that fertilized naturally by means of sexual intercourse, as well as the egg that is fertilized by means of artificial insemination; in both cases the egg is created by God. Therefore, if fertilization is achieved by means of sexual intercourse, or by means of artificial insemination, in both cases, it is because of the Will of God, thus this verse does not prohibit fertilization by means of artificial insemination" (Hashi, 2015).

On top of that, pro IVF *Muslim* jurists argue that, given the fact that fertility is usually achieved in a normal way, infertility is indeed a disease, the medical healing of which should be sought. Based on the prophetic narrations in which seeking healing for given diseases are required (*tadawu 'Ibada Allah*), childless couples should seek medical treatment from relevant healthcare centres, so that given ailments that leads to infertility are medically treated.

Second, as mentioned earlier, one of the evidences employed by anti IVF jurists was that because it involves unveiling the privacy of the body (*'awarah*) of the intended parents in the presence of non-*mahram* personals like medical doctors and nurses. Nonetheless, pro IVF jurists argued that it is true that unveiling the *awarah* in the presence of non-*Mahrams* are prohibited in *Islam*, however as having children is a great pleasure (*ni'mah*), and childless couples are denied the joys of having children, artificial insemination helps infertile couples to fertilize and thus have children. Therefore, in line with the *Fiqh* principles that allow prioritization in extraordinary circumstances (*darurah*) to perform lesser harm (*akhafu dararain*), to unveil the *'awarah* in the presence of non-*Mahrams* for the sake of achieving fertilization should be permitted. Same as delivering a baby to a male doctor in the absence of female medical doctor is acceptable, then unveiling the *'awarah* for assisting infertile families achieving fertilization is indeed a desirable conduct.

Third, this group of jurists also debated the anti IVF jurists' position of prohibiting IVF on the basis of being a new technique, which is in its early stage that might have a potential health risks in the future on the intended mothers or the babies. Nevertheless, as current practices and cases of IVF have increased in number and advanced rapidly, with no health complications on both mothers and children

born as a result of IVF, the validity of this evidence is seriously challenged. For the potential health complications of IVF are not real nor they are imminent, therefore this should not be the basis of judging the permissibility of IVF or otherwise.

Fourth, it is true that there have been human errors on the side of nurses and medical doctors whereby the intended parents are given wrong egg, mistakes that led to legal controversies. However, these errors are not common, in such a way that the danger of their occurrence is very rare and it can be prevented by putting reliable safety measures in place; therefore, these cannot be basis of judgment. These rare incidents could be prevented further by putting necessary measures of ensuring that such mistakes will not occur. Same like other measures of safety in health centres and hospitals; it is duty of fertility centre administrators, medical doctors and nurses to put in place trustable procedures of safe and sound IVF.

Fifth, anti IVF jurists make an issue about the techniques of getting the sperm, particularly if it is received through arousing the male sexually in the presence of non-*Mahram* individuals. Nevertheless, in the view of proponents of IVF, this is not an issue at all. This is so because, though they agree that getting the male's sperm by arousing the intended father sexually in front of non-*Mahram* is somewhat disgraceful act, yet as there are other means of getting the intended father's sperm for fertilization, such as by means of masturbation (*istimna*) or by means of '*Azl*, i.e., withdrawing the male sexual organ before emission of semen to the female's vagina, then this should not be the basis of prohibiting IVF. Getting the sperm of the intended father by means of '*Azl* have been free of issues, but since permissibility of masturbation is contested among the *Muslim* jurists, concern have been made on the suggestion that masturbation might become one of the means of getting the intended father's sperm. Nonetheless, though masturbation (*istimna*) is not a desirable conduct, however in this case, within the dictates of necessity (*darurah*) which allows performing the lesser harm, masturbation could be the way to get his sperm, instead of sexually arousing in the presence of non-*Mahram*. Hence in the opinion of the proponents of IVF, prohibiting IVF solely on the grounds that sexual arousal of the male might takes place in the presence of a non-*Mahram* is unsubstantial.

Conditions of performing IVF

After debating the relevance and the method of interpretation of related evidences employed by the anti IVF jurists to prohibit IVF practices, this group of jurists presented a realistic and pragmatic approach towards the social and ethical challenges of IVF. In the view of these jurists, IVF practices form a new method of overcoming the challenges of infertility among childless couples. This is to say that, in principle, the practices of IVF are not only permissible, but it is a desirable medical treatment, the functions of which should be further enhanced. Though this group of jurists have exhibited pro IVF view for married couples, this group of jurist however imposed some strict rules on performing IVF, so that real and perceived harms of IVF practices are avoided. They have approved IVF for married couples as long as the following conditions are fulfilled (Zallum, 1999; Hamza, 2007; Arif, 2011b):

(a) To perform IVF there must be a need for it (*an takuna al-hajatu qa'imatan*), whereby fertilization cannot be achieved through other means by the childless couple. As long as fertilization cannot be achieved by childless parents through sexual intercourse, and their infertility cannot be healed by other medical treatments, then IVF is performed to assist childless couples.

(b) IVF is permissible for married couples with existing marriage contract. In the cases in which marriage contract does not exist as a result of death or divorce, then fertilization of the egg of the intended mother with the intended father's sperm is not permissible. In this respect, sperm or egg donation, as well as using frozen egg or sperm after the death of the intended father or after the death of the intended mother are not permissible. In other words, IVF is permitted only if the sperm of the husband in a continuing marital life is used to fertilize the egg of his wife; however, if the sperm or the egg used is from a third party (from so call egg donor or sperm donor), then IVF is not permitted.

(c)The medical team is also required to confirm that the intended parents have the ability to reproduce, but due to certain curable disease or blockage in some parts of the reproductive system, they are unable to reproduce. If let us say that one of them or both are permanently barren, then proceeding with IVF to assist them might generate suspicion about whether or not the resulting embryo is real theirs or otherwise. Hence, medical check-up prior to performing IVF must show intended parents are permanently barren.

(d)Another important condition is that, the egg and the sperm should be received from the intended parents in a dignified manner, such as 'Azl (withdrawal), so that doubtful methods are avoided.

(e)The necessary measures to secure such process must be taken by respective medical doctors and nurses, so that all forms of negligence and carelessness or maltreatment of the sperm and the egg, which can lead to family lineage confusion, are avoided.

Conclusion

Muslim jurists' deliberation on the social and health implications of IVF have covered three major dimensions of this practice, namely; its potential benefits, its health risks and social implications. It seems that Muslim jurists generally acknowledged the medical benefits of IVF for married couples, however they have noted the social and health implications of this medical practice. Some of them argued that the social and health risks posed by IVF practices overweight its benefits and thus prohibited it. Majority of the jurists however, did not see it in that way. Same like other biomedical advances that are designed to improve our medical knowledge, majority of the Muslim jurists permit IVF for married couples, as long as relevant principles of life saving and preservation of family lineages are not violated. Therefore, IVF is seen as a positive medical advance that assists the diseases of infertility for married childless, yet like other biomedical advances IVF should be governed and guided by the principles of the shari'ah, so that perceived and potential risk of this practice is avoided.

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The Feminization of Migration

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Abstract

Migration in Brazil is going through an interesting phenomenon: the feminization of migratory flows. More women have chosen to immigrate to obtain better quality of life for themselves and for their families. This feminization obliges society to reanalyze the role of women, especially in Brazil, where this study was performed in. The migratory route chosen, the selection of the destination country and the decision of staying and integrating society has become increasingly a female responsibility. This article intends to delineate a brief analysis of the political participation of migrant women in the Brazilian political context and show that the invisibility, once attributed to women in the migratory process has become inadequate. Starting with the women's movement approach, studies have observed the role of immigrant women and have provided instruments to help think of specific law and public policies for this population.

Introduction

The movement of people over national borders has intensified in recent decades for a number of reasons, such as armed conflicts, natural disasters, economy and politics. The discrepancy in capital and informational flow in comparison with transnational migratory flow presents challenges to the States.

Transnational immigration results in the necessity to critically analyze the concepts and paradigms related to sovereignty, territory and to the State. Analysis of these topics, however, does not emerge only in academic research, but also in social coexistence and in the perceptions of the "other". The 2015 UN (United Nations) report on immigration, estimated that there are 244 million international immigrants in the world, an increase of almost 41%, in comparison to the 2000 (United Nations, 2016).

In Brazil, the migration tendencies follow the same patterns as the global flow. The Brazilian Ministry of Justice estimated that, up to 2014, 1.7 million immigrants were registered in Brazil, and the Federal Police Department, through a research request on the Electronic System of Citizenship Information (Sistema Eletrônico de Serviço de Informação ao Cidadão), informed that 597,287 immigrants lived in the City of São Paulo that same year. (POLÍCIA FEDERAL, 2015)

Transit of people and cross-border migration has reveal opinions that were asleep in societies and, consequently, prejudice and xenophobia emerge. Solidarity ties within a community are strong only regarding peers, since they defend their own national cultures and, therefore, transform the "other", the immigrant, into an invader and cultural intruder.

Cases of xenophobia in Brazil and in the rest of the world have increased steadily, but still, for about a decade; Brazil has changed its outlook regarding migratory movements and has attempted to distance itself from the traditional national security immigration paradigm.

An example of the changes mentioned above is the Free Transit and Residency Agreement for Citizens from the member countries of MERCOSUL – Common Market of the South (Mercado Comum do Sul). A treaty signed in 2002, but started to be implemented in 2009, along with the extension of this agreement to the associated States, such as Bolivia, Columbia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru. This means that Brazil facilitated legal regulation for these migrants and guaranteed them access to public education and health care.

Another important attitude adopted since 2014 as a government policy is the concession of Humanitarian Visas for Haitians, which has also stimulated broad discussions about migration. Current Brazilian legislation, ratified at the end of the military dictatorship, has authoritative inclinations, which focuses in national security and makes clear distinctions between native and non-native workers. Due to this intensifying debate, a new bill has been suggested and accepted in Congress and awaits presidential approval.

Trustworthy statistical data on the number of women who have migrated to Brazil don't exist. The Federal Police, responsible for controlling the entrance of migrants and refugees into the country, when questioned about the proportion and number of immigrant men and women, informed that it does not have available information (FEDERAL POLICE, 2016).

Methods and Materials

In addition to bibliographical research, data provided by the Secretariat of Human Rights of The City of São Paulo were used, by means of the Coordination of Migrant Policies, along with data from the International Organization for Migrations, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) and data from the Federal Police, organ that controls migration in Brazil.

After a detailed analysis of theoretical references related to this topic, a data study was performed with the most recent information provided by the institutions cited above. However, it is important to highlight that these numbers should be used as projections, because within the result offered by these institutions there are large numerical discrepancies.

Results

We noticed that even with the obvious feminization of migration in Brazil, within the three concepts mentioned above, the topic of migrant women is still invisible to Brazilian society and untouched by social institutions.

Discussion

Data show us that women correspond to half of the global migrant population. Increasingly, women migrate on their own or with young children in search of better quality of life. In Brazil, this tendency is also noticed, considering the data provided by IBGE.

Table 2145 – Naturalized Brazilians and Immigrants, by date in which residency was fixed in the country, gender and age group. ²						
Variable – Non-Brazilians (People)						
Age group - Total						
Year - 2010						
Federal Unit	Grouping of years in which residency was fixed in the country x Sex					
	From 2001 to 2005			From 2006 to 2010		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Brazil	42300	24409	17891	85622	49222	36400
São Paulo	16874	9361	7514	32843	18903	13939
Source: IBGE – Demographic Census						

The relevance of women in migratory processes demonstrate the necessity to create a space for them to develop their own economic production and to project their voices to the rest of society, especially because, in comparison to migrant men, they are discriminated twice as much, due to racism and sexism. In the City of São Paulo, which annually receives the highest number of migrants in Brazil (INGE, 2010), the situation of migrant women exposes the social necessity to elaborate ways for their inclusion.

Gender studies and the popularity of feminist movements have increased the visibility of women in the global migration agenda, despite decades delay. *The impact of feminist movements in the migratory context meant redefining the migrant woman and promoting her as main actor in the migratory process* (MAGLIANO and DOMENECH, 2009 – freely translated).

In this sense, using the division of the feminization concepts, elaborated by Robert Marinucci, in the migratory field, it is possible to separate Quantitative Feminization, feminization according to the Visibility of Migrant Women and Qualitative Feminization (MARINUCCI, 2007).

Quantitative feminization is represented by the number of women in migratory flows, and data shows us that this population is increasing. However, it is important to highlight that these numbers should be viewed under a gender focused outlook.

It should be also stressed that feminine migration, from a quantitative standpoint, is profoundly conditioned by gender-related factors. Researchers Boyd and Grieco defend that gender constraints are present in border crossing in pre- and post-migratory stages. The hierarchical and patriarchic relations in families may jeopardize autonomous decision making, as well as feminine access to necessary resources, such as money or information. The cultural and axiological context of society

² All translations from Portuguese to English, including citations and charts, were done by the author.

generates a strong influence, as it established the role of women and their limitations in the migratory act (MARINUCCI, 2007 – freely translated).

Under this outlook, it is possible to think of feminization of migration regarding the matter of migrant woman visibility. Migration studies first granted space for gender related debates in 2000:

In the 1990s, the topics “family” and “gender” were incorporated into migration studies produced in the United States. Steven Gold lists three reasons for this change. Firstly, the increase of immigrant women. Thus, one of the aspects that define “new immigration” to this country is its large feminine contingency. Secondly, the increase of feminist influence in academic research which puts women’s experience at the center of knowledge production. Finally, the presence of a large number of immigrant women has led to relevant political implications, such as demands for better housing and for more extensive social assistance services, making them the center of the research.

In Brazil, the influence of feminism in the academic world, despite the pioneer work of Helleieth Saffiotti and Eva Blay, emerges later, with the creation of gender studies in the 1980s. Bibliographical production on “gender”, as an analytical category in migration studies, started in the 1990s in the United States and in Brazil in the 2000s (KOMINSKY, 2007 – freely translated).

Lastly, with regard to qualitative migration, we can affirm that changes have occurred in the profile of migrant women, consequence of the changes in gender relations. Structuralist theories on migration used to view gender as a transversal topic, which silenced women in migratory debates.

With regard to the motivations to migrate, another set of non-economic factors seems to impact the selectiveness of migration and is mentioned by more women than men. The following factors can be considered non-economic: the transgression of sexual limits imposed by society, conjugal problems and physical violence, the impossibility of divorce, unhappy and dissolved marriages, discrimination against feminine groups and the absence of opportunity for women (ASSIS, GLAUCIA, 2007, p. 745).

At the time when women started being seen as active agents in migratory processes, the need to create space for them to develop their protagonism and recognition process was observed.

This recognition is a consequence of opening space for dialog, so that their demands can be heard and debated. Analyzing the City of São Paulo, it is possible to note that the inauguration of public spaces was a demand of the migrant population, so that there would be horizontality and participation in the elaboration public policies, and, when the government provided these spaces, migrant women demanded that their needs become part of this debate agenda.

To exemplify this, we can observe the Bolivian community in São Paulo, which is the second largest in the city, because immigration to countries that share borders is cheaper. Additionally, the opportunities offered by the MERCOSUL treaty and the smaller linguistic barriers also have great impact. Bolivian migration is also affected by the feminization process, which simultaneously acts as a causal factor and as a result of the transformations in gender relations. (NOBREGA, 2002)

The United Nations, in its 2015 International Migration Report, estimated that 48% of migrants are women. Specifically in Latin America, and in contrast to North America, the number of migrant women has increased faster, when compared to 2010 (UNITED NATIONS, 2016).

Number of international migrants by sex and major area of destination, 2000 to 2015

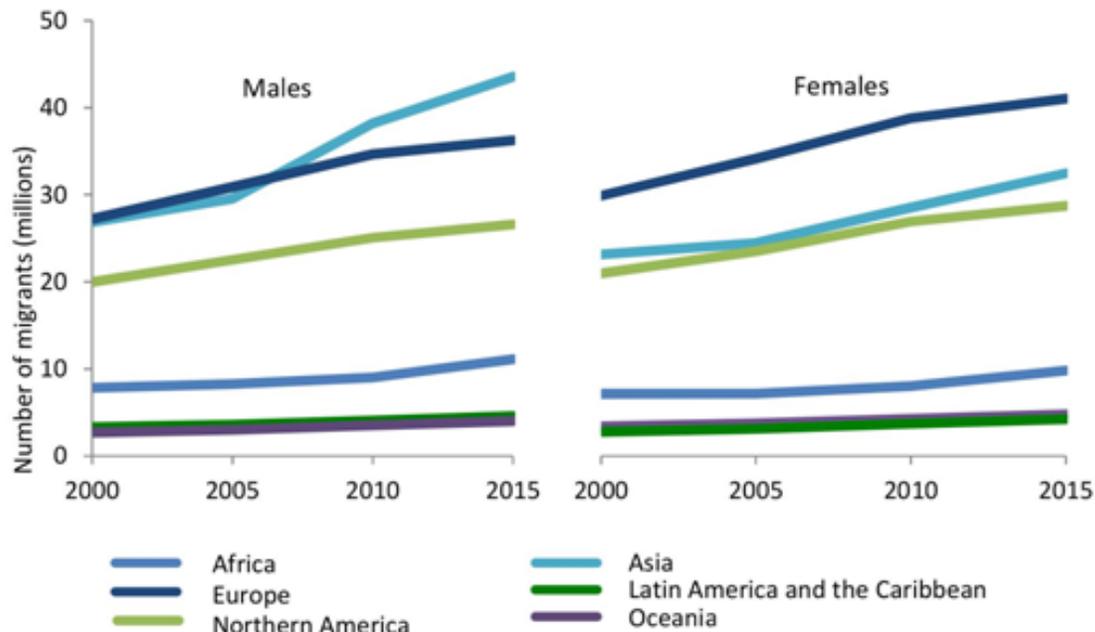


Figure 01 – Source: International Migration Report 2015 – United Nations, p. 11.

Within this contextualization, it is possible to notice that migrant women have their rights suppressed twice, due to racism and sexism. The troubles experienced by Brazilian women reach immigrants in a more potent way, because there is an accumulation of vulnerabilities.

A good example of intrinsic sexism in the country is the omission of the word “gender” in the new migration bill. Migrations are feminized, but the legal instruments do not deal with women’s particularities.

Additionally, the social expectations of women on their participation in society has drastically changed, which also modified their expectations regarding participation in the job market and in the elaboration of integration policies. The integration of women should, therefore, be comprehended as a process that looks to obtain financial autonomy, which started with their decision of migrating, was consolidated by their expectation of social participation. Even when these women migrate with their families, it is important to highlight that this is still an individual act that has several purposes.

Migration executed alone or in the company of others, is an individual activity imbricated in collective strategies that serve several purposes. Unsuccessful, successful or neither of these results, still has an affirmative context of searching for autonomy and freedom for the migrant that is redefining the hierarchies and solidarities in gender

relations within families, in the generation of job opportunities, in education, leisure and everyday friendships (SCOTT, 2012).

Considering the changes in migration flow protagonism, the changes in expectations of social insertion for these women reveals their desire to search for social and financial autonomy and to fight for horizontal spaces, where dialog is promoted, their opinions and agendas are discussed and where they share leadership with men.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research demonstrates that, contrary to its migratory context of quantitative and structural feminization, Brazil still hasn't encompassed a significant reflection about women's access to political rights.

Several projects created by migrant women fight for active participation in matters that involve public migration policies by sharing concerns and creating support networks in several communities. The VII World Social Forum for Migration, which happened in 2016 in the City of São Paulo, declared in its final statement the importance of creating public policies that recognize gender particularities, empowerment and social participation.

The fight against the silencing of the situation that affects migrant women and the absence of political policies that guarantee their rights stamped the debate. If the migrant population already has reduced rights, immigrant women are even more invisible, given the naturalization of systemic oppression to which they are submitted. Therefore, we demand the end of colonization of our bodies that is expressed by multiple oppressions, such as: depreciation of female workforce, domestic, obstetrical and psychological violence, traffic of immigrants, traffic for the purpose of sexual and labor exploitation, imposition of heteronormativity, and other causes that characterize the industry of immigrant exploitation. In light of this situation and in an amplified point of view, which also considers the LGBTT community and is based on Yogyakarta's Principles, it is fundamental to recognize the protagonism and empowerment of women to formulate public policies that consider the particularities of gender relations associated to contemporary migration flows (FSMM, 2016).

Public migration policies need to dialogue with migrant women, because if not these governmental initiatives constantly risk becoming sources of oppression, inapt and unrecognized by this population.

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“Inversion” as a Woman Writer’s Weapon in Arundhati Roy’s *God of Small Things*

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Abstract

*As an astute muckraker, Roy uses the narrative technique of “inversion” to express her worry over the abuse of women, and her equal concern for all categories of the marginalized, be they women, children, factory workers or paravans. In true muckraking tradition, her novel touches upon a plethora of social evils – political and social hypocrisies, patriarchal property rights, ill-treatment of divorced women, caste issues, wife-battering, and so on. A strong sense of grievance lends an angry colour to her work. Roy’s *The God of Small Things* as a specimen of women’s writing displays an obsessive urge to articulate anger through the technique of “inversion”, in turn made possible through the novel’s constantly changing perspective and its non-linear progression. “Inversion” accounts for the undertone of irony that runs through the novel. It colours the title, the ordering of each individual chapter, as well as the controversial end. “Inversion” ensures the effectiveness of the title in foregrounding the “small things” as the central preoccupation of the novel. It also works cleverly to expose the contrast between the apparent and the real, and so upset reader expectations. It also determines the ordering of the events that constitute the novel’s diegesis. The technique of inversion allows the event of the punishment to precede the so-called crime. The crime is relegated to the end, and ironically makes possible the inversion of a happy ending to a sad story.*

Keywords: abuse, anger, inversion, irony

Introduction

Deeply conscious of the enormous chasm between the powerful and the powerless, Arundhati Roy has evolved over the years as the most outspoken spokeswoman for the dispossessed of the country, be they the Ammus or the Veluthas. In her own words, “the theme of much of what I write, fiction as well as nonfiction is the relationship between power and powerlessness and the endless circular conflict they are engaged in” (*The Ordinary Person’s* 2004). As an accomplished muckraker, she uses the narrative technique of *The God of Small Things* as a deliberate tool that enables and empowers her to hammer a protest, to voice her dissent against society, tradition, religion, history, nation, and the establishment. As she puts it, the only thing worth globalising is dissent (Barasamian, 2001). Julie Mullaney rightly records Roy having become “a byword for protest . . . a Kleinian ‘brand steward’ (Klein 23), ‘identifying, articulating and protecting’ what she herself terms as the ‘business of protest’ (Power Politics 24)” (2005). Protest has become for her an attitude of mind – an obsessive, compulsive urge to turn everything on its head, to expose the underbelly, to whittle at our most treasured assumptions, and so shock us out of assured certainties and comforting complacencies. Perhaps it could be possible to say of her that like Ammu in the novel, she displays “the reckless rage of a suicide bomber” (*GOST*, p.44) as also “a lofty sense of injustice and the mulish reckless streak that develops in Someone Small who has been bullied all their lives by Someone Big” (*GOST*, pp.181-82). True to the image of Ammu, Roy is an angry woman writer who to compensate for centuries of bullying, does “exactly nothing to avoid quarrels and confrontations. In fact, it could be argued that she [seeks] them out, perhaps even [enjoys] them” (*GOST*,

p.182). In fact, Roy assesses her authorial role as “someone who asks very uncomfortable questions” (*Algebra* 2001, p.177).

In this paper an attempt shall be made to examine the extent to which Roy’s narrative technique in *The God of Small Things* facilitates her quarrel and confrontation with the world. If narrative technique is the medium and the method, the question is how effectively it functions as a vehicle for a woman’s protest. This paper shall focus on “inversion” as an efficient narratological tool for the transmission of a message.

Discussion

“Inversion” as identified by Annette Kolodny happens to be a characteristic feature of women’s writing (1975). Kolodny (1975) identifies the tendency in women’s writing to invert “generalized traditional images and conventionalized iconographic associations so that they come to connote their opposites” (p.80). Further, she discovers “almost a conspiracy to overthrow all the nice comfortable patterns and associations of a previous (and for the most part male-dominated) literary tradition” (p.81). *The God of Small Things* displays just such a marked inclination to resort to “inversion” as a subversive narrative strategy that allows the woman writer frequent occasion to disrupt the hegemony of patriarchal structures. To begin at the official beginning, the title itself serves as an illuminating illustration of “inversion” in operation, and in initiation of a process that will control the entire narrative. Such a statement has the authority and sanction of the author herself. To a question in an interview, “What is the God of Small Things?”, Roy (1997) gives an answer:

To me the god of small things is the inversion of God. God’s a big thing and God’s in control. The god of small things [. . .] whether it’s the way the children see things or whether it’s the insect life in the book, or the fish or the stars, there is a not accepting of what we think of as adult boundaries. This small activity is the under life of the book.. (Wordsworth Interview)

The conventional worldview conceives of God as a big thing, identifiable with the wider order and pattern of life, in supreme charge and command of the big things that create history. The so-called Big God presides over the large happenings of the world, “the vast, violent, circling, driving, ridiculous, insane, unfeasible, public turmoil of a nation” (*GOST*, p. 19). In contrast, it is a Small God that presides over miniscule individual lives, caught up in forces too large and powerful for these individuals to understand and to change. Roy inverts the Big God to foreground the Small God, “cosy and contained, private and limited” (*GOST*, p.19), who sanctifies the small things, the little events and ordinary things at the expense of the grand narratives that ordain the momentous events that should constitute history. Julie Mullaney (2005) rightly records that “the excavation of these relations between the small and the large, the private and the public governs the ostensible plot of *The God of Small Things*” (p.38). The Small God scripts an alternate history – a private personal inversion of the archive of the past – that upsets conventional expectations of what such an archive should constitute.

In the process of reassembly, Roy inverts “History” to linger lovingly on “a fountain in a Love-in-Tokyo”, on “brown feet in Bata sandals”, on an “Elvis Puff” and “beige and pointy shoes”, on “the cross-stitch pattern on Ammu’s cheek”, on “a light brown birthmark shaped like a pointed dry leaf on a black back”, on “the smell of old roses on a breeze” or on a “sourmetalsmell” No doubt, such images may be dismissed as small things, but each carries a powerful history. Roy’s version of “History” allows for a plurality of voices, initiating a multiplicity of narratives that attempt to impose their own pattern on the disordered fragments that go to make the kaleidoscope of the world. What should be noted is that the presence of such a plurality of voices makes possible an eloquently explicit articulation of those absent and invisible histories that are generally overlooked in the larger narratives of history and politics. These are histories of those such as Velutha – the metaphoric God of Small Things who “left no footprints in sand, no ripples in water, no image in mirrors” (*GOST*, p. 265). As Ng Shing Yi (2003) points out:

Like the small things upon which the novel dwells, the main protagonists of the story essentially occupy peripheral positions in their family or society. *The God of Small Things* attempts to overturn their marginality, their absent histories, by recording the careful detail of their lives, each minute fantasy and idea, the small creeping emotions that culminate in passion or despair . . . the novel is ultimately concerned with marginality, absence and loss: in other words the invisible narratives that are consumed by power, politics, or imperialism. (Quarterly Literary Review Singapore online)

Such narratives enthrone Velutha, Ammu, Rahel and Estha just as powerfully as they do the bat baby, Kochu Thomban, the little swallow in the sky blue Plymouth, and the Kathakali dancer. Significantly, the pattern that is thus woven enables the valorization of “small things”- a valorization which for Roy is very much an attitude of mind, a way of seeing the world which she has vouched for even in her later writing. To quote her words (1999) from “The Greater Common Good”:

We have to support our small heroes. Of these we have many . . . Perhaps that’s what the twenty-first century has in store for us. The dismantling of the big. Big Bombs, big dams, big ideologies, big contradictions, big countries, big wars, big heroes, big mistakes. Perhaps, it will be the century of the small.

(Arundhati Roy unofficial Website)

Roy’s predilection for “the small god” and “small things” engineers the inversion of the Big God, and that of the received narrative of “history”. Yet the point to be noted is that such inversion is possible largely on account of Roy’s “freewheeling” pyrotechnics with narrative technique.

It is found then that “inversion” as an attitude of the mind, and as a characteristic feature of women’s writing controls not only the title but also the matter and the method of the narration. This is not to argue that inversion, irony, or sarcasm is not used by men, but to suggest that Roy, as a woman writer loads her anger against the establishment via inversion, fitting in perfectly with the pattern Kolodny observes in women’s writing. It may be stated that inversion works well for the category of the dispossessed, the marginalized, and the bullied. Since woman happens to be a permanent member of such a category, she exploits inversion to the hilt. Every stage of Roy’s narration shows evidence of inversion. Inversion has a curious propensity. It carries and contains immense potential for the expression of a range of emotion - anger, indignation, bitterness and sarcasm – the most prominent on the agenda of the underdog, and hence serves as the appropriate medium for the message of an angry young woman. There is always the attempt to linger over deceptive appearances, and then tip them over to unmask unpalatable realities, or point out what used to be, and contrast it with what has now become, or invert an adult’s view to present a child’s. The first chapter itself shows up so many such contrasts. There is the sickening contrast between the grimness of the tragedy of Sophie Mol’s funeral, (as shown up through the intervention of the omniscient narrator/authorial voice) and a child’s uncomprehending logic in the face of it. It is a logic that allows Rahel to very sensibly argue that had Sophie Mol been killed on a zebra-crossing, the government would have paid for her funeral, just as if they had been born on a bus, the government would have guaranteed a lifetime of free bus rides. Rahel’s argument horrifies the reader into a comprehension of her total bewilderment and inability to contain the enormity of the tragedy. In effect, it functions as a macabre inversion that further serves to maximize the impact of the tragedy. Subsequently, the visit to the police station shows up the irony of the inversion of the declaration that the police stood for “Politeness, Obedience, Loyalty, Intelligence, Courtesy, Efficiency” through a demonstration of the brazen insolence of Inspector Thomas Mathew as he taps Ammu’s breasts with his baton. What is immediately apparent is the snide sarcasm, and the refusal to be impressed by so-called inflated ideals as also the attempt to uproot rosy expectations.

As the narrative unfolds to accommodate the viewpoints of Ammu and Chacko, inversions often take the form of specific *Ammuisms* and *Chackoisms*, the prime function of which is to shock and awe us out of convenient delusions. Since both are adept at plainspeaking, the inversions come naturally to them.

Thus Ammu can look aghast at a photograph of herself as a bejewelled bride, and wonder in bemusement as to how she could have “permitted herself to be so painstakingly decorated before being led to the gallows. It seemed so absurd. So futile. Like polishing firewood” (*GOST*, p.44). The children in their innocence make frequent references to “what Ammu said”, and whatever she says becomes for them the gospel truth. So Ammu says “that human beings were creatures of habit, and it was amazing the kind of things they could get used to . . . beatings with brass vases were the least of them”(GOST, p.50). Then again Ammu says that “Pappachi was an incurable British CCP, which was short for *chhi-chhi poach* and in Hindi meant shit-wiper” (*GOST*, p.51). Chacko, the Rhodes scholar, in turn, points out in pedagogic expansion that “the correct word for people like Pappachi was *Anglophile*” (*GOST*, p.52). Ammu is not impressed by Chacko’s academic achievement either. (“Going to Oxford didn’t necessarily make a person clever” (*GOST*, p.56)) or his self-proclaimed Marxism. (“Just a case of a spoiled princeling playing *Comrade! Comrade!* An Oxford Avatar of the old Zamindar mentality – a landlord forcing his attentions on women who depended on him for their livelihood” (*GOST*, p.65). Chacko’s bitterness and Ammu’s sarcasm then find outlets in the inversions that are a ubiquitous feature of the entire narrative.

Not only does “inversion” colour the vitriolic exchanges between Ammu and Chacko, it runs through the entire narrative as a prominent strain that exerts its own pattern and control over the ordering of even the chapters. The chapter heads make their own explicit statements in the sarcastic tongue-in-cheek tone of the omniscient narrator (authorial voice) while more often than not, the chapter contents are a subtle inversion of the absurd promise of the titles. While a chapter head like “Big Man the Laltain, Small Man the Mombatti” is an overt reflection of the inversion of the title *The God of Small Things*, it makes a cynical comment on the vulnerability of the “small”, as exemplified in the figure of Estha, in the face of the intimidating juggernaut of the “big”.

Subsequent chapters make inversion a habit. “Abhilash Talkies” captures the irrepressible excitement of children out on an excursion to see *The Sound of Music*, anxious not to miss the beginning – the rippled velvet curtain going up and Julie Andrews exploding on to the screen. The screen freezes one version of reality – the blue Austrian sky, and the captain with seven children. “Clean children, like a packet of peppermints. . . . They were clean white children, and their beds were soft with Ei. Der. Downs. The house they lived in had a lake and gardens, a wide staircase, white doors and windows, and curtains with flowers” (*GOST*, p.105). However, the immediate reality of Estha and Rahel is in stark contrast – a total inversion – brought into sharp focus through Estha’s ugly encounter with the OrangeDrink Lemondrink Man. The two versions of reality run a collision course. One version sings of “Girls in white dresses and blue satin sashes” and “How do you hold a moonbeam in your hand” while the other finds Estha holding not a moonbeam but a penis to oblige the sleazy OrangeDrink LemonDrink man. The inversion is startling enough to provoke a wave of nausea, and the reader along with Estha battles against “a greenwavy, thick-watery, lumpy, seaweedy, floaty, bottomless, bottomful feeling” (*GOST*, p.107).

The next chapter boasts a presumptuous title – “God’s Own Country” – the official slogan of Kerala Tourism. However, significantly, the chapter that follows works a sullen inversion to establish just the opposite. Kerala, as Roy would have it, is anything but God’s own country. The chapter is replete with sarcasm and takes a sly dig at the grandiose title. There is the tone of regret that the once beautiful river has degenerated to being merely “a swollen drain” (p.124). To quote again:

Once it had the power to evoke fear. To change lives. But now its teeth were drawn, its spirit spent. It was just a slow, sludging green ribbon lawn that ferried fetid garbage to the sea.
(*GOST*, p. 124)

What the tourist brochure offers is a travesty of the glory that was once Kerala. Thus, the prime function of the chapter is to “invert” the illusion that the title generates.

Yet another chapter that exploits inversion tactics is “Wisdom Exercise Notebooks” wherein Rahel takes a trip down memory lane to rummage through old book-shelves to discover a treasure trove of old Wisdom exercise books which carry the remains of Estha’s early attempts at mastering the mysteries of the English language. The notebooks record the innocence of childhood, and bely the *Wisdom* of the title. They render a simple account of Estha’s memory of a certain memorable birthday of

Ammu's in the past when the twins gift a diary to their mother, and enjoy intimate moments of shared confidences as they lie at the back of their mother. While the books bring on a wave of nostalgia, the chapter is all the more poignant as it juxtaposes the memory of life with that of death, of a birthday with a death day. Estha's exercise in composition writing narrates a moment of unspeakable happiness which is swiftly followed by Rahel's account of Ammu being fed into the incinerator – "Her hair, her skin, her smile. Her voice" (*GOST*, p.163). The inversion affects a pathos that weighs over the entire narration. However, such an inversion is enabled entirely on account of Roy's free-wheeling with time and point of view.

"Inversion" continues to plod its sarcastic way through other chapters as well. "Welcome Home, Our Sophie Mol" is a charade played out in honour of Sophie Mol wherein the family takes Sophie Mol to its bosom in an extravagant gesture of anglophilian ecstasy. However, the warm welcome is for "the little angel" Sophie Mol who is "loved", but the chapter foregrounds its inversion which takes the form of the cruel rejection of "the little demons" Estha and Rahel who are "loved a little less". In the world view of the anglophiles, "Littleangels were beach-coloured and wore bell-bottoms. Littledemons were mudbrown in AirportFairy frocks with forehead bumps that might turn into horns" (*GOST*, p. 179). Again, it is the juxtaposition of differing points of view that accommodates the inversion.

Yet again, the chapter head "River in the Boat" is itself an "inversion". We would expect the boat to be on the river. But, since the boat leaks, the river enters the boat, literally and metaphorically. The boat carries and contains the magic and mystery of the river which entices only to kill. Further, the chapter "Kochu Thomban" introduces the kathakali performance in its extravagance of vigour, colour, and gesture. The dance lingers over Bhima's annihilation of Dushasan, and recalls the violence of another occasion. A long ago comment of Comrade Pillai surfaces. "Raudra Bhima – crazed, bloodthirsty Bhima in search of death and vengeance" was according to Pillai "searching for the beast that lives in him". The authorial comment that follows is excruciating in the "inversion" it affects:

Which beast, in particular, Comrade Pillai didn't say. Searching for the *man* who lives in him was perhaps what he really meant, because certainly no beast has essayed the boundless infinitely inventive art of human hatred. No beast can match its range and power. (*GOST*, p.236)

Then again, "Work is Struggle" is a chapter head that exploits a popular slogan of the Communist Party that has on its ostensible agenda the uplift of the poor. The ensuing chapter makes short shrift of such pretensions and establishes instead a horrifying inversion of such tall claims that conceal the clay feet of hypocrisy and double standards. Velutha is a cardholding party member who is betrayed by his own party leader. Pillai who claims to be the harbinger of change is himself perhaps the most stubborn hurdle in the path of change. Pillai betrays Velutha many times. The author intervenes to make a cynical comment that registers the "inversion": "Another religion tuned against itself. Another edifice constructed by the human mind, decimated by human nature" (*GOST*, p.287). Comrade K.N.M. Pillai masquerading as "the Crusader for Justice and the Spokesman of the Oppressed" has clay feet. Again the omniscient voice of the narrator, heavily laced with sarcasm, identifies Comrade Pillai and Inspector Thomas Mathew as "mechanics, servicing different parts of the same machine" (*GOST*, p.262). Thus the chapter makes use of "inversion" to make a mockery of the grand narrative of what Communism claims to do. The slogan "Work is Struggle" loses its sheen, and holds out no promise.

But perhaps the most painful "inversion" comes in the chapter entitled "Saving Ammu". Interestingly, what the chapter dramatises is not the "saving" but the "damning" of Ammu. Inspector Thomas Mathew must "save" himself since he cannot have the death of Velutha in custody while the twins insist that they were not abducted, but went to the History House of their own volition. Simultaneously, Baby Kochamma must "save" herself since she cannot countenance the ignominy of being accused of lodging a false FIR. Baby Kochamma picks on a convenient escape route. She "embroiders" reality, and terrorises the twins into believing that they had "murdered" Sophie Mol, and that the only way they could "save" themselves and Ammu from jail was by identifying the dying Velutha as their abductor. In sheer terror, Estha complies, and the little family of mother and kids is not "saved",

but “damned” forever. For Estha, “childhood tiptoed out. Silence slid in like a bolt” (*GOST*, p. 320). For the little family, it meant “not death. Just the end of living” (*GOST*, p.321). Finally, even the last chapter has an ironic edge to it. The title, “The Cost of living”, implies a calculation in economic terms, but the chapter content assesses the same cost in traumatic terms, in the form of a cynical comment on the cost of Ammu’s and Velutha’s transgression of the Love laws. As the narrator puts it,

they knew already that for each tremor of pleasure they would pay with an equal measure of pain The cost of living climbed to unaffordable heights; though later Baby Kachamma would say it was a Small Price to Pay. Was it? Two lives. Two children’s childhoods. And a history lesson for future offenders. (*GOST*, pp. 335-36)

Conclusion

Thus, on the basis of the above illustrations, it may be argued that “inversion” as a strategy permeates and patterns Roy’s narrative at the level of its basic structure. While on the one hand, there is the attempt, via *Ammuisms* and *Chackoisms* to wage war on the inherent prejudices that straitjacket thought and action, on the other hand there is the effort to expose the lacuna between the apparent and the real, between the ideal and the actual. While the chapter head suggests one version of reality, the chapter substance projects the “inversion” of that reality to proclaim its very opposite. Such a strategy serves as a fitting outlet for the barely suppressed anger that forms the undercurrent of the novel. Such a strategy also serves to give powerful expression to Roy’s savage indictment of the “Big Things” – History, Politics, Religion, Custom, Love Laws that do not allow “the scurry of small lives” to continue with the business of living. As Madhu Benoit (2006) puts it:

Roy, as behoves a writer-cum-political activist, wrote *The God of Small Things* as a head-on attack on the Kerelese caste-ridden society, and the cruel destiny it reserves for both women and untouchables . . . Roy wrote her book with a heavily loaded political message . . . (p. 85)

While “inversion” serves as an efficient escape valve for anger, it also works in subtle ways to upset reader expectations through the clever manipulation of the ordering of the events that constitute the novel’s diegesis. To quote Kolodny(1975) again:

Extrapolated to thematic concerns, the “inversion” pattern may even structure the plot, by denying our conventional expectations for a happy ending and substituting for it an ending which is conventionally unhappy, but which, in terms of the particular work, pleases or satisfies nonetheless. (p. 81)

How may we perceive such an “inversion” pattern in the manner in which the novel ends? It is important here to be able to decide first about what we may label as the “ending”. Does the novel end at the last page? Or does it end with the event which is chronologically the last in the novel’s diegesis? The last event in the chronology of events is the incestuous union of the twins - Estha and Rahel while the last pages of the novel dramatise the transgressive union of Ammu and Velutha. Both represent acts of transgression. Interestingly, the former ends on a note of pathos, a fitting end to a tragic tale of love, madness, hope, infinite joy and devastating sorrow – “what [the twins] shared that night was not happiness, but hideous grief”. However, the novel ends officially on a note of ecstasy with the euphoric union of Ammu and Velutha, offering in the process an illustration of “inversion” in action, and so upsetting the reader expectation of a conventional sorrowful ending to a tragic tale. Roy chooses to dwell on happiness, and provides a fairy tale ending even when the readers are already aware of the tragic sequel to these moments of stolen bliss. Such an ending in the form of an “inversion” is possible entirely on account of the novel’s narrative technique that insists on deliberately disrupting the chronology of events that make up the novel. The “inversion” is able to effectively communicate the author’s point of view. To quote Roy’s own words (1999):

I think that one of the most important things about the structure is that in some way, the structure of the book ambushes the story. You know it tells a different story from the story the book is telling. In the first chapter I more or less tell you the story, but the novel ends in the middle of the story, and it ends with Ammu and Velutha making love and it ends on the word “tomorrow”. And though you know that what tomorrow brings is terrible, the fact that the book ends there is to say that even though it’s terrible, it is wonderful that it happened at all. (Simmons online)

When the novel ends in the middle of the story, it represents an “inversion” of reader expectation. It is force-ended on a note of perfect harmony – “the curtain falls on two unions, one sad, albeit endowed with a certain quality of healing, the other . . . a rapture” (Benoit, 2006, p.84). The “inversion” of the end is able to carry the weight of a political message. What is earlier merely hinted at, implied, suggested, assumed through Vellya Paapen’s disjointed, incoherent hysteria is suddenly brought to the forefront to be delineated in loving detail. There seems to be a woman’s method (inversion) in the madness. Roy’s opening chapter castigates the infamous love laws. The closing chapters dramatise the blatant transgression of the love laws. When the act of transgression becomes the only note of harmony, to be revered and treasured, the author is able to craft an ending which sanctifies the act, and strongly indicts the love laws which condone an unequal and unjust world. Ted Gioia (2011) rightly states:

. . . the novel itself, despite the horror of the central story. . . closes on a lyrical note. The effect is almost akin to a rewinding of a film back to a moment before all the terrible things happened, and a lingering on that beauty of small things that contributes so much to this book’s allure. (*The New Canon* online)

But perhaps Brinda Bose honours Velutha’s death best when she says:

There is an exploration of shame and defeat here, certainly, but the politics of the novel is contained in the subversion of this shame and defeat through the valorization of erotic desire. To lunge, knowingly and deliberately, for what one must not have – for what will result in shame and defeat – is to believe that the very process of the pursuit would render the ultimate penalty worthwhile. To know that there may be death at the end of it – and still to desire – is not necessarily to accept a just punishment but to believe that such a death is not a shame and a defeat. (97-98)

In the context of our argument, it may be stated that when the novel ends not on the note of the shame and defeat of Velutha’s death, but on the euphoria of an act of transgressive sexual union, there is a happy ending that eloquently valorizes erotic desire. Thus, it is possible to conclude that “inversion” as a strategy controls not only the beginning and the body, but also the end of the novel.

It would seem then, at this juncture, that “inversion” is the only distinctive feature of women’s writing that colours *The God of Small Things*.

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The Witch, The Maid and Ideological Bodies

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Abstract

Mary Wollstonecraft's attempted persuasion of woman to "acquire strength of both mind and body" is still being prevented. Through the use of *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, and inspection of the two victimised female characters in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, this essay responds to the history of shallow depictions of women and how their ideologically scarred bodies, created by a domineering male author, have shaped the endless misrepresentations of women in literature. Consideration of Britney Blystone's *Extremes of Gender and Power*, exposes the failures of Shakespeare in challenging the hegemonic ideology of the time. He wrote in favour of the inferior treatment of women, sustaining the elevated pedestal of the ruling class man - a technique which *The Body in Literature* identifies as an unwavering characteristic of male authors. Recognising this, foregrounds the historical miasma of unjust which has festered across literature at the hands of writers such as he; fuelling the construction of the female body as a self-grown prison for the mind – one which women have been trained to adore obediently. Hélène Cixous strived to create a new ideological context for the body, quite simply through the allowance of women having their chance to speak. This essay, seeks to emphasise the need to re-write the idea that the defiant woman is not merely an embodiment of fear for all men, but instead exists as symbolic of an overdue true representation of the female - breaking through ideological restraints, regaining her owed power in society and art.

Keywords: Shakespeare, misrepresenting female bodies.

The Witch, The Maid and Ideological Bodies

'I wish to persuade women to endeavour to acquire strength both of mind and body, and to convince them that the soft phrases, susceptibility of heart, delicacy of sentiment, and refinement of taste, are almost synonymous with epithets of weakness' (*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*).

Discuss ideological approaches to the body.

The body in writing is always scarred with ideology. The presentation and interpretation of the female body by male authors is bound with problematic ideologies. As a female author, Mary Wollstonecraft attempts to reject the female body as performed to please men and presents an alternative bodily performance - designed to abandon "delicacy" in favour of "strength".³ However, what is the impact of her call for women to perform femininity differently? These two perspectives of the female body - weakness and strength - are explored by Wollstonecraft in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (2015). However, Wollstonecraft's commentary can also be used to frame two female characters in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (2008);⁴ Miranda and Sycorax. Miranda is a female character who is raised with her body under the control of men, bending to their expectations. In contrast, *The Tempest's* only other female character; Sycorax is free of these restraints as she exists without a body. However, ultimately, both female characters are victims of the ideology of the text.

To understand the different ways in which ideology influences and shapes the body in text, we must first understand what ideology means. As Slavoj Žižek notes in *Mapping Ideology*,⁵ ideology is not just about the truth or belief of a time period, it is intrinsically linked to power:

*...we have ideology 'in-itself': the immanent notion of ideology as a doctrine, a composite of ideas, beliefs, concepts... destined to convince us of its 'truth', yet actually serving some unavowed particular power interest.*⁶

³ Wollstonecraft, Mary, 2015. (1792) *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Vintage Feminism Short Edition)

⁴ Shakespeare, William, 2008. (1610-11) *The Tempest* ed. Orgel (Oxford World's Classics)

⁵ Žižek, Slavoj. *Mapping Ideology*. (London: Verso, 1994)

In extension to this, the literary theory of ideology suggests that these “power interests” always leak into texts due to the fact that the texts themselves are a product for consumption by the masses. This means that Shakespeare’s plays are subject to the reigning ideology of the Renaissance, including issues of power in gender and race. In the book *Essaying Shakespeare*,⁷ Karen Newman draws attention to these issues in her chapter ‘And Wash the Ethiop White’: “Shakespeare was certainly subject to the racist, sexist and colonialist discourses of his time”, however, she identifies that plays such as *Othello*, which challenge the leading ideology of race and love, “stands in a contestatory relation to the hegemonic ideologies of race and gender in modern England.”⁸ Shakespeare’s plays offer the opportunity to challenge ideology and shock audiences, however, much like *Othello*, *The Tempest* is nonetheless subject to the context of the hegemonic ideology of the time - most in particular, the inferior treatment of woman by men.

The Tempest presents characters which embody Wollstonecraft’s concerns of the female “epithets of weakness”, most notably in Miranda. She solely seeks to be defined by male characters, most notably her father; “You have often begun to tell me what I am, but stopped, and left me to a bootless inquisition...”⁹ Miranda’s identity and body are in the hands of her father’s wisdom and guidance, and in this, she “submit[s] everywhere to oppression”¹⁰, just as Wollstonecraft suggests. Miranda’s body acts at her father’s orders “Thou art inclined to sleep...*Miranda sleeps*.”¹¹ Like a helpless puppet, Miranda’s body is at the mercy of her father’s commands. Miranda consistently displays Wollstonecraft’s concerns of the female mind and body being estranged. So that when they solely act together, they “blindly submit to authority”¹², too often aspiring that the “‘highest praise is to obey, unargued’ – the will of man.”¹³

Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* warns the reader of the shallow depiction of women and their bodies in literature; particularly “the fanciful female character, so prettily drawn by poets and novelists, demanding the sacrifice of truth and sincerity...”¹⁴ This character, in this case Shakespeare’s Miranda, becomes the perfect representation of a woman completely under the influence and shaping of patriarchal ideology. Prospero’s discipline of her body; her manners and her mind, is symptomatic of the hegemonic ideology. For instance, when he demands of her to “Be collected. No more amazement.”¹⁵ Miranda’s subjugation is frequent and demeaning, and her every movement and reaction is policed by her father.

Furthermore, Miranda and her body become an object; to be exchanged to a worthy party by her father for only his own gain, or as Wollstonecraft describes it; “...woman are suitably married according to their ranks, by their parents.”¹⁶ In *Identities in The Tempest, Tempests in Identities*¹⁷ it is noted that Miranda’s virginity makes her a “woman who is depended upon as an ‘exchange object’ between Prospero and Ferdinand”. Her body is also a broader symbol for the integrity of the island; “If you be maid or no?”¹⁸ Her body and in particular, her virginity, is the only part of her of any interest to men on the island. Ideology and body collide with Miranda’s virginity and sexuality. Kristeva also suggests that there is “various constraints

⁶ *Ibid.*, (Zizek 10).

⁷ Karen Newman, 2006, ‘And Wash the Ethiop White’: *Femininity and the Monstrous in Othello*, a chapter in the book *Essaying Shakespeare*

⁸ *Ibid.*, p157

⁹ op. cit. (Shakespeare, *Tempest*, 1.2. 34-36)

¹⁰ op. cit. Wollstonecraft. p34.

¹¹ op. cit. (Shakespeare, *Tempest*, 1.2. 185-186)

¹² op. cit., Wollstonecraft. p20.

¹³ *ibid.*, p47.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p32.

¹⁵ op. cit. (Shakespeare, *Tempest*, 1.2. 13-14)

¹⁶ op. cit., Wollstonecraft. p63.

¹⁷ Tuğlu, B. (2016). Identities in The Tempest, Tempests in Identities. *International Journal of English and Literature*, 7(5), pp 62-68

¹⁸ op. cit. (Shakespeare, *Tempest*, 1.2. 428)

imposed upon the body of the [subject] [...] by the family and social structure”¹⁹ Miranda’s body is a symbol of integrity and society, subjected to the ideology of the island;

*Then as my gift, and thine own acquisition
Worthily purchase, take my daughter. But
If thou dost break her virgin-knot before
All sanctimonious ceremonies may
With full and holy rite be ministered...²⁰*

Prospero’s description of his daughter’s virginity is not a soft allusion to virtue, but a vivid bodily image through which her body and her worth are inextricably linked. His “obsession with Miranda’s sexuality demonstrates the value of chastity in a patriarchal society.”²¹ Miranda holds no ownership of her own body and virginity. That power resides in her father, who uses her as a symbol of his own righteousness. Miranda is “objectified and dependent”, to be bartered as a ‘worthily purchase’ or a ‘gift’ to be traded by men.

Wollstonecraft identifies that the submission and “tyranny”²² of women begins in their childhood, where the “bewitching bashfulness of youth”²³ is easily moulded and manipulated. “Taught from their infancy that beauty is woman’s sceptre, the mind shapes itself to the body, and roaming round its gilt cage, only seeks to adore its prison.”²⁴ Miranda and her *girlhood* is no exception to this. Her body is a prison for her mind, which is also controlled and manipulated by hegemonic ideology which values women’s chastity and obedience.

The study of the body is very popular across feminist literary theory, significantly in the essay *The Laugh of Medusa*²⁵ by Hélène Cixous. She suggests that female bodies are shaped and silenced by ideology:

I write this as a woman, toward women. When I say “women”, I’m speaking of woman in her inevitable struggle against conventional man: and of a universal woman subject who must bring women to their senses and to their meaning in history.²⁶

Cixous knows that the female body is powerful, and censoring it is an abuse of women and their right to expression. Shakespeare silences Miranda throughout *The Tempest*, not only through writing her body as an object to be traded by men, but also by ensuring that her father is present in all of her scenes. Miranda is never given a moment to truly express herself. In Scene 4 Act 1, she has one line on her own and has no input on Prospero and Ferdinand’s conversation about her virginity even although she is present. In Scene 5 Act 1, after her final line: “O brave new world! That has such people in’t!”²⁷, she falls silent the second her father enters and does not say another word for the remainder of the play, allowing her fate to be directed by others. Miranda herself is unaware of the wrongs that are befalling herself and her body, as she has no connection or agency with her body. Cixous states simply; “censor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time”²⁸, effectively saying that Miranda’s entire essence and existence has been silenced by the men in her life.

¹⁹ Kristeva J (2000). “Revolution in Poetic Language.” *Identity: A Reader*. Eds. London: Sage.

²⁰ op. cit. (Shakespeare, *Tempest*, 4.1. 13-17)

²¹ Blystone, Brittny, 2012. *Extremes of Gender and Power: Sycorax’s Absence in Shakespeare’s The Tempest*, Vol.5 (Northern Kentucky University: 2012)

²² op. cit., Wollstonecraft. p41.

²³ *ibid.*, p53.

²⁴ *ibid.*, p31.

²⁵ Cixous H; Cohen K; Cohen P, *The Laugh of the Medusa, Signs*, Vol. 1, No. 4. (Summer, 1976), pp. 875-893.

²⁶ *ibid.*, p875

²⁷ op. cit. (Shakespeare, *Tempest*, 5.1. 183)

²⁸ op. cit., Cixous. p880.

Miranda is Wollstonecraft's definition of a victim of patriarchal ideology, the ideology that although not a deliberate dehumanisation, ultimately strips women of their strength; "Men are not aware of the misery they cause, and the vicious weakness they cherish, by only inciting women to render themselves pleasing..."²⁹

Similarly to Wollstonecraft, Cixous also concurs that women and their bodies have been controlled and censored by men since childhood:

*...from their childhood which men have been trying desperately to make them forget...the little girls and their 'ill mannered' bodies immured, well-preserved, intact unto themselves in the mirror! Frigidified.*³⁰

For Cixous, men shape the bodies of women and their behaviour based on their own wants. In terms of *The Tempest*, with Prospero striving to rule the island, he shapes Miranda, just as he does his other subjects: to serve him completely.

The Tempest is a play devoid of female influence or any ideology which might challenge the hegemony. Without other female influence in Miranda's life, she has no other truth but the ideology of patriarchy. She asks of her father "...had I not Four or five women once that tended to me?"³¹ and Prospero demonstrates his complete control and influence of her mind through replying with "Thou hadst, and more, Miranda; but how is it That this lives in thy mind?"³² Prospero is not satisfied with Miranda's isolation, but also seeks to erase any memory of other women which might influence her. This absence of women in the play is discussed by various critics, including Ann Thompson in her work, "*Miranda, where's your sister?*", where Thompson notices the lack and absence of female character, apart from Miranda's 'younger sister'³³, who is portrayed as even more trivial than her. Prospero eradicates any memory in Miranda's history that may connect her to any other woman, in order to make him the centre of her world. He has full control of her past, present and future.

Prospero's oppression of his daughter's body is not only a way of maintaining his superiority and shaping his ideal woman, but as explained in *The Body in Literature*³⁴, this behaviour plays into the wider ideologies of the play, "to uphold the authority of one part of the state (the ruling party)"³⁵, in this case, Prospero and his claim to supreme ruler of the island.

Cixous, like Wollstonecraft, urges women to see their "senses and their meaning in history"³⁶ but instead of insisting upon a certain kind of behaviour, she asks them to write their selves; "write yourself. Your body must be heard."³⁷ Cixous wants to create a new ideological context for the body: which is a woman having their chance to speak. By breaking through these restraints, women will regain their power in society and art. It could be argued that this act of rebellion and transcendence is achieved in *The Tempest*. Although Miranda is the only physical female body in the play, there is one other female that leers over all in a much freer, and spectre-like existence – Sycorax.

As this character died before the narrative begins, she no longer possesses a body to be controlled. She is depicted as a strong and powerful magic wielder - the only character described as equal to Prospero. Brittany Blystone acknowledges the significance of Prospero's portrayal and fear of Sycorax in her essay: *Extremes of Gender and Power: Sycorax's Absence in Shakespeare's The Tempest*;

²⁹ op. cit., Wollstonecraft. p74.

³⁰ op. cit., Cixous. p877.

³¹ op. cit. (Shakespeare, *Tempest*, 1.2. 46-47)

³² *ibid.*, (Shakespeare, *Tempest* , 1.2. 48-49)

³³ Thomson, Ann, 1995, '*Miranda, where's your sister?*': *Reading Shakespeare's The Tempest*' in Kamps, I.

³⁴ Maude U, Hillman D, *The Body in Literature*, 2015. (Cambridge University Press)

³⁵ *ibid*, *The Body in Literature*, chp.4, Staging Early Modern Embodiment.

³⁶ op. cit. Cixous, p876.

³⁷ op. cit., Cixous, p880.

*Prospero's story accidentally portrays Sycorax as an independent woman who remains powerful after losing her virginity...Prospero constructs Sycorax in contrast to himself, but he only exposes the contradictions of his patriarchy.*³⁸

In his attempt to control and condemn this *irregular* woman, Prospero unknowingly fashions the “model of a powerful woman who breaks gender restrictions”, the type of woman that Cixous and Wollstonecraft have been alluding to as the true representation of women – no delicacy, not afraid to “rise above vulgar prejudice.”³⁹

This defiant female entity becomes the embodiment of all of Prospero's worst fears, as she presents “an alternative to the chasteness that Prospero imposes on Miranda”⁴⁰, as well as being associated with ideas that oppose his male successional beliefs. She still remains powerful though she is unmarried and has lost her virginity - her bastard offspring owns the island in her stead; a claim that Prospero seeks to erase as he claims the island as his own. Therefore Sycorax remains a constant threat in his mind, a reminder that another powerful woman like her could easily come into his existence at any moment and reclaim control – not only over the island, but to their right of self and bodily existence.

Prospero characterises Sycorax's ‘body’ as the complete “embodiment of wickedness”⁴¹ and terror in the eyes of a Shakespearian audience; a “foul” “damned” “witch”⁴², wielding dark and dangerous magic. Prospero physically shapes Sycorax, forming a body where there is none in the play, harnessing the power of imagination as described in *The Body in Literature*, “to transform the body itself”⁴³, using the fragments of memories of Sycorax that the islanders have told him and skills of storytelling to create an image of a fearful “hag”.⁴⁴ He manifests her a body that is entirely grotesque and unhuman. Wollstonecraft identifies; “...men have increased that inferiority till women are almost sunk below the standard of rational creatures”,⁴⁵ Prospero turns Sycorax into something that can only be regarded as unacceptably monstrous.

Blystone, with reference to Rachana Sachdev's *A Feminists Companion to Shakespeare*⁴⁶, distinguishes this contrast of the two ideological perspectives of the female body represented in *The Tempest*; “Sycorax is “the deviant, powerful, ‘monster-like’ female,” while Miranda is “a chaste, obedient, and dutiful daughter””. Despite the ways in which Sycorax's body - or lack thereof - disrupts the hegemonic ideology, she ultimately cannot escape it. In fact, literary theorist Blystone believes that “Her absence is an extreme example of women lacking agency and representation”⁴⁷. Sycorax's body is only known to the audience through her characterisation by male characters, and ultimately becomes a nightmare to the audience.

Even though Sycorax represents a woman who acts in the way that meets Wollstonecraft's definition of ‘strength’, her body is not free from the constraints of ideology. As Cixous suggests, “woman has never *her* turn to speak.”⁴⁸ Sycorax is still defined by the male ideological gaze, and is often used in a way for men to gain power over each other, just as a furious Caliban does in scene 1 act 2; “This island's mine by Sycorax my mother”.⁴⁹ Despite her defiance, Sycorax is still a “slave of man”,⁵⁰ just as Miranda is. Ultimately,

³⁸ op. cit. Blystone.

³⁹ op. cit. Wollstonecraft. p85.

⁴⁰ op. cit. Blystone.

⁴¹ op. cit. (Shakespeare, *Tempest*. Introduction, p19).

⁴² *ibid.*, (Shakespeare, *Tempest*, 1.2. 258)

⁴³ op. cit. *The Body in Literature*, chp.4, p43.

⁴⁴ op. cit. (Shakespeare, *Tempest*, 1.2. 269)

⁴⁵ op. cit. Wollstonecraft. p23.

⁴⁶ Sachdev, Rachana, 2001, *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare*. (Oxford: Blackwell) pp 208-225.

⁴⁷ op. cit. Blystone.

⁴⁸ op. cit. Cixous. p879.

⁴⁹ op. cit. (Shakespeare, *Tempest*, 1.2 331)

⁵⁰ op. cit. Wollstonecraft. p23.

women's bodies in *The Tempest* cannot perform defiance in the play, never safe from male oppression and ideology in texts from the male perspective.

Another layer of body and performance in *The Tempest* comes from its staging as a play. Shakespeare's plays were written with the knowledge that the roles would be played by men, to a male dominated audience. This means that to clarify the gender of each character, the young male actors would have performed femininity in a stereotypical and exaggerated form to make themselves identifiable as playing a female character;

*The Tempest demonstrates that sexuality and authorship are nevertheless bound up in compelling ways with the question of identity on the early-modern stage. These are, finally, questions that play themselves out in the body of the actor.*⁵¹

The body is controlled by ideology, not just through its representation in text, but also in the way that it is performed. However, Wollstonecraft suggests that all gender is performed to conform to ideology. As Wollstonecraft notes; "Women likewise acquire, from a supposed necessity, an equally artificial mode of behaviour."⁵² This suggests that, like actors in a play, women shape and use their own body to perform female behaviour, as dictated by male ideology.

Both Wollstonecraft and Cixous urge woman to put a stop to this misrepresentation; "women must write woman"⁵³, or in other words, female bodies must first be represented correctly on their own terms, only then will they be free of male ideology. However, Wollstonecraft does not see females as powerless victims of ideology; she sees the faults in their conformity. Throughout *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, it is plain to see that Wollstonecraft does not instil all the blame upon men, she too blames "the ignorance of woman!"⁵⁴ for bending to the ideology of men.

Ideology leaks into all text, and perhaps, just like Shakespeare, Wollstonecraft was not free of the patriarchal ideology of her time. Cixous identifies this effect as such: "Men have committed the greatest crime against women...they have led them to hate women."⁵⁵ Wollstonecraft turns against women she considers 'weak', demanding for them to perform femininity in a way that values strength. In a very similar sense, Wollstonecraft's concept of the body is plagued with as much ideology as Prospero's – they both wish to bend the representation of women's bodies to their own will.

Regardless of whether or not a female is defiant or obedient, seeking Wollstonecraft's 'strength' or displays an expected 'weakness', women's bodies remain subjected to male dominant ideology. Their state of existence is reduced by restricting and scarring them. By the identification of these two distinct types of representation within *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, the proof of male authors silencing women through manipulation of their minds in their adolescence, so as to claim control and ownership over their bodies, is made evidently clear through critiquing texts such as *The Tempest*. Shakespeare exemplifies the craftsmanship of literature serving as the metaphorical bars of the female's containment, shown through his degrading descriptions of Sycorax and Miranda. By this aiding of the hegemonic ideology, he contributed to the very foundations of the prisons that still restrain women's bodies in literature was set – resulting in the starting point of the continuous construction of bodily confinement through the normalisation of conformity. Without recognition or any action taken towards combating this historical miasma of accepted inferior treatment of women, this disease of unjust will continue to spread, unnoticed and unrectified throughout future writings. The misrepresented image of a woman's body will eternally become the only form recognisable of a supposed female in both text and reality.

⁵¹ Johnson, Nora, 1997, *Body And Spirit, Stage And Sexuality In "The Tempest"*.

⁵² op. cit. Wollstonecraft. p62.

⁵³ op. cit. Cixous. p877.

⁵⁴ op. cit. Wollstonecraft. p51.

⁵⁵ op. cit. Cixous. p878.

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On Women in Brazilian Popular Music

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Abstract

From a relational perspective according to which art not only reproduces the status quo but also anticipates and corroborates transformations through its ability to propagate new discourses and discursive practices by articulating multiple social agents, this paper uses the findings of a case study on the representation of women in Brazilian popular music to explore the relational role engendered by songwriters, performers and dissemination media in the transition from the first to the second waves of the feminist movement. Thus, it investigates how these compositions, individuals and institutions engage in relational actions vis-à-vis the changes experienced in the societal contexts in which they are inserted, with an emphasis on 'discontinuities' - as well as in 'permanencies' - in the ways women are represented in the compositions that were analyzed. Lyrics were grouped into three factors - 'Unpredictability', 'Objectificity' and 'Ideality' - supported by the oscillation of the representations in relation to the different historical moments within which they emerge - 'New Republic', 'New State', 'Post-war', 'Military Regime' - and their protagonist agents. The analysis for all of the above focused on the transition from the first to the second wave of the feminist movement. As a result, it was possible to grasp the protagonism - individual and collective - of the construction of relational devices that support effective strategies of 'discontinuity' and/or new 'discursive agendas'.

Keywords: *Social Representation; Relational Perspective; Feminist Movement; Feminist Movement Waves.*

Introduction

The transformations that the first and second waves of the feminist movement bring to the social role of women and their gender conditions are evident. However, if the actions of a woman who sparks the first wave are restricted to her home space where her *status* of 'queen' is embodied in her main attributions of caring for her husband and children while frequently being thought of as intellectually less gifted, the one who inaugurates the second wave of the movement is faced with new issues and, consequently, with new challenges (Alonso, Breyton, Albuquerque, 2008).

Within such a scenario, opening up spaces in the labor market and in *polis* implies in demanding other 'speech spaces', discourses and power devices that can enable and sustain new achievements. Thus, it is significant to acquire a better understanding of the transformations that are present in the landscape that supports the shift from the first to the second wave of feminism, in particular the possible permanencies and ruptures in the ways women are socially represented in this transition.

In essence, it would be possible to define the first wave - or first generation - of feminism as the period that comprises the emergence of the feminist movement, which stems from a liberal campaign of women's struggle for equal civil, political and educational rights that used to be reserved exclusively for men. The suffragette movement, which was structured in England, France, the United States and Spain, played a fundamental role in this phase by stressing the fight against the discrimination of women and guaranteeing their rights, including voting rights. It is at this first phase that the oppression against women imposed by patriarchy is denounced (Narvaz & Koller, 2006; Meyer, 2004).

The second wave - or second generation - emerged in the 1960s and 1970s and its emphasis in the United States was on denouncing male oppression and on the pursuit of equality; on the other hand, in France it postulated the need to value the differences between men and women by reflecting, in particular, the specificity of the female experience that was usually relegated to the background, if not simply ignored. The proposals will therefore be characterized by positions that emphasize the differences and the uniqueness of female subjectivity (Narvaz & Koller, 2006; Meyer, 2004). Generally speaking, the feminist movement in Brazil will follow international trends, although under the historic influence of French perspectives.

Adhering to this purpose and based on the premise that art not only reproduces, but in large part anticipates and corroborates changes, both at the discursive level and at the political, social and behavioral levels, the main purpose of this paper is to present results of research aimed at investigating the role of Brazilian Popular Music – MPB in disseminating distinct forms of social representation of women and their implications in the dynamics of transitioning from the first (19th century to 1950s) to the second wave (1960s and 1970s) of the feminist movement, in Brazil (Narvaz & Koller, 2006; Meyer, 2004).

Thus, we sought to investigate how women see themselves being addressed in MPB during the time encompassing the end of the 19th century to the mid-twentieth century. The option to analyze the category of 'Woman' based on musical compositions is directly associated to their relevance as a form of cultural manifestation that embodies wide capillarity and the ability to produce – as well as to reproduce - discourses, behaviors and social practices.

Method

The stages to select, process and analyze the musical compositions targeted by this study were developed between February 2014 and September 2016 by using manual techniques in addition to the qualitative data treatment *Nvivo 9.0* software application.

During this time, the lyrics of the songs were selected by identifying the signifiers that are directly associated with the concept of 'Woman'. As a starting point for the analysis that was carried out, it should be emphasized that the musical compositions and the information related to them were inserted into an Excel spreadsheet that specified the number of the record and of the song track; the name of the songwriter and of the performer; the year it was created; the lyrics to the song; the passages that made references to women, including expressions and signifier correlates; and the history of the song. This procedure was applied to the 304 compositions included in the first issue of the 'History of Brazilian Popular Music Collection', produced and distributed by Editora Abril Cultural through biweekly publications containing an editorial, critical texts, biographies, and an offering of songs performed by Brazilian artists who are representative of MPB in the decades between 1880 and 1970 (Milani, 2014).

Data analysis followed the sequence proposed by Langley (1999) and Montanari, Scapolan, Gianecchini (2016). Thus, the initial stage of the analysis involved the building of 'narratives' associated with the compositions that had been selected, with the aim of identifying what each signifier concerning the concept of "Woman" was intended to explicitate, in what context it was inserted, and for what possible interests it had been used (Montanari, Scapolan, Gianecchini, 2016; Garud and Rappa, 1994).

That having been done, and following the interactive process recommended by Strauss and Corbin (1990), the data associated with each of the compositions and their creators - included in the contents of the collection – was used as the basis for the final outline of the 'narratives' underlying the signifiers listed. In this regard, and in order to develop a more accurate understanding of the cases, each one of the authors carried out independent readings of the lyrics.

It should be noted that going more deeply into applying the 'microanalysis' recommended by Strauss and Corbin (1990) gradually led to deeper immersion into the data as well as to the emergence of categories for grouping the signifiers obtained, thus providing greater precision as to its distinguishing characteristics (Montanari, Scapolan, Gianecchini, 2016).

Results and Discussion

As a result, categories such as '*Unpredictability*', '*Objectificity*', '*Ideality*', began to emerge intuitively and were refined throughout the analysis in successive cycles between discussing new data emerging from the lyrics and the theory, as shown on Chart 1.

Chart 1- Qualitative categorization of signifiers by category

Category	Factors	Main Observable Signifiers
Woman	Unpredictability	Chance, abnormality, passion, risk, ruin, joke, whim, uncertainty, jealousy, conquest, consolation, heart, cruelty, distrust, despair, clutter, contempt, destiny, unpleasantness, dissimulation, ambiguity, emotion, deceit, forgetfulness, lack, spell, deception, flirtation, frailty, scape, illusion, inconstancy, indecision, infidelity, ingratitude, insensitivity, tear, madness, lust, late night, hurt, evil, malice, girl, mystery, danger, death, world, night, look, another, past, loss, crying, promise, provocation, unreason, regret, longing, seduction, sensuality, sentimentality, subjectivity, suffering, loneliness, superficiality, pain, betrayal, sadness, vanity, revenge...
	Objectificity	Lover, <i>baiana</i> , doll, cute, arms, mixed-race, mulatto, home, gypsy, columbine, body, kitchen, dance, desire, money, domestic, domination, favor, offspring, swing, lips, blond, blonde, chauvinism, soft, husband, materialistic, mine, brunette, little brunette, mulatto, orgy, legs, possession, pleasure, serve, shadow, submission, replaceable, work, advantage, dress, neighbor...
	Ideality	Calm, belief, worship, affection, loved one, love, angelic, beauty, blessing, caress, marriage, Cinderella, understanding, child, divine, sorrowful, damsel, charm, embellishment, star, frailty, ideal, light, lady, mother, muse, music, dating, eyes, prayer, small, perfection, prayer, dear, saint, mermaid, dream, smile, verse...

Source: Research data

In order to better match the economic, social, cultural and behavioral transformations experienced by Brazilian society throughout the period being analyzed (1880-1970) to the path taken by MPB, we chose to distribute the compositions by stages, as proposed by Tinhorão (1998): 'Brazil Republic' (1880-1919), 'New State' (1920-39), 'Post-war' (1940-1959) and 'Military Regime' (1960-1970). Thus, our 'hypothesis' is that different historical moments show variations in the narratives and characteristics attributed to women. And, therefore, the extent to which we could speak of possible 'discontinuities' (Foucault, 1997) regarding the social representation of women, in particular basing ourselves on the transition between the first and second waves of the feminist movement in Brazil.

In order to verify the representativeness of the factors produced we took into account the number of recurrences, decade by decade, of each signifier that was related to the concept of woman (977). Following that, when articulating the signifiers with the evolution phases of Brazilian Popular Music (Tinhorão, 1998) it was possible to obtain values for each factor (Table 1).

Table 1- Quantitative analysis of signifiers per decade

Stages	Unpredictability	%	Objectificity	%	Ideality	%	TOTAL
BR	24	44.4	20	37.0	10	18.6	54
EN	210	52.5	119	29.8	71	17.7	400
PG	153	47.5	89	27.6	80	24.9	322
RM	82	40.8	61	30.3	58	28.9	201
TOTAL	469	48.0	289	30.0	219	22.0	977

Note: It considers the number of times that words appear, even if repeated in relation to the factors obtained, by stage.

The characterizations of each of these stages vis-à-vis the values obtained for this research were outlined.

In general, our study points to 'permanencies', although it suggests important factors to build 'discontinuities' regarding the social representations of women in MPB. More specifically, it points to relations between such representations and the historical stages they are linked to, which brings us back to the relevance of the influence of contextual changes - socioeconomic, cultural, political and behavioral ones - as well as the struggles and the victories fought by feminist movements (Arán, 2006).

Nevertheless, it is worth noting the prevalence of music compositions that retain, over time, traditional forms of male domination (Bourdieu, 1999). It is true that the findings point to the hegemonic and recurrent trait of women's representations that repeatedly link them to binary pairs, such as 'nature-culture' (biological-corporal vs. cultural-discursive), 'objectivity and subjectivity' (unpredictability-irrationality vs. objectivity-rationality), 'subject-object' (satisfaction-pleasure vs. production-achievement). Such pairs are reinforced by signifiers that restrict women's private and domestic spaces, often under justifications that emphasize their fragile and unstable character, as well as the naturalness of their maternal instincts.

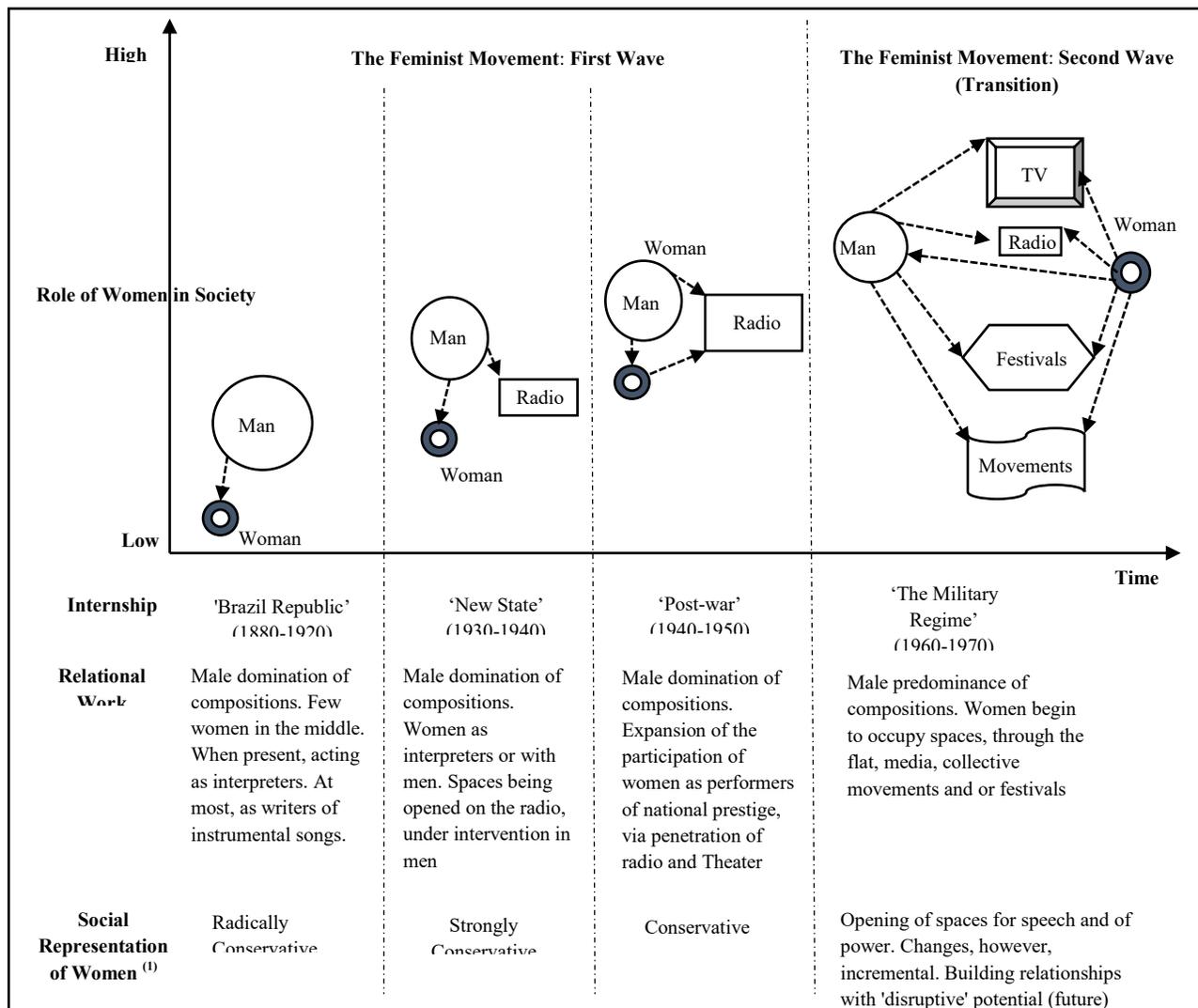
Likewise, the findings seem to indirectly contribute to previous studies that draw attention to the importance of an artist's personal involvement as an interested party in the cause s/he defends. However, what we stress in this discussion is the importance of these agents in opening and building new 'speech spaces'. In this sense, we have added to the emphasis on the role of individual action (Boari & Riboldazzi, 2014) that of the importance of social and relational roles, by means of which alternative discourses can be broadcast by manipulating some aspect of the social context (Phillips & Lewis, 2010). Thus, it is argued that artists play a significant role as they engage themselves in relational work with the goal of producing spaces and or open cracks into which new discursive agendas can penetrate and settle (Montanari, Scapolan, Gianecchini, 2016). Indeed, based on all of the stages we studied our findings point to concrete possibilities of 'discontinuities' only from the time (e.g., the stage described as the '*Military Regime*') when a larger number of women take over the task of producing their own musical compositions and conquer direct access to diversified ways of socializing them (e.g. different media, internet, collectives, social networks, blogs).

Conclusion

Based on Montanari, Scapolan, Gianecchini (2016), relational work is understood as the process that 'includes setting up social links, maintaining them, reformulating them, distinguishing them from other relations, and sometimes ending them' (Bandelj, 2012, p. 176). It does not mean, therefore, proposing simplistic ways to act and engage, but, on the contrary, carrying out 'conceptualizing' actions embedded in the social structures that one seeks to shape. Thus, our findings contribute to gain a better understanding of the 'microscopic' side of the disruptive capacity that arises from art and, therefore, complements and extends the results of research focusing on structure (Montanari, Scapolan, Gianecchini, 2016; Cattani, Ferriani, Allison, 2014; Zaheer & Soda, 2009).

Thus, to highlight the role played by an artist's relational work we expanded the need to cast a more attentive gaze on the micro-theory of creative action, which maintains that artistic innovation is the result of individual action through which individuals act as 'institutional entrepreneurs' (DiMaggio, 1998), for example as they develop partnerships and groups that support their artistic endeavors (Montanari, Scapolan, Gianecchini, 2016). This study thus broadens our understanding of the process through which artists engage in different social interactions, for example through their links to other songwriters, partners, performers, media, festivals and/or movements, which can provide access to the spaces and the resources needed to disseminate their ideas and causes. Inspired, once more, by contributions offered by Montanari, Scapolan and Gianecchini (2016), we illustrate in Figure 1 the analytical-theoretical model applied for the purpose of this study.

Figure 1- Analytical-theoretical model of 'Discontinuities' through relational action/protagonism



Source: Adapted from Montanari, Scapolan and Gianecchini, 2016, p. 856.

Note 1. Taking into account the analysis of the narratives of musical compositions, social context and signifiers making up the factors identified in the research: 'Unpredictability', 'Objectificity' and 'Ideality'.

Although this study focuses on analyzing a period of time (1880-1970), its greatest contribution will be probably based on the most recent stage of the musical compositions. Certainly, extending the study to the transition between the second and third waves of feminism - or even from the third to the fourth wave, suggested by some authors - will corroborate our findings about the importance of women's more protagonist roles - in particular as songwriters - in the building of 'speech spaces' and differentiated attitudes in their relations with other social agents, media and institutions involved in the musical 'field' (Bourdieu, 2009) - e.g., other female songwriters, partners, performers, bands, groups, festivals, musical movements, collective, social networks, and others.

We believe that such relational actions, carried out in the 1970s by a larger number not only of performers but also of female songwriters - e.g., Sueli Costa, Marluí Miranda, Luli and Lucina, Katia de França, Angela Roro, Zélia Duncan, Vange Leonel, Paula Toller, Marina Lima (Brazil, 2015) -, bands and musical groups led by women opened new 'speech spaces' and became fundamental relational devices that produced new signifiers and, through them, ruptures with the mainstream.

Anyway, an important contribution made by this study is to signal the role of relational perspectives, corroborating approaches that, although under distinct epistemological matrices and different theoretical streams, suggest the relevance of establishing relationship networks simultaneously to the role of individual agents in building protagonist positions in the mobilized actions and causes (Montanari, Scapolan, Gianecchini, 2016; Cattani, Ferriani, Allison, 2014; Bandelj, 2012; Zaheer & Soda, 2009).

Thus, as Miranda (2014) summarizes so well, either by means of a disciplinary power that attaches symbolic power over the bodies, differentiating and distinguishing them in terms of value and prestige (Bourdieu, 1999), or by emphasizing the agents that are part of the relations of domination and join forces because they share the same cultural orientations and fight for them (Touraine, 1984), or by emphasizing modes of action involving, on the one hand, the ways in which individuals act to constitute a collective and, on the other hand, the method by which they confront it with the outside world and their opponents (Offe, 1985); or by analyzing how they can articulate in a 'global civil society' (Alvarez, 2000) or in a 'tangle of networks' (Léon, 1994). What becomes evident through our findings is that 'permanencies' or 'discontinuities' derive from a weave of individuals, organizations and movements acting within a network (Castells, 1999), with the protagonism of the agents as they build 'speech spaces' being a key factor to 'disruptive dynamics'.

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Every Step Counts: Qatari Women's Participation in Sports and Physical Activity

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Abstract

The issue of Arab women and sport has already received a great deal of attention from sociologists, feminists, social activists, and Islamic studies scholars in the West. However, little research has been done on women's participation in sports and physical activity in the Arabian Gulf, despite the fact that this part of the world has been undergoing dramatic changes. Fueled by revenues from gas and oil, the push for industrialization and modernization has transformed the physical and sociocultural landscape in the Gulf Corporation Council (GCC) countries. Arguably, new opportunities and societal roles for women in Qatar, a small but ambitious player in the region, are a compelling example of positive trends. The leadership of the country has made it its priority to enable all Qatari citizens to realize their full potential and linked investment in sports culture directly to human, social, economic and environmental development. In the national strategy, encouragement of physical activity seeks to address the epidemic of obesity, while hosting international events promotes national cohesiveness and support for female athletes brands Qatar as a modern country. It is important to document this development and assess its success, since it can potentially serve as a model for other Arab countries. This article discusses factors that hinder Qatari women's participation in sports and physical activity with focus on success of recent government-sponsored initiatives that benefit Qatari women.

Keywords: *Qatar, Muslim, women, sport, physical activity*

Introduction

Increasing women's participation in sports and physical activity in the Arabian Gulf is important for a variety of reasons. The most obvious one is related to health. Obesity, a growing problem worldwide, has reached epidemic proportions in the region. In Gulf Corporation Council (GCC) countries the rates of obesity related diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and cancer are alarmingly high. Moreover, the level of female participation in sports and regular exercise has always been low (Musaiger, 2007). Traditionally, Arab women did not engage in sports and were not represented on national teams. Thus, there is an urgent need for change also from the point of view of gender equality and combating stereotypes of Muslim women as passive and oppressed.

Although the body of literature on Arab women and sport is extensive, it is mainly focused on the populations in the diaspora. Issues related to women's sporting activities in the Gulf have not received enough attention yet, despite the transformations the societies there are undergoing. This dearth of studies is especially striking in the case of Qatar, the country aspiring to become a leader in sports on the regional and global scene.

Qatar has made an impressive investment in building an infrastructure for sports culture and educating the population about the benefits of an active lifestyle. The goal of promoting women's participation in sports and physical exercise has been officially incorporated into *Qatar Vision 2030*, a document encapsulating the leadership's plan for the future. Therefore, it is important to explore this national strategy as a potential model for other countries in the region. This article offers an overview of recent government initiatives to ask

how successful they have been in bringing about sociocultural changes that can benefit Qatari women.

Context

Like other countries in the region, Qatar has been undergoing rapid changes. Modernization and industrialization have dramatically affected the lifestyle of the population. Among the negative aspects of this impact one must count unhealthy lifestyle. Currently, approximately 91% of the population of Qatar is urban. Moving to Doha, the country's capital, the previously nomadic Beduin tribes became sedentary. Local environmental conditions aggravate the problems typically resulting from urbanization. Doha is not a walker friendly city and except for winter, the climate does not favor any outdoor activities. In addition to the negative effects of industrialization, overweight is related to sociocultural factors. With wealth came the possibility of hiring domestic help to do household chores, which further reduced the amount of everyday physical activity. When food, especially fast food, is plentiful and affordable, it is hard to maintain a healthy diet. This is especially true in countries with the cultural tradition of frequent social gatherings revolving around feasts. Due to a combination of all these factors, more than 70% of the Qatari population are overweight or obese (Qatar Biobank, 2017: p. 32).

In addition to socioeconomic and environmental factors leading to sedentary behavior, one must point to socio-cultural norms as barriers to active lifestyle. Interest in active participation in sports and regular exercise has always been low in the region (Musaiger, 2007) for reasons that are complex and intertwined. Especially in the case of Muslim women, religious beliefs combined with a conservative code of manners and notions about femininity can have a deleterious effect.

Contrary to stereotypical beliefs, Islam encourages taking care of one's body and does not restrict the right of women to engage in physical activity. In fact, according to many, it is supportive of physical exercise for women (Nakamura, 2002; Walseth & Fasting, 2003; Jiwani & Rail, 2010; Benn et al., 2011). At the same time, strict interpretations of the Qu'ran impose restrictions on clothing and female spatial practices that make it difficult for them to engage in sporting activities. Modesty requires that in the presence of males who are not immediate family members, a Muslim woman's body must be covered and her hair must be hidden under a *hijab* (a scarf called *shayla* in Qatar). While veiling and an *abaya* (a traditional long and loose dress) restrict movement, the exhortation to avoid the male gaze limits the choice of space in which women feel free to exercise.

Another restricting factor is related to the traditional roles of Arab women as wives, mothers and daughters. Family and societal obligations are given priority over personal goals. This is true for Muslims living both in Arab countries and in diaspora. Since physical exercise is not considered socializing or fulfilling familial duties, Arab women hesitate to dedicate a lot time to an activity that could be judged selfish (Dun, 2016; Donnelly et al., 2011). In a recent study (Donnelly, 2013) Qatari women also cited lack of time and family obligations as an obstacle to regular exercise. Then there is also the fear of engaging in activities that are not feminine. It is assumed that a well-mannered young girl will discipline her body language and maintain decorum in public places; likewise, becoming muscular is associated with de-feminization (Dun, 2016). For these reasons, too few girls and women join organized sports teams or engage in physical activities such as going to the gym, taking fitness classes, walking, jogging or swimming.

Last but not least, until 2012 Qatar was one of the 3 countries that never sent female athletes to the Olympic Games. This fact ran counter to the narrative of modernization and political prominence. Thus, the leadership of Qatar understood the need to take urgent action for the sake of the well-being of the citizens as well as national prestige.

Overview of recent initiatives

The seriousness of the push for change in Qatar is evidenced by the fact that the goal of sports development has been directly linked to human, social, economic, and environmental development, the four pillars identified in *Qatar National Vision 2030* as the foundation for the country's future. Hence, Qatar Olympic Committee's (QOC's) Strategic Plan 2008-2012 listed six priority areas for sports: building sports and leisure facilities, promotion and publicity, sports education, awareness and cultural change; athlete pathways development; sports management and hosting international events (QOC, 2007: p.13).

On the international scene, Qatar can already boast of several significant achievements that put it in the limelight. In 2006 the country hosted a multi-sports event called the Asian Games. In 2010 it won the bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup; in 2011 it bought Paris Saint-Germain FC; in 2013 it became the first commercial sponsor of Barcelona FC's shirt. The greatest achievement came in 2016, when Qatar secured the bid to host the 2023 World Championships. Domestically, visible progress has been made in recruiting new talent and team building, especially when it comes to male athletes. Women's sport seems to advance more slowly, although if one considers that it started from an extremely low baseline progress becomes evident. Several milestones in female elite sport participation deserve recognition here.

A breakthrough in the women's sports movement in Qatar occurred in 2000, when Sheikha Moza bint Nasser al-Missnad, the president of the Family Affairs Council and second wife of the former emir, established Qatar Women's Sport Committee (QWSC). From the beginning QWSC aimed at improving women's performance in sports and promoting their participation in various sporting events, sessions and conferences at home and abroad. Several landmarks reflect progress made under QWSC' guidance In 2003 Qatar hosted the second Asian Conference on Women and Sport, where all participants pledged support for women athletes. Then, in the 2006, Al-Sowaidi became the first woman to^{[[SEP]]} represent her country in Doha Asian Games. Two years later, Yasmian al-Sharshani joined the QGA, becoming the only member of^{[[SEP]]} the women's national team. Later, she represented Qatar in the 2011 Arab^{[[SEP]]} Games in Doha. The QGA continued to enroll and train new female golfers and in 2015, it introduced girls under the age of ten to the game as members of its expanding youth academy. Most importantly, in 2012, for the first time Qatar sent female athletes to the Olympic Games. Four women participated: Bahiya al-Hamad competed in air-rifle shooting, Nada Arkaji in swimming, Aya Magdy in table tennis, and Noor al-Malki in. Though the performance of the Qatari athletes was not spectacular, the significance of their presence at the events can hardly be overestimated.

Following the Olympic debut in 2012, the QWSC developed a four-year strategy for improving female athletics in the country. It is clear that this effort is geared not only towards achieving gender equality in sports but also empowering women. Praising the effort and progress made by the QWSC in the last few years, the committee's president, Ahlam al-Mana, stated explicitly that this type of work 'has enabled Qatari women to play a much bigger role in society and widen their opportunities' (Fanack, 2016).

Even more important than change at the elite level of sport - and more difficult to achieve - is the goal of improving the rates of regular exercise across the society. The benefits of athletics and a healthy lifestyle may be clear, but changing perceptions and developing new habits takes time. Last decade saw many projects and nationwide campaigns showcasing the importance of sport for building a healthy community at both physical and psychological levels. Two significant developments need to be mentioned in this context.

First of all, in a pioneer initiative, on 6 December 2011, HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani (at that time Deputy Emir and Heir Apparent) issued the Emiri Decree No. 80 proclaiming Tuesday in the second week of February each year a National Sports Day. To celebrate this holiday, all ministries, governmental bodies and institutions prepare a series of public events and encourage their employees to engage in sporting activities. Likewise, companies and businesses organize activities and sports competitions to spotlight the message of

healthy, active lifestyles. Thus, every year the local community is offered a growing list of educational and participatory events that emphasize individual achievement in fitness and family fun. These events are well attended and well publicized in the local media. It is important to point out that they include both residents and nationals of all age groups, and accommodate different levels of fitness and ability. Special effort is made to attract women. For example, in 2015, National Sport Day activities organized by Qatar Foundation included a walkathon through the campus of Education City under the inspirational slogan *Unlocking Your Inner Athlete*. Each stage of the route featured stations touting the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and at the end of the walkathon; female participants could try out different types of exercise in 'Ladies Only' places.

Secondly, Qatar's commitment to promoting sports and physical activity is also proven by the scale of investment in building sports and recreational facilities. The best example is Aspire Zone, the 250-hectare development founded in 2003. Originally called Sports City, the precinct includes a large public park called Aspire Park, two hotels, the Aspire Academy training center, Aspetar, a sports medicine and orthopedic hospital, as well as the Hamad Aquatic Center and Khalifa International Stadium. Aspire Zone also has a venue designed exclusively for teenage girls and females over the age of 18 years. There, Aspire Active Women's Programs offer 'Ladies Only' classes in a state-of-the-art facility tailored to the needs of the local population.

Central in the celebration of National Sports Day, Aspire Zone remains a vibrant hub of activities throughout the year. Arguably, however, it is the Aspire Park that best embodies the leadership's vision for the nation's wellness and helps incorporate it into everyday reality. As Doha's biggest park, it encompasses 88 hectares beautifully designed to provide walking, jogging, cycling, and horse riding trails in addition to areas for picnicking and relaxation. Exercise equipment for use by passers-by is placed strategically in multiple locations and the visual landscape encompasses motivational slogans such as *Step into Health, Inspired to Aspire, Walk Towards a Healthy Lifestyle* or *Every Step Counts*. Moreover, billboards with pictures of a traditional Qatari family walking together are prominently displayed at the entrance to the park. Thus, although this space is multifunctional - and is indeed used for many different purposes - it unmistakably emphasizes the importance of sporting activities. While there is no statistics on the use of the park available yet, no one can fail to notice a steadily increasing number of women that engage in walking as a form of exercise. Some Qatari female walkers come to Aspire Park accompanied by a male family member; others come with female friends or even walk alone. They walk dressed in *abayas* and wear *hijabs*; a few are fully veiled, including gloves. Yet, there can be no mistake as to the purpose of their presence in the park - they are there to exercise. This is sometimes further signaled by a few women who wear a sports cap on top of a *hijab*.

Although the creation of walking paths in Aspire and support for walking in other popular public spaces (for example, the Corniche) may seem unremarkable, they are an essential part of the national strategy. It is worth noting that walking is the easiest and least controversial physical activity. It does not require equipment or sports uniforms and can be practiced at different difficulty levels. Women's football met with opposition in Doha due to its clothing requirements, but walking does not cause such concerns. Not surprisingly, it is the type of physical activity most popular and culturally acceptable among Qatari women. For example, the 2009 statistics showed that among females 15 years of age and above who exercised regularly, 58% engaged in walking, 12% in running, 14% in aerobic exercise, and 6% in swimming. Thus, promoting walking seemed an obvious choice and a step forward in pursuit of change. How successful has this effort been?

While there is still little publicly available information on the physical activity of the Qatari population, the results of recent research are not very reassuring. The 2011 Global School-Based Student Health Survey (GSHS) showed that only 15% of students in grades 7 - 9 reported being physically active for 60 minutes or more on 5 or more days per week (GSHS, 2011). Furthermore, the National STEPS Survey (NSS) that recently examined the health and behavior of 2,496 adults in Qatar showed that 43.2% of the female respondents were obese; while 63.3% of the population between the ages of 18-64 years did not engage in

recreational physical activity, 86.2% of the women between 45-65 years old reported no participation in any vigorous physical activity. Last but not least, a year-long pedometer study (Sayegh et al. 2016) established that daily steps for the overall population ranged from 3,505 steps/d to 10,010 steps/d, with a median of 6,008 steps/d. A total of 44.1% females were found to be sedentary, 32.4% were low active, and only 23.5% were physically active. Overall, the data reveals that although females showed an increase in their physical activity, they still remain less active than males and do not meet the global recommendations of physical activity (GSHS, 2011).

Discussion

Recent years have brought progress in developing sports culture in Qatar that is significant, though not always well documented. In terms of gender equality, women have undoubtedly advanced on the elite level of sport participation. Moreover, they have also gained access to venues, facilities and even coaching careers (Al-Busafi, 2015). Yet, even today, Qatar remains among the countries with the highest female inactivity levels (Sayegh et al., 2016). Evidently, more needs to be done.

QOC recommendations for the advancement of women in sports and physical activities include 'reader-friendly publications and media initiative to raise awareness about the value of sport and physical activity, the need for special community-based sports facilities for women, and the need to organize sports programs and physical activities for girls and women of all ages' (QOC, 2017: p.19). Publicity campaigns and high profile events such as National Sports Day play an important role in raising awareness of the benefits of sports and exercise. However, as with other behavioral modifications, changing a lifestyle requires time and support. Important as it is, the role of the media and publicity tends to be overestimated. According to a recent article, famous Qatari female athletes have less impact as role models than was originally hoped for (Dun, 2016). It is the support from social groups such as family and friends (Dun, 2016; Donnelly, 2013) as well as physicians (Namat, 2014) that can make a difference. Arguably, public and visible acknowledgment of engaging in sporting activities can be of equal value.

Incorporation of sporting activities into the cityscape can be critical in changing social perceptions and developing healthy habits. In addition to improving the well-being of nationals and other Doha residents, places like Aspire Park brand Qatar as the place where tradition meets modernity. The fact that nowadays Qatari women publicly engage in a physical activity in a mixed gender space shared with walkers and joggers from different ethnic groups and cultures is a new development. It has been well established that in addition to health benefits and wellness, participation in activities brings with it confidence and control. One would expect that increasing Qatari women's presence in public spaces dedicated to sports might not only sanction their dedication to fitness but also serve as a source of their empowerment.

Conclusion

Qatar's move towards fitness and physical exercise normalization can serve as a model for other countries in the region. More often than not, what restrict Arab women's participation in sports and physical activity is the existence of internalized and self-imposed social norms rather than laws. Wherever one stands in the heated debate on the *hijab* and *burquini*, it is hard not to agree that tailoring sports programs to the sociocultural needs of Muslims works towards improving their wellness and developing healthy habits. Thus, creation of sex-segregated venues is important, if it is the only space where women feel comfortable when they exercise. However, promoting the use of public space as a culturally appropriate place where women can engage in at least some forms of physical activity alongside men can be crucial in changing societal attitudes.

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Representation of women politicians in Indian newspapers: A Content Analysis Study of *The Times of India* and *Dainik Jagran*

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Abstract

The study looks into representation of women politicians in two Indian dailies- The Times of India and Dainik Jagran and argues that such representations of women are empowering, yet relegating them to secondary positions to men. Content analysis of all pages of the two dailies is done from the day of announcement of elections upto the announcement of the results- February 1 to March 12. Findings indicate that the percentage of news items related to women politicians as part of total election coverage is rather low, coverage varies from page to page, it is covered widely in three-column format, there is a large amount of coverage to candidate and campaigning-related issues, framing of women politicians in such columns is empowering, rhetorical, with a competitive tone. Some women politicians are covered more than others- Mayawati was largely represented as compared to Priyanka Gandhi or even Dimple Yadav. Usually women from respectable and socially upward families are covered more in election fray marginalising lower-caste women and the poor.

Introduction

Recent elections to be held across five states in the country- Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa, Manipur and Punjab saw a spate of politicians in the fray where several women politicians- Priyanka Gandhi, Dimple Yadav, Mayawati and Rita Bahuguna Joshi participated. However, they are mainly used as star campaigners and are often covered less by newspapers. This paper argues that women politicians in Indian newspapers are not represented well. The study looks into the amount of coverage given to such politicians, extent of coverage, news space, framing of news related to women politicians and the nature of its coverage. Infact for a long time matter pertaining to reservation of seats for women in parliament has also been discussed. Kishwar (1996) says that marginalisation of women is directly linked to marginalisation of all decent people from our party politics and that there is a need to have wide-spectrum electoral reforms that will curb the role of muscle and money power in politics and 'democratise decision-making in the political parties and a sensible proportional representation system which facilitates representation of various marginalised groups without mechanical reservation quotas'.

Political participation of women in India

Khanna (2009) clearly enumerates the factors that have led to a chasm between the *de jure* and *de facto* status of women's political participation in India. Negrustueva (2000) says that 'the significant indicators of the status of women in any society are political participation, representation and share in decision-making bodies'. In today's scenario, socio-political one there is lot of importance given to women's issues but in reality women are still left out of the decision-making roles in important political parties. Women's participation becomes important in the decision-making role of the country else the result may be that allocation of resources and decisions may not be in the interest of women (Connell, 1990).

Conventional political activities include campaigning, voting, convincing others to vote, attending public meetings, publishing political literature for the public, contributing funds for a political party, contesting elections and canvassing for a political candidate, etc. (Verba et al, 1971). In today's terms of social and

political participation, all such activities are said to fall under this category those that include even protests, marches, rallies, strikes and demonstrations, presentation of memoranda as well as violent acts designed to change the political system (Palmer, 1976). According to Khanna (2009) political participation depends upon various factors and dependent variables like psychological, socio-economic, political and the ones which influence the individual towards less or more political participation.

Psychologically, for example, women have a general apathetic attitude towards politics thinking it's a dirty game; women have also been socialized to think it's essentially a 'male domain' (Goel, 1974; Menon, 1968). There thus needs to be a fundamental change in the way stereotypes are viewed about the role of women as family-maker and child-carer beyond which activities like political participation become difficult for women. Similarly socio-economic variables like age, education, occupation, income, religion, race, family background, residence, etc. condition participation of persons in different political and cultural contexts. Women's participation in all forms of political roles is difficult to achieve. Several other impediments arise for women in their social atmosphere as cost of elections is a major hindrance and women lack legal control over property and effective control on their income. In case they work at home, it is regarded as 'invisible' and shadow work and is not considered significant or remunerable (Singh & Jha, 1992). Also women politicians, activists and decision-makers are faced with character-assassination. Political variable again sees a wide gender gap in voting and contestation of women. Women have relatively less ability to use muscle, power and other forms of influence in the public sphere (Kishwar, 1990). The women even today remain at the periphery of the power structure with a mere 'symbolism' rather than real power-wielding (Kaushik, 1993). Women have long been marginalised in the development process and they could 'redefine political priorities and place new items on the political agenda to address gender specific concerns and provide a new perspective on mainstream political issues' (Sarkar, 2006; Prasad, 2000).

Marginalisation of women in Indian politics

Kishwar (1996) says that peripheralisation of women in politics of our country is a bad sign. In the Swedish parliament in 1994 itself, the proportion of women had reached 40 percent while in local institutions like the Country Councils it was nearly half (*ibid*). On the contrary, in a more macho and violent US, women constitute a bare 8 percent of the US Senate, despite a vibrant women's movement in that country (*ibid*). Election reforms are needed for a more just and equal participation of marginalised groups like women in politics (*ibid*).

Ojha (2009) argues that on the basis of experiences from other countries and local bodies in India it may be said that even if the public face of politics becomes feminised, without changing the political culture and the substantive policy agenda, increased numbers will have no impact. Ojha draws on the critical mass theory to argue that 'when a group remains a small minority within a larger society, its members are tokens who will seek to adapt to their surroundings, conforming to the predominant rules of the game' (*ibid*). It is further argued that women are more likely than their male counterparts to promote and vote legislation concerning issues of healthcare, poverty, education, gender equity, childcare, violence against women, etc. (Burrell, 1995; Dodson, 1998; Flammang, 1997; Carroll, 1994; Thomas, 1994; Berkman and O' Connor, 1993; Thomas & Welch, 1991; Saint Germain, 1989; Kudwa, 2003). Some studies also indicate that women legislators are more likely than their men counterparts to conduct business that is egalitarian, co-operative, communicative and contextual (Rosenthal, 1998; Thomas, 1991; Flammang, 1985). They bring a different voice to the legislative process (Dodson, 1998; Rosenthal, 1998; Kathlene, 1995; Thomas, 1994) yet their underrepresentation raises questions about the legitimacy of the political system which it seems is not fully open to them (Burns et al, 2001; Carroll, 1994). Ojha (2009) argues that 'even though the public face of politics becomes feminised, political culture and substantive policy agenda remains unchanged, increasing the numbers will have no impact'. Thanikodi & Sugirtha (2007) argue that participation of women in politics as voters, candidates, campaigners and office-holders in political parties, on an equal footing with men, is

still a remote ideal to be realised. Moreover their portrayal in national magazines, newspapers or media discourse is rather bleak.

Women politicians and mass media discourse

Cohen-Avigdor (1959) argues that the process of professional feminisation in the media is not only limited to low and medium positions but even senior editorial jobs, representation of women in women's magazines is not stereotypical (or presented in a way which emphasises dependence, sexuality, eroticism, low self-esteem, guilt feelings, passivity or lack of character) and that equal media exposure for women and men is a distant goal in Israel. Havelkova (1996) argues that in Czech media space academics using approaches based on the concept of gender (feminists) have not entered mass media discourse and this is because of the Czech media having an anti-feminist bias, women activists are a relatively small group focussing on questions of violence against women or commercial sexual exploitation of women. She adds:

It is also over the questions of 'quotas' that there are the most striking examples of manipulation of data, ignorance and subsequent passing on of false information to readers, and even of arrogant dismissal of the sections of the population who express support for quotas (1959: 161).

Thus women's representation in even western democracies' press is not a perfect portrayal of reality. There are very few studies in this regard in Asian countries. This gap can be bridged by conducting this study.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical background is feminist scholarship of Hennessey (2012) who argues that materialist feminist analyses problematize woman as an obvious and homogeneous empirical entity in order to explore how woman as a discursive category is historically constructed and traversed by more than one differential axis. Rege (2003) argues that 'the rise of right-wing and market feminisms on one hand and the significant political assertions and theoretical interventions of third world and dalit feminists on the other have challenged this assumed universality of gender oppression'. Sinclair (2014) assesses feminist take on leadership and concludes that- feminists are aiming for change in patriarchal structures, focus should be on manifestations of powered structures in gendered relations, there should be a preference towards 'textual multiplicity' in writing. Research here shows how the concepts and assumptions underpinning leadership are skewed towards male experience and it celebrates the richness and diversity of the ways that women, often blocked by sexism and patriarchal norms, have found to resist and change the public agenda and to mobilise and empower others (*ibid*). Similar to the argument that families are oppressive for women in politics, Carby challenged the materialist feminist analyses of women and noted the ways that values of the family are different for black women and men, just as the division of labour is also radicalized (Carby, 1982). Based on such a theoretical framework and representation of women politicians, some research questions have been framed:

- What is the frequency of news on women politicians?
- What is the extent of coverage?
- What is the placement of such news?
- What types of news are there?
- What is the framing of such news?

Method and Materials

The paper conducts a content analysis of two national dailies (based on readership surveys) *The Times of India* and *Dainik Jagran* following the State Assembly elections' coverage in all news items from February 1 to March 12 as the polling began in five states (Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa, Manipur and Punjab) on February 11 and the poll verdict was announced on March 11. In these news items the study is based on

coverage of women politicians in newspapers. Hence only those news items were studied where women candidates have been mentioned.

Results

Newspaper	Total election news	Women politicians	Percentage
The Times of India	360	66	18
Dainik Jagran	429	53	12.3
Total	789	119	15.08

Columns	TOI	DJ	Total
Digest form	0	3 (100)	3 (2.52)
One column	2 (28.57)	5 (71.42)	7 (5.88)
Two columns	11 (45.83)	13 (54.16)	24 (20.16)
Three columns	19 (51.35)	18 (48.64)	37 (31.09)
Four columns	22 (64.70)	12 (35.29)	34 (28.57)
Five columns & more	6 (75)	2 (25)	8 (6.72)
Total	66 (55.46)	53 (44.53)	119

Pages	TOI	DJ	Total
Front page	11 (50)	11 (50)	22 (18.48)
City page	18 (52.94)	16 (47.05)	34 (28.57)
Election special page	14 (45.16)	17 (54.83)	31 (26.05)
Other pages	23 (71.87)	9 (28.12)	32 (26.89)
Total	66 (55.46)	53 (44.53)	119

Types of news	TOI	DJ	Total
Candidates	20 (52.63)	18 (47.36)	38 (31.93)
Crime	5 (55.55)	4 (44.44)	9 (7.56)
Campaigning	15 (44.11)	19 (55.88)	34 (28.57)
Manifesto	8 (66.66)	4 (33.33)	12 (10.08)
Issues	16 (69.56)	7 (30.43)	23 (19.32)
Code of Conduct	2 (66.66)	1 (33.33)	3 (2.52)
Total	66 (55.46)	53 (44.53)	119

Frames	TOI	DJ	Total
Empowering	9 (52.94)	8 (47.05)	17 (14.28)
Victim	8 (53.33)	7 (46.66)	15 (12.60)
Competitor	19 (61.29)	12 (38.70)	31 (26.05)
Family contest	14 (50)	14 (50)	28 (23.52)
Rhetoric	16 (57.14)	12 (42.85)	28 (23.52)
Total	66 (55.46)	53 (44.53)	119

Discussion

Hence through these tables it may be noticed that out of a large number of election news items only a few contain election news related to women politicians (only 15% as shown in Table 1). It is also important to understand how much coverage does such news items get. Maximum coverage is given to such news in three columns (Table 2). Huge coverage is given to such news items on the city page as compared to other pages (Table 3). It is also important to know the types of news which are covered related to women politicians in newspapers.

There are lot of news items related to women as candidates where they got enough coverage from the day they filed their nomination papers. A lot of women politicians went out campaigning for their party and got media coverage while they were visiting a rural farmer or a poor person. There was a good news report about a female candidate Priyanka who completed her professional course in management to challenge a veteran politician in his constituency as he was known to have become lazy and not done enough work in his constituency. Then there was a news report about the wife of a politician entering politics and contesting the polls. There were few news items on women as victims and one on 'why politics is a dirty game for Indian women' stating reasons why they need to be cautious and stay out- the first and foremost thing being character-assassination of female politicians. Some prominent politicians who were featured were- Mayawati, Smriti Irani, Uma Bharti, Gayatri Singh, Ameeta Singh, Priyanka Gandhi among others.

There's yet another important aspect to all these news items- that of rhetoric and campaigning tactic of women politicians. In other words how women politicians are 'framed' within news discourse is an important aspect to understand in portrayal of women who are newsmakers. Most news items show women as pitted against each other or in a competitive stand than anything else. They do show women candidates as empowered citizens working to make a difference in a democracy. There is use of informal language sometimes in representing women politicians from the same family in the contest. Only in a few subdued cases they represented women politicians as 'villains' or in a 'negative' role or as women who are wronged and even taken for granted.

Conclusion

The paper thus answers some of the basic questions about how women politicians are covered by national newspapers in India. *The Times of India* is a popular English daily while *Dainik Jagran* is the no. 1 Hindi daily which have been studied as part of this research. The paper argues that women are still not treated 'at par' with their male counterparts and media discourse around elections affects the public image of such women politicians. Infact women from the non-capitalist domain are completely left out with little or no reference to women of lower-castes and lower status. Only one female politician who is a Dalit, Mayawati, has found enough mention as she is a seasoned politician. The newspapers focus more on the women from well-to-do families and the capitalist world with no mention of even issues related to the labour force.

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Measuring (Un)successful Integration of Covered Muslim Women

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Abstract

The article focuses on the establishment of an appropriate way to measure the level of (un)successful integration of covered Muslim women into the West. The lack of relevant scientific research, leads to the relevance of given question of choosing the appropriate method for measuring successful integration of covered Muslim women. Methodologically, the article is based on the use of a description method by which we have reviewed the existing ways for measuring successful integration, chosen the most appropriate one and made a substantive upgrade to the selected path for measuring successful integration, which was established by Pucelj (2016). We will design a simple categorization of the success of Muslim integration according to 9 different parameters, implicating successful integration. The said path was used to carry out a quantitative empirical research, i.e. a survey between Muslims and non-Muslims in Slovenia (June - July 2016) and a qualitative empirical research, i.e. in-deep interviews with covered Muslim women in Slovenia. This scale will also enable other researchers from this research area to conduct similar measuring of (un)successful integration of covered Muslim women in other western countries.

Keywords: *Muslim women, covering, measuring, integration, (un)successful integration*

Introduction

By looking through literature about the topic of integration of covered Muslim women and other population of Muslims, we found out that it is not specifically defined, which elements need to be fulfilled, if we want to define the integration as successful. First of all, we must find out what do the studies with the expression “successful or unsuccessful integration” include and afterwards we will form a tool for measuring success of integration of covered Muslim women. Doomernik (1998, pp. 5) states that we talk about successful integration when immigrants reach similar position in the society as other comparable groups of the majority of the population. Bešter (2007, pp. 109) adds that every derogation does not specifically mean that integration was not successful and it is very important to know that differences are not consequences of structured barriers or discriminating individuals or certain groups. UNHCR convention about refugee’s status from year 1951 lists a range of socio-economic and legal rights, which must be guaranteed in order that integration would be successful. Mentioned rights include: freedom of movement, access to the education and jobs, access to public services, opportunity to own a property and a possibility to acquire a citizenship somewhere in the near future (UNHCR, 2015). Bešter (2006, pp. 19) states that a successful integration is also a process in which immigrants get special cultural and/or religious rights which help them to maintain their culture and live accordingly to their religious beliefs. Gathered findings of the studies, which deal with this topic, are that for successful integration it is important that immigrant has a job, education and a place to live. Besides this parameters each research adds additional parameters of which they think are important indicators in order to see if the integration is successful or not. Therefore to sum it up, we can say that there is no definition for successful integration. Out of this reason, we will have to find out which parameters we could define as crucial for measuring successful integration of covered Muslim women.

Different researches define different parameters for measuring integration, therefore we decided to take into account only those dimensions, which on the basis of scientific literature, which we looked closely in order to prepare scientific monography (Pucelj, 2016) seemed to be the most relevant for measuring successful

integration of Muslims in general and also for which we could gather data: (1) **legal integration** which can be successful: a) with naturalisation or acquisition of permanent address of the covered Muslim women and b) with the rights to combine families together; (2) **settlement-housing integration** should if wants to be successful exclude segregation and settlement of minority in one part of the city; (3) **socio-economic integration** will be successful when covered Muslim women will have “equal opportunities and will accomplish acceptable results with employment, incomes, socio-economic status, using social services and other socio-economic markers” (Bešter, 2006, pp. 18) or as Entzinger and Biezeveld (2003) add: “successful work participation usually means to have a well-paid job, although, lately the number of self-employees is increasing fast”; (4) **educational integration** can be defined as successful when covered Muslim women “have equal access to educational institutions, have successfully finished the individual level of schooling, have equal opportunities for continuing education and as a group they achieve an educational structure which is easily comparable with the educational structure of their peers among the general population” (Bešter, 2006, pp. 18); (5) **cultural integration** can be successful when “an individual maintains and develops own authentic culture, when at the same time absorbs elements of the new culture” (Klinar, 1986 in Bešter, 2007, pp. 111); Within this dimension of integration we will concentrate on: **a)** knowing the language of the hosting country which is in this case an important view of integration and without this it would not be possible to achieve full integration; **b)** public and media relation towards covered Muslim women – integration is successful when the majority of the population and different media have been working in favour of covered Muslim women population and both do not potentiate discrimination and stereotypes and **c)** religious integration, which is “a humans right and is important for equal participation” (Vrečer, 2007, pp. 116) and presents freely unhindered practice of religion in the hosting country, an opportunity to build their own religious buildings and a life accordingly to their own religious beliefs; (6) **political integration** can be marked as successful after covered Muslim women have obtained the right to vote and consequently they are included in the process of countries political decision-making. Furthermore, they can be actively involved in certain processes and have influence on decisions, and lastly they literally participate through elections, political parties, special forms of minority representation etc. (Bešter, 2006, pp. 19-20); (7) **Integration politics** is successful when it is based on respecting multiculturalism and at the same time it tries to achieve the maximum closeness of the position of covered Muslim women towards the position of the (other) citizens of the country of resettlement (Pucelj, 2016); (8) **discrimination** is the main obstacle in achieving full integration of covered Muslim women and their descendants and until the covered Muslim women is discriminated by the society/media, she cannot successfully integrate into the country; (9) perhaps the most important factor of this research is **psychological integration**, which we will try to measure through self-assessment or the opinion of the covered Muslim women about their degree of their integration into the society of western countries or the level of (un)successful integration within this dimensions of integration.

In this article we are going to focus on establishing a suitable measurement scale for measuring the level of (un)successful integration of covered Muslim women. The scale will then be used for conducting a survey among general public and a half structured in-depth interview with covered Muslim women in Slovenia. The main purpose is to find out whether covered Muslim women are facing with unsuccessful integration on various fields in Slovenia. Due to the lack of research on this field, we will upgrade already established scale for measuring (un)successful integration of Muslims, which we established for scientific monography (Pucelj, 2016), where we were focusing on general population of Muslims and then we will provide a substantial upgrade of the content.

Methodology and Materials

Basis of this research is an upgrade of the scale for measuring the level of successful integration of Muslims, which was established for needs of scientific monography (Pucelj, 2016). We than accordingly adjusted this scale and upgraded it for the needs of our research question (especially in thematically sense). We are going to use an assessment of scale reliability with which we will try to establish, whether the formed constructs for

measuring the level of successful integration of covered Muslim women are reliable for further use, in other words, empirical testing. We will measure the reliability of constructs with the reliability intern consistence method (Malhotra, 2002, pp. 293). We will use the coefficient Cronbach Alpha to determine the reliability method of internal consistency where the value is among 0 and 1, whereas the value smaller than 0.6 indicates the lack of reliability of internal consistency (Malhotra, 2002, pp. 293).

Results

If we look closer to the chosen scale for measuring successful integration, which we established for the needs of scientific monography (Pucelj, 2016), we could see that:

I) as a part of conducted asynchronous web and also in-depth interviews, we asked interviewees the following questions: 1. How would you categorize when the integration is successful or unsuccessful and how do you evaluate the integration of Muslims in non-Muslim countries in general?; 2. What kind of problems by your opinion do the Muslims confront when they integrate into your country?; 3. How does the public/media accept Muslims?; 4. Are Muslims exposed to discrimination – if so, where can it be seen?; 5. Have you spotted any differences while comparing Muslims with members of other religions?; 6. What could you say about the integration policy in your country – we talk about theoretically basis?; 7. What can you say about ghettoization of Muslims in your country?; 8. How do you think that the Muslims are included into the labour market in your country (e.g. access to employment)? Please explain also the (potential) impact of the fact that it is a Muslim population, which is accessing the labour market; 9. Do Muslims have good possibilities to acquire a citizenship, permanent residence and gather their family together? 10. What do you think about educating Muslim children – generally and in a sense of receiving Islamic education? 11. Do you think that political participation of Muslims is adequately regulated?; 12. Could you say, that Muslims in your country generally feel integrated?; 13. Could you say that Muslims in your country are successfully integrated?; 14. What do you miss in your country in sense of better integration of Muslims?; 15. Are you familiar with the integration of Muslims in other European countries?: 16. Do you feel hatred/impatience towards Muslims in your daily life?; 17. About cultural integration – do you think Muslims can freely use their religion and culture?;

II) as a part of the questionnaire for Muslim and general population⁵⁶ there were established the following questions: 1. Please specify what does SUCCESSFUL inclusion/integration in hosting country means to you?; 2. Please specify what does UNSUCCESSFUL inclusion/integration in hosting country means to you?; 3. Write down your personal experience about your arrival to Slovenia; 4. In my opinion, for successful integration it is important to (5 level scale⁵⁷): a) that I have a job; b) that I have a good access to all institutions in Slovenia; c) that I can freely use own religion; d) that I can to socialize with fellow compatriots; e) that I can be together with my family; f) that I can hang out with majority of members in the society; g) that I have a voting right; h) that I own an apartment; i) that I do not feel discriminated against ; j) that I am equally treated as other members of non-Muslim population; k) that I have own - Muslim representative, who cooperates with the state and represents my interest; l) Other; 4. If you think that there are some other important things for successful integration, please define them;; 5. How long have you been living in Slovenia?; 6. I am a citizen of Slovenia (possible answers: yes, no, I am in a phase of acquiring the citizenship, other); 7. I came to Slovenia as (possible answers: worker, family member, refugee, asylum seeker, to get an education/study, other); 8. In Slovenia I now have (possible answers: permanent address, temporary address, I am an asylum seeker/refugee, I am a worker with the permit for living here, other); 9. Please

⁵⁶ The main difference between questioning the Muslim and non-Muslim population was that we asked the non-Muslim population what they think about the level of successful Muslim integration and the Muslims about their personal experience and their opinion about the level of own successful integration. Because the questions were practically identical and only the perception was different, so on this basis we decided to present questions only for Muslim population.

⁵⁷ Where 1 means – Do not agree, 2 - I agree, 3- partially agree/disagree, 4- I agree, 5 –Totally agree.

answer the following questions (5 – level scale): a) I did not have any problems acquiring the citizenship; b) I had some troubles while waiting for permanent/temporary address; c) procedures within institutions in Slovenia are not organised as expected; d) Muslims are concentrated in one part of the city; e) Muslims are separated from other members of society; f) separateness from other members of society has a negative impact on integration; g) I have equal chances to get a job as other non-Muslim citizens; h) I have a job which is appropriate for my field of education; i) based on my field of education I have a convenient payment; j) due to Islamic religious beliefs, I have a limited access to labour market; k) I have equal access to social services just like non-Muslim residents of Slovenia; l) I have equal access to all educational institutions in Slovenia just like non-Muslim citizens; m) In Slovenia I can maintain my Islamic culture; n) I speak Slovenian language very well; o) the public has a suitable behaviour towards Muslims; p) the media has a suitable behaviour towards Muslims; q) I am discriminated because of my choice of religion; r) I can freely use my religion in Slovenia; s) I can live in accordance with my own beliefs; t) I regularly participate in elections; u) I have been a candidate on elections in the past; v) the integration politics is regulated appropriately in Slovenia; w) I am successfully integrated in Slovenia; x) I perceive Slovenia as my own country; y) I perceive myself as Slovenian citizen; z) I have equal chances to acquire education just like non-Muslim citizens; 10) Were you perhaps dealing with legal procedures that allow families to reunite? (possible answers: yes, no); 11) If you answered YES, then how would you describe this procedure? (5-level scale): expensive, fast, well organized, inaccessible, understandable; 12. I have a right to vote (possible answers: yes, no); 13. Would you consider to propose any additional measures for better integration of Muslims in Slovenia?; 14. As a member of Islamic religion where do you see the biggest problem which you experienced from the majority population?; 15. Mark your gender (possible answers: M, F); 16. Your age; 17. The level of education?; 18. In which country did you grow up?; 19. Are you employed?; 20. Where did you acquire your education? As we will see below, we have transformed certain word phrases, left out certain questions and added new questions. According to our posed research question, the following text is the explanation of how we built this scale which is by our opinion proper for measuring the level of successful integration of covered Muslim women.

Tool for measuring successful integration of Muslims, which we established within the scientific monography (Pucelj, 2016), will be upgraded with the findings of (1) quantitative research with the help of web survey among Muslims and non-Muslims and with (2) qualitative research by using half-structured interviews with covered Muslim women in Slovenia. The purpose of gathered data will be to make an appropriate tool for measuring the level of successful integration of covered Muslim women on the case of Slovenia. By the web survey we will use the 6-level scale with questions for measuring successful integration, where 1 mean completely disagree and 6 completely agree. We will proceed from the opinion, given by Muslim and non-Muslim participants about the level of successful integration of covered Muslim women. This will help us to get a clearer picture about what wider society thinks about successful integration of covered Muslim women, meanwhile with the help of half-structured interview, we will obtain description of personal experience and opinion directly from covered Muslim women about their level of successful integration. We defined different questions:

1) ... for **legal integration**: i) *Survey*: Covered Muslim women: a) in the vast majority own Slovene citizenship; b) in the vast majority have permanent address in Slovenia; c) have good access to institutions in Slovenia; d) have good access to legal protection in case of violation of their rights; ii) *Interview*: a) Do you think that as a covered woman, you have a good access to all institutions in Slovenia? Did you have any issues while dealing with legal procedures in Slovenia because of the fact that you are covered?; b) What is your legal status here in Slovenia? (Slovene citizenship, permanent/temporary address, asylum/refugee status, living permit, ect.); c) By your opinion, how is the legal integration of covered Muslim women regulated in Slovenia and why?

2) ... for **settlement-housing integration**: i) *Survey*: Covered Muslim women: a) Have a resolved housing question; b) Are segregated in specific part of the town; c) Are separated from the society; ii) *Interview*: a) Do you have a resolved housing question?; b) Does it seem to you that covered Muslim women in Slovenia are generally concentrated in one part of the town or are spread all around the town - or anything else? Are covered Muslim women in Slovenia by your opinion separated from the society (ghettoised)?; c) What is your opinion about the regulation of settlement-housing integration area of covered Muslim women in Slovenia and why?

3) ... for **socio-economic integration**: i) *Survey*: Covered Muslim women: a) Have a job; b) Have equal chances to find a job as non-Muslims; c) Perform work, suitable to their education ; d) Are paid suitable to their education level; e) Do not have problems with finding a job; f) They have difficulties with finding a job because they are expressing their religion in public (covering); g) They are not financially dependent from their partners; h) They have equal rights to get social services; ii) *Interview*: a) What is your socio-economic status (employed/unemployed/retired ...)?; b) In case of your employment (or potential one) do you think that you work (would work) in a field suitable for your obtained education? Do you think that you are paid (would be paid) enough according to your obtained education?; c) Can you tell me how does the covering impact the chance of finding a suitable employment? Do you think that you have equal chances to find a job like other uncovered women in Slovenia? Do you have equal access to the social services as the uncovered women in Slovenia?; d) How is by your opinion the socio-economic integration of covered Muslim women regulated in Slovenia and why?

4) ... for **educational integration**: i) *Survey*: Covered Muslim women: a) are in vast majority uneducated; b) Have equal access to education institutions as non-Muslims; c) Wish to get an education in public school; d) Wish to educate themselves mainly on the field of Islamic religion; ii) *Interview*: a) What is your field of education and where did you obtain your education?; b) Do you think that covered Muslim women have an equal access to all educational institutions in Slovenia as uncovered women?; c) Do you wish (or would you wish in the future) to educate yourself in a public school or mainly on the area of the Islamic religion? Do you think that covered Muslim women should be more involved in education system in Slovenia?; d) Do you think that you have or could have problems with choosing your educational field because you are covered? e) How is the educational integration for covered Muslim women in Slovenia regulated and why?

5) ... for **cultural integration**: i) *Survey*: Covered Muslim women: a) Can maintain their primary Islamic culture; b) Can freely express their religion; c) Can live in accordance with their own religious beliefs; d) Can socialize with their compatriots; e) Can socialize with the majority of the society; f) Speak Slovenian language very well; g) Public treats covered Muslim women respectfully; h) Media presents covered Muslim women as a threat to others; ii) *Interview*: a) How are you accepted from the vast of majority of non-Muslim in Slovenia because you are covering? Do you think that public treats covered Muslim women respectively?; b) How are covered Muslim women presented by mass media? Do you believe that media presents covered Muslim women as a safety threat?; c) Do you believe that you, as a covered Muslim women, can freely practice your religion and culture, socialize with members of your religion and culture and socialize with members of the vast majority (non-Muslims), maintain your religion and culture, and live in accordance with your own religious beliefs? Do you face with any problems while practicing your religion, if so, please state with which ones?; d) How is the cultural integration of covered Muslim women regulated in Slovenia and why?

6) ... for **political integration**: i) *Survey*: Covered Muslim women: a) Have active and passive rights to vote; b) Attend elections regularly; c) Should be more actively involved in politics in Slovenia; d) I think that Political integration of covered Muslim women is successful; e) In my opinion, covered Muslim women should have a representative who would help them in order to obtain better integration; ii) *Interview*: a) Do you have a right to vote?; b) Do you attend elections on regular basis and have you ever been a candidate in any of the elections (local/national); c) Are covered Muslim women politically enough active and why?; d) How is the political integration of covered Muslim women regulated in Slovenia and why?

- 7) ... for **discrimination**: i) *Survey*: Covered Muslim women: a) Feel discriminated; b) Are because of their religion discriminated by non-Muslims; c) Face greater levels of discrimination than uncovered women; d) Face greater levels of discrimination than Muslim men; e) Are socially isolated; f) Voluntarily decide for social isolation; g) Forcibly decide for social isolation because the society does not accept them due to the fact that they are covering themselves; h) the discrimination is manifested towards covered Muslim women because they openly practice their Islam religion; ii) *Interview*: a) Are you discriminated by vast of majority, because of you are covered? If you answered yes, please describe in which way do you feel discrimination? Do you think the reason lays in the act that you are covering yourself or because you belong to Islamic religion?; b) Does it seem to you that lately the level of discrimination towards covered Muslim women is increasing in Slovenia? If your answer is yes, then what is by your opinion the reason for that? c) Do you think that discrimination is clearly being manifested towards covered Muslim women because of visual practicing of Islam?
- 8) ... for **psychological integration**: i) *Survey*: Covered Muslim women: a) Feel successfully integrated; b) Feel accepted; c) Feel equal to other, non-Muslim population; ii) *Interview*: a) Could you grade your psychological inclusion/integration into the environment, where you live, and into Slovenia in general?; b) In your opinion, how do other covered Muslim women in Slovenia feel psychologically integrated?
- 9) ... for **Integration politics**: i) *Survey*: Integration politics in Slovenia enable successful integration of covered Muslim women; ii) *Interview*: By your opinion, how is the Integration politics regulated in Slovenia concerning inclusion/integration of covered Muslim women?
- 10) ... for **successful integration in general**: i) *Survey*: Covered Muslim women: a) Are successfully integrated/included in Slovenia; b) Perceive Slovenia as their own country; c) Perceive themselves as Slovenian residents; d) Want to integrate into Slovenian society; e) Do not present themselves enough through the media with a purpose to present their way of living and reason for covering; f); Do not present themselves enough to the public with a purpose to present their way of living and reason for covering g) Would have to give up from covering themselves in order to achieve better integration; h) There is no room for covered Muslim women in Slovenia; i) I wish that I would know more about the life of covered Muslim women, because I think, I have to little knowledge about them now; ii) *Interview*: a) How would you grade your own integration/inclusion in Slovenia and also integration/inclusion of other covered Muslim women in Slovenia?; b) Do you think that you (and other covered Muslim women) have been engaging enough for successful integration in the society in Slovenia?; c) Do you think that covered Muslim women should have their own representative in Slovenia, which would help them/you in order to achieve better integration?; d) In your opinion, what is the biggest problem, which covered Muslim women experience from the side of mainstream society in Slovenia?

On the basis of the assertions, which we used in order to measure the integration on different fields, we designed constructs. But before using them in empirical data, we used Cronbach Alpha in order to check the reliability of the formed constructs. The reliable constructs showed to be: (1) constructs of legal integration (0.657), (2) socio-economic integration (0.711), (3) cultural integration 1st part (0.725)⁵⁸, (4) successful integration (0.839) and (5) psychological integration (0.847). All these constructs with lower Alpha value of 0.6 were not reliable; therefore these variables will have to be discussed individually⁵⁹ in empirical testing.

⁵⁸ Within “cultural integration 1st part” we can find all above mentioned questions, only excluded for the purpose of SPSS testing were two following questions: “Public treats covered Muslim women respectfully” and “Media presents covered Muslim women as a threat to others”, which were put into the category “cultural integration 2nd part”, due to different formulation of question.

⁵⁹ The values of the reliability of the constructs within successful integration of covered Muslim women by each dimensions were: I) Q27 – Reliability of the construct of legal integration = Cronbach Alfa ,657; II) Q28 – Reliability of construct of settlement-housing integration = Cronbach Alfa ,401; Q29 – Reliability of construct of socio-economic integration = Cronbach Alfa ,711; Q22_2 – Reliability of construct of educational integration = Cronbach Alfa -,535 *Violated reliability item; Q30 – Reliability of construct of cultural integration 1. part = Cronbach Alfa ,725; Q31 – Reliability of construct of cultural integration 2. part = Cronbach Alfa ,495;

Discussion

Through past few years, the topic of covered Muslim women is getting public, media and political attention, especially through questions about the legitimate prohibition of covering of Muslim women in West and questions of (successful) integration into labour market. But the lack of relevant research on the field of measuring the level of successful integration of covered Muslim women does not enable a constructive debate about the question of true success/failure of integration of covered Muslim women. If we want to answer the question about the (current) level of (un)successful integration of covered Muslim women, then we must establish the suitable tool for measuring the level of the successful integration. We have seen noticed the lack of research on this field also by preparing the scientific monography (Pucelj, 2016) for integration of general population of Muslims, so we established an appropriate scale for measuring level of successful integration for general population of Muslims. In this work we than upgraded and modified mentioned scale (Pucelj, 2016) and provided substation upgrade for the needs of measuring the level of successful integration of covered Muslim women, where the lack of research is even more evident. (1) Modification was performed in thematically sense, because we will now measure the level of successful integration of a specific social group inside the Muslim population, specifically for covered Muslim women; (2) Questions were much more structured and separated into individual dimensions of integration, because the questions in the first scale (Pucelj, 2016), where we were measuring individual dimensions, had to be looked up in the text and linked by meaning into separated dimensions and after that finally measured. Out of that reason, this time we prepared in advance, with the corresponding separated sets of dimensions of integration in order to make measurement and qualification into each dimension of integration much more easier; 3) the emphasis by measuring the level of successful integration of covered Muslim women was on the assumption that the integration is harder due to the fact that this women are covered; 4) the questions for measuring the level of successful Muslim integration (Pucelj, 2016) were directed firstly in general questions (example: in my opinion, for successful integration it is important to have a job) and secondly in more specific questions (example: **I** have a job appropriate to my education field, are **you** employed ect.), meanwhile during the measurement of level of successful integration of covered Muslim women we used general questions only for the survey for general population, while the specific questions are asked for the interview (example: What is **your** socio-economic status, ect.); 5) bigger focus was given on the experiences of discrimination by the covered Muslim women; 6) we have left out questions from the primary questionnaire (Pucelj, 2016) such as »Would you suggest any additional measures in Slovenia for even more successful integration of Muslims?«, because we rather focused on personal experience and (potential) issues, which covered Muslim women could encounter on every day basis. Because certain constructs (like settlement-housing integration, educational integration, cultural integration part 2, political integration part 2) showed to be unreliable, it is necessary to discuss these variables individually during the empirical testing.

Conclusion

With the help of this research paper we managed to fill the gap in measuring the level of successful integration of covered Muslim women, because we have managed to provide substation upgrade of the scale, which we previously established for measuring the level of successful integration of Muslims in general (Pucelj, 2016). With this act we added to existing (rare ones) scales for measuring successful Muslim integration a new scale, which is intended for measuring successful integration of a narrow social group within Muslim population – of a covered Muslim women and with that we placed foundations for further empirical research or additional improvements of the scale for measuring the level of successful integration of covered Muslim women.

Q32 – Reliability of construct of political integration 1. part = Cronbach Alfa ,445; Q33 – Reliability of construct of political integration 2. part = Cronbach's Alpha ,010; Q34 – Reliability of construct of discrimination = Cronbach Alfa ,762; Q36 – Reliability of construct of successful integration = Cronbach Alfa ,839; Q38 – Reliability of construct of psychological integration = Cronbach Alfa ,847.

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Women, Empowerment, Leadership: Pathways towards Sustainable development

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Statements

"It is about having half of humanity participates. The progress of women means ... the progress of the world." — U. Joy Ogwu, ambassador of Nigeria to the UN, president, UN Women Executive Board

"I dream of a world where a woman can reach her full potential in whatever she wants to become. I would like UN Women to help [the] women and men of each country build this world according to their specificities and create solidarity with other regions of the world in the same effort." —Nicole Magloire, Haiti

"I dream of a world where women are in decision-making positions. I dream that my daughter will be a leader and decision maker." —Kefayah Mohammed Mostafa Njoum, Occupied Palestinian Territory

"With gender equality, everyone would be a part of the advancement and empowerment of mankind. Society would be united, and the world would be a better place." —Vacharin Patjekvinyusakul, Chief of Judges, Thonburi Criminal Court, Thailand

Abstract

In recent years women empowerment become the buzzword for the whole world though we could not notice the proper implementation of it. Empowerments have some unique dimensions like self-confidence, sense of independence and self-respect. Sometimes Women empowerment depends on the socio-economic condition and also religious views. This paper will show the relation between these two variables with the women empowerment. This paper also shows the importance of women empowerment. Education and leadership gives women confidence to be self-dependent. In the south Asian context most of the society is patriarch, so here the economic dependency is notice. Women empowerment is also closely related to the economic development. In one direction, development alone can play a major role in driving down inequality between men and women. Women literacy and empowerment is also related. Education can give women the power of understanding about their self-respect, self-dependency. By the leadership quality one can motivate other for the same work. If we can make some educated leader they can spared the education and also training by which a women can be self- dependent and also economically solvent. This paper will also give some initiative though which we can spread the education all over the country and also will get some leader. By these educated leaders we could make women empowered. I hope that will be a great initiatives for the sustainable development

Introduction

Empowerment the term means authority or power given to someone to do something. Women Empowerment means educates and empowers women, who are homeless, with the skills and confidence necessary to secure a job, create a healthy lifestyle, and regain a home for themselves and their children. Leadership means the action of leading a group of people or organization. Women leadership means the opportunity and encouragement to ensure their skills and talents get recognized. We need to grow, identify and support future

generations of women leaders. Women empowerment and leadership could be possible if we could make them eligible to be self-dependent. Women empowerment which is a very broader concept including economic development, social empowerment, earning capacity etc. Though time is changing but these changes did not reach to the root level of many countries yet. We don't need to research to say that women are still trivialized.

Area of study

Asia is the largest continent of the world. There are two parts of Asia, one is southern part and another is south-Asia. Developing countries are divided into south Asia countries. South Asia consists of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Srilanka, Maldives and Nepal. South- East Asia is the home to over one fifth of the world population, making it both them mostly populous and mostly densely populated region in the world map.

Methods

Comparative analysis on women empowerment, education and leadership in seven south-Asian countries carried on this paper. This comparison will help us to find out the actual situation of women in south-Asian content. This comparison can be done effectively by comparing gender equality in secondary education and gender equity in labor force. This paper will also elaborate the reason and also try to give a possible initiative of this problem.

Inequality between men and women

Women are always deprived from this society but still in some areas women didn't raise their voice for their rights. In the context of south-Asia, there are lot of inequality between men and women. Though recently many governmental and non-governmental organizations are working for women development but this development could not reach to the root level of the society. As a result, half of the population remains in darkness.

Table 1: Female participation in secondary education and labor force compared to male

Country's name	Secondary Education (2005-2015) (% Ages and 25and older)		Labor Force (2015) (% Ages and 15and older)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Bangladesh	8.8	35.4	43.1	81.0
Bhutan	5.8	13.4	58.7	72.8
Pakistan	26.5	46.1	24.3	82.2
Srilanka	80.2	80.6	30.2	75.6
India	35.3	61.4	26.8	79.1
Nepal	24.1	41.2	79.7	86.8
Maldives	34.2	30.9	57.3	78.8

Source: UNDP Gender Inequality index 2016

Secondary Education (2016)

Secondary education rate is one of the indicators of GDI though which we can clearly notice the Educational difference between male and female. In the following table shows the report of 2015. It is said that time is

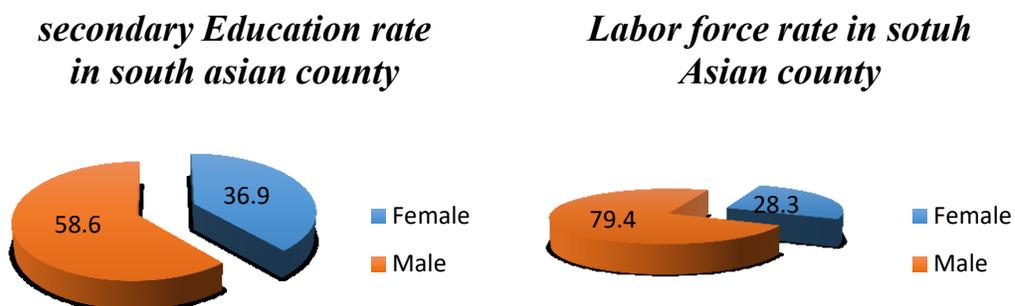
changing and girls are getting equal rights like a man but our present report showing us different things. Without Maldives in every south Asian county contain more education rate for male rather than female. Surprisingly, this rate is almost double in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan, India and Nepal.

Labor Force (2016)

Labor force is another important indicator for the GDI through which we could measure the participation of women in the work place. We always talk about women empowerment but the actual scenery of empowerment is given on the following table. Almost every county have double male worker in labor force in south Asia.

South Asian context

In overall south Asia have almost same situation about the girls empowerment and education. The pie chart shows the rate of female deprivation. In south Asia 58.6 % male are getting secondary education



Source: UNDP Gender Inequality index 2016

While only 36.9% female get this. In the case of labor force the situation is more noticeable that 79.4% male are working in the work force but only 28.3% girls are working in whole south Asia. Which is respectively very low than male.

Root of low rate women empowerment and Leadership

In our society the rate of women empowerment and leadership is decreasing because of religious barriers and also socio economic barriers. Women have to bear almost all the responsibility for meeting basic needs of family member yet they didn't get the proper value for their work. Even people didn't count their responsibility as any work. There are various reasons for which women empowerment and leadership are lack behind.

Religious view VS Social misconception

The relationship between religion and women are very paradoxical and complex as society makes it more complex. Most of the south Asian countries are Muslim country. In these countries every girls are learned to remain in "Pardah" from their childhood. Not only this, even they born in a unwelcome situation where every parents demand is for a boy child. This is not only parent's fault but also somehow society's fault. As most of the south Asian countries are least developed, so they think that having girl is a burden like they have to give extra security and also they have to married off when they grow up ,Whereas a boy treated as a future earning member for their family. Then how a girl can think about their empowerment and leadership by living in such situation? They always repressed by the society under the banner of religion. They are not

allowed to go outside from their home. People of society give them a misconception about the religion. Girls are also did not raise their voice because they have not enough knowledge about this so, they have to obey what their society say. They are kept in a superstition that they cannot work with men or they cannot go outside alone. These things detained them in a fixed boundary, which are totally social made while they named these superstitions as a religion rules but it is totally wrong.

Social and Economic status

South-Asian women are in such a vulnerable situation. In these less developed countries most of the family are patriarch so, they have to depend on the male member of the family for economical As well as social support. The situation is not that women have no ability to walk rather than they are not allowed to do this. As a result, they become bound to do whatever they command. In this less developed country women are considered as a child bearing machine rather than a human being. Their socio-economic condition didn't let them think about their self-respect and their empowerment. In these society girls are married off at their early age not only this, even, they didn't get the proper facilities for education. So, these two things demolish their confidence to do something. They even cannot think about their self-identity all they learn to live with their husband identity. Their society forces them to set their mentality from their childhood. As we know that women empowerments have some dimension like self-respect, sense of independence and self-confidence these element are for those who can think freely. In south-Asian region scenario is that girls cannot give their opinion even in their family matter so, how they can talk or think about freedom, self-respect and confidence? In the patriarch society girls are not only deprived from their demand but also they are being physically tortured by their husband. The common features of patriarch society are gender inequality, physical torture, mental torture etc. Though for the globalization effect situation is changing now but this change is not internal it is only external changes. Now-a-days women are taking education but the rate in almost half from the boy. Surprisingly, after taking higher education they can do any job or not it depends on their in-laws member and her husband. This is how women in south-Asia are freedom. If a women want to do a job they have to first maintain their domestic life then their children after then they can go for job. Doing job after all these things is really very challenging for any women in the world while husband only don their official job they even don't help their wife. That's the reason the rate of women empowerment are than the man. Economic dependency keeps women in vulnerable situation to their husband. Once a girl is married off, their parents don't want to take their liabilities anymore so that women become helpless and their one and only place becomes their in-laws house. They cannot leave their husband house even if they become tortured. Another reason for low women empowerment rate is their security which is not available in these regions. Women cannot go alone at night from home because they are not secured here that is another big reason for which parents want to married off their girl child as soon as possible. There are lots of talented girls in these regions who cannot flourish their talent only because of this socio-economic condition. Women Empowerment and leadership could grow up if we could give them a proper socio-economic condition where they can flourish their talent.

Drawbacks of low rate women empowerment and leadership

The ratio of male and female in the world is quite same so we can say that in a society there are 61% male and 49% female. Though the ratio of boys is little high but the girl's rate is not small. For develop a society properly we need the help of women otherwise half of the development will be lack behind. For example, if we want to drive a car by only two wheel that is not possible at all here is the same position if we want to develop a country properly we will definitely need the help of women and if we want to take their help we need to give them proper education and leadership power so that they could become a useful human resource. So, the whole process is interconnected. In all the developed country there are no inequality between men and women. They work together equally. They treat girls as a human being not as a burden.

South-Asian countries treat women like a burden that is the reason these countries are still developing country. Keeping half of the population excluded the ultimate development is not possible. If we give women the equal opportunity like man they can also do many things for their countries development. Not only this, but also the future of the nation is depends on women. If a child didn't get an educated mother they would grow up with proper education. According to Nepoleon "Give me an educated mother and I shall promise you the birth of a civilized, educated nation" A mother is a first teacher of a child. So, by women empowerment we can not only ensure a developed country but also an educated nation.

An Initiative towards sustainable development

In south-Asian region women education rate and their empowerment rate are approximately half than man. So for a sustainable development we have to build the education and leadership power among the women so that they could empower themselves and also we have to spread it among the root level of all these country otherwise these empowerment will be remain among few women. Now-a-days women are taking education though the number of educated women is very low but first of all we could use these educated women for the sustainable development. Women could empower themselves by two ways one is education and another is make themselves skilled in different sector. For doing this initiative we could develop a team who are educated and also skilled in different sectors like computer programming, sewing, cooking, farming etc. After selecting that team we could send them in different schools in the root level. Then first of all we should give these training to these school going girls so that we could make leaders among them. After giving them training they will become an educated leader. We could spread these educated leaders in their localities. They could gather women for giving them training and also some educational knowledge so that could become self-dependent. Then after giving them training we could make some leaders among the when they become that much skilled. After selecting these leaders among those women we could send them to another nearby locality to give training women of that locality. If we started to do this process continuously this will ensure us to cover all the area gradually. After getting training all the women in the root level will try to make themselves self-dependent and also economically solvent and also women empowerment rate in this region will be increased radically. As this process is a continuous process so it will cover all the localities and also will ensure us a sustainable development. We can notice it by a picture

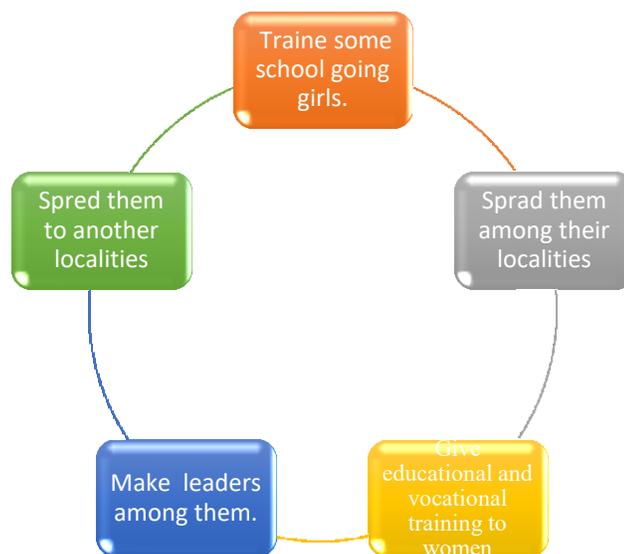


Chart 2: Towards sustainable development

Conclusion and findings

In this study it is shown that how women are in vulnerable situation in south-Asian region. Gender development index also giving this prove that how women's position in backward that a men in different sector like education, labor force etc. First an analysis is done to compare the Gender inequality Index and its component higher education rate and labor force. Higher education differences rate is almost 50% from female to male. This rate is almost same for labor force among girls and boys.

The Gender inequality in south Asian region is very high. Percentage of seats held by women in parliament, Percentage of female legislators, senior officials and managers, Percentage of female professional and technical workers and the estimated ratio of female to male earned income etc. are compared and found that in all the South Asian countries women are in a far worst position when compared to men.

In this paper an initiatives also have shown through which we may be able to reach the root level for eradicating these inequalities. The overall analysis has brought a conclusion that South Asia is regions that need special attention from the world and international agencies for its gender empowerment and human development.

Acknowledgement

It has been a grueling, challenging as well as exciting experience going through the whole research process. Consequently, there is no shortage of gratitude to the many individuals who made it easier and worthwhile

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Scavenging Women of India: Vulnerability Continues

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Abstract

Manual scavenging is an occupation, which not only leads to violation of human rights but also it is a disgrace to human dignity at large. Manual scavenging continues to exist in many parts of India even after 70 years of its independence. It was passed on from generation to generation. Both men and women clean septic tanks, whereas the dry latrines in the houses and public places were generally cleansed by women. Women were engaged in manual scavenging in poor households on credit and these women were treated with contempt. These women and their families were forced to live their entire lives in misery and condemned to remain on the lowest rung of the caste system. Approximately 95% of people engaged in manual scavenging were women, at the bottom of both gender and caste hierarchies (Shahid, 2015). The researcher had applied descriptive research design for his study using simple random sampling method and collected 120 data through interview schedule from Dindigul district in Tamil Nadu. The paper illustrates the status of women scavengers, vulnerabilities faced by women scavengers, the persistence of manual scavenging in India and the efforts that were made to stop the cruel practice. The article proposes the need of a social transformation through generation of awareness and strict implementation of law and policy in order to meet the constraints of the legal and moral regime in which human dignity and respect may be restored for scavenging women.

Keywords: *Manual scavenging, Vulnerability, Women, Anti-manual scavenging efforts.*

Introduction

The dehumanizing practice of manual scavenging is closely interlinked with vulnerability. It is well known that this work is socially assigned and imposed upon certain low castes of India. Manual scavenging is thus a caste based vulnerable occupation, with a large majority of them being women. Manual scavengers are the most discriminated people experiencing the most atrocious form of vulnerability. In India today, scavengers and sweepers still carry out the basic sanitary services. This article is a tool for understanding the vulnerability of women scavengers, helping to amplify their voice for liberation.

Meaning of Manual Scavenging

Actually, manual scavengers are the people, who take away the human waste (night soil) from insanitary, "dry" toilets. (NHRC, 2011), defined manual scavenging as the practice to remove human excreta manually with the help of brooms and tin plates from dry latrines. NHRC explained that, the excreta are loaded into baskets which scavengers carry on their heads to locations sometimes several kilo meters from the latrines. (Pathak, 1995), mentioned that this inhuman practice is said to have started in the year 1214 in Europe when the first public toilets appeared. (Suzuki, 2009), has explained this task to be one of the most disgraced work.

Prevalence

This inhuman practice of manual scavenging is caste-based as declared by *Brahmins* in the past and hereditary occupation for Dalits predominantly linked with forced labour. It is blot on Indian economy. Masoodi mentioned that there are 7, 50,000 families still working as manual scavengers. But he emphasized that actually there are around 1.3 million manual scavengers as above data not included the railway employees who have to clean the human waste from the railway tracks (Masoodi, 2013). According to recent census there are still 7, 94,390 dry latrines where human excreta are cleaned by human hands. It is estimated around ten lakh dalit people in India mainly women, take their livelihood through manual scavenging (Census 2011).

The condition of Manual scavengers

Manual scavengers suffer from extreme form of discrimination, exclusion and powerlessness. Women-folk are kept waiting at sources of drinking water. They are not allowed to take out any religious or ceremonial procession. They are made to live in locations that are isolated from the rest of the village community. Manual scavengers, for example, are paid a pittance. An average manual scavenger earns around Rs.5 to Rs.15 per household per month (Abhiyan, 2011). Health is another issue of prime concern. Manual contact with excreta exposes manual scavengers to various diseases; infection of skin, rotting of fingers & limbs, tuberculosis and nausea are common. Several complain inability to have food due to exposure to excreta. Refusal to perform such tasks leads to physical abuse and social boycott. Public latrines are cleaned on a daily basis by female workers using broom and a tin plate. The excrement is piled into baskets, which are carried on the head or on the waist to a location that is far away from the latrine. At all times, and especially during the rainy season, the contents of the basket drip onto a scavenger's hair, face, clothes and other body parts (Mitre, 1992). The status of the women is the worst. They become vulnerable for being women, for being a *dalit*, and for being a manual scavenger. Surveys have revealed that 93.96% of the manual scavengers in the country are women (Siddaramu, 2013). They bear the dual burden of taking care of their families as well as working as manual scavengers. They are subjugated, oppressed, marginalized and victimized in both social and household spheres of life.

Objective of the Study

1. To describe the demographic characteristic of the respondents.
2. To identify vulnerabilities of women scavengers in Dindigul district.
3. To offer recommendations for sustainable development of scavengers in Dindigul district.

Area of Study

In the midst of adversities and difficulties, Women scavengers live as silent witnesses in Dindigul district, Tamil Nadu, India. Dindigul district comprises of 14 blocks. The area of study comprises the four – Battalakundu, Ayampalayam, Ammainayakanur and Nilakkottai blocks of Dindigul district. In these four blocks the *dalit* population is very strong. The women scavengers belong to *dalit* community.

Methodology

The researcher had adapted descriptive research design for the study. He collected 120 data for the study using interview schedule. The data was collected from women scavengers through simple random sampling method. The *dalit* women involved in various scavenging works are purposively chosen as samples for the study.

Results and Discussions

Correlations

Table: 1 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
SF1 PHYSICAL PROBLEM	60.5667	9.94838	120
SF2 PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM	51.7833	9.73185	120
SF3 UNHEALTHY PRACTICES	69.4500	11.66468	120
SF4 SOCIAL VULNERABILITY	52.4833	10.92679	120
SF5 ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY	53.9667	8.39761	120
SF6 POLITICAL VULNERABILITY	59.4500	10.23411	120
SF7 FORCED MENIAL PRACTICES	54.2833	9.28827	120
SFALL TOTAL VULNERABILITY SCORE	56.2167	4.96007	120

Table: 2 Correlations

	SF1	SF2	SF3	SF4	SF5	SF6	SF7	SF ALL
SF1 PHYSICAL PROBLEM	1							
SF2 PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM	.417(**)	1						

SF3 UNHEALTHY PRACTICES	.570(**)	.201(*)	1					
SF4 SOCIAL VULNERABILITY	.449(**)	.822(**)	.320(**)	1				
SF5 ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY	.430(**)	.310(**)	.412(**)	.281(**)	1			
SF6 POLITICAL VULNERABILITY	.297(**)	.221(*)	.335(**)	.353(**)	.245(**)	1		
SF7 FORCED MENIAL PRACTICES	.351(**)	.767(**)	.408(**)	.779(**)	.227(*)	.266(**)	1	
SFALL TOTAL VULNERABILITY SCORE	.691(**)	.523(**)	.648(**)	.571(**)	.710(**)	.666(**)	.507(**)	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

To understand the construct namely vulnerability it was decided to identify seven sub areas of vulnerability after doing proper review of literature. For each sub dimensions ten statements have been identified and using five point rating scale the constructs have been quantified. As the variables are in interval level of measurements and to ascertain the association among them Karl Pearson's correlation tests were used. It has been found that all the seven areas of vulnerability are positively and significantly associated with each other. It could be concluded that the items are measuring what they are supposed to measure. The reliability is (Alpha = 0.873) and the Intrinsic Validity is (0.934).

Table: 3 MEAN, SD, 't' & F-Ratio values for Total Vulnerability score based on selected Socio-Demographic factors

S.NO	FACTORS	N	MEAN	SD	STAT. RESULT	POST HOC RESULT
BLOCK						
1	1 AMMAINAYAKANUR	36	52.9683	4.35952	17.221 p<.001 sig	Gp 1 Vs 3 4 Gp 2 Vs 3 4
2	2 AYYAMPALAYAM	17	53.5462	4.24512		
3	3 BATLAKUNDU	32	58.2857	3.72879		
4	4 NILAKKOTAI	35	64.9633	4.34198		
	Total	120	56.2167	4.96007		
AGE						
1	1 (LOW <35)	33	65.6147	5.07601	11.896 p<.001 sig	Gp 3 Vs 132 Gp 2 Vs 3
2	2 (MODERATE 36-45)	53	60.3127	5.64303		
3	3 (HIGH 46>)	34	55.6807	3.61729		
	Total	120	56.2167	4.96007		

EDUCATION						
1	0 ILLITRATE	55	52.0156	4.89849	12.237 p<.001 sig	Gp 1 Vs 2 3 4 Gp 2 Vs 4
2	1 PRIMARY (1-5)	32	59.8214	5.40341		
3	2 SECONDARY (6-8)	21	60.0680	4.71723		
4	3 HIGH SCHOOL(9-10)	12	57.6190	3.32603		
	Total	120	56.2167	4.96007		
CASTE						
1	1 SKILIYAR	79	55.5335	5.18323	2.262 p<.001 sig	----
2	2 KURAVAR	41	57.5331	4.25501		
	Total	120	56.2167	4.96007		

The Mean, SD and F-Ratio values for the Total Vulnerability score based on the selected socio demographic factors are presented in this table.

It has been found that samples from Ammainakkanur Block has less Vulnerability score (52.9683) than the samples from other Blocks. These observed differences are statistically significant as the F-Ratio is significant at 99.9 per cent level of significance.(F-Ratio = 17.221 p<.001).

Further, the samples from (Below 35 Years) have more Vulnerability score (65.6147) than the other groups. This observed differences are statistically significant as the F-Ratio is significant at 99.9 per cent level of significance.(F-Ratio = 11.896, p<.001).

The samples whose educational level is Secondary level have more Vulnerability score (60.068) than the other groups. These observed differences are statistically significant as the F-Ratio is significant at 99.9 per cent level of significance. (F-Ratio = 12.237, p<.001).

The samples who are from *Kuravar* caste have more Vulnerability score (57.5331) than the samples from *Sakiliyar* caste (55.5335). These observed differences are statistically significant as the 't' value is significant at 99.9 per cent level of significance. ('t' Values = 2.262, p<.001).

Suggestions

In order to remove this vulnerability all the bodies and government have to work together honestly.

Government must import technology to improve the sanitary services.

All the rules and regulations must be followed strictly and violator of the law must be punished.

There must be a fixed deadline to overcome the problem of vulnerability in scavenging and that deadline must not be crossed.

One agency must be formed in each and every state to conduct surveys regarding the number of scavengers and to assess their vulnerable situation.

Awareness of rights and schemes among manual scavengers is very essential for their upliftment to overcome the vulnerability.

Liberation and rehabilitation both are equally important then only there will be positive relation between abolition of manual scavengers and labour welfare through their rehabilitation.

One more thing which is equally important is to give them dignity and the respectful status in the society and for this we have to take steps forward. We must pledge not to discriminate and relate their identity with their past.

Alternative jobs, proper education for the children, health care services must be provided for these vulnerable scavengers.

CONCLUSIONS

Scavengers remain vulnerable in Indian society today despite the constitutional provisions which direct the state to promote their educational and economic interests. They remained vulnerable because their communities are still predominantly employed to carry out the country's basic sanitary services. Lacking the necessary literacy skills to take advantage of government reservations in education and employment, scavengers have not been able to participate in the job mobility associated with living in a rapidly growing urban environment. While these economic and social problems are shared by other Scheduled Castes, it is the 'unclean and polluting nature' of their employment causes even other Untouchables to discriminate against them. Vulnerability in scavenging remains a complicated social-economic problem, which not only requires adequate funding for its redressed, but need a "radical change of mental outlook". This section of society needs very special attention for their liberation and upliftment. It is high time to overcome this vulnerability. Manual scavengers required fundamental change not cosmetic one. The sense of self-respect is to be created among manual scavengers.

Abbreviation

Dalit: means oppressed castes in India.

Brahmin: is a varna (class) the highest caste in Hinduism specialising as priests, teachers (acharya) and protectors of sacred learning across generations.

Kuravar: is an ethnic Tamil community native to the Kurinji mountain region of southern India.

Sakiliyar: is a Scheduled Caste community found in the state of Tamil Nadu, India.

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The Female Phonocentrism in Shakespeare's Comedies

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I. Preface

The Renaissance would have one of the important periods of European cultural movement from the 14th to the 17th century, beginning in Florence of Italy, spreading from the rest of the main land of Europe and finally to British Island, England by 16th century. The feature of the Renaissance could be the intellectual and artistic rebirth, having an important part in constituting a kind of multiplicitous culture toward individualism. Its influence of humanistic approach would be associated with the critical study of texts of ancient Greece and Rome. Humanistic Renaissance changed the religious culture: the theology of the religion around the people's mind. They would think about the message, "God loves the human beings including women". Those who preferred patriarchy focusing on the male would have distorted Logocentrism. The true meaning of it is not male-centered but Sola scriptura. The Protestant Reformation made it possible to translate the Bible into the vernacular languages, such as national languages with the invention of the printing press. Renaissance scholars were interested in studying classical Latin and Greek, whereas Renaissance writers or authors looked forward to using vernacular languages. They employed the humanistic method and human emotion in liberal art. One of the liberal artists was William Shakespeare in England. Renaissance of England has the differences and similarities of that of European in liberal arts and Reformation. They proved that his works contained with the mixture of an Italian-Renaissance and English own style Renaissance. Especially in his comedies, there are an Italian-hybrid Renaissance and a hybrid Medieval Romance which are distinctive from an Italian-Renaissance. Shakespeare's individualism is related to Reformation with the influence of [Elizabethan Compromise (1559)] Elizabeth I to compromise and to solve the problem of the disruptive society between the Catholic and the Protestant in his romantic comedies.

Protestantism had been finally established as the national religion the year before Shakespeare was born. Hence, from his earliest days, he would be familiar with its rites and ceremonies.ⁱ

Shakespeare's comedies which have the features of Renaissance of England created the cultural variations. Cultural etic is derived from the cultural emic, Italian- Renaissance in liberal arts and Reformation. Shakespeare's imagination would have consisted of the play text partly with the Bible, partly with the avant-garde romance. Shakespeare's tragedies developed masculine military heroism from Epic or history play, whereas, it would have treated as heroines or the female characters in his comedies. Heroines in his comedies solve the entangling problems or cut off their ancestors' sins as forming the romantic love-line with the descendents respectively from the hatred- family or other class family in the hierarchic society between upper and lower class like drawing the courtly love-line in the Medieval romance, creating another romance from cultural variants in the women's speeches.

William Shakespeare might write about allusion and allegory to access to biblical universalism for woman's voice in his comedies: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *As you Like It*, according to religious and cultural changes for the phonocentrism of the Queen Elizabeth. Elizabeth I had the power of establishing the settlement and compromise for solving the problem: religious and political disruption of the domestic and the diplomatic by "an unusual path for a woman." She was a truly eloquent woman with a monarch at the peak of her powers, Speech to the Troops at Tilbury in 1588: "I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a King in England. . . .", which encouraged the British troops to win the Catholic country, Spain. "The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 has long been held as one of England's greatest military achievements. The successful defense of the kingdom against invasion on such an unprecedented scale boosted the prestige

of England's Queen Elizabeth I and encouraged a sense of English pride and nationalism".ⁱⁱ Shakespeare reproduced the 'feminism-oriented literature,' which is a kind of cultural variation of self-fashioning the British own style Renaissance derived from Italian Renaissance in Tudor Literature in the Golden Age.

II. Body

Cultural variations caused the more adoptable English as a spoken language which made it possible to perform the spoken drama on the stage. The origin of drama would begin with the religious ritual. Shakespeare attended the grammar-school and he took the Bible curriculum in Latin and Greek. The Reformers were reacting strongly against the convention of Dark Ages. Furthermore, the Reformation had encouraged individual reading of the Scripture to Shakespeare as essential to individual salvation directly by Messiah, Jesus Christ, not by simony in the Catechism. Looking at the middle ages, the women's role was not important and their parts were minor or assistant in every social work including church life.

. . . . , churches were initially empty spaces and fixed pews within the church were only commonplace by the fifteenth century. The addition of pews created an increased sense of separation within the parish for it led to the separation of women from men. Women were now placed either on the left-hand side, or at the back of the church, removed from the Host, and thus any closeness of identification with the sacrament.ⁱⁱⁱ

Shakespeare's Romances would begin with the similarities from the Medieval romances, however, really breaking through the Dark Ages that is showing the heroes in Epic, furthermore, the heroines, looking forward the modern nation. In his romances: the heroines from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *As you Like It* take part in the role of the pioneer nailing avant-garde in his contemporary. They have the distinctive features of Shakespeare's own style romances which are the women's role as a heroine solving the problem during the period of Tudor Dynasty. As the spoken language much more developed earlier than written language, the phonocentricism is much more focused. We think about the progressive drama with the spoken language as conversation with dialogue from the female characters. Shakespeare's romances would be recreated from the pieces of the origin of Renaissance and Medieval Drama for Elizabeth I. The female voices from Romantic texts written by Shakespeare would compromise the allophones from phonetic system focused on the feministic-oriented literature and produce cultural variations of English style Renaissance from the deep-structure of Renaissance in 14th century of the European Continent consisting of the phonetic system spoken.

II-1 Hermia Standing between a Visionary Fancies and Reality in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

In the beginning of the play called *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, we can see Hermia who is a girl in love with Lysander against her father's wishes. From the First Act, she is enamored deeply with Lysander. Hermia is a weak woman but we can hear her strong speeches to appeal and resist her father. He is forced her to marry Demetrius. She is being managed to victimize by patriarchal system. She converses with the characters around her. The dialogic discourses are resisting the logocentricism distorted by the man's power.

Egeus' father is domineering and overbearing to Hermia. He acts as a foil to the fair and even-handed Theseus. His proposal to bring the full force of the law on his daughter--the penalty of death for disobeying his orders--demonstrates this. "I beg the ancient privilege of Athens: As she is mine, I may dispose of her, which shall be either to this gentleman Or to her death, according to our law Immediately provided in that case." (Act 1 Scene 1, Lines 41-45) He has decided, for his own reasons, that he wants Hermia to marry Demetrius instead of her true love Lysander.^{iv}

Shakespeare treats how to treat patriarchal oppressiveness in his romantic comedies, such as *A*

Midsummer Night's Dream. Important differences from patriarchal bard are his ability to write and create the woman's role in his text. Hermia's speech is against logocentricism or patriarchal system. She is afraid of Athens' "ancient privilege": ignoring individualism and free-will. (I, i, 62-82). Egeus is angry with his daughter Hermia because she is disobeying his will for her to marry Demetrius. Because Hermia is disobeying him, he is petitioning Theseus to sentence her with Athens' "ancient privilege," meaning the right to either kill her or send her off to a convent (I.i.42).

However, it should be noted that while sending her to a convent is an option, Egeus is asking Theseus to "dispose of her" either through marriage to Demetrius or through death, rather than sending her to a convent. (I,i, 40-46)

Hermia and her father, Egeus all of them, appeal to Theseus who is Duke of Athens. Theseus has threatened her with death if she disobeys her father. In Greek, the girl had no right to choose the spouse.

Marriages were arranged by the girl's parents, and we have seen from our brief glance at Xenophon's and we have seen from our brief glance at Xenophon's Ischomachus that he at least took no very ecstatic view of matrimony. . . . The education of girls was omitted. . . and Aristotle holds (in the *Politics*) that by nature the male is superior, the female inferior, therefore the man rules and the woman is ruled.^v

Patriarchy makes bad use of *logocentricism* to oppress the female. The true meaning of *Logocentricism* is focus on the voice of God or hearing and listening to Good News: Gospel. God loves human beings: woman and man. Hermia already knows very well of Protestant evangelism, as an avant-garde woman. She resisters the absurd patriarchy strongly keeping her free-choice (I, i, 57-61). Hermia's father keeps an eye to her. But she would like to split from her father and gets away from her family without his consent.

Hermia. O, hell! ---to choose by another eye's. (I,i, 140).

Her eyes are different form Roman's eyes: Egeus' and Thesus' against Renaissance humanism. Hermia would like to insist and look for her own style individualism.

Romances causing the cultural variations represent again through Hermia's free-will to marry who she wants. To her regret, it is hard to marry Lysander although she has a good and high class.

Hermia. O cross! --- too high to be enthralled low . (I, i, 136) .

She persuasive power makes her generation's conflict reconcile and predict the character's happy ending. This story of Act I (I, i, 40-46) is similar to the history of Henry VIII who didn't obeyed the Pope. Henry VIII would like to remarry Anne Boleyn and started the process of creating the Church of England after his split with the Pope in Roman Catholic in 1534(Act of Supremacy).

Early modern society was patriarchal, indeed patriarch was the most basic of the social attitudes of the period, dictating that fathers should rule.^{vi}

We have considered differently Oberon's mind depending on the view points and focused on it to the little boy with the equivocal perspective: Puck's shoe and Titania's. Puck feels Oberon jealous in the supernatrual world like Zeus from Greek Mythology. Titania would feel much more maternal toward the little body rather than rebuking Oberon's jealous to him. (II, i,143-146)

Titania should get away from Oberon's control going into the refugee to protect from the child : 'The War of the Children Light Against children of Darkness,' which is similar to the accident according to Jewish history.

Their document, known to us 'The war of the Children Light Against children of Darkness,' was not just vaguely apocalyptic but constituted a detained training guide to a battle they believed imminent. Their camp was defensive in layout and provided with a watchtower, and indeed it seems to have been attacked and destroyed by the Romans when the 'end of days' came in 66-70. A.D.^{vii}.

In Shakespeare's imagination, the Roman Empire was the Roman Catholic which controlled oppressively the England. When Herold realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. (Matthew 2:16)

The Conversation with Titania and Oberon has caused the effect of illocutionary force consisting of rhetoric discourse from Biblical allegory.

Most important for the study of Shakespeare's use of biblical allusion is the similar experience of hearing the Bible in the church and the theatre.^{viii}

Titania, Oberon and Puck don't live in the real world, however Hermia's speeches tell us the significant messages in a midsummer night with her visionary fancy. A midsummer night is opposed to Christmas Eve. It was just dream. They dreamed a dream. They would like to come true and expecting Christmas Eve.

Therefore, Elizabethan Compromise harmonized the speeches from Hermia including her faithful friend, Helena and Titania in Shakespeare's romantic play. They are heroines to solve the problems to resist and reconcile the Roman Catholic in England. Each role of them represents the validity of Reformation derived from Individualism Renaissance respecting the woman's victory. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a kind of avant-garde causing Renaissance cultural variations with the liberal dialogic corporation around the women, recovering the meaning of Logocentricism.

II-2 Portia's Dialogic Conversation in *The Merchant of Venice*

. The Shakespeare's romances begin with the ancient liberties, freedom of speech from mid-sixteenth century, together, woman, including the women's speech. Ancient liberties would harmonize Protestantism which respects individualism and free-will

Nerissa is an unimportant woman in *The Merchant of Venice*. However, She is a faithful to God's message and Portia. Portia is the most clever of the play's characters and also she obeys her father's will . In the contrary to Oliver in *As You Like It*. Portia would like to follow Leviticus 19:33-34 faithfully. (II, vii, 1-10).

When an alien lives with you in your land, do not mistreat him. The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the Lord your God. (Leviticus 19:33-34)

She listens to Portia 's complain about her life and tells her father had a good nature : although Portia thinks the unfairness of the casket contest, her father had plan for his daughter's future to suck it up. (II, vii, 1-8). At the beginning of the play, we can hear allusion of the free choice and free-will, how to treat the alien instead of other through two female characters' voices. Portia gives the Princess of Morocco and Aragon an equal opportunity to choose the casket according to father's will and Father's will. Therefore two female characters fashions their identity to respect the alien and recognize the distinction from themselves.

Self-fashioning is achieved in relation to something perceived as alien, strange, or hostile. Self-fashioning is always, though not exclusively, in language. We may say that self-fashioning occurs at the point of encounter between an authority and an alien.^{ix}

Although Nerissa is Portia's woman-in-waiting, she leads Portia a good way and choice freely. She also encouraged Portia to develop productive habits to lead her happy and successful lives. Maybe it is Nerissa who makes Portia clever and quick-witted.

Portia is the main character who solves the problem with her eloquent discourse. In the court scene, Portia saves Antonio's life from Shylock's bond when each man always fails to save his life and to terminate Shylock's contract. Shakespeare depicts Shylock's cruelty to emphasize Portia's role and her speeches.

To focus on Portia's symbolic role is to offer a perspective rather different from current approaches, which tend to analyze the play primarily in relation Shylock.^x

It is shylock who delievers the most famous logical theory in *The Merchant of Venice* (IV, i, 175-184). Shylock violates the principle of humanism so we don't call him "the civilian", or religious man under the name of 'mercy'.

Shylock was both moneylender and Jew. In him are embodied two of the deepest and most widely prevalent social antipathies of two thousand years, prevalent still, but in Shakespeare's play sanctioned by the teachings of religion besides. All that was religious in them Shakespeare probably shared like any other easygoing churchman; but all that was popular and of the people was part and parcel of his breath and blood.^{xi}

It is Portia, in the disguise of a young law clerk, who saves Antonio from Shylock's knife and is the most intelligent of the play's characters. (IV, i, 229-223)

As a woman, Portia is submissive and obedient to her father and Gospel, but she doesn't follow Shylock's demand. Shylock is in prison of his logical theory without the heart responding Portia's speech (IV, i, 304-309). As the judge and as a man, she demonstrates her intelligence and her brilliance. Although she is empowered by dressing as a man and in doing so, she is surely a woman who Shylock recognizes her as a person of infallible judgment like Daniel. (IV, i, 217-220)

Portia gives the chance to repent Shylock who hates Christian, ironically, with her applying Christian style to him. She asks Antonio to mercy him (IV, I, 383-389)

Portia's speech is satisfied with Duke.

Duke. He shall do this, or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here. (IV, I, 390-391).

Portia's endurance and persuasive power lead Shylock's free-will to convert Christian under the mercy and forgiveness.

Portia. Art thou contented. Jew? What dost thou say?
Shylock, I am content. (IV, i, 392-393)

Portia's discourse ability derives from the biblical images and messages and everyone compromises harmonizes all together with producing the cultural variation through the speech of Portia and Nerissa on the surface structure. Portia's persuasive power has a good effect leading to happy ending. Her dialogic skillful conversation harmonizes allegory using biblical quotation. The allegory makes cultural be variable with rhetoric attributing the liberal art, instead of self-righteousness. Elizabeth I controlled the Venice through The Merchant of Venice establishing the Church of England forward to making the face of the modern nation

II-3 Harmonious Conversation with Rosalind and Celia in *As You Like It*

Rosalind is a symbol of a virtue and an intelligent person those days or these days. She is a daughter of Duke Senior having banished by his usurping brother, Frederick.

She is intelligent, witty, warm, strong of character, and she possesses an unshakeable integrity. Yet, there is nothing overbearing or pedantic about her intelligence; she intimidates no one.^{xii}

She is precious to true love and worthy of pure love. Rosalind has a good relationship with her cousin, Celia. Rosalind always seems to rise above the failings of fate by using her resourceful, realistic understanding, and she emerges as a human being who is to be admired. "The people praise her for her virtues," Le beau informs us (I, ii, 271); her goodness and especially her ability to calmly endure misfortune are confirmed by Duke Frederick (I, ii, 79-84).^{xiii}

Religious messages make her endure and temper and able to overcome her ordeal. Something religious is Rosalind's power of pushing through her reality, depending on God according to the Old Testament, "A hot tempered man stirs up; dissention, but a patient man calms a quarrel." (Proverbs 5:18) Rosalind is always happy, ordealing. She said, Thank you, god. (III-2, 329-331)

However, Rosalind's patience is not limitless. Just only she is a patient-woman with great understanding. She is no saint, and she can assert herself with an authority appropriate to her status as the daughter of a duke. Falsely charged with treason and condemned to exile, she is nevertheless secure in her integrity, and she is able to defend herself with courteous yet firm eloquence.^{xiv}

Shakespeare depicts Duke Senior who lived like Robin Hood of England in the Arden Forest far away from the court. Rosalind is a daughter of Duke Senior. Shakespeare would like to draw Rosalind who is a typical girl in Christianity from Protestantism. Rosalind is similar to Elizabeth I whereas she is a counter image of Queen Mary during Tudor Dynasty. She is a representative of Protestantism and Evangelism: temperance and endurance. She has a good patience to control of her own destiny and her cousin, Celia is so kind and generous. They have a good relationship between sister and cousin. They would have a kind of the ideal sisterhood as heroines, not Epic but avant-garde, new romance focusing on two ladies' speeches to compromise and reconcile the conflicts between family discord universal Christianity from the bible messages. In contrast with two brothers, Oliver and Orlando would like to conflict and quarrel over the succession with each other. This situation is more similar like the story of Genesis 4-5 and 50:15 from the Old Testament (I, i, 26-40).

However, Queen Mary was not generous to new Protestant believers because she had been brought up in the Catholic culture and, maybe, got used to it. Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth I are related to half-sister : one is Catholic Christian, the other, protestant Christian. Elizabeth I wished to have come true in *As You Like It* in her ideal sisterhood. For example, another female character, Celia, she likes and would like to follow Rosalind. Their characters are opposed to Queen Mary, comparatively

Rosalind and Celia are very important characters in *As You Like It*. They have a key to reconcile the conflict between two brothers: Oliver and Orlando, Duke Senior and Frederick who repent his past sins rebelling his brother, Senior. Two female characters have beautiful minds and would deliver the religious speech from supporting for it outside of Christianity contrasting to two brothers: Orlando and Oliver who would not seem to have believed in the God of the Bible. They keep on loving each other as sisters according to Hebrews 13:1. All of them are happy ending with recovering the kingdom.

(V,ii,67-68).

III. Conclusion.

Shakespeare invented another romance derived from the Medieval romantic sources in his comedies, listening to the Queen's voice: what she said and wanted with creating the innovative freedom of speech coming true the image of a hybrid- Italian Renaissance, creating another culture. Elizabeth proved that she was an eloquent speaker at Tilbury's speech to become powerful the United Kingdom to establish the Church of England solidly toward the modern country.

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hermia's peripheral knowledge makes sense of Greek environment and Roman Style. In a city of Venice, there are multiple cultures: Morocco, Aragon and Jewish and Christian Culture. Portia struggles the symbol of visible materials, the rich man, Shylock. Finally, Shakespeare accused the Roman Empire's guilt opposite to the Christian Prosperity Gospel through Portia's speeches and performances in *The Merchant of Venice*. There is nationalism about the England, "Duke Senior and his followers spend the life like Robin Hood" in *Act I, i* although the background of a small kingdom of France in *As You Like It*. On the contents with the origin Renaissance: Juno and Hymen, Rosalind and Celia take part in the role of resisters against Roman Catholic who the French believe in. Hymen is Roman god of faithful marriage. Juno is Roman queen of the gods in the Renaissance's style.

Finally, Shakespeare were able to imagine "the female phonocentrism, which might effect Elizabeth I's Tilbury Speech. Today, the people in England have thought that her speech was very famous and it made Elizabeth I an eloquent speaker. Shakespeare couldn't help writing and creating another genre, the romantic comedies of the literal variations, etc from the cultural emic. Elizabeth I was the innovator and speaker in allowing free speech to be positive debating to supply the stable religious and political society and she also innovated Shakespeare's romances with the female-phonocentrism. Shakespeare changed the culture from Renaissance fashioning the British own Renaissance, which is cultural variations including the female's speeches. The heroines from Shakespeare's romantic texts are important role to make them attribute the female-oriented literature.

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Women life in Buddhism

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In the contemporary scenario, materialistic and intellectual changes have given multifarious concepts to human beings. It has given individualism, freedom, formal equality, rejection of traditions, faith in new scientific and technology progress, human's perfectibility and so on. These changes have been called with the term 'Modernity' and these changes have also given birth to feminist thought; even Feminism has known as the daughter of modernization. Under the influence of modernization, women have been aware towards their rights. As such women had started struggling to attain equality between the sexes. Before the birth of the word 'Feminism', this thought has based on the movements like women's rights, women's freedom, women's movements and so on. All these groups have concerned with the issues of gender difference as well as advocates equality for women and campaigns for women's rights.

Feminism term is also based on such issues. According to new Encyclopedia of Britannica, "Women's liberation movement also called feminist movement, social movement that seeks equal rights for women, giving them equal status with men and freedom to decide their own carriers and life partners."^{xv} So Feminism is such doctrine which declares the equality of the sexes and advocates equal social, political, and economic rights for woman. Feminism has long period of struggling which has divided into three waves. In all these periods feminist thought has given numerous concepts to destroy the discrimination of sex. First wave movement was aimed at challenging the lack of rights for women in the public sphere. The right to vote, own property and obtain an education were vital demands in first movement. "Second Wave Feminism refers to the resurgence of feminist activity in the late 1960s and 1970s, when protest again centered around women's inequality, although this time not only in terms of women's lack of equal political rights but in the areas of family, sexuality and work."^{xvi} Apart from this, third wave has also pivotal role to make better environment for women. It is also known as post feminism. This wave has discussed about the gender and sex; sex is concerned with male and female (body difference); gender difference is created by society, culture and so on. It can be said that these waves are mixed with each other, they have not different.

"All histories of feminism properly begin with the appearance of Mary Wollstonecraft's A vindication of the rights of women in 1792."^{xvii} She has fight for women education, equality between husband-wife etc. she whispered that marriage is like legal prostitution. Even she claimed that a woman cannot be perfect till that time when she has not freedom from patriarchal society and dominance of males. As such famous male feminist thinker John Stuart Mill has written book 'The Subjection of women' in 1869, through this he has written about women's dominating life inside the house and work places. He whispered that marriage is main consequence of slavery of women. It is famous with the title of 'Women's Bible.' Virginia Woolf has given unique thought in her writing 'A Room of One's Own' 1929, she said women should be her own room, with that she can write better.^{xviii} Simone De Beauvoir has given new concept to feminism through her book 'The Second Sex', which has published in 1952 in English. Simon is first feminist thinker who has tried to understand women's lives in the perspective of culture. She said, "One is not born, but rather becomes, woman. No biological, psychic, or economic destiny defines the figure that the human female takes on in society; it is civilization as a whole that elaborates this intermediary product between the male and the eunuch that is called feminine."^{xix} Owing to male dominance and patriarchal society, women has represented as weak sex and as thing to satisfy men's

desires. Culture has defined females as weak sex. As such Simone said, “The child is persuaded that more is demanded of boys because of their superiority; the pride of his virility is breathed into him in order to encourage him in this difficult path; this abstract notion takes on a concrete form for him: it is embodied in the penis; he does not experience pride spontaneously in his little indolent sex organ; but he feels it through the attitude of those around him.”^{xx} Simon said women’s body is not enough to define her, this reality should be concerned through actions and within a society also. Thus Simone coined the word gender, which became pivotal in feminism movement. According to Vijayanti Arun Belsore, “The gender perspective is a major step and turning point in the development of the feminist movement. It helped to establish that the ground of inequality between man and woman is not biological difference. But diversity is not the ground of inequality because equality does not mean uniformity.”^{xxi} Betty Friedan, has written different thoughts from her contemporary thinkers in her book ‘the Feminine Mystique’ in 1965. She outlined the ‘disease with no name’, these diseases are unhappiness and loss, a product of seclusion in the home and a life centered on children and husbands. In reality these dilemmas have not heard. Such works have made woman as baby woman and she entirely depend on man.

After these thoughts, feminist thinkers tried to elaborate the women’s writings, as before this, once Virginia Woolf has stated about women’s writings. But it was entirely established by poststructuralist feminist thinkers like Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray and Helene Cixous. These thinkers have adapted a new thought of philosophy and language to understand the women’s lives. Luce Irigaray has whispered about women’s condition, “Woman is traditionally a use value for man, an exchange value among men; in other words, a commodity. As such she remains the guardian of material substance, whose price will be established, in terms of the standard of their work and of their need/desire by subjects: workers, merchants, consumers. Women are marked phallicly by their fathers, husbands, procurers. And this branding determines their value in sexual commerce.”^{xxii} In such conditions, these feminist thinkers have tried to say that women should be represent themselves, women should be write, even women should be write with freedom. Irigaray has defined mystical beauty of women’s body; she said if women’s will be writing than their writings will be mystical, full of feelings and egoless.

She said, “Woman speak is produced from woman’s libido. This is fundamentally different from men’s and so too, therefore, is there language. Where female sexuality is unfixed and decentered, since woman has sex organs just about everywhere, male sexuality is fixed and centered on the penis. His language is rational, linear, and comprehensible; hers is rational, non-linear and incomprehensible-to men. Unlike woman speak, however, ecriture feminine is a feminine discourse, not a female language, and can therefore be written by both men and women.”^{xxiii} Helene Cixous said women’s libido has enriched with numerous feelings. A woman has to be feeling proud because she has unique traits of love and creation. Women’s thinking is also salient like her traits and body, as such women’s writing is also differ than men’s. She whispered for women, “She must write herself, because this is the invention of a new insurgent writing which, when the moment of her liberation has come, will allow her to carry out the indispensable ruptures and transformations in her history, first at two levels that cannot be separated.”^{xxiv} Through all these thoughts feminism has given better environment to women for upliftment.

As above discussed, it can be said that feminist movement tried to reject old faiths and give new interpretation to individuals, but when we are trying to understand these concepts with religion, then religions given different ways to get freedom. Actually feminism talked about world level freedom which is concerned with equality. Sometimes feminist approaches have given the meaning of equality as dependency. According to religions, freedom is entirely related with intellect and inner/personal views.

In this paper while throwing light on the aim of Buddhist faith, *nirvāṇa*, the attainment of *nirvāṇa* by women has been considered. About this, some views have been expressed about the ability of a woman to claim the right to *nirvāṇa* in the observations of Buddha and an attempt has been made to describe the efforts made by great women in this regard as mentioned in the literature of the Buddhist faith.

In the Buddhist philosophy, *nirvāṇa* is the ultimate goal of life. The meaning of *nirvāṇa* is to become free from the suffering. Every individual is surrounded by the suffering. As Mahatma Buddha has stated in the first noble truth, that the world is full of suffering. In second noble truth, he said sufferings are caused if we do not apply the right vision. It is quite obvious that we invite sufferings. The chain of suffering can be ceased if we eliminate ignorance by practicing right acts. This noble path is the right path as the aim of our life. It leads us towards *nirvāṇa*.

In the teaching of Mahatma Buddha, there is no discrimination on the basis caste, creed and gender whether he or she can get *nirvāṇa* if he or she is able to practice right path in his or her life. In his philosophy, Mahatma Buddha has shown the path of life to all human beings irrespective of caste, gender, region and religion. *Moksha* (Sanskrit term), *Kaivalya*, *Mukti* are the synonyms of *nirvāṇa*. In every religion the ultimate end of the life always goes to the freedom from bondage of the sufferings. Mahatma Buddha was sure about this, whether he is man or she is woman who is enlightened, can eliminate the bondage.

The main object of the Buddhist faith, *nirvāṇa*, has been described as a conjunct of two words – ‘*Ni*’ and ‘*Vana*’. ‘*Ni*’ means ‘No’ and ‘*Vana*’ means suffering, craving, etc. In this way *nirvāṇa* means freedom from all desires. According to some scholars, the meaning of the word *nirvāṇa* is ‘to be extinguished or calmed down’. The meaning of ‘Being calmed down’ or getting extinguished is the calming down of suffering, evil, craving, ego, etc. By overcoming all these evils, a person reaches a state (of mind) where there is no distinction between sorrow and joy, right and wrong, good and bad. As a matter of fact, *nirvāṇa* is the path of freedom and purity, whereby one gets free of the cycles of births and deaths.

This attainment is that of the greatest bliss, greatest truth, greatest philosophy and true experience. In *Dhamapada*, true experience (*nirvāṇa*) has been praised as *Amritpada* (Immortal state).^{xxv} There is no greater happiness than the bliss, bloom, and peace which is experienced in this state. According to *Dhamapada*, there is no greater fire than attachment, no evil greater than jealousy and no misery greater than that of five skandhas (form, pain, name, proclivities and knowledge) and there is no greater happiness than peace.^{xxvi}

In order to bring home the significance of *nirvāṇa*, Mahatma Buddha has exhorted about the real nature of misery, common miseries and the way to avoid misery. The basis of man’s miseries is ignorance and proclivities (deeds of the past and present), by which desire is caused in the mind. Becoming aware of these miseries, it has been exhorted to tread the path of *nirvāṇa* – modesty, meditation, pragya (eight-fold dharma) to rise above the miserable state. This is the inner experience and feeling of man. In the Buddhist faith, a person who has attained this stage is called an ‘*Arhāntā*’. In this stage, after controlling the mind, one passing through *Sotāpatti* (listener), *Sakadāgāmi* (devotion), *Anāgāmi* (no return) stages and attains *Arhāntā*. According to *Dhamapada*, one can attain *nirvāṇa* not by outer forms, but by inner discipline and control.^{xxvii}

For every human being, whether a man or a woman, the difference between his or her outer distinctness and inner power cannot be perceived. Therefore if a human being, (man or woman) desires

to attain *nirvāṇa*, he or she can attain this stage without any discrimination because it depends on inner spiritual development. One's outer deeds, and ways can be checked but it is impossible to check the inner development. This spiritual development can be called secret experience. This experience can be had by a person at any place and at any time. According to Karma Lekshe Tsomo, "A Growing number of women, and also some men, feel a need to identify enlightenment in feminine mode. I reject the notion, however, that enlightenment can be categorized or identified with gender at all. To set up a male/female dualism with regard to the ultimate of human experience seems superficial and limiting. It is also logically untenable. Enlightenment is awareness and not a form at all. It is consciousness free of delusions and free of unknowing. How can such awareness be male or female?"^{xxviii}

According to Buddhism, women are equal to men as regards attaining knowledge. Mahatma Buddha has said that any person (man or woman) who has the wheel of *dharma*, *Smṛiti* in the form of a sheet, *dharma* as the charioteer, and the vehicle of thorough vision, whether he is a man or a woman, he/she can reach *nirvāṇa* riding this chariot.^{xxix} That is to say, the way of *nirvāṇa* is the one in which there is no gender distinction between man and woman. Only firm determination is required. Rather he himself treated a woman equally rightful to attain *Arhāntāpada*. In Mahatma Buddha's view, every person has the capability to spiritual attainment.^{xxx} For this attainment, neither age, nor time, nor sex, nor social standing has any importance. The followers of Mahatma Buddha had risen above the consideration of cast or creed, and the distinction of high and low and were adherents of their faith single-mindedly. Some good illustrations of this are, *bhikhu* Upali was a barber, Khajutra was a maid, a snake charmer, who had spent his time roaming about in the lanes and Sunita was a sweeper, etc.

In the Buddhist faith, men and women were enlightened and had the right to enlighten others. It is for this reason that for the propagation of the Buddhist faith there is the mention of women's association. Women treaded the path of truth and attained the position of Great Preachers. These women are known as *bhikhunis* (nuns) or *upasikas* (followers). A *bhikhuni* renounced worldly comforts for living in the *sangha* and attains the object of real life through meditation. An '*upasika*', who is living in family as well as believing in three *ratnas* (gems) (Buddha, *dharma* and *sangha*) to become the follower of Buddha's faith.

The first aspect is with regard to *bhikhuni*, who is living in the *sangha* to attain *nirvāṇa*. Mahatma Buddha described the virtues and vices of a *bhikhuni* and by imbibing which virtues can she attain *nirvāṇa* and doing which vices she goes to hell.^{xxxi} By imbibing true virtues and following the path of truth, she can achieve the goal of her faith. Talking to Visakha, Mahatma Buddha expresses the view that a virtuous woman or man who adopting the path of truth and following the eight fold dharma, they can attain heaven^{xxxii} and in the second part of *Angutara Nikaya*, Mahatma Buddha says that by imbibing good virtues, *bhikhu-bhikhuni* can gain in two ways : one, the attainment of *Arhāntā* in this life and secondly, at the end of this life span, the status of not coming back (*Anāgāmi*).^{xxxiii} It comes to the fore out of this discussion, that the *bhikhunis* can attain *nirvāṇa*. This view is confirmed by '*Therigatha*'. In this scripture the *bhikhunis* have explained their experiences as to how their miseries were removed and they were able to enjoy the bliss of *nirvāṇa*.

It is generally believed about the women joining the *sangha* that, they fed up with their miserable life and joined the *sangha*. Just as Mahaprajapati Gautami, after the death of her husband and in the same way other women on the death of their children, parents and the grief over the passing away of their husband joined the *sangha*. But on the other hand, there were some other women also, who, duly shouldering the household of responsibilities, considering themselves equal to men and came out of the

stranglehold of the social customs and rituals to make free themselves. Thirdly, there were some women, who were not for fear of miseries, but because of their inner quest. They got enrolled themselves in the *sangha* so that through *nirvāṇa* they could get rid of the cycles of births and deaths. “Sumedha, she in spite of the pleading and requests of her parents turned her back on the wedding-bells and retired from the world. Sumana craved to forsake the world but had to wait till the death of her grand-mother (Ayyaka). Annatara there had a natural aptitude for the celibate life, from her very childhood. She took the permission of her husband and joined the Order. Mutta and Punna dawned yellow-robos as soon as they were twenty years old.”^{xxxiv} These women joined the *sangha* to attain the wealth of enlightenment because of the opportunity provided by Mahatma Buddha, fulfilling their desires and spent a blissful life.

The other aspect is about those women who became *upasikas* (following the faith living in family). Mahatma Buddha says that a person who living in the family and following the principles of five precepts (*panchsheel*) that can attain *nirvāṇa*.^{xxxv} In the same way in a *Jataka Katha*, according to Mahatma Buddha, which *upasiks* or *upasikas* (male or female follower of the faith) remain under the shelter of three ratnas (gems) (Buddha, *dhama* and *sangha*), they does not go to hell and can get rid of all the miseries here itself.^{xxxvi} Even Mahatma Buddha never hesitated to give exhortation to the women living in family. His main exhortation to the *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunis* living in the *sangha* was to know the truth and inspire others to know the truth, so that those leading a family life, they can make their life easier. During Buddha’s life time, any woman could approach him at any time. The importance given to a *bhikkhuni* in the Buddhist faith was the same as that given to an *upasika*. The *upasikas* living in family played a very important role in the propagation or development of the Buddhist faith. Therefore it would not be wrong in any way to mention Visakha’s name.

Treading the path of an *upasika*, many women were living in the family and led a disciplined life to know the Truth. According to Mahatma Buddha, along with *bhikkunis*, more than five hundred *upasikas* would attain *nirvāṇa* in this world and would not come back from the other world. The mention of some of such *upasikas* is found in the Buddhist literature. *upasika* Nanda Mata^{xxxvii} had controlled her mind and got to know the reality of misery, and led the life of truth through her remembrance. At the time of the demise of her husband and son she had not felt any grief and she looked at every happening in silence as if she had ceased to have any attachment. As such Sonadina Nalanda, “She was a female devotee who lived at Nalanda and served the bhikkhus with the four requisites. She observed the rules of moral conduct and *uposatha* with perfection. She meditated over the four noble truth and gained *Sotāpatti*.”^{xxxviii} In the same way, was Samana daughter of Anathpindak. Daily 2000 *bhikkhus* came to her father’s house to take their meals and serving them was her greatest joy. At the time of death of Samana, she was dedicated her father as brother. “Buddha explained that, as she was a *sakadāgāmi* and he was a *sotāpānna* her addressing him as brother was quite in order. In the religious world she obtained higher stage than him. So she was senior to her father from the religious side.”^{xxxix} Another such *upasika* was Sujata, who attained the stage of *Arhānt* while living at home. Mahatma Buddha favoured the idea that man and woman, while living at home, through the observance of five precepts (*panchsheel*), could attain the highest goal (*nirvāṇa*).

According to the Buddhist faith, *nirvāṇa* (complete spiritual liberation) is the ultimate truth and words are unable to describe this highest truth. This mystical stage of truth/experience/peace can be described by man only through examples. The experiences of women have been compiled in the scripture called ‘*Therigatha*’. One of these spiritual women, *bhikkhuni* Utpalvarna, had said, ‘the darkness of my worldly desires and ignorance has been fully destroyed.’ According to Jainta, ‘the cycle of my births and

deaths has ended.' *Bhikhuni* Vimal got rid of all the evils, attained peace and *nirvāṇa*. *Bhikhuni* Sundrinanda said that she became aware of the truth of the body, observed discipline and attained *nirvāṇa*. According to *bhikhuni* Mahaprajapati Gautami, she got enlightened about the real form of misery and with the practice of eight-fold path (*ashtanga*), her desires came to an end. She was fully confident that with the practice of Dharma, she had got rid of the cycle of births and deaths. Experiences of seventy three women, who had attained *nirvāṇa*, have been included in '*Therigatha*'.

Along with the attainment of *nirvāṇa*, the time of attaining *nirvāṇa* and the place have also been mentioned in the '*Therigatha*', just as Patachara gives the spectacle of moving the wick of the lamp with a needle she reached the state of *nirvāṇa*. In the same way Anupama following the teachings of *dharma*, sitting on her seat, she attained the third boon (*Anāgāmi*). The most important aspect in the Buddhist faith in the context of women is that Mahatma Buddha himself became aware of the way to *nirvāṇa* because of a woman. When Mahatma Buddha had been absorbed in meditation without partaking of anything in order to attain enlightenment, a dancing women, who happened to pass by, uttered these words, 'Don't loosen the chords of the sitar so much that there is no tune, nor tighten so much to reach the breaking point'. An understanding dawned on him that leading a disciplined life, 'truth can be found.' In *Anguttara Nikaya*, Mahatma Buddha had said to Papimar, 'I shall not attain *Mahaparinirvāṇa* till my *bhikhus*, *bhikhunis*, *upasiks*, *upasikas* do not get enlightened and become worthy of attaining *nirvāṇa*, living the life of *dharma*, and practicing *dharma*.^{xi}

As a conclusion, feminism, as above discussion; it is a movement for women rights. Feminism particularly talks about women's freedom. It can be said that freedom is concerned with intellect and inner/personal views. If we talk about Mahatma Buddha, he was given such rights to women in sixth century. Actually, feeling of such freedom is very strong that can be making independent and free from all slavery. Important is that, this freedom is not express any gender based identity; even this concept is beyond of difference of man and woman. Apart from this, modern feminist thinkers have highlighted thoughts on women's body as well as greatness of women's writings. Luce Irrigary whispered, "Women need to be able to represent themselves to themselves (but in way quite different from men) in order to constitute themselves as truly social beings who can form positive relationships with each other."^{xii} As such Luce Irrigary has given priority to women's body and her feelings related with delivery of child and feeding; she said women should be write her mystical experience of baby delivering. Another feminist writer Helene Cixous said, "I shall speak about women's writing: about what it will do. Woman must write herself: must write about women and bring women to writing from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies-for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal. Woman must put herself into the text-as into the world and into history-by her own movement."^{xiii} If women will be writing by themselves, they can be make identity in this patriarchal society. Moreover, it can be say that which rights have got by women's in 19th century that all rights Mahatma Buddha had already given to women in 6th century.

It can be said in essence that in the Buddhist faith, women can attain *nirvāṇa* like men. For attainment of *nirvāṇa*, sex, caste and time have no significance. For its attainment, one has to control one's mind. Regarding women as the glory of *dharma*, Buddha considered them capable of getting spiritual enlightenment, attaining *nirvāṇa* and preaching the gospel of the faith. The women too, making good use of the opportunity given by him, played an important role in propagating the Buddhist faith and spreading it far and wide.

Notes and References: At the end

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