



Correlates of Working Conditions, Job Stress and Coping Mechanisms Among Working Mothers in an Urban Environment

Dr. Liza L. Quimson

Open University Systems, Pangasinan State University

Biodata:

Dr. Liza L. Quimson, Associate Professor V, is presently the Executive Director of the Open University Systems, Pangasinan State University.

Abstract

Numerous are studies about job stress and the factors that influence it but less are published among working mothers living in an urban environment. This study aimed to correlate job stress, working conditions, and coping mechanisms of working mothers living in an urban environment. Using an enhanced likert scale through a causal-comparative *ex post facto research design* among sampled working mothers living in an urban environment in the Philippines, it was found that the working mothers generally perceived their working conditions as ‘good’ and their job stress as ‘moderate’. Significant findings of the study include a significant negative correlation between job stress and working conditions implying increasing job stress with worsening working conditions. Further, the study has found a significant multiple correlation coefficient establishing that job stress is influenced by working conditions and coping mechanism. Thus, are predictors of job stress level. Stress debriefing approaches and stress management programs are recommended to help working mothers in an urban environment enhance their coping mechanism to lessen the effect of job stress, especially when working conditions cannot be practically solved.

Keywords: *Job Stress, Working Conditions, Coping Mechanisms, Women, Urban*

Introduction

The world of work is changing rapidly but our concept about ‘work’ is not. Should we change a concept that is almost engraved in man’s minds for quite a long time – that work is for men – needs re-evaluation at this present time. And one of the many ways to re-evaluate our perception is to involve research in the process. And involving research in the process is looking at all angles or variables that impact it in the first place. Women working in various types of labor force and the factors that affect their (women) working conditions are thus significant to understand.

According to Ford *et al.* (2007), it was originally believed that work and family are two distinct parts of life, but are not regarded by most societies as closely related, i.e. to balance work and to perform a role in the family have become a key personal and family issue. According to Smith as quoted by Ventayen (2017), a job is not only a main source of income but also an important component of life, and that work takes away a large part of each worker’s day and also contributes to one’s social standing. Further, according to Smith, because of the central role that work plays in many people’s lives, satisfaction with one’s job is an important component in overall well-being. Thus, this means that job satisfaction and working conditions are related.

Traditionally, according to Sevim, as quoted by Zarra-Nezhad (2010), the maintenance of the family like home and childcare was the major responsibility of the women while to find food for the family (i.e. breadwinning) was the major responsibility of the men. He pointed out that with more and more women entering the workforce and pursuing careers, however, our clearly defined perceptions of gender roles were forced to change. This means that while working conditions and job satisfaction are generally held related by several studies in the past, to look into the conditions of women is another story.

Weston *et al.* (2018) found that there was a link between the increase of depressive symptoms of women and with the extra-long hours of work, while an association was found between increase depressive symptoms and with working during weekends for both genders, both of these were claimed to worsen mental health.

While several studies have already been conducted in job satisfaction, and several studies have already established correlations between job stress, working conditions and other variables, and gender has already been strongly used as one important factor in differentiating job stress, a gap in literature still exists – the literature is deplete of studies looking into women who are working

in an urban environment, or in metro-city. In fact, one paper, Sharif and Nazir (2016) recognized that their research on job satisfaction level among working employees in a software industry that responses on their study were taken from only twin cities in Pakistan due to shortage of time, and acknowledged that results in other cities could be different.

Statement of the Problem

Generally, this study aimed to correlate the working conditions, job stress, and coping mechanisms of the working mothers in an urban working environment in one metro-city in the Philippines as well as identifying their personal profile and status to determine which is a predictor of stress in the workplace.

Specifically, it attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the working mothers with respect to
 - a. age level;
 - b. type of employment;
 - c. occupation of the husband;
 - d. family budget, and
 - e. family size?
2. What is the status of the working mothers with respect to
 - a. Working conditions in the workplace;
 - b. Job stress, and
 - c. Coping mechanisms?
3. Is there any significant difference among the working conditions, job stress level, and coping mechanisms with respect to:
 - a. Age level;
 - b. Type of employment;
 - c. Occupation of husband;
 - d. Family budget, and
 - e. Family size?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the job stress experienced by the working mothers' and their
 - a. Working conditions;

- b. Coping mechanisms, and
 - c. Working conditions and coping mechanisms combined?
5. Which of the profile variables and working conditions are significant predictors of job stress in an urban environment?

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study would help open the eyes of family members to the sacrifices of working mothers make for the family and would enable them to make adjustments that will improve the welfare of the mothers. This will also make the employers of the working mothers more considerate, sensitive and supportive to the cause of their employees. The government may be enticed by the findings to legislate for the protection of the mother. To educators, the findings of the study could inspire curriculum revisions that will champion the cause of mothers as key members of society. To the working mothers themselves, the findings may boost their morale and motivate them to be more assertive in demanding for better working conditions, responsibility sharing, and respect in the workplace.

Methodology

The study employed causal-comparative or *ex post facto* research design. Stratified random sampling was utilized to determine the respondents of the study, whose population was determined through the Slovin's formula. The respondents were asked to accomplish the questionnaires which included the Professional Life Stress Scale (1989) design by Fontana of the British Psychological Society and Routledge Ltd in England to measure job stress and the Coping Scale design used by Bretner (1995) to measure coping mechanisms. Moreover, some indicators were derived from Liew, (2016) in the instrumentation. The use of indicators from studies and modification to fit the purpose of the study is similar to the work of Gamary & Batang (2019) which revised the instruments to fit the purpose of their study on textbook adaptation by teachers. The questionnaire was pilot-tested among a representative sample of respondents in one metro-city in the Philippines, similar to the protocol employed by Camara (2020). Data through the pilot-testing as well as expert validation on the questionnaire served as guide for the re-writing of the test instruments. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents to ensure that instructions are personally read to them to avoid ambiguity in answering, as well as to provide assistance should

the respondents request. The data were analyzed statistically through the SPSS with the help of a statistician.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the Working Mothers

Table 1

Frequency and Percentage of the Profile in Various Study Variables

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age Level	Young	46	22.4
	Middle	115	56.1
	Old	44	21.5
Total		205	100
Type of Employment	Support Staff	76	37.1
	Teacher	66	32.2
	Non-Teaching Prof	63	30.7
Total		205	100
Occupation of Husband	Manual/Non-pro	108	52.7
	Professional	40	19.5
	Managerial	57	27.8
Total		205	100
Family Size	Small	25	12.2
	Medium	152	74.1
	Large	28	13.7
Total		205	100

Table 1 generally shows that majority of the respondents are in their middle age (56.1%), are members of support staff (37.1%), have manual or non-professional occupation (52.7%), and with a medium-sized family (74.1%). Noting the huge number of mother-respondents who describe their employment as ‘support staff’, this suggests that they are helping their husband earn money for their daily living, and would prefer to not live with her family as plain wife only. In this context, ‘support staff’ refers to either non-teaching staff or non-professional, i.e. a support staff is not a teacher and not a professional, and perform other societal roles combined. While majority of women in their middle age are already working, Ventayen & Ventayen (2018) found that – as a support – majority of the students enrolled in one state university are women and are master’s degree holder, and are, in fact, pursuing their doctorate degrees.

Table 2

Mean and description of the Profile in terms of Sufficiency of Family Budget

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Description</i>
1. Family budget is enough to provide for our daily needs.	2.2244	Sufficient
2. There is always room for unexpected expenses.	2.1463	Sufficient
3. After the month/week, there is still an amount left to save.	2.1463	Sufficient
4. It is the least of my worries.	1.8634	Sufficient
5. We can easily adjust the amount to accommodate un-programmed expenditures.	2.0829	Sufficient
Mean	2.0380	Sufficient

Table 2 generally reports that the family budget of the household as perceived by the working mothers is ‘sufficient’ for the family. This result in an urban environment is different when taken into the context of private higher institutions in which Ventayen (2017) found that the monetary concerns of the teacher-respondents are related to money, and that they said they are not happy with the monetary value which they are receiving monthly.

Status of Working Conditions of the Working Mothers

Table 3

Mean and description of the Status of Working Conditions of the Respondents

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Description</i>
Good light and Ventilation	3.3171	Good
Sufficient working space	3.1756	Good
Complete working facilities	3.3268	Good
Clean and conducive to task Performance	3.3268	Good
Easily accessible from home	3.2537	Good
Friendly atmosphere	3.2098	Good
Assigned tasks are in accordance with educational qualification/technical skill	3.2049	Good
Worker participates in work Planning	3.1171	Good
Worker is given the opportunity to structure the place of work according to her	2.9707	Good
Worker is given the opportunity to participate in decision making	2.9610	Good
Worker is given vacation/sick/maternity leave benefits	3.3073	Good
Democratic and considerate Manager	3.3024	Good
<i>Bonuses/other incentives Given</i>	<i>3.3951</i>	<i>Good</i>
No life/health threatening Aspect of tasks	3.1024	Good
No discrimination in assignment of tasks	3.0585	Good
No discrimination in promotion/advancement	2.8488	Good
No discrimination in giving opportunity for professional advancement	3.0390	Good
Standard working hours	3.2732	Good
Holiday breaks	3.3366	Good
Supportive management	3.1463	Good

Medical services available	2.8782	Good
Sports/recreational activities held regularly	2.7024	Good
Briefing/orientation held whenever new tasks are assigned	2.9902	Good
Policies/information Properly disseminated	3.1415	Good
<i>Salaries commensurate to position held/assigned task</i>	<i>3.2341</i>	<i>Good</i>
Mean	3.1319	Good

Table 3 generally reveals that the working conditions of the working mothers in the urban environment is ‘good’. This finding suggests that no problem generally exists in the workplace of the working mothers to merit any form of disappointment. As found in the table, indicators relative to monthly pay and bonuses (‘bonuses/other incentives given’ and ‘salaries commensurate to position held/assigned task’) are considered ‘good’ by the respondents. Recall that in Table 1, majority of the respondents are ‘support staff’. To this group of respondents, bonuses and other incentives given refer to ‘small tokens’ of appreciation from their employers or bosses especially when profits are stable. This is to reward the workmanship and cooperation of the support staff, i.e. not teachers and not professionals, could be daily wage earners. This suggests that employers of working women in urban environment are generous and that business is generally profitable. However, Sharif & Nazir (2016) found that the most important factor that can impact job satisfaction, among others, is pay. They claimed that all employees work for money so that they can fulfill their desires. To support this differing scenario of Sharif & Nazir, and as earlier noted, Ventayen (2017) found that money is one primary problem among private higher educational institution. Monetary value was found to primarily motivate the college instructors to agree that they would look for a new job a year after as they quit their work. In viewing this sense of differing experiences among the working mothers of the study as respondents and that of Ventayen’s, it must be noted that majority of the respondents of this study are support staff while those of Ventayen’s are faculty members themselves.

The finding on the working conditions of the working mothers especially those indicators relative in terms of standard working hours and vacation are generally rated as ‘good’ because according to Weston et al. (2018) increased depressive symptoms were independently linked to working

extra-long hours for women, and suggesting that these work patterns may contribute to worse mental health. This could be taken to believe that women working in urban environment start and end their work tasks according to prescribed time of their company or organization – they are time-bound.

Level of Job Stress of the Working Mothers

Table 4

Mean and description of the Status of Job Stress of the Respondents

Variable	Categories	Total No of respondents	Level of Stress	Interpretation
Age	Young	46	2.00	Moderate
	Middle	115	2.24	Moderate
	Old	44	2.18	Moderate
Employment	Support Staff	76	2.09	Moderate
	Teacher	66	2.26	Moderate
	Non-Teaching Prof.	63	2.19	Moderate
Family Size	Small	25	2.16	Moderate
	Medium	152	2.18	Moderate
	Large	28	2.18	Moderate
Occupation of Husband	Manual	108	2.13	Moderate
	Professional	40	2.23	Moderate
	Managerial	57	2.23	Moderate
Family Budget	Small	34	2.06	Moderate
	Average	124	2.19	Moderate
	Large	47	2.23	Moderate
Mean		205	2.17	Moderate

Table 4 reflects that the working mothers only have ‘moderate’ level of job stress in all variables measured and in all categories for each variable. This finding implies that the level of job stress

experienced by, for example, the working mothers who are either young or old or in her middle age, are the same – moderate level. This is the same implication which could be inferred from the table in all other variables. The same result is found through the American Psychological Association in a 2016 survey, on a scale of one to ten, women described their stress levels as 5.1, compared to stress levels of 4.4 women, and while this comparative women-to-men stress level data show women to be more stressed out than men, it does still support (the 5.1/10) that the level of stress of women is suggestive to be ‘moderate’.

Status of the Coping Mechanisms of the Working Mothers

Table 5

Mean and description of the Status of Coping Mechanisms of the Respondents

Indicators	Mean	Description
Confrontive Coping		
I did something which I didn't think would work, but at least I was doing something.	2.7317	Often
I tried to get the person responsible to change his/her mind.	2.8098	Often
I let my feelings out somehow.	2.8878	Often
I expressed anger to the person(s) who caused the problem.	2.7659	Often
I took a big chance or did something very risky.	2.5512	Often
I stood my ground and fought for what I wanted.	2.7756	Often
<i>Submean</i>	<i>2.7537</i>	<i>Often</i>
Distancing		
I went along with fate; sometimes I just have bad luck.	2.4049	Seldom
I went on as if nothing had happened.	2.6341	Often
I looked for the silver lining so to speak; tried to look at the bright side of things.	2.9659	Often
I tried to forget the whole thing.	2.7317	Often
I didn't let it get to me; refuse to think about it too much.	2.6732	Often
I made light of the situation; refuse to get too serious about it.	2.7707	Often
<i>Submean</i>	<i>2.6967</i>	<i>Often</i>

Self-Controlling		
I tried not to burn my bridges, but leave things open somewhat.	2.9024	Often
I tried to keep my feelings to myself.	2.7902	Often
I tried no to act too hastily or follow my first hunch.	2.8900	Often
I kept others from knowing how bad things were.	2.7707	Often
I tried to keep my feelings from interfering with other things too much.	2.8927	Often
I went over in my mine what I would say or do.	3.0488	Often
I thought about how a person I ad mire would handle the situation and used that as a model.	2.9951	Often
<i>Submean</i>	<i>2.8986</i>	<i>Often</i>
Mean	2.7830	Often

Table 5 establishes that the working mothers ‘often’ cope with the stress which they feel in their job – ‘moderate’ the stress may seem but the working mothers still look for measures to cope with it. The table reports that the working mothers ‘often’ use the three categories of coping mechanisms: confrontive coping, distancing, and self-controlling. This means that the use of coping mechanism is generally known to the respondents because they can ‘often’ use it to cope with stress. This suggests ‘balance’ between stress felt and coping measures among the working mothers.

Significant Difference with Working Conditions and Respondents’ Profile

Table 6

Means and Significance between Working Conditions and Respondents’ Profile

Variable	Compared Categories	No. of Cases	Means	Differences	Significance
Age	Young vs. Middle	46, 115	3.0157, 3.1896	.1739	.053
	Young vs. Old	46, 44	3.0157, 3.1027	.0871	.442
	Middle vs. Old	115,44	3.1896, 3.1027	.0868	.386
Type of Employment	Sup. Staff Vs. Teacher	76, 66	2.9732, 3.1970	.2238	.011*
	Sup. Staff vs. NT Prof.	76, 63	2.6432, 3.2552	.2821	.002*
	Teacher vs. NT. Prof.	66, 63	3.1970, 3.2552	.02582	.516
Occupation of Husband	Manual vs. Professional	108, 40	3.0785, 3.2000	.1215	.196
	Manual vs. Managerial	108, 57	3.0785, 3.1853	.1067	.210
	Professional vs. Managerial	40, 57	3.2000, 3.1853	.0147	.883
Family Size	Small vs. Medium	25, 152	3.0496, 3.1518	.1022	.326
	Small vs. Large	25, 28	3.0496, 3.0971	.0475	.732
	Medium vs. Large	152, 28	3.1518, 3.0971	.0547	.431
Family Budget	Large vs. Ave.	34, 65	2.957, 3.1094	.1517	.189
	Large vs. Small	34, 47	2.9576, 3.3174	.3598	.006*

Ave. vs. Small	124, 47	3.1094, 3.3174	.2081	.014*
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Table 6 evidences the idea that no significant difference exists between the working conditions and the profile of the working mothers among the categories of the following variables: age, occupation of husband, and family size. A significant difference, based on the table, was found in the following variables: type of employment of the working mothers, and the sufficiency of the family budget. In terms of type of employment, the working mothers who are support staff are generally different in their view of their working conditions than the teacher-respondents and the non-professional respondents. In terms of sufficiency of family budget, those working mothers who have ‘small’ (or least sufficient) family budget differ in their view of their working conditions compared to those working mothers who either have ‘large’ (or sufficient) or ‘average’ (or less sufficient) family budget. While Table 3 generally reports ‘good’ perception of working conditions, still a significant difference exists which basically means that ‘good’ differs already considering type of employment and sufficiency of family budget.

Significant Difference with Job Stress and Respondents’ Profile

Table 7

Means and Significance between Job Stress and Respondents’ Profile

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Compared Categories</i>	<i>No. of Cases</i>	<i>Means</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Age	Young Vs. Middle	46, 115	23.0000, 20.1896	2.8174	.008*
	Young Vs. Old	46, 44	23.0000, 20.1955	2.7045	.023*
	Middle Vs. Old	115, 44	20.1896, 20.1955	.1128	.913
Type of Employment	Sup. Staff Vs. Teacher	76, 66	22.1184, 19.3182	2.8002	.005*
	Sup. Staff Vs. NT Prof.	76, 63	22.1184, 20.8889	1.2295	.264

	Teacher Vs. NT Prof.	66, 63	19.1382, 20.8889	1.5707	.182
Occupation of Husband	Manual Vs. Professional	108, 40	21.3796, 20.6000	.7796	.804
	Manual Vs. Managerial	108, 57	21.3796, 19.9825	1.3972	.196
	Professional Vs. Managerial	40, 57	20.6000, 19.9825	.6175	.651
Family Size	Small Vs. Medium	25, 152	21.6400, 20.8355	.8045	.535
	Small Vs. Large	25, 28	21.6400, 20.1429	1.4971	.348
	Medium Vs. Large	152, 28	20.8355, 20.1429	.6927	.563
Family Budget	Large Vs. Ave.	34, 124	21.1471, 21.3629	.2158	.877
	Large Vs. Small	34, 47	21.1471, 19.2340	1.9130	.223
	Ave. Vs. Small	124, 47	21.3629, 19.2340	2.1289	.042*

Table 7 accounts for no significant difference between job stress of the working mother respondents and their persona profile in terms of the following variables: occupation of husband and family size. Further, the table evidences a significant difference among the working mothers in the level of their job stress in terms of the following variables: age, type of employment, and family budget. In terms of age, this implies that those who are young differ in the level of their job stress compared to those who are middle-aged or already old. In terms of type of employment, those who work as support staff differ in their job stress compared with the teachers. Finally, in terms of family budget, those with small (or least sufficient) family budget differ in their level of job stress compared with those who have average (or less sufficient) family budget. According to

Yusuf (2016), gender, among other variables, has no significant influence on attitude to work, and conclude that demographic factors should be effectively managed in work organizations because they are important factors in work management.

Significant Difference with Coping Mechanisms and Respondents' Profile

Table 8

Means and Significance between Coping Mechanisms and Respondents' Profile

Variable	Compared Categories	No. of Cases	Means	Difference	Significance
Age	Young vs. Middle	46, 115	2.9024, 2.9131	.0007	.991
	Young vs. Old	115, 44	2.9024, 2.9103	.0079	.928
	Middle vs. Old	115, 44	2.9031, 2.9103	.0072	.928
Type of Employment	Support Staff vs. Teacher	76, 66	2.9057, 2.8705	.0352	.587
	Support Staff vs. NT Prof.	76, 63	2.9057, 2.9386	.0329	.636
	Teacher vs. NT Prof.	66, 63	2.8705, 2.9686	.0682	.295
Occupation of Husband	Manual vs. Professional	108, 40	2.8737, 2.9375	.0638	.399
	Manual vs. Managerial	108, 57	2.877, 2.9396	.0659	.274
	Professional vs. Managerial	40, 57	2.9375, 2.9396	.00221	.979
Family Size	Small vs. Medium	25, 152	2.9486, 2.9043	.0444	.533
	Small vs. Large	25, 28	2.9486, 2.8662	.0824	.432

	Medium vs. Large	152, 28	2.9043, 2.862	.0380	.671
Family Budget	Large vs. Ave.	34, 124	2.8476, 2.8615	.0139	.869
	Large vs. Small	34, 47	2.847, 3.0589	.2113	.043*
	Ave. vs. Small	124, 47	2.815, 3.0589	.1974	.008*

Table 8 discloses the idea of no significant difference between the coping mechanisms used by the working mothers in job stress and their profile in terms of the following variables: age, type of employment, occupation of husband, and family size. However, a significant difference was discovered in terms of family budget. Accordingly, there is a significant difference between how the working mothers cope with their stress by using the three categories of coping mechanisms among those with small (or least sufficient) family budget to both working mothers with large (or sufficient) family budget and average (or less sufficient) family budget. Comparing Table 8 and Table 5 (on coping mechanisms of working mothers), those with small (or least sufficient) family budget can ‘often’ use coping mechanisms.

Relationship Between Working Conditions, Job Stress, and Coping Mechanisms

Table 9

Correlates of Working Conditions, Job Stress, and Coping Mechanisms

<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Job Stress</i>	
		<i>Correlation</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Working Conditions	205	-.264	.000*
Coping Mechanism	205	.058	.409
Working conditions and Coping Mechanisms Combined	205	R=.305, F=10.333, £=.000 *	

Table 9 firmly establishes that there is a significant negative relationship between job stress and working conditions at the 0.05 level of significance. It appears that if the working conditions are bad, the job stress is higher. The poorer the working conditions are of the working mother, the higher their job stress are.

The correlation of 0.058 between job stress and coping mechanism has a significance of 0.409. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between job stress and coping mechanism at the 0.05 level of significance. This could be because the job stress of the working mothers only moderate and thus, no conscious effort was probably exerted to cope with it.

The Multiple Correlation Coefficient of 0.305 produced an F-ratio of 10.333 with a significance of 0.000. This means that there is a significant relationship between job stress and the combination of working conditions and coping mechanisms. The job stress of the working mothers is significantly influenced by their growing conditions and coping mechanisms combined.

The significant relationship between working mothers conditions and job stress for working mothers accentuates the need to restructure or modify the working environment to compensate for their responsibilities in the home that they have to put up with aside from the working conditions prevailing in the workplace.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This paper concludes that, in an urban environment, the working conditions of working mothers are generally good and that their job stress is moderate. While statistical analyses have shown significant difference between the perception of working conditions among the working mothers in terms of their age, occupation of husband and family size – a significant negative relationship was still found which basically implies that as working conditions worsen, job stress increases. Further, while statistical analyses have shown that there is a significant difference among the working mothers in their coping mechanisms in terms of their age, type of employment, and family budget – no significant relationship was found between coping mechanisms and job stress which basically means that the difference basically does not result to any statistical relationship worthy of attention. However, the study found that, using multiple correlation, a significant relationship was found between job stress and the combined working conditions and coping mechanisms. This basically means that working conditions and coping mechanism both influence the job stress experienced by working mothers in an urban environment. Thus, predicting job stress level.

With all these conclusions, the researcher recommends to ensure that stress debriefing approaches are available to working mothers living in an urban environment. Stress management programs could be instituted to help working mothers reduce the effect of stress in their job. Wellness activities could be installed as well to help working mothers be on track in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Implications of the Study

Considering the findings, the study could impact future policies in labor employment in both government and non-government agencies or instrumentalities by ensuring that anti-stress protocols are formed part of their employment procedures, or that debriefing approaches would consider gender differences in its implementation.

Note on limitations of findings

The study's findings limit itself to working mothers living in an urban environment. While the researcher ensured that all range of 'working' mothers are represented in the study, the support staff, which generally excludes 'teachers' and 'other professionals', all other types of working conditions of working mothers are included in this category including daily-wage earners. Future studies are encouraged to ensure that this category could be sub-divided to increase clarity among the parameters. Nonetheless, this study has very well represented the findings as regards to other types of working conditions.

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Rewriting *A Passage to India*: A Study of *Burnt Shadows*

Shouket Ahmad Tilwani

*Assistant Professor, Department of English, College of Science and Humanities, Al-Kharj,
Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Alkharj, Saudi Arabia.*

s.tilwani@psau.edu.sa

Biodata:

Dr. Shouket Ahmad Tilwani has his Ph.D. from Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad, (India) in 2015. His specialization is Postcolonial Literature. He is currently working as an Assistant Professor, Department of English, College of Science and Humanities, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj, 11942, Saudi Arabia.

Abstract

The present research attempts to explore and analyse how the technique of intertextuality is employed in novel *Burnt Shadows* to interact with E.M Forster's novel *A Passage to India*. Intertextuality in literature pertains to a reference to a literary text within another literary text. While basing on the idea of interdependence of texts, it underscores the interrelationship between two literary texts and showcases how two texts interact or enter into a dialogue with each other through the medium of one of the literary texts which uses the reference of another text. A text does borrow ideas, allusions, phrases, references, themes, or characters from a prior text and transforms itself by either building on it, interrogating it, challenging it, altering perspective, showing interdependence or acclaiming it. Postcolonial writers effectively employ intertextuality in their texts or discourses by borrowing references or allusions from the "canonical Western" texts and thereby challenging and questioning the hegemony and supremacy of the Western writers and discourses by modifying or by subverting it, or both. This paper shall analyse the intertextual relationship between Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows* and E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*

and it shall be attempted to establish how *Burnt Shadows* is an intertextual rewriting and reinterpretation of *A Passage to India*, in order to offer a postcolonial reading of the colonial times, sketched by Forester in his text.

Keywords: *Carnival, Dialogism, Intertextuality, Post-colonialism. Subversion.*

Introduction

No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. I mean this as a principle of aesthetic, not merely historical, criticism.” (Eliot, 1992, p. 15).

The concept of sign propounded by Ferdinand de Saussure in his seminal work *Course in General Linguistics* bases the many modern literary theories (Al-Ghamdi, 2019). Saussure proposes that ‘linguistic sign’ is composed of dyadic aspects- the signifier and the signified. He claims that the signified is the concept that is understood through the signifier, which is a linguistic form. Saussure finds the relation between the two as essentially arbitrary which is underlined within social conventions. Therefore, he says that language is non-referential, which means that meaning of a text depends, not on the thought process of the writer or encoder but, on the interpretation of the decoder, who understands a literary text in relation to her/his surrounding linguistic structural patterns, cultural contexts, and the special literary systems. In this manner, Saussure leads one to hold that meaning of a text is materialized through, what Bakhtin says, relational processes and practices or “relational becoming” (Robinson 2012). This relational process becomes very important and unavoidable when a postcolonial readers or writers decodes a text to understand it or counter its colonial narrative, while relating it to their local “narratives which reflect their culture, history, myths, idioms, proverbs, heroes and ideological roots” (Yousafzai, 2018, p. 212). It creates, what Bakhtin says, carnivalesque state in “which diverse voices are heard and interact, breaking down conventions and enabling genuine dialogue. It creates the chance for a new perspective and a new order of things, by showing the relative nature of all that exists” (Robinson,

2011). The new perspective is not necessarily a deconstruction of the dominant culture. Rather, it's a positive alternative vision.

The Saussurian concept of sign is more explicated further by Bakhtin. He contends that there is a diversity of voices in a literary work that save it from the tyranny of "authoritative discourse" which limits the meaning of a text to the hegemony of the speaker/writer, who makes the addressee look at things the way the former wants the later. He says this raises the conflict. The conflict limits the diversity of meaning language of a text can offer if it's exposed to what he calls "heteroglossia", which means the diversity of voices, a text can offer in a social setting, based on the intentions, accents, tastes, professions, parties, generations, places and time:

At any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form. These languages of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new typifying languages" (Bell and Gardiner, 1998, p. 176).

Explication of a text on the bases of the preferences, kind of mentioned above, allows a text, he argues, to inexhaustible voices against the limited authoritarian discourse of the addresser. He says that "word is a two-sided act". It is "the product of the reciprocal relationship between" an addresser and addressee". He adds the concept of "social orientation" of an utterance and claims that the meaning is determined by who the addressee is and who is addressed. In this regard, he says that "[O]rientation of the word towards the addressee has an extremely high significance" (ibid, p. 127). Proprietorship of a word is partly that of the "undoubted possessor" (addressor) who speaks it. Then he adds that in "purely psychological terms..... possession doesn't apply". Because when "we take the implementation of a word as sign, then the question of proprietorship becomes extremely complicated as "[T]he immediate social situation and the broader social milieu wholly determine..... the structure of an utterance" which is implemented from human consciousness, formed by the social enterprise of a person. He emphasizes that "[T]he structure of the conscious, individual personality is just as social a structure as is the collective type of experience" (Denith, 1995, p. 127-9). The concept of meaning an utterance or a sign conveys through the participation of addresser, addressee and the social surrounding that gives a sign a

particular meaning is the theory of dialogism by Bakhtin. It's later explicated rather disinterred by Julia Kristeva. She describes it as "as an open-ended play between the text of the subject and the text of the addressee" (1986, p. 34). She formulates the theory of Intertextuality while analyzing Bakhtin's dialogism.

Inseparability of a text from the larger cultural and social 'textuality' out of which the former is constructed forms the focal insistence of her theory. To her all texts do harbor the ideological patterns, structures, thought processes and struggles exhibited by a society through discourse. She elaborates Bakhtin's dialogism to emphasize the semiotic dual pattern and nature of language. She explains the production of meaning of a literary sign in terms of a horizontal dimension and a vertical dimension, as turns out to be a mediator and a link for them. In the horizontal dimension "the word in the text belongs to both writing subject and addressee". In "the vertical dimension 'the word in the text is oriented toward an anterior or synchronic literary corpus" (Kristeva, 1968, p. 38). The communication between author and reader is always partnered by communication or intertextual relation between poetic words and their prior existence in past poetic texts. Authors communicate to readers at the same moment as their words or texts communicate the existence of past texts within them. This recognition, that the horizontal and vertical axis of the text coincide within the work's textual space, leads on to a major re-description of Bakhtin's theory of the dialogic text which culminates in the new term, intertextuality. It's described as the communication in which the addressee with her/his social setting and cultural understanding is "included within a book's discursive universe only as discourse itself" (Kristeva, 1986, p. 38). The meaning of a text is the fusion of the discursive interaction of the two texts imbedded in two axis: "horizontal axis (subject–addressee) and vertical axis (text–context)". They do "coincide" in order to bring to "light an important fact":

each word (text) is an intersection of word (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read..... any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of intertextuality replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least double (Kristeva, 1968, p. 37-38).

Kristeva vociferously emphasizes the dialogic nature of a literary text. She considers that different social and cultural contexts of a text lend its language scope of being double-voiced. In another sense, it lends the text open to considerations of the reader with his understanding of the text in its

relation to other texts and the social setting in which the text is produced and received. The ‘text becomes independent of the author, who is rendered irrelevant as the culture and time contained in the text become independent of the subject matter’ (Robinson, 2012). This idea is central to the classical definition of intertextuality.

Intertextuality brings forth how the two texts are inter-connected and that no text can have an independent meaning. Every text borrows ideas, references, allusions, phrases, themes, or characters from a prior text and transforms it by either building on it, interrogating it, challenging it, altering perspective, showing interdependence or acclaiming it. Postcolonial writers effectively employ intertextuality in their texts or discourses by borrowing references or allusions from the “canonical Western” texts and thereby challenging and questioning the hegemony and supremacy of the Western writers and discourses. “Postcolonial fiction writers deal with the traditional colonial discourse, either by modifying or by subverting it, or both” (Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H., 2002). Using intertextuality strategically, the postcolonial writers attempt to assert themselves by foregrounding the tension with the imperial power, and by emphasizing their differences from the assumptions of the imperial centre. Edward Said (1993), one of the most notable Orientalists expounds how a postcolonial writer responds to the imperial dominance through their texts:

The postcolonial (*sic*) writers of the Third World therefore bear their past within them – as scars of humiliating wounds, as instigations for different practices, as potentially revised visions of the past trending toward a postcolonial future, as urgently reinterpretable and redeployable experiences, in which the formerly silent native speaks and acts on territory reclaimed as part of general movement of resistance, from the colonist.” (Said, 1993, p. 212).

Through their texts, postcolonial writers show a resistance to the colonial marginalisation and interrogate, subvert and counter imperial oppression in a western text by rewriting and retelling their version of the text. Shamsie being a British-Pakistani writer makes her novel *Burnt Shadows* instrumental in turning Forster’s canonical text *A Passage to India* upside down to represent a rebellion against the hegemony.

As it’s established that a text is inseparable from the larger cultural and social context that serves as ‘textuality’ out of which the text is constructed and in which it’s received forms the focal point

of the arguments put forward above, this paper attempts to make intertextual reading of *Burnt Shadows* by Kamila Shamsie as an intertextual text of *A Passage to India* by E. M. Forster. It aims to re-read the two texts to underline the ideological patterns, structures, thought processes and struggles exhibited by society through the two texts. It is going to underline the semiotic dual nature of language in time. It's an analysis of a text that is oriented toward an anterior or synchronic literary corpus to underscore a new cultural landscape the two text try to offer. In this manner, it's going to be a communication of a meaning which is authored in partnership by a reader and an intertextual relation between textual words and references and their prior existence in past literary texts. Because a "text is a dynamic site". And it's understood "not as self-contained systems but as differential and historical, as traces and tracings of otherness, since they are shaped by the repetition and transformation of other textual structures". (Alfaro, 1996, p. 268).

In *Burnt Shadows*, Shamsie employs the technique of obligatory intertextuality, which is defined as the writer's self-conscious, deliberate and intentional attempt at invoking a comparison between the two texts. It refers to the ways in which the production and reception of a given text depend upon the participant's knowledge of other texts. John McLeod analysed some postcolonial literary texts that re-read and re-write the received literary texts in a new light. McLeod (2000) points out that, "The re-interpretation of 'classic' English literary works has become an important area of postcolonialism" (p. 139). He concludes that the postcolonial re-writing does much more than merely filling in the gaps perceived in the source texts. Rather it enters into a productive critical dialogue with the source text. The postcolonial writers take on the language of the imperials and modify it by inducting their native dialects and versions and thus use the imperial language as a tool to expose the misrepresentation of the subaltern people and their culture.

Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin address the issue of employment of language in *The Empire Writes Back* (1989). Ashcroft, et al, explore the ways in which postcolonial writers encounter a dominant, colonial language. They describe a two-part process through which writers in the post-colonial world displace a standard language (denoted with the capital "e" in "English") and replace it with a local variant that does not have the perceived stain of being somehow sub-standard, but rather reflects a distinct cultural outlook through local usage. The terms they give these two processes are "abrogation" and "appropriation". Abrogation is a rejection of the categories of the colonial culture, "its aesthetic, its illusory standard of normative or 'correct' usage, and its assumption of a traditional and 'fixed' meaning 'inscribed' in the words".

Appropriation is the process of reconstructing, capturing and remoulding the language of the centre without the marks of colonial privilege, by which it is “made to “bear the burden” of one’s own cultural experience ... Language is adopted as a tool and utilized to express widely differing cultural experiences” (p. 38-39). As a post-colonial text, Shamsie's novel employs urdu/vernacular words to represent cultural practices and objects with no correspondents in English. She deliberately inducts urdu references to clothes like *Shalwar Kameeze*, *Kurta- Shalwar*, locations like *moholla*, and emotional terminologies like *ghum-khaur*, *udaas*, *uljhan*, and *manhoos*, etc. the intertextual aspect of the book is made emphatically hoarse, as it attempts to “make a sense of cultural difference”. It “creates a sense of foreignness in the text” (Nyman, 2011, p. 112) as it paints a new emotional landscape different from the one, presented normally by the imperial text. *Burnt Shadows* covers a wide space of history from the Second World War to Guantanamo Bay. It traces the final days of the Second World War in Japan, and India before Partition in 1947. It also talks about Pakistan in the early 1980s, New York in the aftermath of 11 September and Afghanistan in the wake of US bombing spree. All this is set around the stories of two families who join individuals of several different nationalities and several cross- cultural relationships. (Duce, 2011, p. 6). Shamsie’s section dealing with India before Partition in 1947 will be specifically discussed in this paper for its usage of Forster’s *A Passage to India* as an intertext. The paper will analyse how Shamsie uses variations as well as continuities in her novel *Burnt Shadows* vis a vis Forster’s canonical text. It will be studied as to how the perspective of a Western author (E.M. Forster) differs in projecting India in its colonised setting from that of an Asian writer (Kamila Shamsie), and how Shamsie’s dealing of colonised-coloniser dialectic or East-West encounter poses a challenge to Forster’s relationship of colonised and the coloniser.

Shamsie like Forster in the initial section of her novel begins by describing the Indian city of pre-independence era. While Forster opens his novel by describing an imaginary city Chandrapore, Shamsie talks about the real place – Delhi. Forster’s Chandrapore is cited as capable of “presenting nothing extraordinary” “except for the Marabar Caves” (Forster, 1952, p. 9). In Chandrapore as Forster describes “[T]he streets are mean, [T]emples ineffective”, “Chandrapore was never large or beautiful”, “houses do fall, people are drowned and left rotting, but the general outline of the town persists, swelling here, shrinking there, like some low but indestructible form of life”. The outline sketch of the imaginary Indian city of Chandrapore is described by an omniscient narrator who is probably echoing the Western author’s point of view, thereby giving a foreigner’s view to

the place, labelling it as a very mundane place where no beauty exists except that of a “few fine houses” of imperial people living there. Shamsie uses Forster’s novel’s intertext in her initial section and undercuts Forster’s version of the Indian city by celebrating the description of the real Indian city - Delhi of pre-independence era, which is seen and described through Sajjad’s - a native’s- perspective. Sajjad is no outsider unlike Forster’s omniscient narrator who holds no attachment or sense of belonging to the city. Sajjad proudly emphasises his belongingness to the city by describing it as “his city”, which he describes as “the rhythmically beating heart of cultural India”. At the same time Sajjad is also aware of the demarcations and separations that have occurred in the city owing to the presence of the divisive British imperial rule. He cycles his way through the city and looks for a “celestial point” where Dilli becomes Delhi, the city of the British Raj (rule):

Yes, there, there was the boundary of Dilli and Delhi. There, where the sky emptied – no kites dipping towards each other, strings lined with glass; and only the occasional pigeon from amidst the flocks released to whirl in the air above the rooftops of the Old City where Sajjad’s family had lived for generations (Shamsie, 2009, p. 21).

This reference to demarcations and separations is something that Shamsie lifts directly (without questioning) from Forster’s text and uses this theme in continuation with Forster’s text. Forster’s Chandrapore like Shamsie’s Delhi is divided into two sections, one for the natives and the other for the imperialists. The Anglo-Indians or the English live on the higher grounds of the city and have an elite and refined infrastructure, which is “sensibly planned”, “it has nothing hideous in it” and the “view is beautiful” and it shares nothing with the section of the city where the natives live except for the overarching sky (Shamsie, 2009, p. 10). Shamsie plays on this theme of demarcations and separations between the native Indians and the British, sometimes interrogating Forster’s perspective and at other times complying with his version. Like Forster, Shamsie also tries to explore the question of possibilities for any true cross-cultural friendship between the coloniser and the colonised.

The beginning scenes in both the novels show the native protagonists cycling their way to meet their English masters. Forster shows Dr. Aziz summoned in the middle of his meals by Surgeon Major Callendar. Dr. Aziz rides his bicycle furiously, in a foul mood to civil lines to meet Callendar and on mid-way clumsily leaves aside his cycle when its tyre goes flat. He then takes a tonga and

reaches Callendar's bungalow, fearing a "gross snub" and humiliation for walking in late. Shamsie portrays Sajjad as the native joyfully cycling his way through "his city" Dilli, his ancestral land, which is "the rhythmically beating heart of India". Shamsie empowers Sajjad to don the role of a surveyor or an investigator as he paddles his way from his homeland Dilli to the imperial Delhi to check how things have changed under the British Raj. He states: "At home in Dilli but breaking free of the rest of my flock to investigate the air of Delhi" (Shamsie, 2009, p. 21). Unlike Dr. Aziz who is angry and scared of his master Major Callendar, Sajjad is confident and optimistic about his relationship with Delhi and his master James Burton: the confident air of a man of twenty-four who has never known failure – and instead fixed his attention on the beige cashmere jacket from Savile Row, running his hands along its length with sensuous pleasure (Shamsie, 2009, p. 22). Whereas Dr. Aziz finds his master gone, Sajjad receives a warm reception by James Burton. "James smiled at the sight of the young man in his perfectly fitted jacket." (Shamsie, 2009, p. 23). Forster's portrayal of Dr. Aziz's relationship with Major Callendar is harsh and full of rigid disparities. Shamsie on the other hand, attempts at portraying Sajjad's relationship with his imperial master to be slightly more flexible, less rigid, dynamic and friendly. Sajjad indeed becomes "priceless" and "invaluable" for his master who holds immense admiration for him for their engaging chess sessions and conversations on books, poets, writers and life.

'Don't believe me?' James said. When Sajjad merely smiled and shrugged, James put a hand on his arm. 'I don't know any man more capable.' It was not so much for the compliment itself – Sajjad had no need of those from anyone – but for James's way of compressing a complicated matrix of emotion, one that encompassed the relationship of ruler–subject, employer–employee, father–son, chess-player–chess-player, into the word 'capable'. (Shamsie, 2009, p. 26)

Forster's Bridge Party, which is organised to bridge the gap between the West and the East only works to widen the gap. Mr Turton, the Collector reinforcing the disparities, says: "I refuse to shake hands with any of the men, unless it has to be the Nawab Bahadur." (1952, p. 41). And in the same line, Mrs Turton reminds Mrs Moore: "You are superior to them, anyway. Don't forget that. You're superior to everyone in India except one or two of the Ranis and they're on an equality." (1952, p. 42).

The City Magistrate – Ronny Heaslop’s mother Mrs Moore and his fiancé Miss Quested display relatively pleasant and open-minded disposition towards Indians and take initiatives to build friendly bond with them in the bridge party. Shamsie likewise portrays Hiroko Tanaka, a Japanese woman who comes to Delhi to start a new life post Nagasaki bombing trauma. Hiroko is a liberal, gentle and kind-hearted woman who has no prejudices or any preconceived notions about cultures, religions or race. If there are any prejudices, misunderstandings or notions of discrimination, they are practiced by the characters of the West – James Burton and Elizabeth Weiss. Shamsie has brought a kind of alternative view. She has introduced an outsider, Hiroko, to look at the things which are native. As she is not from a colonial relationship to India she doesn’t treat Indians as low or inferior. She is from the East, rather than the West, the colonial world. She embraces the culture on the basis of equality, rather than on binary relationship.

In another sense, it can be inferred that Shamsie seems to be trying to highlight the East/West colonial encounter, in which the Eastern people were discriminated and looked down by the Western colonial masters, through the presentation of Hiroko, an Eastern one, as a foil to underscore the unjust colonial system. She seems to be sometimes endorsing Forster’s view that the East and West can’t be friends. Because of their colonial relationship, which is primarily based on inconsiderate discrimination, injustice and inequality. Shamsie very subtly and ironically underscores the wryness about the situation when Sajjad replies Elizabeth about the picnic information to a historical place in India, Qutb Minar, “[M]y history is your picnic ground” (2009, p. 58). Shamsie rewrites Forster’s tale of expedition to see the real India, undercutting several aspects as projected in the canonical text. Just as Adela Quested of Forster desires to see the “real India” and asks Dr. Aziz to take them to Marabar Caves, likewise Shamsie’s Hiroko conveys her desire to Sajjad “to see your Delhi.... Would you take me there some day?” (2009, p. 56). Sajjad though acquires much better treatment than other subordinate natives in the Burton house but because of race or social class or his status as an employee, he can never be a true friend or equal.

Last evening, when James Burton had whispered, ‘Tomorrow morning we’re all going to see Sajjad’s Delhi,’ she had felt her face stretch into a smile that didn’t seem possible. His world wasn’t closed to outsiders! The Burtons weren’t entirely resistant to entering an India outside the Raj! And she, Hiroko Tanaka, was the one to show both Sajjad and the Burtons that there was no need to imagine such walls between their worlds. Konrad had been

right to say barriers were made of metal that could turn fluid when touched simultaneously by people on either side. (Shamsie, 2009, p. 58)

Shamsie's female protagonist Hiroko functions as a binding force in the novel, able to develop amicable and meaningful relationships with people across all cultures and races. After arriving from Japan, the words of her dead fiancé remain her guide and inspiration in her environment. Konrad warned her against trusting anyone in Delhi except Sajjad. Her trust and admiration for Sajjad invites resistance from the British couple – James Burton and his wife Elizabeth. The contemporary thinker Huntington comments on the tense and unfriendly treatment the British use in dealing with their Indian subjects as "Second hand citizens on their own Land." (Huntington, 1993, p. 22). Shamsie shows how the expedition to Qutb Minar is an enriching experience wherein Sajjad apprises Anglo-Indians and Hiroko with pride, eloquence and confidence about the glorious history of Qutb-ud-din Aibak's dynasty (intertwining his family history with this grand history) and the valour of Razia Sultan. Sajjad even mocks his foreign companions for treating his 'history as their picnic ground'. Shamsie bestows Sajjad's character with a sense of empowerment, which comes from the pride, the knowledge and the sense of belongingness he has of his nation's cultural history. This makes him take complete control of the expedition.

Postcolonial writers have been particularly very effective in disinterring the history and culture they belong to. Not only do they give a fine portrait of their societies, but they also de-mythicize their culture and society which has been presented by the colonial writers as dumb and backward. Forster offers his central character doctor, who ironically, is oblivious of his own surroundings and culture. Forster, implicitly seems to imply that this doctor needs to be 'educated' and taught the importance of once culture, which Indians, like Dr. Aziz, although qualified enough to be doctor, don't know. Dr. Aziz, who takes Mrs. Moore and Adela Quested on an expedition to Marabar Caves hardly has any potent knowledge of the historical significance of the place. Moreover, Aziz has never himself visited the caves and he seems to be as clueless about the historical place as the Westerners. The cave is depicted as an incomprehensible and mysterious place of which no clear history is interpreted by Dr. Aziz. His elaborate preparation (elephants, chairs, breakfast, drinks, etc.) for the comforts and pleasures of the Westerners makes it more like an affair of sycophancy rather than a tour which could have glorified Indian cultural history for the Westerners. Forster's depiction of Dr. Aziz, during the expedition, is that of a subordinate to the English who is simply serving them to suit their whims and fancies. Dr. Aziz's status by the

end of the trip is reduced further, with his reputation tarnished due to the false allegation of sexual molestation by Adela Quested.

On the contrary, Shamsie depicts the expedition to Qutb Minar as the point that ends up intensifying love between Hiroko and Sajjad, though after a brief misunderstanding cropped up by Elizabeth who brings in the topic of Sajjad's marital plans hurting Hiroko. However, it is the very next morning after the expedition that Hiroko's trust and love in Sajjad strengthens as she unbuttons her blouse and shows Sajjad the scars on her back and with emotional proximity confides in him her own apprehensions and life. Though the expedition ultimately results in bringing Sajjad close to Hiroko, this episode also depicts heightening of tensions between the coloniser and the colonised. The intimate scene is inappropriately misunderstood by the Burtons who think Sajjad as a rapist just as Dr. Aziz was misunderstood in *A Passage to India*. Here, Shamsie draws a parallel between the Western view of the local people. Forster mystifies the incident of cave, in which he delineates natives as uncivilised and capable of sexual predation. At the same time the court acquits the doctor for being innocent. But yet Forster presents the incident in a way that doesn't unequivocally acquits the local culture of the ambiguity and mystery with which he glosses the whole incident.

Orientalism by Edward Said, argues that, Western literature, exoticized and mystified the East almost always. Indeed, it, Barry says, becomes "the repository or projection of those aspects of themselves which Westerners do not choose to acknowledge". The East is represented as savage and 'seductive', carrying all the dark traits of humanity, such as cruelty, decadence, and unbridled sensuousness, as opposed to the West being portrayed as civilized, rational and reasonable, therefore superior. (Barry, 2009, p. 192; Walder, 1990, p. 236; Said, 1993, p. 11). Sajjad being utterly disillusioned with mind-set and behaviour of the English couple towards him decides to leave his job, as he was falsely suspected to have sexually predated Hiroko. Summarising all frustration at the wrong opinion the English couple developed about him, he states with much self-respect "I am done with the English" (2009, p. 105). He would be seen to a great extent equal to the English people. However, he would continue with them as a kind of subordinate at the Burtons because of a dream that he would one day practice law as an apprentice to the advocate Burtons for having no academic degrees required for a barrister, or an advocate independent of Burtons with the experience and knowledge attained at the Burtons.

The novel culminates the misunderstood intimate moment between Sajjad and Hiroko with two outcomes. Firstly, it does reinforce what Forster argued in *A Passage to India* that friendship or intimacy between the coloniser and the colonised is impossible. It exposes the underlying tension, mistrust and prejudice between the English colonisers and the Indian colonised. Secondly, the episode strengthens the relation between Hiroko and Sajjad undercutting and challenging the view and the will of the English colonisers who do not support mingling of people of two different races to an extent of getting married. Taking the second outcome further, Shamsie empowers Sajjad and Hiroko to take control of their lives, without succumbing to any colonial pressure, challenging the hegemonic ambitions of colonialism of subduing the colonised or the other. Here Sajjad and Hiroko being Asians are “other” or “colonised” for the English and they emerge powerful enough to voice their feelings, and take practical steps to resist colonial perspectives and oppression. In the representations of imperialism, Western values are often contrasted against the hostile environments in the colonies (Ashcroft, et.al, 2002, p. 19). This has been shown as an “encounter between the civilized and the wild” (Marrouchi, 1999, p. 29), something that Sartre calls “racist humanism”. Sartre argues that Europeans have been able to become men through the creation of slaves and monsters in other cultures. That’s what Said says that through the misrepresentation of the orient, the West was able to define itself good and human, while as the Orient is presented opposite to all that positive what for the west is shown to be standing for. Sartre says that the West has always portrayed that there is “a race of less-than-humans” on the other side of the ocean, who will reach the West, culturally and morally, in thousands of years. There was a resistance from those ‘less than humans’ of these native lands. And the native populations of those countries revealed their true nature. This made the Western “exclusive ‘club’ reveal its weakness..... Worse than that: since the others become men in name against us (the West), it seems that we are the enemies of mankind..... nothing more than a gang” (2015, p. 13).

Forster’s expedition to the Marabar Caves ends up tragically and completely ruins the relationship between the natives and the imperials. Adela Quested’s hallucinatory experience makes her falsely blame Dr. Aziz of molesting her inside the cave. Adela’s hallucinatory experience in the cave is so intense that she loses sense to understand what exactly happened to her inside and what caused her to become physically bruised and psychologically wrecked. Her assumption that she must have been sexually molested by Dr. Aziz comes from her prejudiced and racist mind-set against the native Indians whom Westerners think as inferior race, capable of vulgarity and depravity. The

cave being a site specific to the natives, becomes associated with “otherness”. Forster’s presentation itself owes to the perception, typical of the West, of the ‘East as exotic and mysterious place. Adela is unable to relate to its incomprehensible, complex and closed atmosphere and thus accuses Dr. Aziz for her condition. The English policemen McBryde feels Dr. Aziz should not be forgiven for his deed. He, so quickly blames the Indians as all the colonialists did. “Quite possible, ... when an Indian goes bad, he goes not only very bad, but very queer” (Forster, 1952, p. 177). He claims he has never been surprised by Indians. For him “the unfortunate natives (Indians) are criminal at heart” because they “live south of latitude 30”. He adds that they shouldn’t be blamed as “they have not a dog’s chance” and the English would be like them if they settle in India (Forster, 1952, p. 148). It’s is in no way surprising when he proselytises that Indian culture with such base analogies. Mr. Burton states that he has “never known anything but disaster result when English people and Indians attempt to be intimate socially” (Forster, 1952, p. 182). Dr. Aziz’s trial makes him repulsive towards the English. This accusation of rape on Dr. Aziz brings strong resistance from the Indian masses towards the English. Said in his *Culture and Imperialism* propounds that Forster “intended the gulf between India and Britain to stand” and “we are entitled to associate the Indian animosity against British rule that is displayed during Aziz's trial with the emergence of a visible Indian resistance” (Said, 1993, p. 201)

The portrayal of power relations, mistreatment of the colonised by the colonisers and the misrepresentation of the native culture is a typical feature of colonial literature. Postcolonial literature has been serving as a foil to it. Shamsie’s is a good example in this regard. It brings her fiction in line with post-colonial writings. In her presentation of the colonizer- colonized dialectics in *Burnt Shadows* she reinterprets several instances and episodes from Forster’s *A Passage to India* through a post-colonial’s lens. The episode of false allegations of sexual molestation is re-written by Shamsie. In *Burnt Shadows*, it is again the Westerns – Elizabeth Weiss and James Burton – who misinterpret a moment of tenderness as an act of sexual molestation by Sajjad, owing to their resistance towards a mixed-race relationship and prejudice towards a native Indian. This echoes Forster’s episode of all whites reinforcing that Adela was surely raped by the Indian native, Dr. Aziz.

In *Burnt Shadows* however, an Asian, Hiroko is the one to trust Sajjad without fail and willingly develops a loving relationship with him. Shamsie has ingeniously shaped the character of Hiroko who is an outsider as well as an insider for India. She is an outsider because she does not belong

to India and is a Japanese woman. But the fact that she is an Asian and hails from a background of tragedy of Nagasaki, thus she shows affiliations and regard for the Indian – Sajjad undergoing the tragedy of colonial oppression. She deals with Sajjad without doubt and suspicion, believing the advice of her dead fiancé Konrad who had told her when he was alive that the only person to whom she could see and meet in Delhi was Sajjad Ali Ashraf. Hiroko comes to India with open mind, takes a deep interest in the Indian culture and adapts well to it. Though dissuaded by Burtons, she expresses her desire to learn the native language – Urdu and successfully learns to speak and write it. She grows fond of Sajjad, is not doubtful to trust him and shares her most personal memories with him. On the contrary, it is Elizabeth, the Westerner who is full of suspicion with regard to Sajjad and thinks he has raped Hiroko. Hiroko’s refusal to join Burtons to England after India’s independence and her marriage with Sajjad comes across as the candid act of resistance and subversion of the imperial notions of superiority, racism and civilised. Hiroko chooses to stay with Sajjad, shares his pain of partition, relates her victimisation of Nagasaki bombing to Sajjad’s victimisation of partition, which like the former tragic incident is the making of the West. Her oriental affiliations further strengthen Hiroko’s stand to be with him. *Burnt Shadows* offers a counter-narrative to the colonial text by Forster.

In his research work, “Narrative and Counter-narrative in Pakistani English Novel”, Gulzar Jalal Yousafzai (2018) submits how the psychological phenomena like hysteria, claustrophobia, hallucination, inferiority complex and superstition have been used in Forster’s narrative. Yousafzai states that *A Passage to India* focusses on the age Occidental attitude and percentage about the Orientals as “lazy”, “slack” and “victims of superstitions”. Yousafzai is actually elaborating what Edward Said argues that the West is describing the Orient with negative and derogatory epithets because it helps it to define itself as positive. Forster while describing the Orient as with negative qualities, has ironically, inserted hallucination as a psychological phenomenon, to expose the western colonial enterprise. The behaviour of Adela is ascribed due to Hallucination. It’s a phenomenon caused by extreme stress, which once experienced through criticism, derogation and rejection is again experienced externally in a paranoid manner, even though “no one is there” and “nothing has happened” (Yousafzai, 2018, p. 20282). Shamsie presents a psychologically whole and healthy self through Hiroko in sharp contrast to the schizophrenic self of Adela Quedstedt. She doesn’t feel contradictions and paranoid. Shamsie invests in Hiroko the capabilities and qualities to accept and withstand the tough times of Partition in India. Hiroko is inclined to embrace the

culture to which Sajjad belongs by happily making adjustments and compromises and does not feel claustrophobic in the new atmosphere. Shamsie projects Hiroko (an outsider in India just like Adela Quested) as a competent woman who is strong and sensible enough to handle the Indian environment and traumas like Partition and dislocation with perseverance and strength. Hiroko overcomes psychologically disturbing events of the time, without being critical or without responding in any damaging way as Adela Quested does in Forster's novel. She learns Urdu quickly and uses it to communicate with Sajjad, besides communicating in English. This multilingual form of communication implies her ability and willingness to compromise and adapt. She speaks in English to James and German to Elizabeth, demonstrating the ability of language to forge bonds of understanding between divergent groups, an indication of how women are able to prove themselves in any community despite all difficulties. Adela and Mrs Moore on the other hand are the English women in *A Passage to India* who can't speak any native language. This is reflective of their social distance and cultural indifference for Indians, whom they consider as "other".

While the colonial texts highlighted the polarised world of discrimination and victimization, postcolonial texts do often subvert this trend. They do often serve as a counter narrative to the former one. They do present an inclusive society in which people do suffer not because of forced polarization but because of the usual complexities and difficulties of life. *Burnt Shadows* foregrounds a very positive picture of society of human endeavours who try to make sacrifices for each other and defend each other like shields. Hiroko is constructive and nurturing as she makes a home with Sajjad, gives birth to a child, earns a living by being a teacher and carries forward a family life with composure. Whereas Adela Quested comes across as a fragile, idiosyncratic and incompetent woman, who not only ends up destroying Dr. Aziz's reputation, but also brings upon self-mockery after admitting Aziz's innocence in trial, thus lowering her self-esteem and fleeing to England after Ronny Heaslop breaks marriage with her. Hiroko is Shamsie's portrayal of the Orient, whereas Adela belongs to Forster's Occident. What we understand in *Burnt Shadows* is that Shamsie projects Orient as endowed with superior qualities and strength of character, capable enough to handle psychologically disturbing situations sensibly and with determination, without being escapists. To sum up, Shamsie's Hiroko blatantly challenges Forster's imperial character of Adela and this is how in one of the many ways that Shamsie successfully turns Forster's text upside down.

It needs documentation that both the texts are replete with annoying and unpleasant scenes. What makes the postcolonial text of *Burnt Shadows* different from the Colonial text of Forster is that it foregrounds the positive relationships. Otherwise we do have some characters in *A Passage to India* also who throw the polarising and exclusive demarcations and consideration to the dogs, without any consideration in favour of humanity. But that's not foregrounded. It has, apparently, made it a kind of political document. While *Burnt Shadows* foregrounds the relationships between the people of the different cultures and has put the destruction and politics in the background. It presents the East and the West co-existing and living together with much understanding and consideration for each other though Ashrafs of the East and Burtons of the West. Whereas Forster keeps it black and white by showing the English colonisers as the oppressor, 'superior' and full of racial prejudices against oppressed and 'inferior' Indians, Shamsie paints her picture of the East and the West as complex and grey without any fixed divisions. Shamsie explores the complexities between the colonised and the coloniser and at several instances attempts to show the relationship between the two full of flux, sometimes friendly and trustworthy whereas at other times bitter and full of suspicion. By doing so, Shamsie tries to make scope for reconciliation and solidarity between the English and the Asians, something which Forster's novel completely fails at. The experience between the two families - Ashrafs and Burtons - is extended beyond India's partition (goes on from 1947 to 2001 and further) and in course of that as Adriana Kiczkowski expounds, "throughout different countries and by means of diverse geopolitical transformations, each of the families ends up being essential for the other, sometimes as support and at other times as a genuine burden and punishment.". "The bonds of solidarity and friendship between the two families constitute a basic structure that allows them to subsist and survive the vicissitudes they have to endure" (2016, p. 129). So here Shamsie is trying to posit that the relationship between the colonised and the coloniser, which changes into the neo-colonised and the neo-colonised later is rather complex, it not only about oppression, suspicion and subjugation, but the relationship also hints at situations of cohabitation, cooperation, and companionship in globalised spaces.

The ending of Forster's novel highlights the failure of reconciliation and solidarity between the colonised - Dr. Aziz and the coloniser - Fielding. The two men contemplate and make attempts on the possibility of a lasting friendship between them. But Forster prefers to go against this possibility by symbolically showing how the horses, the sky and the earth make way for the parting of Aziz and Fielding. Shafique and Yaqoob interpret it as "the very spirit of the Indian earth,

Forster believes, tries to keep men in compartments, and in the final sentence of the novel the sky and earth together are pictured as conspiring against mutual understanding". (Shafique & Yaqoob, 2012, p. 483).

The novel, as Malcolm Bradbury points out, "... ends on a discouragement to the human relationships" (Bradbury, 1970, p. 19). Shamsie rewrites this last scene of Forster's novel in the middle of her novel and makes James Burton critical of Forster's ending. She depicts James Burton missing Sajjad after Sajjad leaves his work on account of being held falsely suspicious by Burtons for sexually molesting Hiroko. Thereafter a long gap, James Burton feels elated to see Sajjad entering his house and calling his name. Burton moves forward to see him, addresses him as "dear fellow" and enquires why he has not brought a chessboard with him. Sajjad still upset over his treatment and false accusation by the Burtons clarifies he has not come to return to his duties. Sensing Sajjad's repulsion, Burton says,

I just read *A Passage to India* . . . Ridiculous book. What a disgrace of an ending. The Englishman and the Indian want to embrace, but the earth and the sky and the horses don't want it, so they are kept apart (Forster, 1952, p. 111).

The statement by James Burton reflects his personal guilt as well as condemnation of Forster's presentation of the unworkable gaps between the British and the Indians. James Burton makes a quick apology after this statement and accepts him and his wife Elizabeth being wrong in implicating Sajjad falsely in relation to Hiroko. Sajjad is amazed at how Burton took many months to realise this and apologise. Sajjad emphasises that the problem between them is not a matter of racial differences. There are other factors that deepen and feed the differences. Sajjad puts the matter as follows, " You are right. It's not a question of nation. It's one of class. You would have apologized if I'd been to Oxford" (Shamsie, 2009, p. 111). Sajjad's statement introduces new facets into colonised- coloniser relationship and indicates its deepening complexities. This aspect highlighted in this sentence is something which is practically universal in its scope, not specific to the East and West. Shamsie seems to be working on practicalities rather fantastical presumptions of racial and political boundaries.

To sum up, as a postcolonial writer, Kamila Shamsie uses the intertext of Forster's *A Passage to India* to bring in the perspective of the marginalised to the mainstream and depict a version of Indians and Asians which was never depicted by the earlier text. Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows* exposes the biased representation of the Asians by the Western authors, denounces colonialism and racism,

and makes attempts to reclaim the past of the colonised, retrieve their lost voice and identity. Through the novel, she tries to erode the colonialist ideology by which the past of the colonised has been devalued. Shamsie has remained successful in putting forth the episodes of colonised-coloniser relationship, rape accusation, portrayal of pre-independent India, expedition to an Indian cultural space, and Forster's novel's ending through an unprejudiced perspective that restores the self-esteem and identity of the colonised. The coloniser in *Burnt Shadows* has been given a voice, a standpoint and a command over the situations and through his/her acts the coloniser poses challenge to the opinions and actions of the coloniser. This was something that Forster had invariably denied in his text by depicting the status of the coloniser as superior and oppressive against the colonised who was delineated as a, victim of suppression and subjugation and sexual predator. She re-writes Forster's novel with a new understanding and insight to answer back every mis-portrayal and the mystification by Forster. This intertexting has not only given a new insight and understanding of the two texts, it has, through a dialogical process, enabled a reader to question and reinterpret the texts. It has helped the reader to deconstruct, disrupt and change the fixed patterns of a meaning of a text. The reader is demanded to be an active producer of meaning to come up with new perspectives, new insights and outlooks.

Pedagogical Implications

Colonial encounter brought various cultures in confrontation to each other. Although, a division is quiet clear, but the schism is often irrelevant when the interconnectedness of various cultures is focussed, in a postcolonial setting. On the one hand, the importance of the colonial legacy is stressed. On the other hand, the indigenous space which has been transformed into a postcolonial culture “offers a rich site for the study of both influence and intertextuality” (Trivedi, 2007). Creative writers are tasked to weave ‘their native rhymes of a culture and a society of one’s own, in a language and medium that’s not one’s own’ (Nayak 2004), to refute the colonial projection, that has disfigured a native image for some reason. In this manner, the postcolonial writing, rewrites the colonial text to exercise a literary influence on the colonial masters, in order to reverse the essentializing discourse (Tilwani 2013) of the West. The postcolonial writers through an intellectual approach document their response in a more complex manner not only to highlight the inner sense and sensibility of the local culture but the intertextuality of colonial texts. This paper has aimed to highlight this idea with the proper explication of the deep thematic patterns

of the novel, *Burnt Shadows*, in order to underline how a postcolonial text offers a different hermeneutic value to a native setting or a cultural space, which is unidentifiable in a colonial text.

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