



Honor, Shame, and Gendered Violence in South Asian Anglophone Fiction

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Abstract

The article critiques contemporary South Asian Anglophone fiction and the subject of honor/shame, and explores their intersections with gendered violence. It challenges conceptions of family honor and communal shame that tend to regulate women's bodies, decisions, and identities. The article examines selected novels by South Asian Anglophone authors through qualitative textual analysis, focusing on salt and on novels with female protagonists. The novel is examined through a qualitative textual analysis of selected novels written by South Asian Anglophone authors, viz., *Cracking India*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, *Brick Lane*, *Burnt Shadows*, *The Lowland*, and *Girls Burn Brighter*, and in combination with the salt, the novel is examined in terms of the women protagonists of the novel. Feminist literary criticism, postcolonial theory, and gender studies are utilized to comprehend domestic abuse, forced marriage, honor-based control, emotional pressure, and how women are silenced. These texts clearly reflect more than the victimization of women. They cannot leave without women who refuse to give up, who remember, who speak and migrate, who make friends, and who seek identities. Overall, the article argues that South Asian Anglophone fiction is a significant critical terrain for feminist analysis and for social critiques of patriarchy and possible alternative forms of family, culture, and community.

Keywords: Honor, Shame, Gendered Violence, South Asian Anglophone Fiction, Feminist Literary Criticism, Postcolonial Theory



Introduction

In many communities, there is a strong bond with honor and shame. They can contribute to moral responsibility, family relationships, and respect for others. But insufficiently in different ways in a patriarchal society. Women's duty is to uphold honor, while men have the responsibilities to safeguard, adjudicate, and correct honor. This is an unequal system, in which women's bodies, sexuality, marriage options, their voices, their clothes, their bodies – all of these are under public control. If women are to be considered representative of the family's honor and status, their denunciation may be branded as discipline, protection, or cultural responsibility. This system has been challenged many times in South Asian Anglophone fiction, which demonstrates the influence of honor and shame on the lives of women in both South Asian societies and diasporic communities.

South Asian Anglophone fiction is creative writing in English by individuals who are tied to a South Asian nation and/or from a South Asian diaspora (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Nepal). Topics addressed in these works may include colonial past, migration, the process of nation-building, religion, class, caste, gender, and family systems. In much of the literature, the violence perpetrated against women isn't demonstrated as a private matter. On the contrary, it is tied with more extensive networks such as those of power, patriarchy, nationalism, communal animosities, poverty, racism, and migration. Theories of feminist and postcolonial studies argue that interpretations of women's experiences in postcolonial societies must consider both gender and the history of colonialism, nationalism, and cultural identity, and how these shape concepts of women's roles (Mohanty, 2003; Spivak, 1988; Yuval-Davis, 1997).

The topic is important as gendered violence is still a big concern in South Asian countries as well as amongst the migrant population. Domestic violence, forced marriage, marital control, sexual (housemaid) violence, emotional violence, honor violence, and restrictions on education and mobility are examples of forms of violence. The literature on international studies indicates that women's perpetration of violence is associated with unequal gender norms, dependency, lack of legal protection, and the prevalent silence of culture regarding violence against women (United Nations Women, 2024; World Health Organization, 2021). When it comes to individuals and violence, there's no replacement for contemplating literature of such nature to inform us of the inner experience of violence. Statistics don't show fear, silence, memory, shame, or trauma; they can be demonstrated by fiction. It also leaves the reader with insight into the transformation of social pressure to personal pain.

The research issue embodied in this article is that honor can be discussed as a cultural value. However, it is not always considered a cultural construct that structures the gendered nature of violence in fictional texts. There are numerous studies on the concept of "patriarchy" in South Asian literature, as well as studies on violence against women in the social sciences. But there is still a need for a focused study of literature that weaves together honor/shame, gendered violence, and female resistance in South Asian Anglophone literature. The question this study poses is how honor and shame are represented as systems of gender regulation in fiction, and how fiction presents female characters reacting to these systems.

This is also significant, as there are times when people become oblivious to the importance of addressing matters of honor in a public forum. Some discussions on honor-based violence assume that it is occurring in 'traditional' communities, and other



discussions avoid coverage of honor-based violence because they expect to suffer from cultural stereotyping. There is a very precarious position to be traversed: between these two weak positions, a literary approach is recognized. It can condemn violence explicitly and demonstrate that, in fact, culture is not monolithic. Culture is fraught with conflict, disagreement, change, and resistance. The novels chosen indicate that fathers, husbands, daughters, mothers, friends, and neighbors from different backgrounds and relations, as well as strangers, are variously engaged in systems of shame. They also depict characters that contest the systems within the community itself. Fiction, for this reason, serves to familiarize readers with oppression as well as its possibility.

The article takes the perspective that fiction is a significant type of knowledge. Novels form imaginary worlds, and these may be related to society. For instance, Bapsi Sidhwa's *Cracking India* draws a connection between sexuality and Partition and communal honor. In *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, Khaled Hosseini exposes the entombment of women within the confines of an oppressive home and its violence, as a result of the plight of war and poverty. In *Brick Lane*, by Monica Ali, the theme is migration and marriage, as well as the need to be a decent wife in an exilic culture. *Burnt Shadows* is Kamila Shamsie's literary interweaving of gender, memory, and political violence on a transnational plane. In *The Lowland*, Jhumpa Lahiri portrays the themes of motherhood, widowhood, and female self-making in the context of a family's expectations. In Shobha Rao's novel, *Girls Burn Brighter*, friendship and survival in the face of extreme gender-based harm are the themes. These texts have different settings and styles, but share a common focus on the control of women and their quest for freedom.

The theoretical underpinnings of this study are feminist literary criticism, postcolonial theory, and gender studies. The feminist literary approach makes it possible to explore the oppression of women, their voice, their silence, and their agency in texts. With the aid of postcolonial theory, it can be demonstrated how colonial history and national identities contribute to the definition of gender roles. Gender studies can be viewed as an explanation of the social construction of male and female identities. Taken together, these theories enable this article to understand honor and shame not as fixed traditions, but as social practices subject to challenge.

This article analyzes the representation of honor/shame and gendered violence in South Asian Anglophone fiction and how a range of texts are seen to produce a space of resistance and feminist critique. The primary point of argument is that honor and shame are discourses of social control, and fiction uncovers their violence and enacts alternative forms of remembering, speaking, walking, friend-making, and defining the goals of both individual lives and societies via these other registers.

The article is divided into sections, most of which are structured like those of a research article. The literature review covers important theories and discussions on honor/shame, patriarchy, postcolonial identity, trauma, and women's agency. The methodology explains the approach to text, carried out qualitatively using primary texts. The data analysis section contains tables and graphs that compare and contrast close reading. The results are explored in the light of previous studies. Recommendations and a conclusion are included in the last sections.

Research Objectives

The primary aim of this research is to examine how honor–shame and gendered violence are presented in South Asian Anglophone fiction. This research will explore the body,



identity, and women's actions as regulated by patriarchal customs, traditions, and cultural expectations. It also aims to discuss various forms of violence found in literary texts, like domestic violence, forced marriage, emotional oppression, and humiliation or honor and shaming-based violence. Another aim is to gain insight into other South Asian writers' depictions of women's resistance, survival, and healing from trauma. The study also seeks to explore criticisms of social stratification and feminist notions of autonomy and cultural change in South Asian societies and diasporic communities as reflected in these texts.

Research Questions

In this study, honor, shame, and gendered violence are examined in South Asian Anglophone fiction. It explores how the texts of literature demonstrate the relationship between patriarchy, culture, and the oppression of women in South Asian societies and diasporic communities. The study also raises questions about the violation of female characters, social control, and the emotional strain they experience in the interest of preserving the honor and values of families and communities. A significant issue being addressed by modern South Asian writers is whether they question traditional male institutions of power in their works on resistance, trauma, identity, and women's empowerment. The study also examines the issues of awareness and social change regarding women's rights in post-colonial societies through these literary texts.

Literature Review

Honor, Shame, and Patriarchal Social Control

The concepts of 'honor' and 'shame' are social values that have long been studied in relation to family, gender, and community reputation. In many patriarchal power environments, honor is not construed as a singular characteristic. It turns into public property, property of the family, caste, clan, or the community. Gender often leaves women caught in the center of this web, as typically society looks upon women's sexuality, marriage, and public appearance as indicators of family respectability. Kandiyoti (1988) argues that women sometimes find themselves living within a 'patriarchal bargain' that has strict norms and conditions for women's gender roles in exchange for certain security or social acceptance. This is a handy concept to read in South Asian literature, when there are not just victims of women characters. They go along and often engage in negotiation; however, when they cannot out-compete the system, they are forced to comply.

As feminist scholars have demonstrated, shame is something we feel as well as something that is internalized, resulting in feelings both inside and outside. Another form of it is created by society as well. Ahmed (2014) is interested in emotion crossing bodies and communities, making a distinction between belonging and exclusion in community. In literature, shame is frequently cast when a man or woman has his wife or girlfriend killed over her, when a girl is forced, or when a girl's parents are disgraced because of her criminal actions. Thus, it is not a coincidence that there is a politics of shame. It teaches women to be self-aware and, as a community, to condemn women.

From a South Asian perspective, honor may be related to religion, caste/class, nationality, and/or migration. Honor-based violence does not remain within countries or religious groups. It is more appropriately considered a broader manifestation of patriarchal power. It is important to avoid a "helpless victim of tradition" view of non-Western women, and "talk about gender and culture," says Abu-Lughod (2013). It is of key importance for this study to point out this warning. It is not intended to portray any South Asian cultures as "violent by nature". It is rather to look at selected literary works, both as critical



instruments of pointing out inequality in social practices and as showcases of the strength, thought, and agency of women.

Intersectionality also provides insight into how women are subject to different forms of honor and shame. Crenshaw (1991) states that gender is inextricable from notions of race, class, law, and other forms of power. Risk differentials between a rich urban woman, a poor rural woman, a migrant wife, a widow, and a displaced woman do not exist in the genre of fiction of South Asia. However, they will have a different social context, which will alter the nature of the control dynamics they experience and the tools at their disposal to fight back. This will require a careful reading to be mindful not to label “South Asian women” as a monolith. Instead, it should reflect gender in relation to socio-economic factors such as poverty, migration, nationality, caste-like status, religion, language, etc.

Everyday habits, too, are based on honor and shame. They might show up in minor statements about a woman's attire, that a woman shouldn't use her family name, that family members aren't allowed to go out of the house, or in taciturn voices when abuse is discussed. Even actions like these have implications as they pave the way for more serious violence. These small acts are especially useful to study in literary texts, particularly novels, which allow for the examination of ordinary conversations that (as in movies) have a duration of their own. The literary text is especially useful for the study of these small acts, particularly novels, which allow the study not only of ordinary conversation but also of private thoughts and emotional changes over time (as depicted in movies). In this respect, fiction has revealed the gradual nature of the process of normalizing social control.

Feminist and Postcolonial Approaches to South Asian Women's Writing

Feminist literary criticism is the study of literature with respect to the representation of women and genders and their roles, as well as power. In it, questions of what is spoken—what is unsaid—and who is silenced circulate, whose pain is taken on board, and whose body becomes the point of control. The practice of feminist literary criticism is established by the work of Showalter (1977), which brought feminism to the forefront of literary criticism and focused on women's writing and women's experience. While more feminist critics focused on race, class, and colonial history and global inequalities, later. In Global South countries, women cannot be treated as a homogeneous group, Mohanty says (2003). History, the economy, class, religion, caste, and where they live influence their lives. The issue is very pertinent to South Asian Anglophone fiction, in which the role of women appears in various forms, ranging from domineering/dominant in villages, cities, war zones, and migrant homes.

The discussion here can be continued from the lens of Postcolonial theory. Spivak (1988) questions the subaltern's ability to speak by examining how powerful institutions and languages represent marginalized women. This is a complicated question in South Asian fiction in English. English is also a colonial language and can serve as a tool for communication and critique in the world. The framework of South Asian Anglophone writers is the narration of a woman whose life is shaped by her local environment, its language, and culture. This puts pressure and opportunities on them. Novels can be accessible to a worldwide readership, but they have to avoid oversimplifying local realities. Postcolonial feminist critics also reveal that women's bodies are frequently symbols of nation-states and cultures. Yuval-Davis (1997) argues that women are often expected to reproduce the nation, both biologically and culturally, as well as symbolically. When communal and social problems arise, women are required to safeguard the community's



social purity during communal migration or a national crisis. This is the reason why there seems to be an increased prominence of sexual violence in literature during the Partition period. Women's bodies here turn into warfields on which men indulge in marking a communal triumph and a communal revenge in *Cracking India*. As a novel, then, it demonstrates that gendered violence does not exist outside political violence.

One of the other concepts that is important is bell hooks' (2000) idea about furthering the elimination of sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. We use this definition because it encompasses feminism beyond personal success. A woman can be taught or work, but if the family/community's honor/shame system persists, she can still be subjected to social control. This is sometimes quite evident in South Asian Anglophone fiction. Education, migration, and employment are opportunities that open new doors, but they do not eradicate patriarchal thinking. Thus, feminist reading requires an analysis of personal ways of acting and the social structure.

Theory associated with the post-colonial also reminds us that the English language has reached the global market for fiction, and that fiction moves both globally and through global markets. There's an interesting question: can Anglophone fiction confront stereotypes, or can it sometimes perpetuate them for readers in some countries around the world? This is no simple matter. Though stories in some texts might be read as stories of suffering, they also feature complex characters, local histories, and ethical struggles. Such works, then, must be read not as simple documents of culture, but not at all as pure imagination, either. Both such things must be read with caution; both must be read as literature, carefully.

It is a set of literary products informed by history, language, publication, and politics.

Gendered Violence in South Asian Anglophone Fiction

The gendered nature of violence is explored in many South Asian Anglophone novels, which illustrate the various places that violence may occur, such as inside the home, in the street, during wartime, and across national borders. *The Cracking of India* by Sidhwa is an important read as it relates the idea of gendered violence to the Partition of India in 1947. When women become the victims of communal vengeance, Ayah's abduction and sexual abuse bring it to light. While Partition fiction has been viewed as a testimony to the nation's trauma, feminist interpretations reveal how women's trauma has been masked by the official narratives of independence and nationhood (Butalia, 1998; Menon & Bhasin, 1998). In Sidhwa's novel, the narrator is allowed to tell about this veiled violence.

A Thousand Splendid Suns, by the Doors of the Year author, writer, and journalist Khushbuses Siddig-Kazim, shows the impact of domestic violence in Afghanistan across decades of political turbulence. Rasheed harasses Miriam and Laila, and they are forced to bond in order to endure emotionally. This novel demonstrates how Law, War, Poverty, and Social Opacity enable Gendered Violence. It also offers long-term care for women. Hosseini is sometimes categorized as read in isolation from the Afghan experience for the benefit of the global viewer. However, the novel is primarily a book about women's friendship and, as such, can be analyzed through a feminist lens.

The focus of Ali's *Brick Lane* is on the South Asian community in Britain. At the same time, Nazneen's arranged marriage, her isolation, and the turmoil of her emotions illustrate that migration is not necessarily liberating for women away from patriarchal domination. Meanwhile, diaspora opens up new space: employment opportunities, language education, friendship opportunities, and freedom of choice. *The Lowland* is also



more about migration, via widowhood, motherhood, and intellectual independence. That Gauri is making a morally ambiguous choice is intriguing. However, it seems to be a rejection of the notion that being a woman is enough to justify sacrificing everything for the sake of family honor.

Resistance, Trauma, and Female Agency

Stresses, agents, and trauma have been considered more recently as coupled entities. Trauma theory serves to understand some of the ways trauma impacts memory, speech, and identity. It is a feeling of trauma that comes back, according to Caruth (1996), in delayed and sundry ways. In the stories of South Asia, the female characters might not express their suffering all at once, but when they are silent, it isn't saying what can't be said. Silence conveys fear, social pressure, or the limit of language. It may also be a survival strategy.

Not always dramatic is the role women play in these works. It feels like it is to make an escape out of an abusive relationship, to take one's own scorn, to learn about something, to establish a friendship, to be part of a story, or to pretend that it is another life. *Girls Burn Brighter* is an account of two women, Poornima and Savitha, who endure hard and brutal gendered abuse in their lives, and the connection they have with each other is a means of resistance. They are an example of friendship, busting the myth of the "male gaze" that women must win men's approval. *Remembering in Shamsie* is no respect of space or nation, as women's memories traverse borders.

There is a gap in the existing literature: a comparative study that reads honor, shame, gendered violence, and resistance together across multiple South Asian anglophone texts. Most of the research on Partition, Diaspora, etc., earlier deals with either a single author, a country, or one particular topic like domestic violence. This article synthesizes these issues and demonstrates how honor and shame can be understood as recurring narrative patterns. This also exposes how the chosen novels break with those patterns by providing contexts to hear from, move with, and recover from women.

Methodology

Research Design

This research employs a qualitative method related to text analysis. The study is more concerned with meanings, symbols, characters, voices of the narratives, and themes rather than with numerical measurement; so, qualitative textual analysis can be used for this study. The chosen novels are read carefully to gain a closer understanding of the portrayal of honor, shame, and gender-based violence in a fictionalized work of literature.

Primary Texts

The main books include *Burnt Shadows* by Kamila Shamsie, *Brick Lane* by Monica Ali, *The Lowland* by Jhumpa Lahiri, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini, and *Cracking India* by Bapsi Sidhwa. These are chosen texts as they come from very diverse locations and settings in South Asia and in the diasporas, and contain explicit gender, honor, shame, violence, trauma, and resistance themes.

Analytical Framework

The analysis is firmly influenced by feminist literary criticism, postcolonial theory, and gender studies. This study explores repeated themes, symbols, narrative voice, plot structure, dialogue, and character construction. It is also an exploration of the modalities of violence and resistance in different contexts, from the family to the country to the migrant's territory to the memory of war.



Effective Reading

The interpretation is documented through secondary sources, including journal articles, books, reports, and feminist criticism. With the literary piece analyzed, these sources facilitate the dialogue with the broader discussion surrounding patriarchy, gender violence, postcolonial identity, trauma, and women's agency.

Procedure of Analysis

The analysis was in three steps. First, all the novels were read for recurring scenes related to 'honor', 'shame', gender roles, 'violence', 'silence', and 'resistance'. Second, these scenes were categorized into topics like domestic control, communal violence, forced marriage, migration, friendship, memory, and recovery. Thirdly, the novels were compared to identify their similarities and differences. These interpretive conclusions are summarised in tables and graphs in the data analysis section. These are not proof; they are simply visual aids that help to make the close reading more comprehensible.

The scope and limitations of the method statement.

This research is not intended to indicate the actual level of violence in the real world. It is a literature representative study. This implies that the results indicate how the selected novels make sense, involving plot, character, symbolism, and narration. It's a restricted method, as it relies on interpretation, and another researcher might emphasize different scenes. The method, however, is suited to the research questions, as they interrogate and critique fiction's representations of honor, shame, and gendered violence.

Data Analysis

The "data," as used in this article, are not responses to a survey or laboratory results because of the qualitative textual analysis they are used in. Themes/events/symbols/character experiences- from selected novels. The following tables and graphs summarize the patterns observed from close reading. Some of the scores presented in certain tables are based on a (qualitative) scale between 1 and 5, with 1 indicating a very low presence and 5 indicating a very strong presence. These abstract scores are not intended to measure performance; they are included only to clarify the qualitative comparison.

Table 1: *Selected Texts and Main Analytical Focus*

Text	Setting	Main Form of Violence	Main Link to Honor and Shame
<i>Cracking India</i>	Partition-era Punjab	Communal and sexual violence	Women's bodies become symbols of community honor.
<i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i>	Afghanistan	Domestic abuse and forced marriage-riage	Female obedience is treated as a matter of family and social respectability.
<i>Brick Lane</i>	Bangladeshi Diaspora in Britain	Emotional control and marital pressure	A wife is expected to protect the family's image by remaining silent.
<i>Burnt Shadows</i>	Japan, South Asia, United States	Political and historical violence	Memory challenges fixed national and gender identities.
<i>The Lowland</i>	India and United States	Emotional coercion and family judgment	Social norms judge Widowhood and motherhood.



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Girls Burn Brighter India and global Sexual exploitation Poverty and patriarchy turn migration and bodily violence women into objects of control.

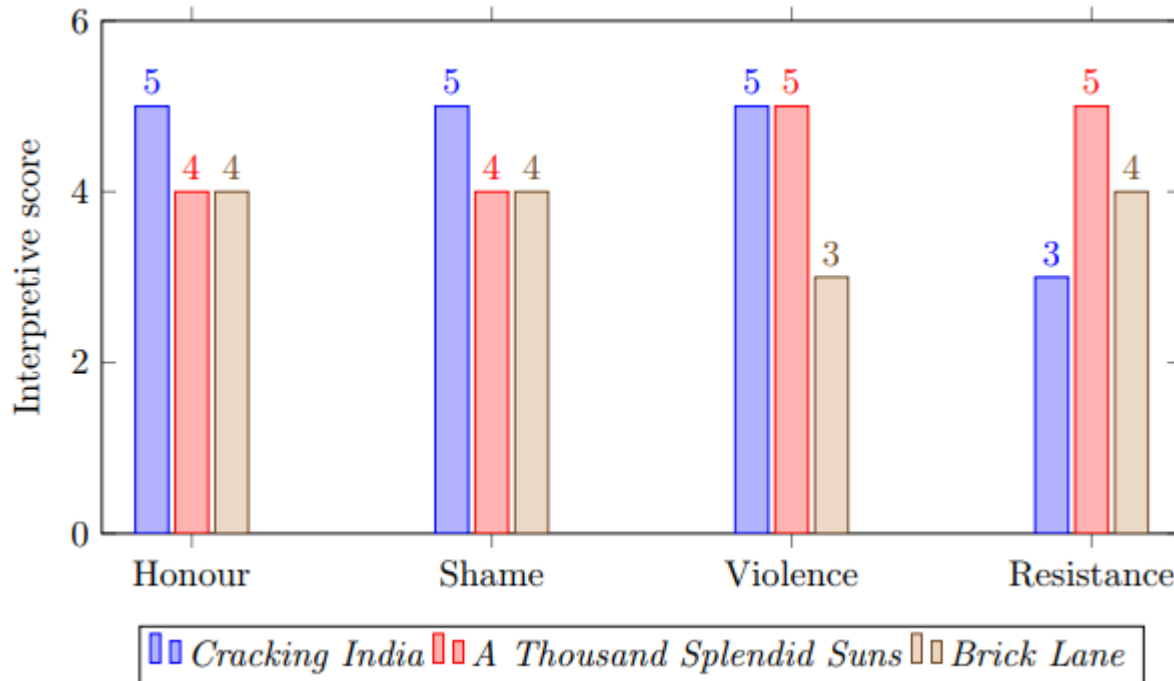
From the data in Table 1, it can be seen that there are various forms of gender violence. Does not only apply to physical abuse. Emotional pressure, sexual exploitation, and forced marriage, social judgment, and symbolic control are also expressions of this. This table illustrates the role of honor and shame in shaping women's decisions across various contexts in relation to Objective 1.

Table 2: Thematic Intensity Across Texts

Text	Honour	Shame	Violence	Resistance
<i>Cracking India</i>	5	5	5	3
<i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i>	4	4	5	5
<i>Brick Lane</i>	4	4	3	4
<i>Burnt Shadows</i>	3	3	4	4
<i>The Lowland</i>	3	4	2	4
<i>Girls Burn Brighter</i>	4	5	5	5

It is observed that all the novels selected contain honor, shame, violence, and resistance; however, the strength of these elements varies in each novel, as can be seen in Table 2. But the level of honor, shame, and violence in *Cracking India* is very high, since Partition transforms women's bodies as indicators of communal revenge. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and *Girls Burn Brighter* portray a high level of resistance with the emphasis on female relationships as a means of survival.

Graph 1: Theme Frequency by Interpretive Score



Compare three texts in which family or community control is quite salient (Graph 1). We can see that both books feature higher levels of violence, and that resistance is strongest in



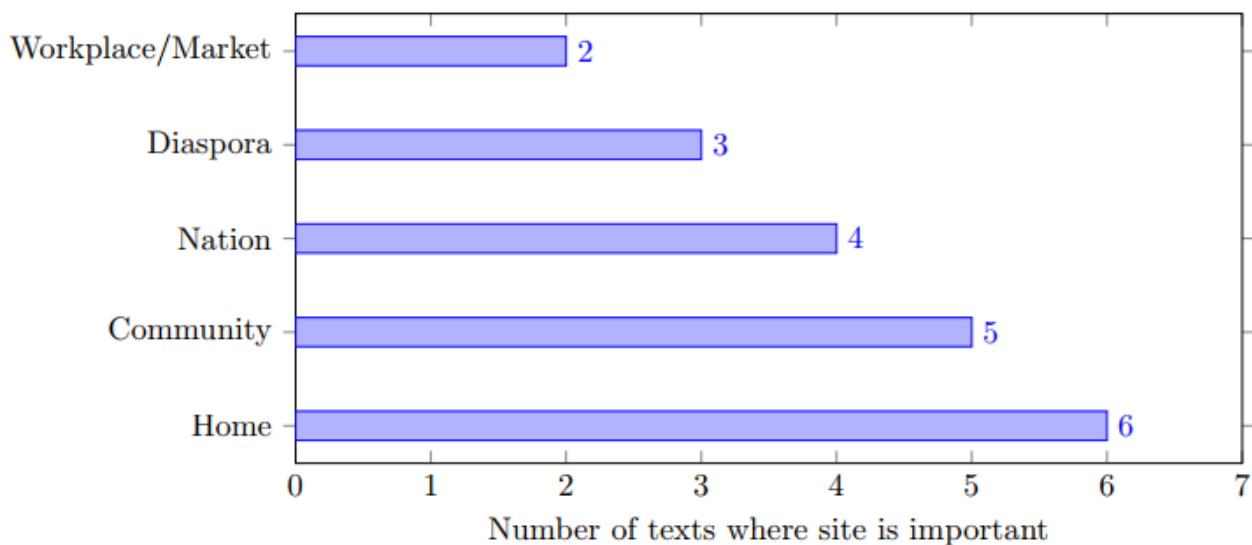
Hosseini's novel, as shown in the graph. This aligns with Objective 2 as it demonstrates how solidarity and moral courage empower women.

Table 3: Forms of Resistance in the Novels

Form of Resistance	Examples in Texts
Speech and testimony	Remembering violence, telling hidden stories, naming injustice.
Female friendship	Mariam and Laila, Poornima and Savitha, women supporting each other.
Mobility and migration	Leaving restrictive homes, crossing borders, entering new social spaces.
Education and work	Learning language, gaining income, and developing self-respect.
Refusal of shame	Rejecting the idea that women are guilty for the violence done to them.

Table 3 reveals that it is not only open rebellion that is resistance. It might manifest as friendship, memorialization, teaching, travels, work, or an unwillingness to take responsibility for an action. This is significant since wars of independence against the patriarchal systems can sometimes be dangerous. The novels, then, portray agency as something that unfolds over time rather than as a simple occurrence.

Graph 2: Sites of Gendered Violence



As indicated in graph 2, the most commonly mentioned place of gender based violence is the home. Public violence is not less important, but this does not mean that. Instead, it conveys the impression that the house is the first site of the teaching and enforcement of honor and shame, the fiction. The community and nation further matter in that they are a source of approval for private control.

Table 4: Narrative Strategies Used to Expose Violence

Narrative Strategy	Function in the Novels
Child or limited viewpoint	Shows how violence enters ordinary life before it is fully understood.
Multiple settings	Connects private suffering with national and global histories.
Memory and flashback	Shows trauma as a repeated experience that returns over time.



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Female-centered narration

Gives emotional depth to women’s pain and choices.

Symbolism of body and home

Shows how women’s bodies and domestic spaces become controlled territories.

Table 4 shows that no violence is reported in the novel. Literary form is a means for them to convey the sense of no words, no fear, no memory. For instance, a kid narrator might demonstrate how violence becomes regular, and flashbacks will depict continued trauma beyond the experience of violence.

Graph 3: Overall Pattern of Control and Resistance



To compare the scores for the close-reading tasks in the novels, the scores have been combined into a single graph, called Graph 3. It has a very low level of alliance between control, violence, and resistance. With high levels of patriarchal control, there is an increased tolerance for violence, it is suggested in the texts. But resistance also has great strength, indicating that it is not just a novel about exhibiting victimization that ends there.

Table 5: Findings Linked to Research Questions

Research Question	Main Finding
How do novels represent honor and shame as tools of control?	Honor and shame are shown as systems that control women’s sexuality, marriage, speech, movement, and family roles.
How do novels portray resistance and recovery?	Resistance appears through female friendship, memory, migration, work, education, speech, and rejection of imposed guilt.

The results of the research are directly answered in Table 5. It demonstrates that the novels examined in the study reveal the negative consequences of honor and shame and that women are active agents who seek dignity and freedom.

Discussion



The results demonstrate that honor and shame are social norms, with the power to regulate women in various South Asian and diasporic contexts. Unfortunately, these unwritten rules are not always codified as laws. However, they are very strong because families and communities enforce them through appeals to praise and blame, gossip, marriage arrangements, silence, and punishment. This discovery corroborates feminist arguments that there is a physical and emotional pacification of patriarchy (Ahmed, 2014; Kandiyoti, 1988). The novels chosen reveal how a woman can be subject to control from a violent husband or father, and from her neighbors, her family, her religious beliefs, her class, and national histories.

The text above can also be considered when analyzing through a feminist lens, promoting postcolonial perspectives on women's bodies as a burden for numerous others. During the Partition era, sexual violence was linked to 'national trauma' and 'communal revenge' in *Cracking India*. This is related to past studies on Partition, which have pointed to the invisible plight of women in the independent narratives of Partition (Butalia, 1998; Menon & Bhasin, 1998). *Burnt Shadows* is a novel in which politics intrudes into the personal sphere in a way that transcends nation, race, class, and gender. These novels reveal how we can not only take violence against women for granted as an individual matter, but we also have a deeper understanding of it. It has historical, national, religious, and migration ties.

Concurrently, the study reveals that there are other characters beyond women victims in SAA Anglophone fiction. Female resistance is seriously expounded upon in the novels. In *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, friendship can be a means for survival when it comes between you and death, as is the case for Mariam and Laila. The process of learning to trust oneself, which also appeared in *Brick Lane*, demonstrates that one can change an attitude towards oneself as a result of work, language, and social contacts. In 'Girls Burn Brighter', writer Poornima and Savitha exemplify a relationship between women where they are not dependent on any patriarchal entity to build an emotional family. It can be argued that agency might be relational, invisible, and subtle.

In this sense, the theory derives from this study's findings and suggests that honor and shame not only function as themes but also constitute a system of story. They are important in the structuring of plot, character development, conflict, and in the portrayal of gaps and veins of silence. The lesson is that literature is a means of educating, empowering activists, and informing the policies that seek to address gendered violence from an emotional perspective. Legal change is needed, but fiction tells us that without the flavor of law in the practice of eliminating shame, families and communities will overcome the shame of women.

The study has some limitations. This is not a complete sample of the literature of South Asia because it focuses on six novels in English. It also examines English-language texts, and many important texts on honor, shame, and gendered violence are in Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Sinhala, Nepali, Pashto, etc. More regional-language texts, including poems, plays, films, and oral texts, should be included in future research. It also needs to analyze the issues of caste, queer identity, disability, and religion more deeply.

Recommendations

The conclusions of this article indicate that notions of honor and shame are far from benign cultural discourses and symbols when employed to keep women in check. They can



carry in silence, fear, and violence. Accordingly, the following recommendations concern education, policies, literary study, and future research.

The works of South Asian women and work committed to analyzing and talking about genre include literature courses in schools. Pupils should have opportunities to discuss how honor, shame, and family pressure affect women. These types of conversations can foster empathy and raise awareness among young people about the negative stereotypes. Teachers should use simple critical approaches in class, for example, through close reading, small-group discussions, and comparisons with debates about human rights.

Honor-related violence should be seen in its broader context of gender inequality by the policy makers and social workers. Domestic violence, forced marriage, and honor crimes laws should go hand-in-hand with educating the community. Violence based on so-called family honor is never justified and has to be clearly written in public awareness campaigns. Emotional coercion, as well as physical, needs to be seen to be protected for women at risk – its support services should not miss these.

More tales from women across South Asia, by writers, publishers, and cultural groups, should be promoted. Voices of rural minorities, low castes, refugees, and migrants should be taken into consideration specifically. This would add more inclusion in the literary representation and minimize the danger of ‘tying the knot on the same knot for all South Asian women.

Future studies can be compared with Anglophone and regional languages. lit. and films. They should also explore how honor and shame are different for women as a result of their caste, class, religion, sexuality, and disability. More interdisciplinary research is necessary across literary studies, sociology, law, psychology, and gender studies.

Conclusion

This essay explores the issues of honor, shame, and gender-based violence in some South Asian Anglophone fiction. The study's analysis revealed that honor and shame are sometimes employed as devices of patriarchal control. They control women, their marriages, their speech, their sexuality, their going, and their role in the family. But violence, of course, is not just physical; the novels demonstrate this. It can also have emotional, symbolic, social, and psychological elements.

The article also discovered that the selected texts provide for the creation of strong spaces of resistance. Women resist by befriending, remembering, moving, laboring, learning, telling stories, and saying no to imposed shame. A variety of forms of resistance are crucial because they demonstrate that women's agency is not only present but also functional amid highly stressful situations. The study builds on other studies that view honor, shame, violence, and resistance in relation to both South Asian and diasporic settings.

There are theoretical and practical implications. In theory, it is demonstrated that the study of honor and shame should not be limited to the cultural theme only, but rather to the culture as a ‘narrative’. In practice, it demonstrates that fiction is a useful way to help readers, teachers, and policymakers appreciate the emotional and social aspects of gender-based violence. However, the study is limited by the small number of English-language novels used. More regional texts, oral histories, films, and multi-generic studies are needed. Despite these restrictions, the essay positions South Asian Anglophone fiction as both a potent critique of gender oppression and a way of envisioning alternative, just conceptions of family, culture, and community.

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