

Womanism and Gender Issue in Alice Walker's "The Color Purple"

النسوية وقضية النوع الاجتماعي في رواية اليس وولكر «اللون الأرجواني»

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العراق - الانبار - الرمادي
المديرية العامة للتربية في محافظة الانبار

تاريخ النشر: 2024/3/1

تاريخ القبول: 2024/1/30

تاريخ الإستلام: 2024/1/6

Received: 6 / 1 / 2024

Accepted: 30 / 1 / 2024

Published: 1 / 3 / 2024

Abstract:

African-American women struggled to improve their image in patriarchal societies, where the most severe forms of psychological and sexual violence were practiced on them, despite their effective contribution to the society. This authoritarian culture failed to acknowledge women's basic role in all aspects of life and also led them being deprived of earning or inheriting income and property. Throughout history, men have enjoyed the majority of power and

viewed women as a private property. Few studies have addressed the novel "The Colour Purple" through the lens of womanism and gender issues. Instead, most research works have concentrated on resistance to sexual assault, and cultural identity. This study seeks to critically analyze the gender dynamics in "The Colour Purple" from a womanist perspective, and explore how these issues can challenge and potentially undermine established gender norms in society. The research concluded that Walker used the term

womanism to inspire black women and provide them with positive role models. From the writer's point of view, the meaning of Womanism is self-reliance, promoting equality, and resisting oppression on the basis of ethnicity, culture, or class. Also through this novel, the author wanted to prove that women are capable of creating cultural platforms based on shared experiences to improve the image of woman and lift them out of the oppression of male society.

Keywords: womanism, patriarchal, gender, oppression, challenge

ملخص البحث

كافحت المرأة الافريقية الامريكية من اجل تحسين صورتها في المجتمعات الذكورية حيث تعرضت الى كل انواع الضغط النفسي والجنسي على الرغم من مساهمتها الفعالة في المجتمع. هذه الثقافة الاستبدادية فشلت في الاعتراف بدور المرأة الأساسي في كافة جوانب الحياة وادت ايضا الى حرمانها من أن تكسب او ان ترث الدخل والممتلكات, حيث يتمتع الرجال عبر التاريخ بأغلبية السلطة وينظرون الى النساء على انهن ممتلكات خاصة. قليل من الدراسات تناولت رواية «اللون الارجواني» من خلال

العدسة النسوية وقضايا النوع الاجتماعي . وبدلا من ذلك معظم الابحاث ركزت على مقاومة الاعتداء الجنسي والهوية الثقافية. هذه الدراسة تسعى الى اجراء تحليل نقدي للجنس الديناميكي في الرواية من منظور نسوي واستكشاف كيفية تحدي هذه القضايا وامكانية تقويض المعايير الجنسية الراسخة في المجتمع. واستخلص البحث ان الكاتبة استخدمت مصطلح النسوية لإلهام النساء وتقدير قوة ايجابية لهن, وهي تهدف ايضا الى دراسة تاريخ المرأة وكيف ادت المبادئ الخاطئة للمساواة الى سيطرة الذكور واضطهاد المرأة. ومن وجهة نظر الكاتبة ان معنى النسوية هو الاعتماد على النفس وتعزيز المساواة ومقاومة القمع على اساس العرق او الثقافة او الطبقة. وايضا من خلال هذه الرواية, ارادت الكاتبة ان تثبت بان النساء قادرات على انشاء منصات ثقافية تعتمد على التجارب المشتركة لتحسين صورة المرأة وانتشالها من اضطهاد المجتمع الذكوري.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

النسوية, الذكورية, النوع الاجتماعي, اضطهاد, تحدي



1. Introduction:

Gender portrayal in the Afro-American society has been causing problems for women for a long time. Despite significant contributions to the development of society as active citizens, women have always been oppressed by patriarchal societies. These societies fail to recognize the responsibilities that women play in all spheres of life. Throughout history, men have predominantly ruled over women, denying them the right to own or inherit property or wealth. Additionally, women were often treated as possessions. It is only recently that women have gained the ability to impact the political, religious, and cultural aspects of their own societies in many parts of the world (Ourati, 2017:1).

“The Colour Purple” is a great illustration of womanism. The narrative of oppressed ladies who encounter many obstacles throughout her lifetime is told in the novel. Following an extended period of subjugation by men, the events culminate with the female characters, gaining their freedom and heroically metamorphosing into independent women with aspirations for a better life. “The Color Purple” is a comprehensive and nuanced examination of African American women’s experiences in terms of gender representation. Through

its treatment of womanist themes and characters, the novel questions and subverts conventional gender standards. Few studies have explicitly examined “The Colour Purple” through the perspective of womanism and gender issues; instead, most have concentrated on womanism in general as it relates to topics like sexual assault, cultural identity, and resistance. The purpose of this study is to explore how “The Colour Purple” challenges and undermines traditional gender norms while providing a critical examination of the gender dynamics in the novel through the lens of womanism.

2. Literature Review:

Tally (1986: 205-222) attempts to define “Womanism” as it is used by Walker in her writing and examines the term in the context of the historical and cultural elements that have shaped black women’s reaction to white feminism. Because of its new meanings, an increasing number of female authors use it to refer to principles that are believed to be fundamental to a woman’s perspective on life and to incorporate them into classic feminist theory. Along with other female writers, Walker feels the need to develop a new set of values that will better serve women’s lives and goals. These values will be derived from a system of genuine, relational,

emotional, and interconnected beliefs derived from lived experiences. These beliefs will strengthen the social myth, which explain how the world functions and guide proper behaviour. The author's "Womanism" is a conviction in the development of a human potential that has been wasted here and now and has the ability to improve every human life, rather than merely an effort to reintegrate women into the movement.

Musanga and Mukhuba (2019: 388-400) interpret Walker's *The Colour Purple* in a womanist manner. In America, Walker presents a view of being "black," "ugly," "poor," and a "woman" that is gendered. This point of view is often overlooked in writings by men about African Americans that focus primarily on racial and class issues. The societal stigmas associated with being "black," "poor," "ugly," and a "woman" doom African American women to marginalization, underscoring the complexity of American women's lives. But in a capitalist, patriarchal, and divisive America, characters like Celie, Sofia, Shug, Mary Agnes, and Nettie struggle for recognition and support one another as African American women seeking freedom and independence. Consequently, this article traces Celie's development from a helpless and illiterate "nobody" (invisible/voiceless)

to a responsible and self-sufficient "someone" (visible/having a voice). This transformation is shaped by two key womanist ideas, "family" and "sisterhood," as Walker emphasizes her dedication to the survival and unity of African Americans.

Wahlström (2021:1-27) examines "The Colour Purple" to discuss how patriarchal power dynamics are criticized in the novel. This involved a close examination of Celie's character and those around her, focusing on the empowerment of female characters and the liberation of male characters from patriarchy. The analysis was filtered through the lens of feminist critique and psychoanalytic principles that feminists have adopted and interpreted. The relevant narrative and story arcs were assessed using Walker's womanism feminist style to investigate the importance of female sisterhood and bonding for gaining power and overthrowing oppression. Ultimately, it was found that the novel openly criticises patriarchy and offers womanism as a philosophy that challenges the patriarchal worldview.

Adventeena and Jayakanth (2022:28-31) discuss how the characters in Walker's "The color Purple" endure the double burdens of being both female and non-male, as well as being non-white,

resulting in social disadvantage. Within the Afro-American social structure, being a woman of color is considered a position of low status. This novel is a triumphant anthem celebrating a woman's fight against racism, sexism, and social determinism. Alice Walker demonstrates how African women, who endured slavery, dominance, sexism, and racism, gradually overcame patriarchy, oppression, and sexuality. A self-reliant lady leads a meaningful existence, as shown through the experiences of the protagonist. Celie symbolizes not only her own predicament in life but also the repressive conditions that society as a whole faces.

3. The Concept of Womanism

The term "Womanism" was coined by Alice Walker in her 1983 essay "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens". In the opening of the anthology, she defines it as a feminist, Afrocentric, healing, embodied, and spiritual concept. Walker conceived this idea upon recognizing the detrimental impact of racism and sexism on the identity and self-esteem of black women. A new concept was necessary to challenge the incorrect perception of black women in American society and inspire them to work together

for social progress and freedom. To accomplish this, she devoted her whole literary career from 1963 to 1980 to studying and resuscitating African-American women's history to restore black women's sense of identity and pride. This journey culminated in 1938 with the creation of womanism, which offered black women a new, self-defined significance,

emphasizing their leadership role in society and their connection to their African heritage (Torfs, 2008:17, El-Shennawy, 2019:374).

Walker defines womanism in four dimensions to provide a clear understanding of the subject and precisely pinpoint the characteristics of the black female identity. According to her, womanism is:

"From womanish (opp. Of girlish, ' i.e., frivolous, irresponsible, no serious) . A black feminist or feminist of color. From the black expression of mothers to female children, " you acting womanish, ' i.e., like a woman ,usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or willful behavior. Wanting to know more and in greater depth than is considered "good " for one. Interested in grown – up doings. Acting grown up. Being grown up. Interchangeable with another

black folk expression: " (Walker, 1983:11)

In Walker's portrayal of womanism, she praises and distinguishes it by comparing it to the vibrant colour purple, often associated with royalty, stating "Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender" (Walker 1983:12). Feminism appears less significant when linked to the lighter lavender, echoing debates about whether feminism had waned in appeal for many females during the 1980s and 1990s. Lavender, being a lighter color, clearly illustrates the notion that white women are more intimately identified with feminism than are women of colour. Walker's use of colour contrast in her definition is consistent with her political goal of highlighting the important distinctions between the terms "womanist" and "feminist"; in her semantic analogy, a bourgeois, exclusively white feminism literally pales in comparison to the richer, more unadulterated colour purple, which represents the more inclusive, non-exclusive womanist concerns. (Izgarjan and Markov, 2012:305)

During the 1970s and 1980s, womanism concentrated on political action and the fight against classism, sexism, and racism. Due to the split of feminism and multicultural feminism in the late 1990s and early 21st centuries, womanism

underwent changes. Many tenets of multicultural feminism, such as the focus on examining the influence of social categories like gender, ethnicity, racial or ethnic background, and class on women's lives, are also embraced by womanism. (Izgarjan and Markov, 2012:307).

Womanism now centres on the study of spiritual and theological dimensions. In her books "The Colour Purple," "The Temple of My Familiar," and "Possessing the Secret of Joy," Walker explores the spiritual side of womanism. She examines how Christian religion enslaves women by imposing rigid rules and behaviours that minimise them and limit their roles to just two. Walker's approach, which combines womanism with spirituality, has led several African American female theologians to incorporate womanist ideas into their work. These theologians are at the forefront of redefining knowledge about women and critiquing the oppression they face. (Ibid)

In the light of this, womanism keeps reinventing itself and acts as an organisational perspective that closely monitors the processes involved in defining the roles that females play in their societies, avoiding past errors and maintain crucial equilibrium. Womanism remains dedicated to



opposing injustice and division, along with any actions that aim to denigrate an individual or a group based on racial, cultural, or class disparities. Womanism has therefore developed from a policy to a living worldview. Walker articulates this notion in her call for all women to create a platform that centres upon the commonality of the female experience, hence facilitating more fruitful interactions amongst them.

For years, analyzing the portrayal of race and gender in literature has been a critical subject. The exploration of womanism and gender issues in “The Color Purple” is particularly relevant, especially considering the ongoing discussions about intersectionality. Studies that examine “The Color Purple” from the perspective of womanism and gender concerns are few. Rather, the majority of studies have focused on womanism in connection to sexual assault, resistance, and cultural identity. This study aims to fill the knowledge gap in current research by examining the representation of race and gender in “The Color Purple” from a womanist standpoint, and exploring how the novel challenges and overturns traditional gender norms (Izgarjan and Markov, 2012:308).

4. Synopsis of “The Colour Purple”

In *The Colour Purple*, the protagonist and narrator, fourteen-year-old Celie, is a destitute and illiterate black girl from rural Georgia. Celie begins writing letters to God after enduring rape and beatings from her father, Alphonso. Alphonso had previously impregnated Celie, and after giving birth, he likely murdered their daughter in the woods and kidnapped their son. Celie’s mother also passed away after a long illness, and even after taking a new wife, Alphonso continued to mistreat Celie.

Celie learns that her sister Nettie is engaged to a man known only as Mr._____. (Brenda & Russel, 2019:6)

Mr._____ is the lover of Shug Avery, a captivating lounge singer whose photo piques Celie’s interest. Alphonso, Celie’s stepfather, proposes that Mr._____ marry Celie instead of Nettie. Mr._____ eventually agrees to the arrangement and Celie enters into a difficult and unhappy marriage. Nettie seeks refuge in Celie’s home after fleeing from Alphonso, but when Mr._____ approaches her, she runs away to protect herself. Celie assumes Nettie is dead when she doesn’t hear from her again.

Kate, Mr. _____’s sister, sympathizes

with Celie and advises her to confront Mr. _____ instead of enduring his mistreatment. Harpo, Mr. _____'s son, falls in love with Sofia, a lively and big girl. Celie is not allowed to see Shug Avery perform at a local pub when she visits the area. After getting pregnant, Sofia marries Harpo. Celie is surprised by Sofia's refusal to submit to Harpo and Mr. _____'s efforts to treat her as inferior. Due to her physical strength, Harpo always fails in his attempts to control her. Shug falls ill, and Mr. _____ takes her to live with him. Shug initially mistreats Celie, but when Celie takes over Shug's care, the two women end up becoming friends. Celie realizes her sexual attraction to Shug and becomes infatuated with her. Sofia leaves with her children, fed up with Harpo's constant attempts to control her. A few months later, Shug performs every night at Harpo's juke bar. Celie's feelings for Shug begin to confuse her. Shug decides to stay with Celie after learning that When Shug leaves, she gets beaten by Mr. _____. Shug starts probing Celie about sex as their friendship becomes closer. When Sofia comes back to visit, she fights with Squeak, Harpo's new girlfriend. Sofia is asked to work as Miss Millie's maid, but she declines, bringing the mayor to the ground. Shug returns with Grady as her new husband after she is sentenced to

prison. (Brenda & Russel, 2019:7)

Shug initiates a romantic liaison with Celie, and they often sleep together. Shug asks about Celie's sister Nettie one evening, believing her to be deceased. Shug finds numerous mysterious letters from Mr. _____ hiding in the mail. They find dozens of letters from Nettie, which indicate that she befriended a missionary couple, Samuel and Corrine, and traveled to Africa to do ministry work. They have two adopted children, Olivia and Adam. Nettie becomes disillusioned with her missionary experience and learns that Alphonso is their step-father, not their real father. Their real father was a storeowner who was lynched by white men for resentment. Nettie confesses to Samuel and Corrine that she is their children's biological aunt, and Corrine dies, but accepts her story before her death.

Shug helps Celie recreate God in her own unique manner when she starts to lose some of her confidence in him. Six months ahead of schedule, the mayor frees Sofia from slavery, and Celie at last lets go of her rage, swearing against Mr. _____ for all of his years of mistreatment. Squeak chooses to move to Tennessee after Shug says her and Celie are relocating there. In Tennessee, Celie designs and sews pants, eventually turning her hobby into a business.



Nettie and Samuel marry and prepare to return to America. Before they leave, Tashi, a native African girl, undergoes painful rituals of female circumcision and facial scarring. Celie and Mr. _____ reconcile and enjoy each other's company, becoming independent financially, spiritually, and emotionally. Sofia remarries Harpo and works in Celie's clothing store, and Nettie returns to America with Samuel and the children. (Brenda & Russel, 2019:8)

5. Data Analysis and Discussion

The Colour Purple is a representation of a womanist approach through a number of female characters that fight for their own autonomy and reject all forms of violence perpetrated by males. "The Colour Purple" strongly emphasizes the impact of racial prejudice and male aggression on the oppression of black women. Walker focuses the narrative on a group of black women and demonstrates how racial prejudice is the root of their subjugation. African-American women in America have been keenly aware of the impact of gender for a long time. They have fought both individually and collectively, to put an end to the numerous injustices inflicted upon their communities. "The Colour Purple" examines male violence in the Black Community. Walker appoints a group of women in the black society

and shows how their oppression is based on gender differences. Following her stepfather's sexual assault, young Celie is silenced. She should keep the information to herself, he advises, saying: "*You better not never tell nobody but God. It'd kill your mammy.*" (Walker, 1982:3) She writes to God because she has no one else to share this terrible truth with. Due to what has happened to her, Celie can only confide in someone she truly loves; everything else is just awful. Celie's challenging battle to persevere despite all the horrors in her life is documented in these letters. Celie is a quiet, obedient woman who communicates with God alone to express her feelings.

Even though Celie was too young to be a mother, Walker depicts the psychological abuse Celie experiences when her stepfather takes away her children and keeps her away from experiencing and exercising motherhood. (Abd Al-Salam, 2019:670). Because he views Celie as merely an object that feeds his sexual needs, Alphonso never informs her where he took the infants:

"He took it. He took while I was sleeping. Kill it out there in the woods."(Walker, 1982:7). Whenever he gets the chance, Pa never stops embarrassing Celie. Alphonso declines Mr.'s proposal to Nettie and makes one to Celie in its

substitute. Walker displays his boldness when he tells Mr. _ how Celie looks:

"she ugly. He say.

But she ain't no stranger to hard work.

And she clean. And god done fixed her.

You can do everything just like you want and she ain't gonna make you to feed it or clothe it....but she can work like a man." (Walker,1982:12)

Mr. _____, Celie's spouse, regularly mistreats her. Celie is merely a tool for him to use for his own purposes. She is responsible for managing his household, caring for the children, and satisfying his sexual desires. He has complete control over every aspect of her life. She repeatedly endures physical abuse from Mr. _ and turns herself as an object for her own benefit: *"He beat me like the children. I make myself wood. I say to myself, Celie you a tree."* (Walker, 1982 :22) As the patriarch and leader of the household, Mr. _ asserts that the husband has the power to make decisions that affect the lives of the other family members. He uses his spouse and kids as leverage to work in the fields: *"No reason for me [to work]. His daddy say. You here, ain't you? He say this nasty."* (Walker,1982: 27). Celie gets mistreated at Mr._'s house and is unsure of how to correct the other

people's actions. She cannot resist her spouse since she is passive, like an object. She responds as follows when her sister Nettie attempts to encourage her and urges her to fight back: *"But I don't know how to fight. All I know how to do is stay alive."*(Walker,1982 :17). Nettie observes that her sister Celie is not truly alive, despite her best efforts to put up with her husband's abuse: *"It's like seeing you buried."* (Walker,1982:18). Her entire existence revolves around Mr. _ . Even his sisters, who visit the house, support this patriarchal perspective: *"When a woman marry she sponse to keep a decent house and a clean family."* (Walker,1982:19)

Despite being a compassionate and empathetic man, Harpo's marriage begins to deteriorate due to his father's sexist beliefs. He has been raised to believe that wives should always obey their husbands and that women are inferior to men. Mr._'s belief in a man's authority over his wife and children is passed down. Mr._ answers Harpo, his son, when he asks why he strikes Celie, *"because she's my wife."* (Walker,1982: 22). It conveys the belief that husbands should be free to physically abuse their wives and that there should be no justification for such behaviour. Mr._ orders Harpo to strike Sofia in order to subjugate her:



"Wives is like children.

You have to let`em know you got the upper hand.

Nothing can do that better than a good sound beating." (Walker,1982: 34).

The physical aggression against women in "The Colour Purple" is a result of the patriarchal and masculine culture. Harpo tries to use his iron grip to control Sofia, but she fights back. Instead of a master-servant dynamic in their marriage, she wants a partnership: *"a girl child ain't safe in family of men"* (Walker,1982: 29). The greatest injustice against women: Men have covertly and forcefully instilled in them a hatred for their own gender, driving them to turn on each other and wield their considerable power against themselves. (Dieke,1999:166). When Celie's stepson, who is Sofia's husband, asks her how he can *"control her thoughts,"* she responds with the same patriarchal mentality: *"Beat her; I say"* (Walker,1982: 43). One may regard Celie's envy as the initial spark that ignited her journey towards self-awareness and independence (Abd Al-Salam, 2019:675). She wants she could have the same level of freedom as Sofia. This might explain Celie's response when Sofia confronts her and asks why she proposed this course of action to Harpo:

"I say It 'cause I'm a fool, I say.

I say it 'cause I'm jealous of you.

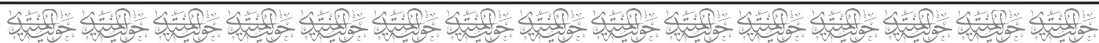
I say it 'cause you do what I can't.

What that? She say. Fight. I say" (Walker,1982: 38)

After Celie explains her motivations, Sofia expresses pity for her situation and informs her of the challenges she faces as a woman living in a male-dominated black community.

Sofia highlights the various ways that society oppresses women especially Black women who want to take charge of their own lives. A happy marriage between Harpo and Sofia was possible, but his constant fixation with controlling his wife emotionally wears her down. Following Sofia's move out, Harpo selects a partner who feeds his control-obsession. Sequeak is a submissive girl who is docile. Celie remarks on her: *"She like me, she do whatever Harpo say"* (Walker,1982: 50). This puts an end to Harpo's quest for masculine dominance and finally fulfills his ambition of becoming the voice of authority.

As a womanist, Walker wanted to give her female characters the freedom to proactively identify themselves as opposed to merely responding to



the prejudice of males. She made it possible for people to express their own names and experiences by portraying successful black females. Self-aware female characters who know their needs can succeed in their quest for self-identity (Reid, 2000:315).

The journey of self-discovery that Celie undergoes can be seen as an embodiment of the process of womanism. Celie's journey to conquer the men in her life, understand her sexuality and learn about love (primarily from the female singer Shug Avery), becomes more self-reliant in her social and emotional life, and establish a stronger spiritual bond with God. As friends and later romantic partners, Shug teaches Celie about sexuality, love, and spirituality: *"My life stop when I left home, I think. But then I think again. It stop with Mr._ maybe but start up again with Shug."* (Walker,1982: 72). Shug assists Celie in fighting against Mr._'s persecution. As she and Shug make plans to attend a juke joint song, Mr._ attempts to exert his domineering authority over Celie. He makes use of the antiquated notion that women have to give priority to and remain in their homes. Mr. tries to limit her social opportunities and maintains that she should stay at home: *"women don't go to places like that. My wife can't do this."* (Walker,1982: 64).

She breaks away from Mr._'s servitude. One Independence Day, she manages to escape her husband's chains while having dinner with the family. She informs him while putting a knife to his throat:

"You a lowdown dog is what's wrong, I say.

It's time to leave you and enter into the Creation.

And your dead body just the welcome mat I need." (Walker,1982: 170).

Celie has to work towards her own self-acceptance and self-definition throughout the story. This starts the day she declares she's moving out of Mr. _____ and into Shug's house in Memphis. She says: *"I'm pore, I'm black, I may be ugly and can't cook...But I'm here"* (Walker,1982: 215). Celie quickly discovers that she can support herself by engaging in the stereotypically feminine activity of sewing. Actually, Shug is the one who inspires her to use fancy trousers design as a vehicle for her creativity. Shug also helps Celie by contributing money to her company in order to guarantee Celie's success. Shug Avery exemplifies a classic Walker womanist. Walker defines a womanist as "a

serious, independent-minded woman



intent on gaining possession of her own space in the world” in her 1983 book “In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens.” (Abd Al-Salam, 2019:683). In the novel, Shug and Sofia’s “abnormal,” “different” personalities are discussed in a conversation between Celie and Mr. ____, which casts a shade over this definition:

“Mr. ____ thinks all this is stuff men do.

But Harpo not like this, I tell him.

You not like this.

What Shug got is womanly it seem like to me.

Sophia and Shug not like men, he say, but they not like women either.” (Walker,1982: 228).

Shug Avery’s identity as a self-aware, self-realized, and sexually free African-American woman of her day was definitely impacted by Alice Walker. This representation relates to black womanism because the author wants to break through the inferiority mentality that women have been left with by patriarchy and provide a good role model. (Janusiewicz, 2014:10). Shug has several characteristics that are associated with Womanists, and it is evident how she takes advantage of these attributes to achieve social influence.

Sofia is not afraid of anything, unlike other female characters in Alice Walker’s “The Colour Purple”. When she initially appears in this book, she boldly tells Mr. ____ that Harpo is her child’s father:

“Who the father? he ask.

She look surprise. Harpo, she say.

How he know that?

He know. She say.” (Walker,1982: 19)

Sofia is a feisty and rebellious person, as evidenced by the fact that Harpo beat her after Celie said him to. She beats Harpo:

That’s right, say Harpo. But not Sofia. She do

what she want, don’t pay me no mind at all. I

try to beat her, she black my eyes. Oh, boo-hoo,

he cry. (Walker,1982: 36)

Sofia refuses to be in Celie’s position and be subservient to her husband because Celie always obeys Mr. ____ and never fights back. She made the decision to move out from under her husband’s roof. She may live with her sister and do anything she wants after leaving Harpo. Sofia’s rejection of patriarchal thinking

embodies some womanism ideas. She starts by disputing the notion that women are less valuable than males. She also demonstrates that women are just as capable as males. The transformation of Mr. ___ and the other men in the novel is more intriguing. Mr. ___, who formerly held the firm belief that women should be treated as subordinates, modifies his mind and accepts a more significant position than Celie's at Folks Pants. He also acknowledges Celie and Shug's organic affection for one another. The victory of womanism lies not in his outward apology but in his rejection of his patriarchal beliefs. Men's consciousness therefore develops together with women's conscious connection. Harpo, the son of Mr. ___, works at home and appears to like it. He returns with Sofia in tow. He even asks her what she's going to be working on when she begins at Celie's business. She seems content with it, and capable of handling any issue that arises at home. In the end, the distinctions between the genders'

conventional duties become less clear. Men work in the house, while women like Celie and Sofia operate their own businesses and work in stores (Raja, 2016: 166).

5. Conclusions

Black women have endured the oppression of subjugation and the dominance of men. Consequently, they have experienced a loss of both their identity and sense of self. The study highlights how Walker fearlessly depicts Black women courageously facing and overcoming numerous challenges stemming from deeply rooted racial discrimination and exploitation within the framework of womanism. In her work, "The Colour Purple," Walker deftly portrays the harsh realities of injustice. Throughout the novel, she thoughtfully and respectfully challenges the common sexist stereotypes that are often associated with Black women, by thoughtfully redefining, or adopting them. Her ideas of womanism is intended to inspire women by providing positive role models that can help them overcome gender prejudices that are deeply ingrained in patriarchal culture. She thoughtfully examines the history of women from

the dawn of human civilization and highlights how the acceptance of egalitarian principles led to the transition of society into a male-dominated one.

Actually, the fundamental principles of womanism represent an unwavering



dedication to advancing inclusivity and equality as well as a resistance to all types of oppression, division, and prejudice based on a person's ethnicity, culture, or class. Because of this, one may claim that womanism has developed into a more comprehensive ideology that directs women's outlook on life. Walker puts this theory into practice by encouraging all women to establish a platform centered on the experiences that they have in common in order to improve communication amongst them.

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