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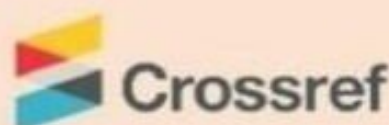
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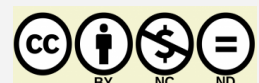


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The Intertwined Trajectory between Gender and Psychic Anxiety in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*

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Abstract:

This paper examines the intersection between gender and the psychic aspects of anxiety in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* (2013). The study focuses on how Adichie looks into gender through psychological perspectives. The main argument of the study will be the interpretation of gender as an impasse negatively affecting the novel's female protagonist's psyche. Ifemelu, who is the chief protagonist, embodies Adichie's concern with creating an optimal view of women on the brink of psychological retardation due to two interrelated problems. The first problem gender severe prejudice engulfing women's social relations. The second problem is women's development of psychic anxiety as a result of the gender bias. Therefore, the study's objective is to explore gender discriminations as the primary cause of protagonist's psychic anxiety. The methodology for analyzing the relationship between gender and anxiety will be qualitative. It follows a textual analysis of the major female protagonist as well as the novel's setting which plays a crucial role in identifying the accumulative formation of the protagonist's anxiety. Thus, the study's finding will be limited to the exploration of gender discrimination as an impetus to the formation of human anxiety.

Key Words: Adichie, Anxiety, Discrimination, Female Protagonist, Gender

المسار المتشابك بين الجنس والقلق النفسي في رواية أمريكانا لشيمناندا نغوزي أديتشي

الملخص:

تبحث هذه الورقة البحثية في التقاطع بين الجنس والجوانب الفيزيائية للقلق في رواية أمريكانا لشيمناندا نغوزي أديتشي (2013). وتركز الدراسة على كيفية نظر أديتشي إلى الجنس من خلال وجهات نظر نفسية. ستكون الحجة الرئيسية للدراسة هي تفسير الجنس باعتباره طريقاً مسدوداً يؤثر سلباً على نفسية بطلة الرواية. تجسد إيفيميلو، وهي البطلة الرئيسية، اهتمام أديتشي بخلق رؤية مثالية للنساء على وشك التخلف النفسي بسبب مشكلتين مترابطتين. المشكلة الأولى هي التحيز الجنسي الشديد الذي يحيط بالعلاقات الاجتماعية للنساء. والمشكلة الثانية هي تطور القلق النفسي لدى النساء نتيجة للتحيز الجنسي. لذلك، فإن هدف الدراسة هو استكشاف التمييز بين الجنسين باعتباره السبب الرئيسي للقلق النفسي لبطلة الرواية. إن المنهجية المستخدمة في تحليل العلاقة بين الجنس والقلق ستكون نوعية، حيث تتبع تحليلاً نصياً للبطلة الرئيسية وكذلك بيئة الرواية التي تلعب دوراً حاسماً في تحديد التكوين التراكمي للقلق لدى البطلة. وبالتالي فإن نتائج الدراسة سوف تقتصر على استكشاف التمييز بين الجنسين كدافع لتشكيل القلق البشري.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أديتشي، القلق، التمييز، بطلة الرواية، الجنس.

1. Introduction:

The problem of gender is widely tackled in various contexts. This is due to the relative nature of gender in different societies and cultures that perceive the relationship between men and women in discrepant ways. There has been much interest in the way by which men and women look at each other on the grounds of the contemporary considerations regarding the possible ways of bridging the gap between them. Yet, a number of complex notions and social phenomena limit and belittle the attributes of gender as a single concept regardless its multifarious implicative meanings because “the relationship between men and women takes many aspects. Women are seen and judged by men in different ways. They are subjects to perception and criticism of social communities where society determines the position of women and men. In patriarchal societies, for example, women are objects to negative judgment” (Al-Fartoosi 33). As a matter of fact, one of these phenomena is patriarchy which destroys the typical mutual affinity between men and women in the same social circumstances. That is, the traditional aspects of patriarchy put forth suppressive limitations of women’s roles in their society. Men play the essential social roles as they are considered superior to men in the light of the patriarchal implications of this affinity “through self-representation which challenges the reductive imperial gaze and emphasizes the complexity of their experience and cultural identities” (Jackson 101).

Patriarchy, in this sense, holds back any serious attempt to construct a good reciprocal understanding between men and women. For this reason, it belittles the perfect and smooth roles of each gender in the same social and cultural backgrounds. Patriarchy, accordingly, is one integral motivation of gender discrimination due to its discriminatory nature. Furthermore, marginalization is another integral factor of the deterioration of female subjectivity. Women relentlessly seek to establish their identity away of the patriarchal domination over their society which may include “marginalized genders, and racialized peoples down every road, alleyway, dark street, and personal residence” (McKinley 18). The search for gender independence and self-autonomy as they have a great desire to be stable. Yet, they confront different male-oriented attitudes which might demolish their fro liberty. In this respect, marginalization does not offer them their chance to be equal to men. It does not also make them confident to be as effective as men in their cultural circumferences. The purpose of the current study, therefore, is to explore the intersection between gender and the physic aspects of anxiety in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Americanah* (2013).

2. Literature Review:

Adichie’s *Americanah* (2013) has been a subject to different critical studies. It has been approached by many scholars to explore its literary and cultural value. In “Mimicry, rebellion and subversion of Western beliefs in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Americanah*” (2021), Mark Ighile and Charity Oseghale examine the portrayal of the western destroyed image in the novel. They highlight the allegorical peculiarities of the novel since it deals with the intricate cultural issues emerging out of its themes. Furthermore, the allegorical features of the novel are sustained by the symbolic depiction of the protagonist, Ifemelu. The protagonist exemplifies the African imitation of the west because it affected their culture: “Ifemelu cuts her straight hair and starts grooming her natural hair afresh. Ifemelu’s action of cutting her hair, is symbolic of her decision to shed all forms of pretensions and artificiality in order to conform to Western standards” (5). In this manner, Ighile and

Oseghale conclude their study by exploring the protagonist as a symbolic manifestation the western stereotype influencing the African cultural traditions.

Monica Megasari, *racism in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Americanah* (2018), tackles the postcolonial insights of the concept of racism in Adichie's *Americanah* (2013). Megasari writes argues that racism prevails the entire narrative incidents of the plot. The concept of racism is limited to its presence in America and some other countries, like Nigeria and England. Megasari, moreover, claims that the novel abounds with the authorial observations of racism in order to mitigate it: "while *Americanah* is a tale of individual characters, it is also a sweeping analysis and critique of race and racism in America, England, and Nigeria, and the novel is peppered with Adichie's biting observations on the subject" (35). Megasari, consequently, unravels the complex nature of racism due to its unethical considerations. Hence, the novel exposes racism and attacks it because it had got rife in the racial-dominated societies: "race and racism are big and complicated enough issues on their own, and they deserve a novel as sprawling and complex as *Americanah*" (36). As a result, the finding of Megasari's study offers a remedial solution to racial segregation and how it could be hindered in any society.

Maria Dias and Josane Pinto trace the concept of identity in "Racism and Identity: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie *Americanah*" (2019). They conduct a discourse analysis study of Adichie's *Americanah* (2013) for the sake of discovering the identity themes in the plot. Like Megasari's study, Dias and Pinto pursue the postcolonial aspects of the novel. However, they focus on identity by means of discourse analysis. Through explicating the novel's discourse, they claim that the novel's protagonist constructs her identity according to her new environment as a way of adapting to her new personal and social life: "brings to the protagonist's social and personal life, associating it directly with her identity construction and adaptation to this new environment" (227). In this way, Dias' and Pinto's study discovers the necessary cultural adaption to new to gain personal and social co-existence with the foreign culture. The protagonist, in this regard, is employed by Adichie to emphasize the importance of identity adaptation to new cultures.

Though the previous studies relate to the main subject of this study, it is going to examine the intersection between gender and the physic aspects of anxiety in Adichie's *Americanah* (2013). The study will highlight two concomitant topics. First, gender will be interpreted in relation to discrimination exerted against the female protagonist, Ifemelu. Gender will be further discussed in terms of how she suffers from gender bias, which is hardly tackled in previous studies. Second, anxiety will be traced by pursuing its psychic nuances. That is, the protagonist becomes anxious due to gender discrimination surrounding her life. As such, this study's contribution lies in its exploration of gender discrimination as the main impetus of the protagonist's psychic anxiety.

3. Analysis and Discussion:

Adichie's *Americanah* (2013) focuses on Ifemelu who descends from a Nigerian origin. She later travels to the USA to complete her study. The plot unravels different episodes dealing with her experience during her stay in America. Her experience passionate, racial and cultural fluctuations that imprint her personality to the extremes. She undergoes many hardships that make her anxious. This is due to her personal affairs with her compatriot Obinze. At the beginning they fall in love of each other. Then, Ifemelu gets negatively affected her restrictive attributes of her gender. The eponymous

implication of the novel “*Americanah*” suggests that she suffers from gender limitations. For this reason, she attempts to travel to America to obtain her feminists freedom as she “prefers going to America for the sake of freedom” (40). Adichie, in this case, gives voice for Ifemelu to be independent.

However, Ifemelu’s desire to leave for America refers to some psychic agitation. She feels that she is not stable or in good living conditions to stay in her homeland, Nigeria. This is due to the fact that she suffers from gender restrictions limiting her ability to be self-autonomous because such autonomy tries “to dissolve the gender difference between men and women for the sake of establishing social equilibrium” (Abu Jweid 29). As a sequence, she decides to travel to be in appropriate social environment. In essence, this tendency reflects her psychic anxiety caused by gender limitations and marginalization at homeland. Being so, she seeks refuge from this these limitations because anxiety does not only mean having “amusements but whole ways of life have been cultivated that alleviate the restlessness or unease that any intimation of a spiritual destiny” (Hannay *et al.* xxii). Adichie, here, offers adequate view of her protagonist’s predilection to obtain deferent kinds of amusements that are apparently not available at her homeland. She escapes form her harsh reality since her compatriots judge her on the basis of her gender as a women, not the basis of her human value. As a reaction, she leaves for America to find her lost value and pursue a new free life. Consequently, travel means that she could be able to be self-autonomous; and she easily could reinforce her decision-making potentials.

Adichie’s *Americanah* (2013) perceives the issue of gender through Ifemelu’s social position. She does not feel that she is a good person as she suffers from deprivation and marginalization. She decides to leave her homeland for a safer environment where she could be relieved from her sufferings. When she travels, she does not find African people have a desire to mention their African social conditions because they suffer from bad circumstances: “why do you say Africa instead of just saying the country you mean? Ifemelu asked” (39). In this case, Adichie conveys the notion of gender suppression and deprivation via Ifemelu’s disposition. As such, she begins to adopt negative psychic feelings once she confronts new life conditions to which she is not completely accustomed to. Here, she could not be properly treated and valued by her social peers when she lives in a new environment. In the first place, she begins to acquire accumulative anxious feelings as a response to this environment.

The symptoms of anxiety appear when individuals are exposed to new environment where they could not live good and safe conditions. They develop in this environment as they encounter different atmosphere; and individuals become more prone to negative feelings and responses. The depiction of anxiety in literature is meticulously depicted in the aesthetic attributes of the fictional text that “is drawn into aesthetics, the mood becomes either frivolous or melancholic, for the category under which sin lies is contradiction and this is either comic or tragic” (Hannay *et al.*19). Being so, the aesthetics of psychic anxiety might be connected with the contradictory feelings of individuals. In other words, anxious individuals develop discrepant feelings which accumulate in an average making them less stable and secure. For this reason, they do not feel that they strong enough to confront the new challenges in life. Such challenges add new dimensions to anxious individuals; and they make individuals’ psyches less effective. Hence, they start to adapt to such challenges as they do not have

any means to be strong enough to face them. These challenges, therefore, are primary to absorb the anxious nature or individuals' psyches.

Adichie's *Americanah* (2013) abounds with these challenges faced by the protagonist, Ifemelu. As previously argued, she suffered from suppressive treatment that left its obvious impact upon her personality. Many challenges make her less stable; and she could not feel that she is able to cope with them in a suitable way. Gender requires decisive view of the position of women in their societies. Notwithstanding, power is considered as the most influential factor of sustaining women's self-autonomy. Power makes women strong; and they could be equally treated as men in the same society or other societies. Ifemelu lives this challenging experience when she could not bear the harsh treatment of her society because she could not accept patriarchal "mistreatment as she is an expatriate living in America" (43). Ifemelu's gender attributes are associated with her expatriate living in the USA. However, she also becomes a victim of patriarchy even when she lives in America because she is not yet powerful.

Ifemelu's anxious feelings are created within the context of her expatriate life. Alastair Hannay *et al.*, in *The Concept of Anxiety: A Simple Psychologically Oriented Deliberation in View of the Dogmatic Problem of Hereditary Sin* (2014), argue that the concept of anxiety originates in the melancholic mood of individuals. It, then, matures in an unethical environment that does not give individuals any powerful voice to be psychically stable. Hannay *et al.* add that ethics hinders the recovery of the anxious individuals; and "ethics is on the spot and now follows every step it takes. How it came into being does not concern ethics, except insofar as it is certain that sin came into the world as sin. But still less than any concern with the genesis of sin is ethics concerned with the still life of its possibility" (28). In this sense, ethics plays a crucial role in shaping the anxious behaviors of psychic individuals. The concept of anxiety, therefore, has profound psychic residuals that appear on individuals' conscious behaviors.

By the same way, Adichie's *Americanah* (2013) reflects Ifemelu's anxious psyche through her behavioral reactions to people around her. Aisha is one of those people who meet her even in her expatriate life. Both Aisha and Ifemelu share the same gender experience and ethnic origins. Aisha tells Ifemelu that they will not be safe of any gender discrimination even when they live away from their original homeland: "Aisha clucked. 'You don't know America. You say Senegal and American people'" (39). Here, Aisha reminds Ifemelu of the different social and cultural norms regarding gender in both Africa and America. As a sequence, she is a constant support of Ifemelu in order to make her powerful; and, in doing so, she helps her get rid of her anxious feelings. Strikingly, her anxiety comes out of discrimination imposed upon her.

The concept of anxiety has various measurements as it does not yield to specific definitions. The ultimate concern with anxiety is to find suitable outlets for its destructive effects. This is because anxiety it has many connections with other psychic disorders. For this reason, alleviation from anxiety is necessary to heal individual from their psychic complications via "the modification of symptoms and the alleviation of suffering through redescription" (Phillips 3). Consequently, the necessary attempts to halt anxiety are needed for putting forth an end to its negative influence upon the individuals' psyches. The psychological complications of the concept of anxiety are reinforced by the way the get immersed in the bad feelings of individuals due to the fact that "merely that nothing

in our lives is self-evident, that not even the facts of our lives speak for themselves, but the facts themselves look different from a psychoanalytic point of view” (4). This psychological state is very bad as it does not represent the individuals’ true psychic states before the development of anxiety in their unconscious mind.

Similarly, Adichie’s *Americanah* (2013) approaches the concept of anxiety by means of gender relations. Ifemelu does not only confront a new life, but also anew patriarchal tradition. She is greatly moved by the social surroundings even in expatriate life. Her friend, Aisha, exemplifies a continual reminder of her gender inferiority when that meet in America. Ifemelu’s difficult life is created by both the patriarchal society and the new American lifestyle: “nobody wants black babies in this country, and I don’t mean biracial, I mean black. Even the black families don’t want them” (46). In this case, Adichie portrays Ifemelu’s ordeals by appropriating her African ethnicity and gender peculiarities. She could not escape this fact because she previously had undergone the same gender experience in Africa.

Ifemelu’s negative experience is associated with her negative living conditions in a new life. By the same token, Ruth Ronen discusses the concept of anxiety in *Aesthetics of Anxiety* (2010). Ronen contends that the concept of anxiety has multifarious psychic implications. However, it is primarily connected with certain experience that shapes individuals’ anxious psyche. Ronen, moreover, argues that the concept of anxiety could be fortified by its inserting it in literary texts. As such, literary texts have great value in defining “anxiety as being embodied in literary experience, showing how its manifestations take many and varied forms. Objects not clearly defined as human or inhuman, occurrences of doubles, omnipotence of thought-these and others elicit anxiety” (8). The optimal value of literary text exposing the attributes of psychic anxiety are twisted by the authorial erudite description of narrative events. Feelings of anxiety, in turn, appear on the core conceptual manifestations of literary characters’ feelings and reactions.

Adichie’s *Americanah* (2013) reveals the concept of anxiety through the characters’ feelings and reactions. Adichie employs Ifemelu’s personality to provide the reader with a vivid picture of how gender could demolish the psychic stability of individuals. Ifemelu lives in a spiritual vacuum due to her previous life in Africa. To her surprise, she re-lives this negative experience in American as long as she encounters patriarchal tendencies in her new life. She does not have any peer to support her except for Aisha and some other people to make her live away from her past experience: “she sues whenever she was trying to convince other black women about the merits of wearing their hair natural” (52). In this sense, Adichie uses Ifemelu’s personality in order to convince the receptive audience of the danger of gender oppression and its negative influence upon suppressed women’s psyches. The novel’s plot parades many instincts in Africa and America where she is mistreated and suppressed.

Both mistreatment and suppression are dual factors of psychic anxiety. They intersect with each other shaping a deformed state of conscious mind. Anxious people appear a bit torn between their reality and inner feelings. Anxious individuals have abnormal psychic sentiments which make them unsafe; and the “the embodiment of anxiety-ridden experiences is extensive in art, and with this singular intensity, the uncanny constitutes an aesthetic experience that cannot be correlated with positive sentiments, nor simply equated with extra-artistic experience” (Ronen 8-9). At this point,

Ronen's conceptualization of psychic anxiety in the light of the aesthetic qualities of literary texts offers the reader with crucial clues to delve deep into the essence of psychic anxiety in fictional narrative fabrics. As a result, the reader discover embedded indications of anxiety that appear on the characters' conscious behaviors.

These indications are apparent on Ifemelu's Adichie's *Americanah* (2013). In essence, her psychic anxiety is a result of the excessive development of gender oppression throughout her past life. She goes through many life stages when she experiences gender discrimination till she confronts it once more in her expatriate life. She says that she needs more years in her life to be healed from anxiety; the novel's omniscient narrator describes her psychic state as follows: "she needed more years. Six years, she began to say when it was five. Now that it was thirteen years, lying seemed unnecessary but she lied anyway" (79). In this regard, Ifemelu's psychic anxiety develops further as long she grows up regardless the time and place in which she lives. This means that she lives in inevitable psychic anxiety originated in her psyche as a result of gender discrimination. The elaboration and development of her anxiety are caused by the progressive confrontations with people of different social and cultural backgrounds and who treat her in the same patriarchal way.

The social and cultural peculiarities of the concept of anxiety are of paramount importance. They have critical influence upon perceiving anxiety in its interdisciplinary nature including psychology and literature. In this regard, Ronen polarizes the concept of anxiety to literary contexts for the sake of unravelling its significance for understanding the lurking stimuli of individuals' abnormal behaviors: "anxiety ... is not to be located in a specific feature of the object causing it, nor understood as automatically raised in every subject facing that object ... anxiety is there yet not as a given but as something it is necessary to seek out. So the key to understanding the pictures (experience pictures) is anxiety" (9). Ronen's use the words "experience picture" to demonstrate how anxious people store their negative experience in the form of picture or memories of the past; and they recall them once they are affected these picture in their later stages of their life. As a result, anxiety becomes to appear on their conscious behaviors or speech.

Adichie's *Americanah* (2013) highlights the personality of Ifemelu's conscious behaviors by scrutinizing her conscious reactions to other people. Adichie depicts how women are obliged to obey men in a traditional way. In this manner, they do not have any control over their decisions. Women, in the traditional societies, are not able to emulate men. They are not equal to their masculine counterparts as they are not allow to reject men's orders. Ifemelu represents this case by showing how they are forced to behave in a certain way: "but you know these men, the one woman that says no to them is the one that they don't forget" (80). Women, consequently, are not able to refuse men's requirements; and they are asked to do different tasks for the pleasing men. The utilization of women in this way is embodies the core notions of oppressive patriarchy that marginalized women on the grounds of gender considerations.

Ifemelu's anxious reactions to her patriarchal society creates another psychic disorder i.e., paranoid. In essence, the concept of paranoia refers to the suspicious feelings of other people in the same social environment. That is, paranoid people feel that they are threatened and intimidated by other people to plot against them. As a sequence, paranoid people could not get rid of their suspicious feelings of others. Paranoid people usually "become common to casually remark that someone is paranoid if it is felt that his/her concern or suspicions are unjustified or his/her cynicism and pessimism too far-reaching. In professional circles too, paranoia has a descriptive value that is quick

to be employed in a host of situations” (Worth 3). Both paranoia and anxiety go together in shaping the anxious behaviors of individuals. Paranoid people, therefore, are restricted by their somewhat true feelings. They could not solve their personal problems as they get more immersed in the environment of their psychic anxiety.

Adichie’s *Americanah* (2013) exemplifies both paranoia and anxiety in the light of Ifemelu’s behaviors. She becomes more suspicious of other people around her. To explain, she is not able to feel stable and safe in the patriarchal dominated society. For this reason, she cannot free herself from her suspicious mood wherever she goes. She confronts racial segregation and patriarchal prejudice which makes her describe a person as “bad father! Bad man!” (82). In fact, this man would not be harmful or bad. Yet, her internal anxious feelings appear on her conscious mind in the form of paranoia which motivates her to describe the man as being bad. The concept of anxiety has an apparent indicator of the detrimental effect of anxiety upon individuals’ behaviors. Ifemelu, furthermore, feels paranoid when she contemplates the live of men and women who live peacefully with each other in America: “she looked at photographs of these men and women and felt the dull ache of loss, as though they had prised upon her hand and taken something of hers” (85). Being so, Ifemelu is a literary stereotype of how anxiety and paranoia exist with each other on the grounds of psychic agitation. Nevertheless, she could not get rid of these negative feelings by any means.

The detrimental attributes of psychic anxiety are formulated in new challenges that profoundly change and imprint individuals’ psyches. There are various tokens of psychic anxiety that serve as clue for discovering the individuals’ paranoid reactions. This is because suspicion creates a sense of tense perception of other people. To put it another way, the suspicions of paranoid people, puts them at loggerheads with the entire society; and it limits their communication with others. In fact, the feeling of anxiety results in severe psychic condition because the new “challenges involve the need to encompass the range of personality and psychotic manifestations paranoia assumes, as well as the psychological processes, such as projection, that are believed to underlie those manifestations” (Worth 3). Here, the new challenges are the representative aspects of psychic anxiety in all its complications.

Adichie, in *Americanah* (2013), offers a new and unprecedented view of anxiety. This is due to the fact that anxiety intertwines with paranoia. However, there are inherent psychic differences between them. On the one hand, anxiety appears on the behavioral reactions of individuals. As such, it is grasped through individuals’ behaviors, speech, and recursion to their surrounding environment. On the other hand, paranoia is limited to the individuals’ feelings. That is, paranoid individuals develop suspicious feelings of other individuals; and these feelings could be truth or false. Ifemelu believes that men are always dangerous because they are the source of women’s gender discrimination. She could not free herself from this feeling as she tries to cope with her new society; and she likes to utter this phrase: “the man could be very dangerous” (98). Adichie portrays Ifemelu’s paranoid feelings by accentuating her emotions and feelings rather than her behaviors. In contrast, she depicts Ifemelu’s anxious reactions through her domestic role as a woman. To clarify, women play a subordinate role in their society where they do not have any opportunity to improve themselves. They are limited in the peripheries and not fairly treated “as equal as men in their societies” (74). In this way, women are subordinate to men; and they become victims of gender discrimination in many

ways of their lives. Ifemelu, therefore, incarnates this reality; and Adichie perceives it in the light of gender discrimination as the main source of Ifemelu's psychic anxiety.

4. Conclusion:

This study examined the intersection between gender and the physic aspects of anxiety in Adichie's *Americanah* (2013). It discusses the gender and psychic peculiarities of the novel. On the one hand, it demonstrated how Adichie utilized her characters in order to show how they treat and perceive each other on the grounds of gender factors. On the other hand, it examined the psychic conditions of the female protagonist who is prone to psychological agitation caused by gender discrimination and bias which are decisive factors of shaping her personality. Therefore, the study's originality lies in its discussion of both gender and psychological aspects of the novel. In this sense, it revealed Adichie's dual treatment of her social and cultural circumstances in fictional narrative reflecting the spirit of the age.

The study, consequently, has three interrelated findings. First, it concentrated on gender as the core notion of the analysis. In essence, the bulk of previous researches shed light on the racial and ethnic attributes of the novels, while the current study accentuated gender issue because Adichie is a great feminist; and she deliberately projects her insights regarding the position of women in the course of her narrative events. Being so, the study of gender is or paramount importance since it integrates both the authorial and fictional features of the relationship between men and women. Second, the study approached the psychological aspects of the novel by looking into the concept of anxiety via scrutinizing the disposition of the female protagonist, Ifemelu.

That is, it employed the concept of anxiety to examine the female protagonist's gradual development of psychic anxiety due to her negative social surroundings. The study of gender and anxiety formulate this study's third findings i.e., gender discrimination is the latent stimuli of psychic anxiety. By exploring gender as the cause of the female protagonist's anxiety, the study paves the way for analyzing the selected novel from different critical perspectives. For example, feminist could be applied as the main conceptual framework by supporting it with Adichie's feminist arguments. Moreover, it could be studied by interpreting the ethnic qualities of the major characters that suffer from deprivation and marginalization.

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