

Women as Subalterns: An Analysis of Khaled Hosseini's Novel *The Kite Runner*

Surendra Prasad Ghimire

surendra.ghimire7@gmail.com

Department of English Studies, Nepal Open University, NEPAL

Abstract

This research article reports how Hosseini's novel The Kite Runner depicted subaltern women characters and their consciousness regarding the injustices imposed on them. There have been a limited number of female characters in the novel, albeit they have been enough to explore the ground reality of their contemporary time. This study utilized subaltern theories, particularly those developed by Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, to explore the depiction and consciousness of subaltern women characters in the novel. The findings of this article reveal that the majority of the women characters were victimized and ignored in society because of their socio-cultural stereotypes and national and international intervention in their lives. As a result, they were deprived of the opportunity to follow their passions and make their own decisions, not only in their society but also within their families. This study further shows how social, cultural, and religious milieus became responsible for making them invisible and unheard in their own society. In addition, this study sheds light on how patriarchal ideology became an indispensable component of women's marginalization by restricting their voices, freedom, and social mobility. However, the majority of the female characters developed their consciousness about injustices against them and resisted such injustices by breaching long-established social and religious norms and values in their society. In a broader sense, this study will have important significance in unfolding subaltern women's ground reality in further study.

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Introduction

Khaled Hosseini, an Afghan-American author, published his debut novel, *The Kite Runner*, in 2003, which became successful by

drawing the scholarly attention of readers, particularly Americans, and exposing the political and social ground realities of Afghan society (Aubry, 2020). Apart from this, it was translated into more than forty-two different

languages and widely welcomed and read almost all over the world (Matta, 2019). In addition, it became successful in attracting the attention of a larger number of readers by exposing the social, historical, and political ground realities of Afghanistan, setting itself in the background of the Soviet attack on Afghanistan and the rise of the Taliban to fight against the Russian invasion over there (Matta, 2019). Due to these conflicts, a larger number of refugees from Afghanistan were going to Pakistan and the U.S. Moreover, the novel *The Kite Runner* uncovered the devastating ethnographic history and culture of Afghanistan to the rest of the world with the support of the story of Amir and Hassan. Amir belonged to the Pashtun ethnic group and Sunni Muslim, whereas Hassan belonged to the Hazara ethnic minority and Shi'a Muslim. Hazaras were thought to have come from Mongolia, and Pashtuns believed that Hazaras were "mice-eating, flat-nosed, load-carrying donkeys" (K. Hosseini, 2003, p. 9). This reflected that Hazaras were not even considered human beings and were forced to exist being ignored in society. In contrast to them, Pashtuns believed that they were the true citizens of Afghanistan, remaining at the center of political and economic power. In addition, by focusing on the social, political, and historical facts of Afghanistan in a fictional form, the novel unveiled the bitter reality of the victimization and exploitation of women and its prolonged impact on them.

This study aims to explore the answers to how subaltern women were depicted and developed their consciousness about injustices against them in Hosseini's novel *The Kite Runner*. I argued that the novel *The Kite Runner* uncovered the multiple layers of exploitation and injustices against women created by the patriarchal, social, and cultural norms and values of their society. Moreover, they were marginalized and exploited by imposing social and religious norms and values on them; consequently, not only they became voiceless and invisible in their own society, but also they were treated as subhuman beings. On top of that, women belonging to high economic standards, educated, and living in a developed country were not exceptional cases of such exploitation and injustice. However, remaining in such a

situation, the majority of female characters developed their consciousness of injustices against them; as a result, they attempted to challenge them by breaching long-established norms and values of their society; thereby, this novel depicted the subaltern women and their consciousness toward injustices against them and their revolt against such injustices. Thus, the primary objective of this study is to interpret and analyze the novel to discover how subaltern women were depicted and developed their consciousness about injustices against them. This study has great significance in two ways: it exposed subaltern women's ground reality as depicted in the novel, and it also established the foundation for further exploration related to subaltern women.

Several studies on *The Kite Runner* depicted the social reality of Afghanistan, focusing on various social issues such as the atrocities of war, interpersonal relationships, and human identity, just to name a few. For instance, the study by Jefferess (2009) claimed that *The Kite Runner* allegorically depicted the ethical and political ground reality of Afghanistan by exposing contested issues of human identities and responsibilities against the backdrop of a complicated globalized world. Moreover, in his recent study, Chen (2020) explored the novel, emphasizing the symbolic meaning of the 'Kite' which symbolized personal, social, and interpersonal relationships among the people. However, the study by Gupta (2020), utilizing the feminist perspective, claimed that *The Kite Runner* revealed the reality that patriarchal society suppressed women by limiting their role in society. In contrast to this, Ranju (2022) argued that the novel *The Kite Runner* reflected the lives of both affluent and fashionable people and suppressed and underprivileged people in Afghanistan by exhibiting the vivid roles of the major characters Amir and Hassan in the novel. However, by focusing on the psychological aspects, Dayekh (2020) argued that this novel exposed the atrocities of the war and its prolonged impact on the citizens of Afghanistan, even those who were not directly involved in the war zone. Afghanistan was captured and ruled by Russia before the Taliban captured it. In this context, America created an intervention in the politics of

Afghanistan. The perspective of the Russian and American governments toward Afghanistan was racist in the sense that they categorized the majority of Afghani people as terrorists, Muslim fundamentalists, and backward etcetera. Moreover, the previous study by Algoo-Baksh (2005) reflected that the ethnic conflict between Pashtuns and Hazaras in the novel mirrored the social, political, and religious complicities of Afghanistan. Furthermore, O'Brien (2018), adopting the traumatic perspective, argued that *The Kite Runner* depicted the narrator's personal and social trauma, which was formed by being reluctant to protect his ever-supporting friend, Hassan, from being raped. However, focusing on the psychological perspective, Kai-fu (2019) argued that the novel showed the journey of Amir's maturity by undergoing various psychological and emotional stages in his overall life. Furthermore, Yuan-Yuan (2018) explored the novel from an ethical perspective and claimed that Amir's deformed family environment was the underpinning of the tragic situation in his life. However, the study by Saeed (2015), adopting the socio-cognitive approach to critical discourse analysis, explored the impact of adult discursive language on children's identity formation and the overall development of their consciousness. In contrast to this, the recent study by Sheoran (2022) claimed that the novel *The Kite Runner* not only uncovered the struggle to adjust to the host land, i.e., the U.S., but also unveiled the heart-rendering experiences of being displaced and ignored over there.

In addition, numerous studies were conducted on *The Kite Runner*, which reflected various themes related to ethnic relations, such as the ethnic conflict between Pashtuns and Hazaras, religious conflict between Shi'a and Sunni Muslims, and exploitation of Hazaras, just to name a few. For instance, A. S. Hosseini and Zohdi (2016) argued that *The Kite Runner* exposed racism as a major cause of social injustices in Afghanistan, which promoted the ethnic conflict between Pashtun and Hazara. However, adopting the method of critical discourse analysis, the previous study of M. Malik, Murtaza, and Shah (2014) explored the novel, focusing on power relations between the Pashtun and the Hazara,

where the minority Hazaras were discriminated against, exploited, and oppressed by the majority of Pashtuns.

In addition, the study by Raza (2016), focusing on the children's characters, argued that the novel *The Kite Runner* reflected the displacement of ethnic imageries in the urban context of Kabul. Furthermore, a study by Khan and Qureshi (2019), adopting the critical discourse analysis method, argued that the novel *The Kite Runner* revealed the ethicist mindset of extremist Taliban (e.g. Pashtuns), which severely victimized the group of Hazaras by exploiting and marginalizing them. Moreover, analyzing the novel from the Marxist perspective, the study of Rubiyanto, Eko, and Arini (2016) claimed that ethnic conflict in Afghanistan was mainly caused by social class differences, where Pashtuns were the upper class and the dominant group and Hazaras were the lower class and the suppressed group.

Moreover, Rohmatullah and Permatasari (2021) in their recent study argued that ethnocentrism has been reflected in the novel *The Kite Runner* by emphasizing particularly one ethnic group, the Pashtun, and ignoring and suppressing the Hazara minority ethnic group by discriminating against, and depriving them of fundamental rights and imposing their own parameters to judge them. Furthermore, the previous study by Sarma (2015) reflected that the novel depicted the hegemonic position of masculinity and a single ethnic group, i.e., Pashtun, which allowed for the perpetuation of exploitation and injustices, particularly against women and Hazaras. However, utilizing the method of critical discourse analysis, the previous study of M. A. Malik, Shah, and Mahmood (2013) depicted that the author manipulated the linguistic devices such as the use of first-person narration, back grounding, foregrounding, metaphor, word level, and presupposition, just to name a few, to establish the issue of ethnicity.

In addition, a recent study by Prasanna and David (2020) exploring Afghan historical facts claimed that the novel *The Kite Runner* unveiled the consequences of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, ethnic rivalry between Pashtuns and Hazaras, and the

mistreatment of the Taliban over Hazaras. Furthermore, in their recent study, Sejuti and Biswas (2022) argued that the novel *The Kite Runner* reflected the political and ethnic conflict in Afghanistan and its prolonged consequences in the minds of Afghani people. However, the study by Shah, Ahmed, Munir, and ud Din (2021) claimed the novel *The Kite Runner* uncovered the ethnic power relationship between Pashtuns and Hazaras by exposing Hazaras were more imaginative, loyal, and humane in nature than Pashtuns.

The above literature reflected that the novel *The Kite Runner* was explored by focusing on the social, political, religious, historical, and psychological aspects. In addition, some of the studies discussed above argued that the novel showed the changing lifestyles of migrant people, particularly those living in America. However, the study of subaltern women in the novel has almost been ignored. In the novel, almost all the female characters were marginalized, subjugated, and categorized as others. Additionally, women were made invisible and voiceless within their own houses and in their society. Although Hosseini provided very limited space for female characters in his novel, he left ample room and evidence to navigate the basic reality of women in Afghanistan. Therefore, this study aims to explore the novel from the subaltern perspective to investigate how subaltern women were depicted and developed their consciousness toward injustices against them with the support of subaltern theories, particularly Guha's concept of historiography and Spivak's notion of the gendered subaltern.

Methodology

This article is based on a qualitative interpretative research design, and Hosseini's novel *The Kite Runner* was purposefully selected as the primary text of this study. The secondary data were collected from journal articles, theses, theoretical books, and reading other associated materials. This study primarily employed Spivak's concept of gendered subaltern and Guha's ideas of historiography to explore how subaltern women were depicted in the novel and developed their consciousness of injustices against them.

The subaltern perspective emphasized the study from the margin, focusing on culture, history, race, class, gender, and etcetera. Moreover, Guha (1982), focusing on the South Asian context, defined subaltern as suppressed and ignored people from various perspectives such as gender, class, caste, age, and rank, just to name a few. His remarks utterly revealed that subaltern studies shed light on ignored and marginalized people in society. In addition, he developed the concept of historiography, which, unlike the traditional concept of historiography, focused on the hidden and unexplored small voices of marginalized people. Guha (1996) claimed that the traditional strategy of historiography ignored the mini-narratives of subordinated people, which made them invisible and unheard. Unlike traditional historiography, Guha's notion of historiography focused on the voices of suppressed and ignored subaltern people. His idea of incorporating mini-narratives from both fictional and non-fictional expressions for understanding subaltern people's hidden and unexplored reality assisted me to explore the mini-narratives and small voices of exploited subaltern women as depicted in the novel.

Moreover, Spivak emphasized the role of gender in the study of subaltern women. She claimed that traditional patriarchal ideology made women subaltern by limiting their social mobility, controlling their voices, and imposing various norms and values on them. She stated that "The subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in the shadow" (Spivak, 2015, p. 45). This indicates that gender roles remain one of the responsible factors for women's victimization and marginalization. Subaltern women's power to make autonomous decisions was seized by patriarchal norms and values. In addition, Spivak defined subaltern consciousness as "consciousness here is not consciousness in general but a historicized political species; therefore, subaltern consciousness" (Ranajit & Spivak, 1988, p. 30). Her notion about subaltern consciousness indicates subaltern people's awareness about historical changes, race, and gender, as well as their awareness of various kinds of exploitation and victimization

against them. Her concept of gendered subaltern and subaltern consciousness assisted me in exploring how women characters were suppressed and victimized due to patriarchal stereotypical gender roles, and such exploited characters developed their consciousness of injustices against them in the novel. Thus, utilizing Guha's notion of historiography and Spivak's concept of gendered subaltern helped to analyze the depiction of subaltern women in the novel and their consciousness of injustices against them.

Results and Discussion

This section of this research article explored the novel *The Kite Runner* to find the answers to the research questions, such as how the subaltern women were depicted in the novel and how they developed their consciousness about injustices against them. Furthermore, the notion of a gendered subaltern developed by Spivak and the concept of historiography discussed by Guha provided a theoretical perspective for analyzing the novel.

Women as Subalterns in The Kite Runner

Hosseini's novel *The Kite Runner* unfolded the story of Amir, the son of a wealthy man from Kabul, Afghanistan, and his relations with Hassan, the son of the servant of his father. Focusing on the story of Amir and Hassan, the story left very little room for female characters and further narrated the story of exploitation, marginalization, and victimization of women characters due to patriarchal norms, cultural, and political conditions in Afghanistan. Spivak argued that women were subjugated in a patriarchal society with the support of ideology (Morris, 2010). Such ideology in a male-dominated society was exercised to make women docile and submissive; as a result, women would be marginalized, exploited, and ignored in society. In addition, women would be invisible and voiceless within their houses and, in a broader sense, in their communities. In the same way, as discussed above, the novel *The Kite Runner* exhibited the devastating ground reality of the exploitation and marginalization of women

characters with the support of patriarchal ideology. In the novel, women were made voiceless; thereby, they could not speak, and if they did, their voices were regarded as insignificant and ignored. The majority of the women characters in the novel were not autonomous in making their own decisions. According to Spivak, such women have been known as subaltern women. Furthermore, this novel was set in a male-dominated Afghan society where the male was the principal earner and the majority of women would be at home. As a result, the majority of them would be confined within a limited space, which, finally, restricted them from being independent and perusing the passion of their lives.

Although female characters in the novel were suppressed and marginalized, they developed consciousness about the injustices against them. As Spivak argued, subaltern consciousness indicated subaltern people's awareness about historical changes, race, and gender, as well as awareness about various types of exploitation against them (Ranajit & Spivak, 1988). Here, almost in her lines, the majority of women characters transformed themselves after their exploitation and marginalization. Thus, subaltern consciousness provided ample strength to construct their own space to be independent and autonomous for subaltern characters by rejecting male-constructed ideology. As a result, they attempted to reject such injustices by breaching long-established social and religious norms and values. Unlike traditional submissive and docile women, the majority of them questioned and then challenged the social, political, and religious boundaries established around them. For instance, Sanaubar, after facing tremendous injustices for a long time, realized that she should follow her own passion by ignoring the social restrictions created by patriarchal ideology. She became sure that being the wife of Ali, who was nineteen years older than her and physically deformed by polio, she could not get any freedom in her life. Therefore, she determined to break the marital relationship with her husband, Ali, by remarrying someone who understood her. Amir narrated:

Hassan's mother, Sanaubar, gave birth to him one cold winter day in 1964. While my mother hemorrhaged to death during childbirth, Hassan lost his less than a week after he was born. Lost her to a fate most Afghans considered far worse than death: She ran off with a clan of traveling singers and dancers (K. Hosseini, 2003, p. 6).

These Amir's remarks reflected that Sanaubar had a passion to be a singer and a dancer, albeit she was deprived of them by her husband; consequently, she was forced to select another option of marrying somebody who understood her. Similarly, these remarks further indicated that she had a consciousness of being exploited; as a result, she loved her own passion and personal freedom instead of selecting her newly born baby and her husband. Therefore, after giving birth to Hassan, she left him and eloped. Furthermore, she was victimized by layers of injustice. Consequently, she was deprived of the freedom of her life. In addition, after being exploited by such injustices, she was transformed into a bold and decisive woman to take her own decision. As it was narrated in the story:

Like Ali, she was a Shi'a Muslim and an ethnic Hazara. She was also his first cousin and therefore a natural choice for a spouse. But beyond those similarities, Ali and Sanaubar had little in common, least of all their respective appearances (K. Hosseini, 2003, p. 7).

These remarks indeed reflected how women were confined and compelled to perpetuate traditional social and religious norms and values in their society. Likewise, Spivak claimed that subalterns are people living in inferior conditions in their society because of various reasons such as race, age, gender, and so on (Riach, 2017). As Spivak claimed above, Sanaubar belonged to the Shi'a Muslim, ethnic Hazara, further as a woman and lower economic class, and was victimized by tribal, gender, and economic inequalities. More importantly, she was restricted even to selecting her husband and, consequently, had to marry someone with whom nothing matched at all. Although she struggled to obtain freedom in her life by eloping with

someone whom she liked, in the last part of the story, she was found in a miserable condition alone, without her husband. Ultimately, she arrived together with her son, daughter-in-law, and grandson. As Amir narrated, "Hassan and Farzana nursed her back to health. They fed her and washed her clothes. [...] As far as I know, he never asked where she had been or why she had left, and she never told" (K. Hosseini, 2003, p. 195). His remarks reflected that she was entrapped by patriarchal social practices, and as a result, she had to face tremendous challenges. Guha (1996) argued that the traditional strategy of historiography ignored the small voices of the common people. Their voices were unheard by those who had power; consequently, subaltern people had many unexplored histories, and in the same way, her life remained unexplored. These remarks further indicated how women were made insignificant in society by restricting their freedom. Nevertheless, she rebelled against injustices and lived her own way of life.

Although Soraya Taheri was an educated woman living in the US, she was victimized by the various layers of injustice. In addition, she was subjugated by patriarchal ideology and prevented from pursuing her passion. As an illustration, she narrated, "I want to be a teacher [...] I've always wanted to. When we lived in Virginia, I became ESL certified, and now I teach at the public library one night a week" (K. Hosseini, 2003, p. 139). Her remarks clearly stated that she was obsessed with being a teacher. However, she further narrated, "My father wants me to go to law school, my mother's always throwing hints about medical school, but I'm going to be a teacher. Doesn't pay much here but it's what I want" (K. Hosseini, 2003, p. 140). Her remarks clearly indicated how women were victimized by a patriarchal society and how their passion and creativity would be restricted. As Spivak argued that subaltern as a whole related to the gendered subjects (Guha, 1987), in the case of Soraya, an almost similar situation occurred: her voice was deliberately made insignificant and unheard, simply because she was female. Nevertheless, she did not surrender but rather exhibited her courage to revolt against injustices. She had a rebellious nature against injustices against her from the beginning. For

instance, she had a passion to be a singer, albeit she was not allowed to be. As a result, she rebelled and left her family to join a band of singers and dancers. Because of a male-dominated society, indeed, she had to suffer tremendously. However, such challenges did not perplex her; rather, they assisted her to overcome the problem by accumulating consciousness about her space. As a result, she disclosed to Amir all the bitter incidents that happened before marriage. She narrated, "I want to tell you something. Something you have to know before [...] I don't care what it is. You need to know. I don't want us to start with secrets. And I'd rather you hear it from me" (K. Hosseini, 2003, pp. 150-151). Her remarks reflected that she had the courage to share even unfavorable events before marriage with her would be husband and did not have any fear of the consequences of her such remarks. She was not a docile, submissive woman who surrendered to a male-dominated society.

Furthermore, she was indeed entangled by tremendous obstacles and underwent psychological pain after getting married. For instance, she could not become a mother for 15 years after marriage; consequently, she was being criticized as it was solely her fault. It was narrated as, "When the tests were over, he explained that he couldn't explain why we couldn't have kids. And, apparently, that wasn't so unusual. It was called unexplained infertility" (K. Hosseini, 2003, p. 170). Then they started her treatment further; however, she could not be successful to be a mother. As a result, they selected the option of adoption. Consequently, this added to her feeling of inferiority, as a patriarchal society would only value blood relations. She was restricted from articulating her feelings about not becoming a mother by silencing her with the support of patriarchal ideology. Although she was an educated modern woman living in an advanced urban city in the USA, she perpetuated patriarchal norms and values, which heightened her psychological pain.

Moreover, Jamila Taheri, the mother of Soraya, was a famous singer in Kabul before her marriage. However, she was compelled to promise not to participate in the public singing program with her husband. She was confined within her house, albeit she was living in an

advanced country in the US. More importantly, she concurred and perpetuated the patriarchal ideology of being submissive. Amir narrated, "She never sing in public had been one of the general's conditions when they had married. Soraya told me that her mother had wanted to sing at our wedding, only one song, but the general gave her one of the looks, and the matter was buried" (K. Hosseini, 2003, p. 163). This extract unraveled how patriarchal society dominated women and suppressed their passion and desire. These findings, to some extent, aligned with the study of Gupta (2020), which reported that one of the reasons for women's exploitation in the novel *The Kite Runner* was a patriarchal society.

Although Sofia Akrami, the mother of Amir, was highly educated and belonged to an aristocratic family, she was under the shadow of her husband. More importantly, she was addressed as "my princess" by her husband. She was supposed as property of her husband; consequently, she lost her identity. Finally, she died after giving birth to Amir. However, her brief life was enough to navigate the ground reality of her life. Likewise, Tanya, the mother of Assef, was dominated and exploited by patriarchal ideology. She was being criticized for not behaving as patriarchal society expected her to, as she had the habit of "smiled and blinked a lot" (K. Hosseini, 2003, p. 89). She was "a small, nervous woman" (K. Hosseini, 2003, p. 89). She was considered a puppet; as a result, she did not have the freedom to live her own way of life. This reflected how women were suppressed and oppressed in a male-dominated society.

Moreover, Farzana, the wife of Hassan, was not exceptional in terms of exploitation and male domination. As she belonged to the Hazara ethnic community, she had to face layers of injustice. Similarly, she was docile and submissive by nature. She was narrated, "She was a shy woman, so courteous she spoke in a voice barely higher than a whisper, and she would not raise her pretty hazel eyes to meet my gaze" (K. Hosseini, 2003, p. 190). As a woman, she was disciplined in such a way that she could not directly look at her husband, i.e., Hassan, with the support of patriarchal ideology. This extract revealed the reality that women who belonged to the minority

community had to face various kinds of injustices in comparison to those who remained in a privileged community. For instance, Hassan narrated:

I accompanied Farzana Jan to the bazaar to buy some potatoes and naan. She asked the vendor how much the potatoes cost, but he did not hear her, I think he had a deaf ear. So she asked louder and suddenly a young Talib ran over and hit her on the thighs with his wooden stick. He struck her so hard she fell down. He was screaming at her and cursing and saying the Ministry of Vice and Virtue does not allow women to speak loudly (K. Hosseini, 2003, p. 200).

This extract indicates how women were victimized and suppressed by supposing them as inferior to males; they were restricted from speaking louder. The society was deaf enough to listen to them and considered their voices to be insignificant; consequently, they deliberately remained unexplored. As Guha (1997) argued, traditional recursive history ignored subaltern people's mini-narratives, and he claimed that discursive, critical historiography valued the small voices and mini-narratives of subaltern people. Likewise, the above extract reveals the controlled and ignored voices of women and shows an example of how women, as subalterns, were victimized in the public space. Furthermore, Farzana, the wife of Hassan, was killed by the Taliban. She was killed as she was protecting her husband from the Taliban's attack. It was narrated, "Farzana came screaming and attacked them [...] shot her too. Self-defense, they claimed later" (K. Hosseini, 2003, pp. 202-203). The above remarks indicate that women were not only victimized by patriarchal ideology in their homes and public places but also oppressed by the policies of the state, political intervention, and war as well. This finding to some extent parallels the study of Dayekh (2020), which reported that the novel *The Kite Runner* exposed the atrocities of the war and its prolonged impact on the citizens of Afghanistan.

Conclusion

The above discussion identified that Hosseini's novel *The Kite Runner* depicted

subaltern women who were victimized and suppressed by multiple layers of injustices created by social, economic, political, and religious values. They were marginalized and ignored by patriarchal ideology and also they belonged to ethnic and religious minorities. In addition, women were brutally victimized by the Russian and American political interventions in Afghanistan and by the rule of the Taliban. Moreover, not only women's freedom was obstructed, but also their lives were not secured in public places or even at home. The majority of women characters were submissive and docile, and various layers of injustice were imposed on them, which made them voiceless and invisible. As a result, women remained unexplored and became a marginal group in society. This study further unpacked the bitter social reality as the women characters belonging to educated, wealthy, and urban families were also directly and indirectly suppressed and victimized by a patriarchal ideology that kept them under their shadow. However, after being suppressed and exploited by layers of injustice, the majority of the women developed consciousness about the injustices against them. After understanding how they were being exploited and ignored, the majority of them rebelled against such injustices by breaching long-standing social, political, and religious norms and values.

However, this study has some limitations as it explores the depiction of subaltern women and their consciousness related to injustices against them by utilizing Guha's concept of historiography and Spivak's notion of gendered subaltern. Thus, it ignores the subalternity of male characters in the novel. Furthermore, the findings of this study have been based on the limited number of characters involved in the novel, so they cannot be generalized for understanding the subaltern women's condition in contemporary times. However, this study can be the foundation for further exploration of women's subalternity in the novel.

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