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Struggle and Identity Crisis of the Migrated Women in Selected American Novels

A B S T R A C T

With three featured novels as a primary focus, this study investigates issues of gender conflict and identity crisis among migrant women. *The Jungle* (1904) by Upton Sinclair, *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin, *Pocho* (1959) by Jose Antonio Villarreal are among the novels to be studied. The problem and role of women has been neglected. Previous research on women's migration has focused on struggle and identity crises, resulting in a wide body of literature that can be used to better understand the issue. The following study elucidates that the unhealthy and inappropriate treatment to migrant women contributes to the continued victimization of these women. The scope of this research can be identified by STANDPOINT THEORY. This theory is adopted to analyze the domain of struggle and identity crisis of migration women. This analysis looks at a few of the American novels about women immigration and their struggle and identity crisis.

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الصراع وأزمة الهوية للنساء المهاجرات في روايات أمريكية مختارة

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الخلاصة:

بوجود ثلاث روايات مميزة كمحور تركيز أساسي ، تبحث هذه الدراسة في قضايا صراع الجنس والهوية بين النساء المهاجرات. الأدغال (١٩٠٤) لأبتون سنكلير ، الصحوة لكيت شوبان ، بوتشو (١٩٥٩) لخوسيه أنطونيو فياريال هي من بين الروايات التي ستم دراستها. لقد تم إهمال مشكلة ودور

المرأة. ركزت الأبحاث السابقة حول هجرة النساء على أزمات النضال والهوية ، مما أدى إلى ظهور مجموعة واسعة من المؤلفات التي يمكن استخدامها لفهم القضية بشكل أفضل. توضح الدراسة التالية أن المعاملة غير الصحية وغير الملائمة للمهاجرات تساهم في استمرار إيذاء هؤلاء النساء. يمكن تحديد مجال هذا البحث من خلال نظرية وجهة النظر. سيتم تبني هذه النظرية لتحليل مجال النضال وأزمة الهوية للنساء المهاجرات. سيبحث هذا التحليل فقط في عدد قليل من الروايات الأمريكية عن هجرة النساء ونضالهن وأزمة هوية

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the research of women migrants' struggles and identity crises has taken an in-depth literary approach. Many novels have portrayed the struggles that women and their families face as refugees (Bolin & Kantawala, 2017). The aim of the study is to look into these central themes: struggle and identity among migrant women in three novels. Numerous works by several authors will be employed in the course of the study include *The Jungle* (1904) by Upton Sinclair, *The Awakening* by Kevin Chopin, and *The Pocho* (1959) by Jose Antonio Villarreal. The main issues of struggle and identity crisis studies among women migrants will be the integration of selected American novels as well as the focus. Secondly, a conceptual and theoretical framework will be established. The theory of standpoint is the theory of study focus. Three aspects of theory are discussed and synthesized in the novel. The aspects are the social knowledge situation, the exposure of marginalized groups in the context of marginalized situations and, finally, the effect of powers' relations of exploration of the lives of marginalized migrant women, linking views with the novels.

1.1 Background of the Study

The word 'migration' means people, with or without their families, who move from one place to another with the goal that they settle temporarily or permanently in a new location. Women migrants to other countries or residential areas with the intention of settled or temporary or permanent residence include the issue of female migration (Bolin & Kantawala, 2017). The husband may be with or without

the children in the family or vice versa. In some cases, a married woman may start a new family through immigration. Participation of women in family migration cannot be overemphasized. In almost all the time more specifically, when considering women as a gender, social challenges and the politics of migration pertain more to women. (Watson et al., 2016).

Many facets of women's migration have been exposed through literature and autobiography. Several studies have shown that the transition process is not only complicated for women, but also highly traumatic for them. For example Bolin & Kantawala (2017) state that women are often subjected to abuse and widespread sexism, they are more vulnerable to it. According to Kumar (2021), racism, patriarchy, and restricted acceptance in new cultures, as well as struggles against religion and gender identity, are major themes in political studies of women's migration.

Over the years, issues of migration, women have become increasingly involved. migrant women have used literature to aid in their efforts to challenge the status quo that has always maligned women When the skilled writers handle an issue, it calls attention to persuasion as seen in other high-profile writing (Williams, 2017). They are persistent even when the odds are stacked against them, by demonstrating the strength of traditional gender roles. As early as the 1800s, there have been many feminist movements fighting for equality and against oppression. Patriarchy, racial, and gender biases permeate the migrant literature (Watson et al., 2016).

1.2 Research Objectives

- To focus on the themes addressed in migration literature on struggle and women's identity
- To look at how marginalized groups are subjected to migration issues in relation to non-marginalized groups.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Standpoint theory has been used to examine gender equality issues from a feminist viewpoint. The focus of many gender studies has been on inequalities and stereotypes in society, mainly because women are more susceptible to them (Harding, 2013). The theory states that women as well as many others belong to marginalized groups. They must fend for themselves, with little help from the

social systems in place. Anecdotes are told from the viewpoint of where things are observed, and they take a naturalistic approach to life experience. (Espin, 2017). Those who believe in this theory believe that life stories are the best way of understanding their meanings in today's society. It seeks to construct information structures by showing how women have been oppressed and influenced by social forces. According to feminist theory, these women face a slew of issues as a result of migration, with gender playing a part. This is supported by the presence of several migratory women's memoirs. (Botwinick, 2016).

There are three important aspects of the Standpoint Principle that should be investigated while researching its theoretical structure. To begin, information must be socially situated (Williams et al., 2018). Knowledge means being conscious of and acknowledging a social issue in the sense of society (Botwinick, 2016). According to Standpoint Theory, awareness is a strong source of empowerment for women. Women are economically marginalized because of a lack of education (Bolin, Paul & Kantawala, 2017). The actions of that character in the selected book, *The Jungle* (1904) by Upton Sinclair, portray a lack of knowledge and empowerment, which holds them at a disadvantage. Jurgis' wife, like many other migrant women, is at ease working in the decrepit meat industry. Furthermore, they live in slums and struggle to make ends meet. It is clear that migrant women in such a society lack awareness about their health, which is a source of empowerment. They should advocate for their rights as workers in order to achieve emancipation. It is clear that society withholds information from oppressed people, leading them to believe that they cannot survive without assistance (Hirschmarm, 2018). According to the book, key problems such as social oppression and health disparities among women migrants are exacerbated by society's hidden information situation. Upton has expertly depicted the true social dialogue in today's society by drawing on the real-life experiences of migrant women (Harding, 2013).

In his analysis of Jose Antonio Villarreal's *The Pocho* (1959), the author tells the story of Richard Rubio, who was born to Mexican parents. To make a living, the Mexican family chooses to work on a farm for many years. They later decide to move to Santa Clara in the hopes of finding greener pastures. Migrant women married to native Spanish men are abused by their husbands in the book. The majority of the women are traditional housewives who are not permitted to seek schooling or formal employment in order to improve their lives. Usually, a Villarreal novel portrays the oppressive circumstances that women face when they move to a new city. Chopin's book, too, is about a suppressed journey of

awakening. According to Standpoint theory, there are certain social constructs that build an obstacle to women acquiring information in society.

Second, there is the idea that life writing has identified actual female oppression. In terms of status, women migrants are an oppressed community, and because of this, they are at a particular disadvantage. Lack of social support, lack of mechanisms, government-unprotected laws result in an inclination to trouble (Bolin, Paul & Kantawala, 2017). On the other hand, as a result, organizations such as the women's liberation front appear to promote the message of women's equality and the achievements of disadvantaged groups. For the past 3,000 years, women and women have had been subordinate to men and men in the three canonical books, preventing them from advancing significantly. You must deal with the root cause of the problem before devising a long-term solution (Botwinick, Howard, 2016). According to the Standpoint Theory, setting up an information network at the societal level and identifying women as the disenfranchised are critical to the concerns they face. can be said to be a powerful tool for disseminating knowledge and using which helps empower women, can be used to educate the public on narrative strategies and inspire women to improve their rights (Hirschmarm, 2018). marginalised women's desired change As a result of these life stories and empowerment in literature, women's literature, there have been victories and expansions in women's rights and advantages (Harding, 2013). Due to this, it, these disadvantaged female migrants are better able to recognize and address their problems, thus promoting resolution of the latter.

Thirdly, the understanding of social differences among marginalized and non-marginalized persons depends on the impact of the dynamics of power. Every society is divided into classes, most of which are based on income. Income levels can be affected by a number of factors, including race, ethnicity, and gender. In migrant countries, women and their families struggle to make ends meet due to low wages (Watson et al., 2018). They are unable to support themselves and are forced to provide low-cost labour to employers who are constantly gaining wealth and power. Gender stereotypes about job opportunities are widening the gap between migrant and native women, as well as between men and women (Meraj, 2015). The economy is under the rule of capitalists, who decide who climbs the unstable socioeconomic ladder. In the Jungle Book, migrant women and their families are subjected to harsh working conditions. They are exploited by those at the top of the socioeconomic ladder as the social class gap widens (Winslow, Sarah, and Shannon, 2016).

Power relations and conservation, according to Standpoint Theory, account for the perpetual migrant problems articulated in literature. *Pocho* and *Awakening* reveal the oppressive homemaker roles of the women and how chauvinist society promotes the social discourse (Hirschmarm, 2018). Gender-influenced power struggles also lead to conflict within communities, as well as families, and cause women to feel rejected by their own families. In the novel, character Leone does not help his struggling wife Edna because he believes she is too outgoing. The problem is comparable to that capitalists contend for influence without concern for the interests of others (Runyan, 2018). Women migrants and feminists have revealed a massive gap between oppressed and non-marginalized, which maintains the social dialogue on women migrants' and their families' problems (Williams et al., 2018).

3. METHODOLOGY

The three chosen novels serve to advance topics and discuss various aspects of the research. Based on its thematic links to the theme of a proposition on the fighting of migrants and crisis of identity. The study would link the problem to the actual facts of the novel and focus on key issues for women migrants in the fight and identity crisis. Secondly, a conceptual structural approach will be used to describe the definitions and main issues of the subject in order to explain the problem facing oppressed women migrants and their families.

The study is based on Standpoint theory. Women migrants are socially exposed to the obstacles they face, according to the theory's authors. Women's independence and rights to self-identity and fulfillment are denied by adverse social circumstances at home and in visiting countries. Standpoint Theory, according to Sandra Harding, examines the experiences that women have as a result of being subjected to social discourses such as gender inequality in the cultural structure (Espin, 2017). Many women have used life narratives to justify the problems they encounter solely because they are female. In order to boost their social standing, the theoretical approach also seeks solutions to the social challenges that these women face. In most life narratives, women migrants are portrayed as oppressed. In response to the picture, the theory claims that the overwhelming exposure is due to social conditions of hardship and lack of help (Folly, 2015). The research will explore the lives of migrant women by connecting

to ideas from the three novels chosen for the study, using various aspects of the theory.

4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The novels selected for this research study, represent the main issues that describe the issues that migrant women face. In *The Jungle* (1904) by Sinclair, a Native American author, immigrant labourers from the Windy City vividly illustrate the deplorable working conditions of major cities like Chicago. In the piece, the author describes the working conditions in the United States. In many cases, the immigrants are totally exploited and held in bondage by the meatpacking industry. As a result, women immigrants transport their families to the occupational health risk. The meat industry has subpar practices, with the employees receiving a low wage. These immigrants cum workers are forced to work in meat industry because they find huge employment opportunities in this industry. Jurgis Rudkus is the protagonist of the family lives in Chicago. Although life is challenging for them, they anticipate that moving to the location will provide freedom. As a result of Jurgis' imprisonment, the wife is left to take care of the children.

Kevin Chopin delves into the all women have on a journey of self-discovery in his novel, *The Awakening*. In other words, self-directedness causes serious friction with families, friends, and the one's self. The story of Edna Pontellier, who immigrates to New Orleans, follows Though her husband is present, Edna has a hard time raising children. Because of a couple of rejections, she decides to try something else. According to Edna believes that she is discriminated against due to her gender. To some extent, she puts herself in a position where she has to deal with men who exploit her. She's criticized by friends and family members who claim she has fallen out of touch with normal female stereotypes in the process of self-discovery. Chopin displays the rigidity of the patriarchy. The end of the story is that Edna never manages to wake up. She puts an end to the chauvinistic behaviors of her husband and struggles with the societal sexism she's up against, regardless of who she's with.

Chopin's novel is an outstanding portrayal of some of the problems that women face in today's society. Due to this, they have no control and guidance in their undertakings. Some life-writers claim that society has hindered women from reaching their full potential in certain areas. The effort to rise similarly brings

about the demise of both Edna in "The Awakening" and of Chopin. Many feminist theorists argue that social oppression has been the reason for the inability or absence of these marginalized women to flourish throughout history. People may begin to isolate and neglect women as they support others distance themselves. Because her husband is deployed, it is up to Edna to take care of the children on her own. In bidding for status, she loses her path (Forson, 2013). the two biggest challenges for migrant women are social oppression and powerlessness

Jose Antonio Villarreal's novel *The Pocho* (1959) tells the story of Richard Rubio, who was born in Mexico to Mexican parents. To make a living, the Mexican family chooses to work on a farm for many years. They later decide to move to Santa Clara in the hopes of finding greener pastures. Richard's mother, like many other women in the alien world, is affected. Richard's mother takes on the traditional role of housewife and farmer. The husband is so relaxed with the situation that he tells Richard's mother that this is what women are known for. She is unable to communicate with Spanish residents of her new neighborhood because she is a Mexican, which makes her even more discouraged. Richard's father agrees that Mexican migrants, especially women, are subjected to discrimination and cultural stereotypes. Migrant women married to native Spanish men are abused by their husbands in the book. The majority of the women are traditional housewives who are not permitted to seek schooling or formal employment in order to improve their lives. Usually, a Villarreal novel portrays the oppressive circumstances that women face when they move to a new city.

The main problems facing migrant women addressed in Jose Antonio Villarreal's *The Pocho* (1959) included domestic violence, racism, and cultural stereotypes. Many women have used life narrations to educate the public about the difficulties they face, according to feminist research. There is a high risk of domestic violence in partnerships between a migrant woman and a native woman. The studies argue that a favorable social climate promotes the vice of domestic violence. Women are viewed as traditional homemakers, just as they were in the Chicago storey. They are unable to work due to a lack of schooling and resources, leading their husbands to belittle them. Racism tends to restrict migrant women's opportunities in American society, according to Jaising (2018), as demonstrated by most migrant studies. Many patriarchal cultures favor women's oppression, which exacerbates the issues.

The literature review of this research study shows that there are many problems concerning the issues of women's migration, including the selected

novels and life stories. The bulk of the study focuses on women's life experiences, the influence of those experiences, and their status. The fact that they are women exposes them to a lot of abuse and racism. Issues of social oppression, racial discrimination, and the battle against religious identity, as well as restricted resources and difficulties with acceptance in new countries, are all discussed in the politics of women's migration. There are several topics that need to be addressed in the politics of women's migration, as shown by life narrations from life novels and autobiography studies (Orb, 2014). Folly (2015) reveals that there is indeed a problem when it comes to a novel and theoretical analysis of the lives of the fundamental issues in the experiences of migrant women. Firstly, women migrants are seen as profoundly marginalized and therefore more exposed to challenges than men. The marginalisation is exacerbating by gender standards and cultural perceptions. The social situation of perception is prejudicial to women, according to Standpoint Theory (Meraj, 2015). Feminists argue that women are probably being treated unfairly because they are accepted by society. In addition, any effort to change the status quo from the feminist approach is either suppressed or without the support required. The feminist approach therefore points to the sensitivity of identifying the root cause of the problem when we discuss key issues concerning women migrants. Women associate the lack of progress in empowerment and improving equality with the negative social climate and perception about the matter, as discussed in literature on fighting and identity crises (Orb, 2014). Tackling the negative will be central to resolving the issue of research.

The novels identify many critical problems which affect migrants in particular. The focus was, however, on women as the disadvantaged sex. There were obvious employment discrimination in all novels, issues of racism, religious and cultural stereotypes and health disparities (Orb, 2014). These problems have contributed significantly to women's social oppression. The victimized group feels racial discrimination is minor, and that psychologically affects them. They eventually have low self-esteem and a decline in daily roles and activities overall. As in the case of immigrants in some countries, a lack of structured support is likely to lead to emotional torture that affects their health and well-being. According to Hirschmarm (2018), people are probably negatively judged when migrating to countries with a limited religious subscription in relation to religious and cultural stereotypes. For example, Muslim women migrating to dominant Christian countries where people are unable to achieve religious freedom (Orb, 2014). Christians may be alienated from the fact that they have migrated to Islamic

States in another context. In the end, migrants live a stressful and well-being-affected life.

Health disparities were clearly an issue for most immigrants. The problem is compounded for women with special healthcare needs. Health disparity refers to disparities or variability in one's health status as a result of social demographics such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status, to name a few. Immigrant women are particularly vulnerable to health inequalities. (Folly, 2015). Second, they are likely to be viewed as outcasts, as feminists advocate. Second, low incomes and joblessness make it impossible to provide insurance or cash-based healthcare services. Discrimination in the workplace places a worker at a disadvantage. Simple needs such as lodging, food, water, and clothing will not be met. (Orb, 2014). According to personal accounts and narratives, women migrants who are unable to find jobs are forced to live in slums, work in unsafe environments, and are paid pitiful wages. For the disadvantaged, this has an effect on their intimate, family, and societal health.

According to feminists and proponents of gender equality, research has shown that there are sound policies that can salvage the situation. To begin with, there is a need for a clear focus on empowering women and everyone in society. (Saul, 2013). Women are strengthened when they are motivated by social issues education and jobs. (Folly, 2015). Society must empower individuals in order to help them meet their personal goals. As seen in feminist studies, empowering women while leaving the public domain would increase tension and resistance to change. Another suggestion is to make mandatory structured integration therapy for migrants, especially women, both before and after they leave their home countries (Hirschmarm, 2018). This helps them adjust and succeed in the long term. Strengthening immigration rights across countries is necessary to face the various forms of racial, cultural, and occupational inequality. The core of life-writing issues is to strive for amicable resolutions. (McDowell, 2015).

In order to achieve the aspects of nationhood, identity, and pluralism in the studies, it is essential to undertake geographically balanced studies. (Krummel 2015). The lives of migrant women have been under-studied in North America and the United Kingdom, leading to prejudice in literature. As immigration is growing, studies should focus on all these issues to undertake thorough research into women's migrant politics. Feminists, gender champions, research organizations and policymakers will cooperate crucially to solve the main problems affecting the investigative problem.

5. CONCLUSION

The migration dynamics in the struggle and identity crisis studies are essential to explore, understand and develop strong strategies to address major research-related issues. It will also provide an overview and a major effort to reduce research among these marginalized groups. Not only emotional appeal is made from the relevant novels and life stories, but the credibility of the study is also strengthened. Women have been working hard to change their social perceptions, both at home and in foreign countries. We should appreciate the efforts of women's movements by studying conflict, identity crises, the literature, campaigns on equality between men and women and revolutions. Studies show that women face more challenges, in contrast to other migrants. Key immigration studies cover racism, social oppression, sexual abuse, health disparities, gender stereotypes and employment discrimination. In order to address the key questions that surround the problems, the recommendations implicit in research should be accepted, adopted and incorporated into the working policies. Politicians, human rights organisations and governments will be helpful to resolve the social problem in the long term. In general, future research studies will bring facts into line with women's migration policy and create hybrid solutions to the problems of research.

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