

**An Analysis of Connell's Theory of Hegemonic Masculinity in *The Bull and She Devil* by Zaib Un Nissa Hamidullah**



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**Abstract:** *Hegemonic masculinity is a critical theory proposed by Raewyn Connell which analyses literary texts by according to toxic patriarchy and the supremacy of male dominance over female. Insulting a woman is counted in male honor. The present study is a Hegemonic Masculinity of The Bull and the She Devil (1958), a short story written by Zaibunnisa Hamidullah, a Well know Pakistani feminist writer, who made a best contribution in the early years of Pakistani English literature. Her father was the first person who translated Allah Iqbal poetry in Bengali. The story, taken from her collection of short stories titled The Young Wife and Other Stories (1958), deals with the suppression of female in a repressed patriarchal society. This analysis focus on why the man became toxic, first thing is male should be harsh and rigid for proving himself a man, the female should be consider as a puppet for him. In the story the Ghulam Qadir was too rude to Shirin. Even he had lots of doubt regarding his wife. In the start Amna put him in a square that Shirin will be his slave and he will be her master. He consider he as her property. The study concludes that the author through her deep work, simple yet, her writing style is able to effectively deal with a taboo subject without being too explicit.*

**Keywords:** Hegemonic, Masculinity, Bengali, femininity, transcendence

**Introduction**

According to Cheng's hegemonic masculinity, it is not about the sex of men; it is expressed and followed by women. They can proudly perform for them. They are the main reasons for and acceptors of hegemonic masculinity (Whitehead, 1999). Hegemonic masculinity was exposed as an ideology to understand the variety of power as a matter of male supremacy and value among genders for the variation of society. (Duncanson, 2015)

Connell claims that hegemonic masculinity hangs on the concept of gender and that it is constructed or made by society. Masculinity is performed by society under the idealised

constraints of being a 'Man'. It creates a hierarchy between a circle of men between male and female across different social groups and setups. It is encountered due to the formation of typical and ignorant masculinity. (1982)

Hegemonic masculinity stands for the fact that Mel has a higher ratio of crime scenes and violence compared to females. People deny their treasure with their cultural implementation of hegemonic masculinity. (Van Doom, 2021)

He demanded muscularity, which is a patriarchal system that has become the norm in society. People in society had been its believers, also obeyed it, and were followed by women to show that men are upper. (Rahmawati,2022)

Hegemonic masculinity is a term specifically used for the past more than three decades in a social setting that has facilitated the unequal relationship between masculinity and femininity among men and between men and women. It is not only formed by men but also by women to prove a woman as a puppet for men and to impose femininity and calmness on men in unequal relationships. (Connell, 1987)

The achievement of hegemonic masculinity is promoted and gained through digressive opinion and cultural transcendence. It is a concept that was revealed by legitimising the connection between subordination and super ordination. (Khitruk, 2022)

It is the ideology that has been found in the study of gender since the early 1980s that emphasises men's supremacy and authoritative position over women. (Jewkes,2015)

Hegemonic masculinity is the development formed by the people because of their guessing and hoping from men in society. It is controlling how much females are suppressed and bounded. (Suryadi,2023)

#### **About Author**

Zaib-un-Nisa Hamidullah is considered a pioneer of feminist literary studies in Pakistan. She highlighted and expressed the mental approach, the psychodilemma of the village-based young men and generation, and the emotional and repressive nature of female and male dominance in the community. (Hashim,2022)

She was the most famous female journalist in Pakistan. She writes columns as well, and her first published column was "Between Us: A weekly Feature for Women" during the 1940s and 1950s. It was published in Karachi's English-language daily newspaper, Dawn. She focused on the education of women and how educated women can prove themselves as good wives and wise mothers. (Ansari, 2023)

#### **About Story**

The story is written in a simple yet subtle style, focusing on the issue of repressed sexuality in a conservative Muslim society like Pakistan. It

takes place in the village of Ghulam Qadir, where the main character lives. Ghulam Qadir is a patriarchal peasant who recently married the young and beautiful Shirin. However, he struggles to control her charming personality and sexuality, which leads to frustration and mistreatment of both his wife and his bull. He feels that his wife hasn't fulfilled his repressed sexual desires. The story can be divided into two parts, with the first part depicting Ghulam Qadir reflecting on his marital dilemma while working in his fields with his bull. He sees his wife as a threat and refers to her as a "she devil" for charming his family and his bull. Despite his masculine power, Ghulam Qadir hasn't found complete satisfaction from his wife. He plans to finish work early to have some alone time with her, but his brother and nephew return unexpectedly. Frustrated, he forgets to tie up the bull, which escapes and is only calmed by his wife. This leads to him being laughed at by the village boys. In a fit of rage, he injures his wife, kills his brother and nephew, and ultimately takes his own life.

#### **Literature Review**

Stylistic analysis of the text "The Bull and She Devil," taken from the story collection *The Young Wife and Other Stories* by Zaib-un-Nissa Hamidullah in 1958, focuses on the theme of sexual suppression of women by men in a male-dominated society. The stylistic approach has been followed and categorised into four parts, which are: the first is the lexical category, the second is the grammatical category, the third is the figure of speech, and the fourth is cohesion and context. The study claims that writers highlighted and dealt with a very sensitive matter in the best and most clever way. (Malik,2015)

The study discusses the exploitation and subjugation of women in villages in Pakistan because of religious norms and values. The study focused on the Lacanian psychoanalytic model in the story *The Bull and the Devil*. The study focused on how a man projected his failure on women. The story, based on the location of Punjab province in Pakistan, revealed the psyche of men who blamed their wives for the worst incidents, and at least he murdered her. This

study exposes the psychological frustration of men over women in the light of religion. (Quloob,2020)

The Implementation of Ronald Barthes's Theory of Five Points Taken from Structural Theory on the Short Story of Zaib and Nissa The Bull and the Devil. The study was observed through the lens of hermetic, proaitic, semantic, symbolic, and cultural-based This study introduces the concept of the binary mindset of genders. (Akbar,2021)

Team is the major crux and base of literary text. The symbolism stands for a concept that portrays deep meaning through the use of words, characters, and location. The goal of this study was to find the themes and samples of the Zaib Un Nisa novella The Bull and She Devil. The major focus of her writing this story is to deal with the expression of sexuality imposed on women. It discussed the mentality of patriarchal men. (Hashim,2022)

The bull and the devil is the masterpiece of Zaib Un Nisa Hamidullah, showing the variation of genders in dominant Muslim countries Pakistan and Punjab. She highlighted in her works the issues faced in Pakistan between social and cultural issues. On implementing the psychological concept, propose the reason and response to sexual male suppression. It also exposed how the sexuality and identities of genders parenthesis men and women parentheses are put in a zone of pre-existing beliefs square. It demonstrates how women's sexual responses to men are both active and passive. The story analyses how Ghulam Qadir tries to control and regulate the sexuality of Muslim women to satisfy his Punjabi machismo. In the end, his failure leads to his own tragic end. (Imtiaz,2012)

### **Research Methodology**

The whole study is based on the qualitative method. The research is also based on a deep reading of the text. A variety of journals and articles have been consulted to collect the data and information. A detailed textual study is used for this research paper. The qualitative method is selected because it is considered the most attainable way to explore discernible and

immanent sense and the context of the text. The population of the study is Zaib-Un-Nisa's collection of short stories named The Young Wife and other stories from 1958, as well as articles and journals from the digital medium. The sample drawn from the whole book was one story, „The Bull and the She Devil (TBSD). Both typical and critical case sampling strategies were employed while selecting the textual lines and events for the sake of analysis and interpretation. The hegemonic masculinity theory was applied to evaluate psychological masculinity and is mentioned in the story along with multivariate cohort signs and symbols. The selected text was codified and categorised according to the gender-specific perspective of the symbol and themes for logical interpretation.

### **Theoretical Framework**

In society, there are various forms of masculinity that are not fixed and can change depending on the situation. Hegemonic masculinity, which is the dominant form, is often associated with heterosexuality and being "not gay" or "not female." It is important to recognise that masculinity is not a singular concept and can be fluid and dynamic. (Jewkes,2015) The concept of hegemony, as influenced by Gramsci, highlights that dominance is often achieved through consensus rather than solely through force. In the case of hegemonic masculinity, this consensus is built among both those who benefit from its promotion and even some who are oppressed by it, such as women. It becomes a cultural ideal of manhood that is not only rewarded by women's interests and attention but also replicated by them in their relationships with male relatives and associates. (1971) Raewyn Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity helps us understand how certain attitudes and behaviours among men contribute to gender inequality. It encompasses not only men's dominance over women but also the power dynamics among different groups of men, including minority groups. This concept has been widely discussed and refined over time, highlighting that hegemonic masculinity is both an idealised cultural form and a personal and collective endeavor. Hegemonic masculinity, as described in a recent review, refers to a system

of values established by powerful men that shapes society in unequal ways. It involves a hierarchy of masculinities, unequal power dynamics among men, and the influence of identity, ideals, interactions, power, and patriarchy. (Morrell,2012)

### **Data Analysis**

According to Raven Connell, hegemonic masculinity is the top “honoured” source of considering being a man, and in the patriarchal zone, it is compulsory and supposed that all men meet the values of masculinity to prove themselves as men. (Messerschmitt, 2005)

She did so with gentle, reassuring fingers, and the animal, quieter now, allowed her to lead it to its stall and tie it up. ‘Shabash! Shabash!’ shouted the children in great glee. ‘Shabash auntie, you have succeeded where uncle could not.’ Ghulam Qadir, who had been standing for the past few minutes watching his wife, was galvanized into action by the words. With a quick flick of his powerful arm, he caught hold of a handful of his wife’s long black hair and, with it, dragged her down to the ground before him. Then he hit her with the stick held in his hand. Once, twice, and three times, the blows fell, each time more forcefully.

It's really disheartening to know about Ghulam Qadir's violent actions towards his wife. In the context of hegemonic masculinity, this behaviour reflects a desire to exert control and dominance over her. By physically assaulting her, Ghulam Qadir is attempting to reinforce traditional gender roles and assert his power as the "master" in their relationship. This aligns with the harmful aspects of hegemonic masculinity, which perpetuate gender inequality and condone violence as a means of maintaining power dynamics.

She had succeeded in doing what he could not end. She had shamed him before the whole village by bringing the bull passively home; he had struck her full in the face. This he had then, not so much to hurt her as to proclaim to the village that he was master and this was his woman, even though the bull was his animal.

According to Connell’s theory of hegemonic

masculinity, Ghulam Qadir's act of striking the woman in the face can be seen as a display of power and control. By doing so, he aimed to assert his dominance not only over her but also to proclaim his authority to the entire village. This aligns with the concept of hegemonic masculinity, where men often resort to physical force or aggression to establish their position as the master and to reinforce gender hierarchies.

Hegemonic masculinity is the genre of masculinity to which a variety of groups of individuals are considered less, weaker, and subordinate. These individuals include the young generation, women, and homosexuals. ( Madalina,2022) Ghulam Qadir pushed aside the lota with disgust, and, seeing a pot of motia flowers in a corner on which waxen blooms had opened up their scented sweetness, with a wild gesture of anger, he stretched towards the plant and, with one mighty pull, uprooted it.

In the context of hegemonic masculinity, Ghulam Qadir's actions can be seen as a display of dominance and control over his environment. By pushing aside the lota with disgust and uprooting the motia flowers, he is asserting his power and rejecting anything that may be associated with femininity or fragility. This behaviour aligns with the idea of hegemonic masculinity, where men strive to embody a culturally idealised form of manhood that involves asserting dominance and rejecting anything perceived as weak or feminine. He had run in search of an animal, and she had followed him. He knew this, although she kept her distance. And the knowledge brought his hatred of her to the surface again. 'She, Devil!' he had thought. I'll show her who is the owner of the bull, and I'll show her whose command it obeys.

In the context of hegemonic masculinity, Ghulam Qadir's reaction to the woman following him can be seen as an attempt to assert his dominance and control. His thoughts of calling her a "She Devil" and his determination to show her who is the owner of the bull reflect his desire to maintain power and authority over her. This aligns with the idea of hegemonic masculinity, where men strive to establish their dominance and assert their superiority over women.

Hegemonic masculinity is an open and clear way of exploitation that is adopted by men, practicing patriarchy and hegemonic patronage of masculinity. ( Siles,2022) In a sudden outburst of fury, he clenched his fist at his lovely face. Shaitan shouted. She Devil!! She Devil!! She Devil!!' Frenziedly, he picked up a stone and hurdled it into the well. Aiming straight into her eyes. In this scenario, Ghulam Qadir is clearly displaying anger and violence towards a woman. In the context of hegemonic masculinity, this kind of behaviour can be seen as an expression of dominance and control over women. The use of derogatory terms like "She Devil" and the act of physically attacking her by throwing a stone all reflect the power dynamics associated with hegemonic masculinity.

The idea of hegemonic masculinity is continued and maintained by the interaction of heterosexuals, which means a clear variation between genders, for example, women and men, through the isolation of societal norms and values (Bird,1996). He was her master and would force her to bring forth the fruits of her womb; even the fields gave up their abundance to him.

According to the theory of hegemonic masculinity, this scenario reflects the power dynamics and control exerted by a dominant male figure over a woman. The language used, such as "master" and "force her to bring forth the fruits of her womb," suggests a sense of ownership and entitlement, where the man expects the woman to fulfil his desires and demands. This aligns with the concept of hegemonic masculinity, which emphasises the idealised form of masculinity associated with dominance and control over others, particularly women. The reference to the fields giving up their abundance further reinforces this power dynamic, as it symbolises the man's ability to extract resources and benefits from his surroundings. It's important to challenge and critique these harmful gender norms to promote equality and respect among all individuals.

Hegemonic masculinity is how male norms have traditionally emphasised qualities like bravery,

independence, strength, rigidity, and toughness in their nature. These ideas have been valued for a long time (Sexton, 2018). Wild with rage, Ghulam Qadir turned away from the woman and towards his brother, striking out at him with every ounce of concentrated energy. The old man mourned and fell to the ground, blood trickling from his mouth.

Like Ghulam Qadir's actions, they were driven by a lot of anger and rage. In the context of hegemonic masculinity, society often emphasises qualities like aggression, dominance, and physical strength as the ideal traits for men. These traditional expectations of masculinity can sometimes contribute to violent behaviours, as we see in this situation. Ghulam Qadir was really angry and took it out on his brother. Society often tells guys that they should be aggressive, dominant, and physically strong. These expectations of masculinity can lead to violent behaviour, like what happened here. The idea of hegemonic masculinity and the search for inconsistencies within the gender system that could lead to its changes. It seems that it has not been successful in bringing about a transition. (Connell, 1990). And his nephew, Allah Wasayu, how he hated him! That handsome strapping youth is on the verge of manhood, with something of the weakness of womanhood within him.

The concept of hegemonic masculinity, as proposed by Connell, explores how societal expectations and pressures shape our understanding of what it means to be a man. It's clear how Allah's feelings of hatred towards his uncle could be influenced by these societal norms. The idea that men should suppress their emotions and vulnerability can create internal conflicts, especially when someone like Allah, who appears strong and handsome, also feels a sense of weakness associated with femininity. Connell's theory helps us delve into the complexities of masculinity and how it can impact relationships and self-perception. However, it's important to note that the transition towards a more inclusive and diverse understanding of gender is an ongoing process, and there are still inconsistencies within the gender system that need to be addressed.

## Conclusion

According to Connelly's theory of hegemonic masculinity, men are considered dominant and powerful even in the poorest of societies in some manner. In many societies, a man's set gender role prevents him from respecting and valuing a woman. Patriarchal societies consider women weak and make their men strong. Male dominance is possible because women give free hands to men, and no one told me from childhood that women are not for controlling but for love. They are scared to share what they feel inside because they are afraid of becoming weak because they are sharing their ideas and feelings with a weak gender. Respecting and obeying a woman has become taboo. In "The Bull and the She Devil," the character Shirin gains power without speaking a word. This highlights the concept of the super object, where a person, in this case, Shirin, possesses a certain aura or quality that commands influence and control over others. The subject, Ghulam Qadir, who initially appeared authoritative, finds himself in a dilemma as he tries to figure out how to win his wife's affection. This power dynamic challenges traditional notions of masculinity, where dominance and control are often associated with power. Instead, the story showcases that power can manifest in different ways and that communication is not always the sole source of influence. Shirin's power lies in her actions and presence, which leaves Ghulam Qadir questioning his own approach and seeking to find a way to connect with his wife. In proving himself superior, Ghulam Qadir broke a flower pot because his wife liked it. He punished his bull because he obeyed her. He considers himself something and calls her the devil. In his toxic patriarchy, he attacked his brother due to his doubts and killed him. He became so suppressed by his hegemonic masculinity and toxic patriarchy that he committed suicide.

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