

**RELATIONSHIPS AND GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN
HOSSEINI'S NOVELS- *THE KITE RUNNER* AND *A
THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS***

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of
Bachelor of Arts degree in English

By

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES
SATHYABAMA**

**INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)**

**Accredited with Grade "A" by NAAC
JEPPIAAR NAGAR, RAJIV GANDHI SALAI,
CHENNAI - 600 119**

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BONAFIDE CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this Project Report is the bonafide work of **AZIN SHAD (38010004)** who have done the Project work. She has carried out the project entitled "***Relationships and Gender Discrimination in Hosseini's Novels- 'The Kite Runner' and 'A Thousand Splendid Suns'***" under my supervision from June 2020 to April 2021.

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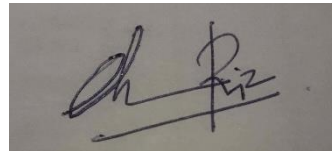
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DECLARATION

I, **AZIN SHAD** hereby declare that the Project Report entitled ***Relationships and Gender Discrimination in Hosseini's Novels- 'The Kite Runner' and 'A Thousand Splendid Suns'***, done by me under the guidance of **Dr. J. Amutha Monica**, is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Arts degree in **Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology**.

DATE: 5-4-2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Azin Shad', is written over a horizontal line.

PLACE: CHENNAI

SIGNATURE OF THE CANDIDATE

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ABSTRACT

This research is a brief study of Hosseini's novels *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. The focus of this paper is on Relationships and gender discrimination in his novels. Here the characters and incidents are explained to point out each thing. By showing the relationship with different characters, we can learn about the key elements of a healthy relationship. Through this, a social message can be given to the readers that from the centuries we have been marginalized women. The paper has also detailed the struggles of women in a patriarchal society.

In the thesis, the primary data are gained from *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Whereas, the secondary data are collected from some relevant and supporting papers and references. The theory of gender is used to mention the struggles of women.

The result of the analysis shows that there is nothing precious than the bond of love among the people and the relationship. In every relationship, some unique qualities are needed to maintain throughout life. Hosseini depicted that through the protagonists of novels. The heart-touching story of Amir and Hassan made us realize how beautiful it is to have someone with us to share our feelings. And another important part is that the characters struggle against gender discrimination. Mariam and Laila try to be unique from other women in the patriarchal society they are living in. Both struggles to get the freedom of choice in society, to get the same opportunity in education and career, to get equality in marriage, and finally to get an equal position under the law.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Literary work can be considered as a reflection, a picture, or a reflection of people's lives. The author tries to reveal the ups and downs of people that he saw and experienced through the literature. With every expression, literature is a reflection of human life. The portrait of social issues in the community is present in the literature. The relation between literature with humans cannot be separated, since the literary works discuss the issues of the human. For the author, the issues of humans are the inspiration to express himself with the literature. The culture and tradition of language people can be represented through the literature. So, literature is a record of what men have seen in their life and experienced and what they have thought and felt about.

Life is an incomplete story and literature tries to search the lost chapters of it. Thus, the medium of language is through an expression of life. In the past decades, Afghan literature can be called 'almost homeless literature'. This term is coined by a body of Afghan writers whose works are produced largely in exile. The contemporary Afghan writers often reflect the paradoxes of culture and location. Contemporary Afghan literature rests upon a rich heritage of both oral and written tradition. Modern writings have attempted to bring Afghans closer to understanding the changes associated with the modern world, especially to comprehend the destruction of their country due to war.

The story of American literature begins in the early 1600s, the earliest writers were Englishmen describing the English exploration and colonization of the new world that is America. A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia by Thomas Hariot, was only the first of many such works. For education, this literature is very significant and it talks almost the history of America and the civilizations and plot, settings, characters, and the theme

of the story all such things are explained. The theme of American literature is unique and it speaks about the place and the past history and the traditional sense of the United States and in the early time of the theme where about the wilderness, community, and selfish nature. Mark twain was known as the father of literature, his works were influenced more than hundreds of years in literature work. American English is more consistent and is exactly different from the British writers. In America, literature mostly talks about the history and the social events of the era there writing style will depend on their culture only whereas the Native American author wrote stories describing life during the white man come to America whereas the African American writer writes a story in which they describe life during and after the slavery all of this issue that this author lived through and experience through the world even the fiction in this time period showed a connection with the event going on in the world.

American literature period- Early national period- this period is set between 1607 and 1765. Benjamin, Anne, etc...were the famous writers of this period. Historical, practical, or religious in nature were the majority writings.

Romantic period- This period is set between 1830 and 1870. During the Romantic age, three men Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and Walt Whitman began publishing novels, short stories, and poetry, and that was the most enduring works of American literature. Romanticism is a way of thinking that emphasizes the individual over the group, subjective than analytical, and the emotional experience of an individual over purpose.

Realism and Naturalism -This period is set between 1870 and 1910. The Civil War in the United States had a huge human cost: more than 2.3 million soldiers fought the battle. In the decades that followed, literature arose to portray a comprehensive and unembellished view of the world as it was. This was realism in its purest form. Naturalism was a more extreme version of realism.

American Renaissance- This period is set between 1830 and 1865. This is the richest period in American literary history. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, and Emily Dickinson were the main writers.

Contemporary period -This period is from 1945 to the present. American literature narrated the story of dead white men who made art and living white men doing the same. By the turn of the century, American literature had evolved into a much more nuanced and inclusive narrative, based on a diverse body of past writings created in the United States by people of various backgrounds and accessible to more Americans today.

Common Themes in the 20th Century Novels- Modern literature includes twentieth and twenty-first-century fiction, poetry, and drama. Modernism and Postmodernism are the two important movements that mark this period. The innovative style of the twentieth century is described in modernism, while postmodernism describes the period of art that evolved after World War II.

Capturing and Creating the Modern - By experimenting with new forms and themes from lifestyle, perception, and time to the kaleidoscopic and fractured nature of recent life modernist writers broke the new ground.

Gender and Sexuality- We have discovered how literature explored, questioned, and exploded traditional ideas of gender roles and sexuality through From Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, E M Forster's *Maurice*, and Shelagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* to Sylvia Plath's journals.

Fantasy and Fairytales -To analyze and question the real world around 20th-century writers, used fantasy from subversive fairytales to gothic nightmares.

Power and Conflict -The violence and loss of primary war affected the modernist writer's attitudes towards nature and time and this was

described by Randall Stevenson. He also pointed that it affected shaping the experiments with languages, literary forms, and therefore the representation of consciousness. The 20th century literature has been shaped by dispute and struggle, from First World War poetry to works motivated by Blitz and futuristic anti-utopia to portrait of religious irrationality.

Writers in the 20th-century novels

Ernest Hemingway - Hemingway was born on July 21, 1899, and died on July 2, 1961. Hemingway started his career as a newspaper writer at the age of seventeen. He himself considered a sportsman and liked to portray hunters, soldiers. Sometimes the courage and honesty of primitive are set against the brutal ways of modern society. *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952), the story of an old fisherman. His long and lonely struggle with a fish and the sea, and his victory in defeat. This is the most outstanding short novel among his works.

Virginia Woolf- Virginia Adeline Woolf is considered one of the most modernist authors of the 20th century. She was born on January 25 1882 and died on March 28, 1941. Both in style and subject matter, Woolf's work captures the fast-changing world in which she was working, From transformations in gender roles, sexuality, and class to technologies such as cars, airplanes, and cinema she captures the fast-changing world in both subjects and style matters. *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is the best-known works of Woolf.

William Faulkner -He was born on September 25 1897 and died on July 6, 1962. Faulkner is an American writer, best known for his novels *The Sound and The Fury* and *As I Lay Dying*. His powerful and artistically unique contribution to the modern American novel made him won the Noble Prize. He wrote many novels, short stories, poetry, essays.

Mark Twain- Samuel Langhorne Clemens was his name and Mark Twain was his pen name. He was born on November 30, 1835, and died on April 21, 1910. In his works, he mostly talks about freedom and nature. His best works are *The Adventure of the Huckleberry Finn* and *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*.

T.S Elliot- Thomas Stearn Elliot was considered one of the major 20th poets. He was born on September 26 1888 and died on January 4, 1965. He was an essayist, playwright, and literary critic. He is best known as a leader of the Modernist movement in poetry.

Ralph Ellison -Ralph Waldo Ellison was an American novelist, literary critic, and scholar. He won the National Book Award in 1953 for his best novel *Invisible Man*. He was born on May 25 1 1914 and died on April 16, 1994.

John Smith- Robert Frost was a classical writer. He started writing at a young age and during his lifetime he became very popular. He was born on March 26 1874 and died on January 29, 1963. His popular poems include *After Apple-Picking* and *Mending Wall* and his famous books and plays include *A Way Out: A One-Act Play* and *A Masque of Reason*.

Khaled Hosseini, an Afghan American writer, has written four novels, *The Kite Runner*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, *And the Mountain Echoed*, and *The Sea Prayer*. All of these are popular all around the world. He grew in a well-educated family. Because of the war in Afghanistan, they moved to the USA. He studied and became a doctor in America. But later he left that and became a full-time writer. He was emotionally attached to Afghanistan even though he was living in America. He had a tight connection with Afghanistan that he visited there many times during his writing. The bad days he had in his childhood still haunts him. He was appointed as the Goodwill Envoy for the United Nations High Commissions of Refugees.

His writings has two dimensions, it gives information of the country, Afghanistan, which is unknown to the readers. In another dimension, he has portrayed the culture, gender and caste discrimination, economic condition, and social system of Afghanistan. Through his works, he tried to do something for his country and showed the reality of Afghanistan.

The work chosen in this project is *The Kite Runner* and *The Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini, this project focused on relationships and gender discrimination which is intellectually presented by the writer in his novels. His novels *The Kite Runner* and *The Thousand Splendid Suns* were international bestsellers, published in 2011. *The Kite Runner* spent more than a hundred weeks on *The New York Times* bestseller list.

“A Powerful Book....no frills...no-nonsense...just hard spare prose....An intimate account of family and friendship, betrayal and salvation that requires no atlas or translation to engage and enlighten us. Parts of *The Kite Runner* are raw and excruciating to read, yet the book in its entirety is lovingly written. Hosseini loves his country as much as he hates what has become of it.....A tale told in simple brush strokes, closer to Kawabata's *Thousand Cranes* than Mahfouz's *Trilogy*. Hosseini is at his best describing moments of slow, silent agony.” (*The Kite Runner*)

The Kite Runner was nominated for Pushcart Prize. Hosseini was appointed as the UNHCR goodwill envoy. He was also listed as one of the most influential people in the world. Hosseini's first two novels have sold more than thirty-eight copies worldwide. Hosseini's novels are among the literary works known as postcolonial literature, the term covers 'all the culture affected by the imperial process from the movement of colonization to the present.'

“The novel moves swiftly but is unwieldy, as Hosseini suddenly introduces an entirely new set of characters a quarter of the way through and needs another quarter of the way to get them fully involved in the plot. The

book is powerfully moving, as was *The Kite Runner*, but Hosseini is not above the melodrama and heartstring-tugging... The central theme of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is the place of women in Afghan society...Hosseini is punctilious about providing dates for all of this, which seems a bit out of place in a work of fiction but doubtless will be useful to American readers, too few of whom know as much as the times demand about Hosseini's native land, where 'every Afghan story is marked by death and loss and unimaginable grief,' yet where 'people find a way to survive, to go on.'"(*A Thousand Splendid Suns*)

The second novel by Hosseini, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* was published in the year 2007. In contrast to *The Kite Runner* in which he considers 'a father-son story', Hosseini described this novel as a 'mother-daughter story', and was remarked for this. The novel takes place in the context of Kabul in the 20th and 21st centuries. The novel continues with some themes such as his previous works, familial aspects but mainly focuses on female characters and their role in Afghan society. It is divided into four parts focusing on individual stories. The novel revolves around two women, how their lives are intertwined after a series of dramatic events and subsequent mutual friendships. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* won the Book Sense Book of the year award in 2008.

And The Mountains Echoed is the third novel written by Hosseini. The novel was published by Riverhead Books in the year 2013. The book is based on the relationship between the ten-year-old Abdullah and three-year-old sister Pari and their father's decision to sell Pari to childless couples in Kabul. The book is written differently from the first two books, there is some deviation in the style of Hosseini. This is evident in the novel by the choice of avoiding focus on one character.

Hosseini's recent novel *The Sea Prayer* has a powerful message from a father to his son, who looks back upon the time when there was peace in the town where he lived. The narrator needs his child to experience the

cheer times that he recalls. He laments over the fact that nothing would be the same now, with everything destroyed and affected because of the ongoing war. The novel brings out the distress that is subjected to refugees.

The chosen novels for this project are *The Kite Runner* and *The Thousand Splendid Suns*. The first novel written in English by an Afghan American writer is *The Kite Runner*. *The Kite Runner* is the first novel of its kind to gain such prominence and greatly influence western readers. The book is the story of the strained relationship between a father and son between two brothers. The novel shows how the characters dealt with forgiveness, political and social transformations of Afghanistan from the 1970s to 2001. The novel has portrayed from the late 1970s to the early 2000s and contemporary Afghanistan during the Taliban regime. *The Kite Runner* sets the characters into mutual drama. It depicts the economic and political scale of the instability of the various regimes in Afghanistan, i.e. from the end of monarchy to the soviet backed government of the 1990s to the fundamentalist Taliban government of the 1990s. As a contemporary novel, the book deals with loyalty, courage, identity, and morality.

The Tension and Love between Father and Sons- With Baba, Amir has a very complex relationship. Baba has his own difficulty in contacting Amir. He feels guilty for treating Amir well when he can't acknowledge Hassan as his son. Amir's desire to win baba's love persuades Hassan not to stop the rape. For Hassan, he can only express his love indirectly. In contrast with this, Hassan and Sohrab is an example where we could see the most loving relationship between father and son. Hassan, however, is killed, we watch Amir trying to become a substitute father to Sohrab towards the end of the novel. Tas Sohrab is a boy who is recovering from the loss of his parents and the abuse he suffered. So their relationship experiences its own strains and has trouble opening up to Amir.

Male friendship- Though the book highly focused on the relationship of the Father and Son, on the other side we can the relationships of two

boys. Amir's relationship with Hassan is an obvious example. The two are still together, but Amir's higher social status creates a power imbalance, which is further complicated when Amir discovers that Hassan is his half-brother. Rahim Khan is another crucial character in the novel when we take a closer look at male friendship. He is a friend of Baba and Amir and in those friendships, he plays the role of a pushing back against dubious decisions both men make. Rahim Khan is suitable for this position because he is in the same social class as Baba and Amir.

Betrayal- In the book, *The Kite Runner*, Amir and Baba's feelings of guilt for their betrayals drive much of the novel's action. When Hassan gets raped by Assef and Amir watches and does nothing like Hassan, who always stood up for Amir in the past. This is the central betrayal in the novel. At the end of the novel, Amir gets to know that Baba also betrayed his own best friend and servant Ali, by fathering a child with Ali's wife Sanaubar. This comes as another kind of betrayal for Amir, who had always hero-worshipped Baba and is shocked to learn of his father's flaws.

The Redemption- The heart of the novel is Amir's quest for redemption. Amir strives hard to earn Baba's forgiveness, mostly because he feels guilty for his mother's death while giving birth to him. To make amends with Baba, Amir believes he must win the kite-tournament and bring the losing kite to him, both of which are inciting events that set the plot in motion for the rest of the book. The novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, in the backdrop of horror-stricken Afghanistan, narrates the touching tale of womanhood. This is an extraordinary work of literature. The novel tells the story of two Afghani women, Mariam and Laila, both married to the same aggressive husband, Rasheed. Hosseini's female characters were the epitome of a highly oppressed Afghan feminist until they realized their fighting power. This book closely depicts the strong oppression of patriarchy in which women are marginalized, abandoned, betrayed, abused, and punished. All-female characters, from Nana to Aziza, face the cruelty of patriarchy. These female characters were treated unfairly by all men,

including the Taliban. The power of patriarchy is presented through illegality, marriage, and gender discrimination.

Suffering and Perseverance- Every character in this novel had suffered either emotionally or physically. The loss of loved ones often causes severe pain of its own in such a way that it feels like there is no recovery of any kind.

Love and Loyalty- The characters in the novel's erratic behavior can be explained by the strong loyalty that stems from love and love makes them act in irrational ways. Mariam's love for her father Jalil remains constant despite hints that he is ashamed of her harami, only out of her love for her own mother she turns back on Jalil. Laila, in turn, believes that by marrying Rasheed and thus saving her and Tariq's baby, she will remain faithful to Tariq, even after his death.

Hosseini writes about the problems and issues that are prevalent in his native and refrains to write about the host country, identity in a foreign land, and feelings of nostalgia for the native land. Lindsay B. Shapiro found the thematic similarity between issues of Middle Eastern women like male domination and physical, mental, and sexual abuse that are covered in the bestselling novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and the journal articles in *The New-York-Times* (2010). Under the frustration-aggression and drive model, Neupane & Khanal, 2017, found the Taliban's women confinement and unfavorable social and individual conditions like loss of son and wife impregnate Rasheed's aggression which ultimately leads to spousal bitter relations. Muntian & Shapak, 2020 provide gender distorted structures of discursive practices in Afghanistan and portray the rural Muslim women as active participants rather than passive sufferers. Naik & Tiwari (2018, p. 3) comments "people experience their lives against the backdrop of their culture, Hosseini wisely steers clear of merely exoticizing Afghanistan as a monolithically foreign place [...] for long what might differentiate Afghans and Americans." Verma (2018) considers the diasporic study in Hosseini's

writings about memory, which remembers the trauma of his homeland rather than the host country. Shihada (2019) talks about women's rights and how a boy child is preferred to a girl child in developing countries. According to him, "peace and stability cannot be achieved in Afghanistan without the restoration of women's human rights and violence against them is eliminated." From these works on Hosseini, it is clear that he is a master in portraying filial relations and also the political regimes of his homeland.

Characteristics of the Characters in the Novels

Hassan

- Hassan is always true to Amir and considers Amir as a soul friend. But Amir never considers him the same back.
- Many critics commented on Hassan's character even after the master betrays him that "too good to be true". Hassan is always ready to accept Amir for everything.
- Even after the master betrays him, he is always loyal to his master as a perfect servant.

Amir

- The protagonist and the narrator of the novel are Amir.
- Amir is a Pashtun and a Sunni Muslim.
- For his father Baba and his friend Hassan, he has conflicted feelings
- Though Amir realizes that Hassan socially has a lower place in the society, he is always jealous of Hassan for the way baba treating Hassan.

- Due to his conflicted character, Amir struggles between the emotional and logical sides of being.
- His addiction and guilt-ridden conscience, along with the adult's view of childhood events, usually make him credible.

Baba

- Baba is the father of Amir. He is considered the leader and a hero in Kabul.
- Baba and Amir do not seem to be connected, especially in Afghanistan.
- Baba always expects more from his son and Baba always helps and does things for others.
- Baba is an example of a man who lives according to his own moral code, and yet reveals, he holds a secret that can weaken everything he stands for.

Sohrab

- Sohrab is the son of Hassan.
- After the death of his parents, he stays in an orphanage.
- Until Amir rescues him, he is a sex slave to Assef.
- Sohrab tries to suicide when Amir tells him that he may stay here again in the orphanage.
- Towards the end of the novel, Amir and Soraya adopt him as their son and bring him to America.

Ali

- Ali is the father of Hassan.
- Ali was taken care of by the parents' Baba when his parents were killed. Ali is a Hazara.
- Like Hassan to Amir, Ali grew up alongside baba. Ali has paralysis in his lower face muscles and a crippled leg. The children in the neighborhood ridicule him.
- When Hassan is grown, Ali is killed by a land mine. Like Hassan, he is also devoted and loyal.

Mariam

- Mariam is one of the protagonists of the novel. Mariam is the illegitimate daughter of Jalil, who is the most successful businessman in Herat.
- Throughout her life, Mariam is embarrassed to be a harami and the great shame of believing that she is the main reason for her mother's suicide.
- After Jalil feels Mariam is unwanted and unimportant, the same was experienced by Mariam from Rasheed for not having a baby. The lack of love and entitlement has been a constant theme throughout Mariam's life. But she has a remarkable ability to endure and preserve hardships, often with help of koranic verses.
- Mariam can be the best example in the novel for both the strength and suffering of women in Afghanistan.

Rasheed

- Rasheed is the Husband of Laila and Mariam
- He is a colossal man who owns a shoe repairing shop and he is notably elder than Mariam
- He had a difficult past as both his first wife and son has passed away
- He is very serious and short-tempered and has a high expectancy to have kids especially boys.
- He has very particular sanctimony for rituals of Islam.
- For example, he wants the women to wear burqa while appearing the public, but during Ramadan, he doesn't fast.
- Rasheed is rude to his wives and daughter to an extent near to murder.

Laila

- Laila is a dazzling girl living in Kabul. She belongs to a family which is so educated and her father is committed to providing her education and plans a bright, independent future for his daughter.
- As her mother is detached from her daughter and as she rejected her inferiority of her 2 sons, who went for a conflict and are killed during that conflict.
- Laila is very inquisitive and bright, she hold on to a strong sense of Afghanistan's culture and optimistic about its future.

- Laila's affair with Tariq as the teenager and her plan to escape with Rasheed and her commitment to visit Azeeza, her daughter at the orphanage despite of possibility of being beaten up by the Taliban proved that she is very much bold and audacious.
- Unlike Mariam, Laila is not very tough or matured but she remains fully aware of the tremendous sacrifices Mariam has made for her. It is the sense of responsibility towards Mariam, her family, and Afghanistan that will mark her return from exile Pakistan to Afghanistan.

Tariq

- Tariq is a friend of Laila, a few years older than Laila.
- During the war, he lost his leg. The neighborhood people referred to him as a cripple. Tariq is very strong, when Laila gets picked on he stands up for her.
- To avoid further violence in Kabul his family moves to Pakistan, but by that time Laila and Tariq fall in love and conceive a baby.
- After the marriage of Laila, he returns to Kabul for her, though Laila was told Tariq has died.
- Laila and Tariq get married after the death of Rasheed and two of them moved to Pakistan along with their children.

Jalil

- Jalil is the father of Mariam, who is a rich movie theatre owner in Herat.

- Jalil is an amazing father and a paragon of virtue to Mariam. But for her mother, he has neglected his obligations to her family.
- In addition to Mariam and her nana, Jalil has another legitimate two wives and ten children.
- Mariam is sent to Jalil's house when her nana dies, but his wives were not ready to accept her and they refuse to keep her in the house.
- Jalil took the decision to gives her up to marry Rasheed. But then he regrets his harsh decision and tries to contact her to apologize for this treatment.

Nana

- Nana is the mother of Mariam, who was the housemaid of Jalil. But later, she became pregnant with Mariam.
- Jalil evicted nana from his household and built a shack for her and Mariam. Throughout the novel, there are references to nana's life but it revolves around the character of Mariam's mother.
- As nana's strong familial connection she only has Mariam. She killed herself when Mariam begins to deepen the relationship between Nana and Jalil.

Fariba

- Fariba is Laila's mother, who lives in Kabul. She tries to befriend Mariam.

- Hakim is her husband and she has three children Ahmed, Noor, and Laila. Fariba stays in her bed grieving to her sons Ahmed and Noor left to fight in Jihad.
- She always wishes to stay in Afghanistan because her sons died for this land to get freedom. So in order to see the freedom, she wants to stay here. But the living circumstances forced her to shift from this place.

CHAPTER II

Relationships and Gender Discrimination in Hosseini's novels *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

Relationships get so beautiful, sad, annoying, and everything when it goes down to the depths. There won't be any sorrow, guilt, nothing if it has not kept in the depths of the mind. The only truth is that even if we pretend that there is nothing outside, some incidents will haunt us till death. We would be so far in an irreparable distance when we realize the truth, and that is the most painful thing. In the novel, *The Kite Runner*, Hosseini has portrayed the guilt for not helping Hassan during their childhood. There is no value for the relationship when people have struggles. Relationships will lose their bond. People will start using this same relationship to overcome their tough times. But life gives a chance to everyone to take away all the mistakes. In the novel, *The Kite Runner*, Amir got a chance to correct his fault for what he has done to Hassan. Amir saved Sohrab, the son of Hassan. At the end of the story, Amir took Sohrab along with them to California. The story of Laila and Mariam in the novel *Thousand Splendid Suns* shows how a good relationship can hold on to life no matter how many crises it overcomes. In every relationship, whether it is male or female, friends, brothers, sisters, it is the living circumstances that project in their relationship.

Hosseini has beautifully explored the subtleties of human relationships in his novels. He is concerned about the wretched conditions of people in general and women in particular who have degraded one by society and the others within the four walls of their home. Bond of love is the only factor that gives power to characters against this backdrop. It reflects in his novels *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Through his works, he made it clear that these love stories are very much unlike the platonic tale of romance between a man and a woman. Their love is tried

and tested amid conditions of difficulties and characters are left to discover their paths to reunite with their loved ones. The strength to transcend their limitations, struggle with their vulnerabilities and perform devastating acts of self-sacrifice-for all this, longing for love pushes them out.

We all know that the most beautiful relationship is between parents and children. For every child, the relationship between a father and son is an influential part of a child's life.

"The most important influence in my childhood was my father."
Defrost Kelly.

This quote clearly illustrates what impact can have on a person by this relationship.

Throughout the entire novel, *The Kite Runner*, the parent-child relationships are abundantly evident. That is the relationship between Amir and Baba, Ali and Hassan, Amir and Sohrab, Baba and Hassan. The relationship between Amir and Baba is very distant during many parts of the novel. In the story, Baba and Amir have many differences. And to connect with and gain his acceptance, Amir will do anything. A great example is when Amir lets Hassan get raped for him to get the kite to bring home to his father. *"He opened his arms. I put the kite down and walked into his thick hairy arms. I buried my face in the warmth of his chest and wept. Baba held me close to him, rocking me back and forth. In his arms, I forgot what I'd done. And that was good"* [*The Kite Runner*, 66].

He did this with only one intention to seek Baba's love and affection. When Baba was young, he won the kite tournament, which in turn makes his father proud. So Amir wanted to do the same to make his Baba proud of him. Amir always believed that his Baba treats Hassan well than him. All the time, he is jealous of Hassan and did many cruel things. Like any other young boy, Amir thinks to get Hassan out. If Hassan left home, he would be

able to bond more with his Baba. For this, Amir lifted his mattress and placed his new watch and handful of Afghani bills under it. Then Amir lied about doing nothing. In the novel, it is transparent that Baba shows love and respect. The reason for this is understandable in the end. *"Whatever Baba would buy for me, he would buy for Hassan. Sometimes I wish he didn't do that. Wished he'd let me be the favorite."*[*The Kite Runner*, 51].

This relationship between Baba and Hassan tremendously affected the novel. Amir's anger at Hassan for stealing his Baba's love. Sometimes little things like this hurts Amir more and made him cheat his only good friend, Hassan. In the beginning, Hosseini portrayed Baba as a father who wants his son to be independent and motivated. He wants a son who lives with expectations and achieves his dream. On the other hand, Amir is a son who competes for Baba's attention. He always admires him and his works. Hosseini also portrayed the real picture of Baba and the sketchy relationship he has with Amir. Rahim khan, the friend of Baba, sometimes acts as a father and mentor for Amir. We could see this in some parts of the novel. *"I was always learning things about Baba from other people."*[*The Kite Runner*, 18].

This line shows that how Amir was with his Baba. With all the pain, Amir is expressing that he is an outsider in his Baba's life. Even though he has tried many things to get a relation with Baba, he failed. Amir still doesn't know the real face of Baba. The kite running tournament made changes in their life. After the competition in which Amir Wins, their relationship steadily improves and turned into a new relationship, one that Amir has been persistently seeking throughout his life. Hosseini uses kite-flying to represent the changes that happen in the relationship of father-son. The progress in the character of Amir leads him to discover himself, self-discovery. As the novel goes, he finds himself through his thoughts. Amir began to see things from his point of view and develops his attitude. When they both migrate to America, Amir realizes that he misses Afghanistan and Baba believing that his son does live up to expectations and undergoes an attitude

transformation when he finally understands that Amir should not be an outsider in his life. The character change is the most prominent at Amir's wedding Baba remarking,

"Tonight I am too much happy...I am drinking with my son". As another example is when Baba bought a car for Amir, his first car. "I wanted to say more...how touched it was by his act of kindness, how much I appreciated all that he had done for me, all that he was still doing"[The Kite Runner,124].

So this is the point that the relationship of Amir and Baba turned into a new way. He started realizing that Amir was innocent. Here Hosseini is molding a healthy relationship through Baba and Amir. Most significantly, America witnesses the development of Amir and Baba. Amir started to choose his way When Amir decided to marry Soraya, an Afghani. Readers can note how Amir has changed from childhood to adulthood. Now Amir is prepared for his future. In addition to this, readers can see the development of Baba through the acceptance of Amir. Their relationship is no longer sketchy now but a stronger father-son bond. Amir became a mature, positive, and self-opinionated person. *"My whole life I had been Baba's son, now he was gone. Baba couldn't show me the way anymore, I'd have to find it on my own"[The Kite Runner, 161].*

Here we can see how important the role of the father to a child. Though Amir is independent and mature, he still needs his father to guide him. He found it difficult to accept the truth that Baba is no more. For every child, this is the same. Fathers will be their superheroes.

Amir and Baba do not have a good father-son relationship throughout Kite Runner. Baba feels that his son wants to live up to his expectations and that Amir is constantly competing for attention. Their lineage developed positively as the novel progresses from the kite running tournament to their exodus to the United States. in addition, these two main characters

developed themselves, Baba becomes an understanding father, and Amir finds himself and eventually returns to Afghanistan for something that life in America could not provide for him: redemption, and thus showing Amir's relationship with Baba throughout his life turned him into the man he is at the end of *The Kite Runner* for as he matures his relationship with Baba strengthens.

"But we were kids who had learned to crawl together, and no history, ethnicity, society, or religion was going to change that either"[*The Kite Runner*, 22].

"A twisted tale of friendship", is another name Hosseini likes to call his first novel, *The Kite Runner*. Amir and Hassan are close friends, both of them are the same age, bounded in a master-servant relationship. Against all the backdrops of Afghanistan, Hosseini portrayed the relationship of Amir's and Hassan's intense loyalty and friendship.

Amir recalls that *"I spent most of the first twelve years of my life playing with Hassan. Sometimes, my entire childhood seems like one long lazy summer day with Hassan, chasing each other between tangles of trees in my fathers' yard, playing hide-and-seek, cops and robbers, cowboys and Indians"*[*The Kite Runner*, 22].

Hassan is intently following orders as a servant, but at the same time, he reads stories and plays with him. In the above statement, Amir Expresses how important is Hassan and how pure was their friendship. In the novel, Amir remembers everything about Hassan. Hassan has never denied Amir. He will do anything for Amir. It is Hassan who gives the structure to the concept of loyalty.

"For you thousand times over" [*The Kite Runner*, 61]. This is the loveliest sentence in the entire novel. Through this line, Hosseini portrayed Hassan's love for Amir. He told this to Amir just before he goes off to retrieve

the fallen blue kite. Their friendship is a tapestry relationship of love, guilt, and retribution. Although Amir is interested in Hassan, he avoids his company to please other Pashtun boys who are stabbing him in the ribs to make friends with expelled. Hassan is ready to do anything as a loyal follower. The kite running tournament played an important role in their friendship. It turns their relationship into a battlefield. *"I ran because I was a coward. I was afraid of Aseef and what he would do to me. It turned my back to the alley, to Hassan...Maybe Hassan was the price I had to pay, the lamb I had to slay"*[The Kite Runner, 68].

Amir watched the entire crime done by Aseef's gang to Hassan but he doesn't rescue his friend. This guilt always haunts Amir's whole life. Mentally he was not even to pardon himself. Hassan knew that Amir had betrayed him when he needs him the most. For days Hassan keeps away from Amir. Amir was not ready to admit his fault though he has guilt inside. Amir was afraid of only his Baba, if Baba comes to know about his cowardice, then he would rebuke him even more. He justifies himself by saying that Hassan has stolen his place in Baba's heart. Hassan is a gem that he doesn't know to hate, betray, he only gives love without expecting anything back. To send him out of their house, Amir confers another thing to their relationship and he blames Hassan for a theft. But for all this, Hassan remains unresponsive and silently bears all the indignity at his close friend. He didn't utter a word. On the other side, Amir pretends that he knows nothing of whatever happened on that fateful day. Soon due to some political crises, they were forced to shift to America. But as he grows up, he is affected by something that he has left behind in Kabul. *"I have told much about you to Farzana Jan and Sohrab, about us growing up together and playing games and running in the streets. They laugh at the stories of all the mischief you and I used to cause!"*[The Kite Runner, 184].

Hassan wrote this letter shortly before his death. This letter reveals that his devotion to Amir has not been broken by Amir's betrayal and his absence over the years. Hassan's connection with Amir is also linked to

innocence. One day he received a call from his Baba's closest friend Rahim Khan. "Be good again" there is still scope for Amir to do something for Hassan. He also comes to know the truth that Hassan is his brother, he and his wife had been killed by the Taliban. But their son is still alive. At this moment, Amir realizes that the only way he can repay the debt of their friendship is by saving Hassan's son Sohrab from the clutches of the Taliban, who were sexually abusing the boys.

Amir adopted Sohrab as his son with overwhelmed love and empathy. They together went back to America. "For you a thousand times over"-is what Hassan had said to Amir and now it is Amir who towards the end of the novel runs after the kite saying "For you a thousand times over". At the end of the novel, Sohrab becomes the bridge of love and friendship between Amir and Hassan. Amir finally realized that real redemption lies in the restoration of one's self and goodness as a human being.

"I ran. A grown man running with a swarm of screening children. But I didn't care. I ran with the mind-blowing in my face, and smile as wide as the valley of Panjsher on my lips" [The Kite Runner, 328]. Hosseini ended the book by these lines. He plays along with children after forgetting the pain he went through and compares his smile with a beautiful valley in Afghanistan. So this how Hosseini pictured the beautiful story of two friends.

Hosseini, in his second novel, A Thousand Splendid Suns, narrates the story through two women Mariam and Laila. In this novel, we could see a mother-daughter relationship and a strong bond between the two women. This novel has so far been acclaimed as the most heart-breaking story which makes the reader cry at several points. Laila belongs to an upper-middle-class prosperous family and Mariam from Herat, a remote part of Afghanistan. Both Mariam and Laila are the co-wives of Rasheed. In the beginning, both of them find it difficult to adjust to each other. At first, Mariam was shocked and upset that the girl she had helped for a better life came to her house as her husband's second wife. She displeased and had

arguments with her. She was also jealous of her. A few months later, things changed positively among them, when Laila gave birth to a baby girl. There ensues a bond between them that lasts forever when childless Mariam draws towards the baby and forgives Laila for the intrusion. Both of them discover that they are the victims of Rasheed's temper and brutality and Afghanistan's patriarchal culture.

"Mariam is in Laila's own heart where she shines with the bursting radiance of a thousand suns"[A Thousand Splendid Suns, 402].

They started helping each other and endure their daily fear and humiliation, the novel takes a different turn where these two ladies show resistance. Mariam takes responsibility when Laila is mourning in labor pain.

"My daughter water broke and the baby won't come out"- Mariam reaches to the doctor by saying this. Mariam considered Laila as her daughter. The structure is an interrelationship of their relationship, like creeping overlap to create a creeping and strong plant. Throughout this emotional and expressive novel, Khaled Hosseini does an excellent job illustrating the extraordinary and epic relationship between Mariam and Laila. The relationship reflected in this novel is actually moving; Hosseini has included topics of love, faith, and sacrifice to improve and intensify the relationship. Overall, Hosseini succeeded in turning the relationship between two women into a unique relationship between a mother and daughter. This story is extremely heart-rending and touching, as it opens the minds of readers to a different perspective. The quote not only describes Mariam but her life and relationship with Laila.

"One could not count the moons that shimmer on her roofs or the thousand splendid suns that hide behind her walls" [A Thousand Splendid Suns, 381]. Hosseini shows how women who have been subjected to social, mental, physical, and sexual abuse can come together regardless of the principles of caste and religion. Weak sex can shine like thousand bright

suns with the milk of human compassion that fills their hearts.

"Mariam was five years old the first time she heard the word harami"

A Thousand Splendid Suns start with a story of a mother in the kolba and her daughter Mariam, who is a harami, bastard. Though Jalil is a rich man, nana the mother of Mariam hates him, also he has three wives already. He did not show up when Mariam was waiting for Jalil one day outside Colby. Nana told Mariam not to wait and that he was cheating on her, but Mariam did not listen to her and left the village to the city where Jalil lived. Mariam went on a trip to Jaleel's house. When she got there, they did not let her into the house, and when she returned home the next morning, Nana was hanged because of the action taken by Mary. Mariam was back to his house by Jalil's driver, where Jalil's three wives kept her not for long but only two days. They decided on the marriage of Mariam to an old man from another city. They did not ask Mariam's wish or permission, she was never happy with this proposal. Mariam and Laila shared the unhealthy and poisonous relationship that they both share with their mothers throughout the course of A Thousand Splendid Suns. In different aspects and level, both mammy and nana could be considered as rude and abusive. It is absolutely clear that the love for Laila was not extreme like her brothers. Mammy loves Ahmed and Noor with more intensity. Mammy discern Laila like a distant child, she doesn't care her like her own child, so Laila never had a pleasant childhood memories. She was forced to be independent due to deterioration faced by her in her childhood. One day after coming from school, Laila sat with her mother and she expresses her numbness at that time. The two then start conversing and Laila starts to think to herself about what is going to be happening next through her knowledge of Mammy's repetitive and unmotivated behavior. Throughout the story, Nana's behavior is portrayed as a harsh and bitter woman who distrusts men and also as an aggressive person. A former housemaid by profession, Nana had formerly worked for Jalil, where she had an affair and got pregnant with Mariam. After being disowned and shunned away, Nana who was a victim of disownment and

rejection by society was consumed with hatred and jealousy. As a result, through emotional and verbal abuse by insulting Mariam she vents her anger on her. After Mariam accidentally smashes a traditional Chinese tea set belonging to Nana's mother, Nana responds with sweetness by calling Mariam a harami. Although Mariam did not understand at the beginning the meaning behind that word, she understood what Nana meant because she interpreted the word to mean something unnecessary and she was an illegitimate person who never made a fair claim to other people's things. Nana reveals her deeply rooted insecurity about her ban on her family, Jalil, and the community as well as the idea that Mariam loves Jalil more than her. Mammy and Nana are both essentially the same, though have portrayed as different characters in different cities at different times. They both are personified by the opposite effects of rejection and trauma. The two struggle through the struggle of internalized isolation.

In the novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* we can see many relationships like Jalil and Nana, Jalil and his three wives, Rasheed and Mariam, Rasheed and Laila, Tariq and Laila. In these relationships we can see many mismatching relationships that could not withstand for longer, only two selfless love relationships survived, though after hardships.

"Even though the communists had invaded and destroyed their country only one thing they did right is, in the field of education of women. It's a good time to be a woman in Afghanistan" [A Thousand Splendid Suns, 133].

Laila is an ethnic Tajik, daughter of Hakim and Fariba. She is a beautiful and intelligent educated girl, unlike Mariam. Laila's father wants her to be educated and serve the nation since he is a university graduate and a teacher. He was liberal-minded and valued women's education as equal to men. There is a contrast between urban and rural life, educated and uneducated family. Mariam who belonged to rural life and uneducated ancestry was asked not to think of education. Nana insisted that women like

them only need the thalamus. On the other hand, Laila's father helped her with homework and helped her to get the first position in the class. He is a man who considers women's education as necessary as equal to men. She was very close to Tariq and found it very difficult to live in the absence of his love. The relationship between Tariq and Laila was very good. After Tariq left Kabul to find a safe place in Peshawar, all hopes were dashed by the bombing of Laila's house. There was solely smoke flowing within the air; Laila's admiring folks additionally became the victim of the blast, going away Laila within the cruel hands of society. Tariq was not there and she was orphaned. From here, Rashid, the cunning sorcerer, now turns his mind to the devil to trap Laila.

Nana and Jalil's relationship was sex-driven and later Nana suffered and hanged herself, but Jalil repents for the loss at the end. When Tariq and Laila moved to Kabul where Hamza, Mullah Faizullah's son gave her the box from Jalil which contained a Film, a letter for Mariam, and Mariam's share of inheritance from her father. Mariam married Rasheed to escape from a miserable life in Jalil's house, but her fate put her in harder life with Rasheed. For Mariam, there was no single sign of love in the heart of Rasheed. Mariam was blamed for this and that only for the reason she was a woman and as an illegitimate person. Thus, rather than a marriage, their relationship was a symbiosis. Aziza was a sign of love, respect, and the relationship between Laila and Tariq out of wedlock. After ten years with the arrival of Tariq the relationship of Laila and Rasheed deteriorates and also there was no bond before itself. Hakim and Fariba were a good couple and good parents, but a slight flaw was Fariba was more attached to her sons, Ahmad and Noor. Tariq and Laila's relationship was good and they could recognize and acknowledge their love, after ten years of absence, because this relationship was not, in any case, a mismatch. Mariam was always in Laila's heart and she intended to name her girl child, Mariam.

In Hosseini's novels, women who fabricate feminist relationships are able to find inner strength and fulfillment. Through different perspectives,

each relationship is displayed. Hosseini was trying to convey a prosperity message for each female bond. It is evident in the novel that, through each bondwomen conquering fears with the help and support of each other. The strongest bond of their friendship leads to the union and prosperity to life and death.

“Mariam had started teaching Aziza verses from the Koran...It’s all I have to give her, this knowledge, and these prayers. They’re the only true possessions I’ve ever had” [A Thousand Splendid Suns, 265].

It is this motherhood experience of Mariam that changed the entire novel. This made their bond strong. Mariam is very fond of Aziza and takes care of her own daughter. Laila sometimes too exhausted to teach Aziza so Mariam takes the responsibility to teach her. Mariam is a person who thinks about others. Even if Laila does not ask for help, Mariam still lends help. Both trust each other more than anyone. Their friendship is always full of trust. A relationship should always be full of trust, it is what keeps it genuine.

Unlike Mariam, Amir, in the kite runner, does not care about others whereas Hassan like Mariam is ready to do for anyone. Hassan always shows a great amount of respect to Amir but treated Hassan very badly. We will get only the exact amount of love and respect which we gave to someone. We knew that Amir and Hassan are best friends right from childhood but the stronger bond is between Laila and Mariam than Amir and Hassan. Mariam and Hassan both emphasize loyalty towards their friends so both are similar. When Laila gives respect to Mariam she returns it back. Amir is lacking this quality, he only receives love and respect. Hassan is the only one who puts the effort into their relationship. He tries to keep the knot tight but one day or the other will untie. Mariam and Laila are working together because they have a purpose for keeping their relationship and is to keep themselves safe and secure.

Hosseini portrayed the quality of the strength of sacrifice in both

novels. His quality may help everyone to maintain a strong relationship. In *The Kite Runner*, Hassan made the first sacrifice to save himself and Amir from Aseef, but if it was Amir it would have been revolutionary.

“Rasheed raised the belt again and this time came at Mariam. Then an astonishing thing happened: The girl lunged at him. She grabbed his arm with both hands and tried to drag him down” [A Thousand Splendid Suns, 216].

In *A Thousand Splendid Suns* both Laila and Mariam sacrifice for the benefit of each other. Laila sacrifices for the first time to protect Mariam from Rasheed’s beating. She could not let Mariam be punished for what she has not done since she was raised in a household with respect and to stand up for what is right. In the end, Mariam makes the biggest sacrifice for killing Rasheed.

“For me, it ends here. There’s nothing more I want. Everything I’d ever wished for as a little girl you’ve already given me. You and your children have made me so very happy. It’s all right Laila Jo. This is all right. Don’t be sad” [A Thousand Splendid Suns, 319].

Mariam justifies this by saying this to Laila. She killed Rasheed and deprived Zalmai, the son of Laila. Mariam could have gone with Laila but that guilt will get to her. Mariam happily ended it. She needs only the cherished memories of Laila and her kids. She wants Laila to have a better future. We could see sacrifices in both novels and how it has changed the plot. But the sacrifice made in the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* had a more positive reaction than *The Kite Runner*. Through these novels, Hosseini points out that Sacrifice for those people who would do the same for you and not for the ones that use you as a benefit. Another important quality for a relationship is honoring one and another. Because if this is not in our relation, our relation may change into enmity.

“The game involves only male names. Because, if it’s a girl, Laila has already named her” [A Thousand Splendid Suns, 367].

Laila becomes pregnant when they moved back to Kabul. She asked Tariq and other kids to search for boy names because she has already decided to name Mariam if it is a girl. This is the last sentence of the novel and it shows that Laila is compliance a girl World Health Organization has come back to mean such a lot to her. No matter where they are, Laila is always there with her. In The Kite Runner, Hassan always honoring Amir but Amir starts only when he goes to rescue Sohrab.

“There was brotherhood between people who had fed from the same breast, a kinship that not even time could not break” [The Kite Runner, 16].

Ali always reminds Hassan and Amir by saying the above statement, so they would always remember to honor themselves and maintain their friendship. Feeding from the same breast means that Hassan and Amir were brothers. Unfortunately, Amir and Hassan do not know this. But he returns to save Sohrab when Rahim khan informs all this. Therefore, the honor was there but it was not expressed. Hassan was like Baba who expresses without fear and hesitation but Amir was just the opposite of both. *“My body was broken- just how badly I wouldn’t find out until later” [The Kite Runner, 289].*

Through Sohrab Amir is showing regret towards Hassan. Amir pays homage to what Hassan did for Sohrab by saving the lives of each other. He feels peace and happiness after he fought with Aseef, he has got what he deserved for so many years. Amir granted a new life with Sohrab with no regrets. The friendship of Amir and Hassan was not smooth enough when compared to Mariam and Laila, they had a smooth flow of all the indigents needed in a friendship. In all relationships, all characters may have different reasons to honor each other but the thing is that there is a two-way connection in the friendship than a one-way connection. Amir took over the bones and Mariam died and they both did this for their loved ones.

Gender Discrimination in the novel- What does gender equality mean? Should a woman and a man live together? Think alike? And live equally? But since from the time, we have seen that equality is only on the paper. Religions and politics have only sought to oppress women everywhere. Although a woman has a lot of mental arousal, all of it is in the hands of a man. Today, although women's power has advanced at all levels, women continue to show strength in all areas. My view is that despite advances in politics, society, economics, cinema and science, women have not been able to reach the milestone that our female society can reach. If we look at the school and college levels, we can see that girls are ahead of boys in everything from learning, to arts and sports. But then what happens. The fact that women have to fight a lot again to reach the top.

Theories of gender- Gender is a special characteristic of either man or woman that is socially and culturally constructed [Faik, 1996:8]. In almost all societies, women are assumed to be weak and sick creatures. They are less intelligent, less creative, more emotional, and more rational in thought. On the contrary, men are considered to be strong, intelligent, rational, and physically strong. It is because of these qualities that men claim to be superior and women inferior. Magie Humm states that the gender identity that differentiates men and women culturally, is socially constructed and can be challenged and changed. Gender inequality begins very early in the patriarchal society through its dominant institutions [1992:21]. Gender is a social construct designed to limit the range of life choices available to mankind for the proper functioning of social institutions. The position of women as the other and inferior as well as the imposition of compulsory heterosexuality resultant from this ideology of gender are responsible for that negative socialization which all women share [Birch, 1994:5-6].

In his novels, he has tried to pull out the real incidents in Afghanistan, with his imagination and it creates an emotional attachment of the readers. The country which is marginalized for many decades and still in this 21st century its people are struggling for identity and happiness. He exposed the reality of his native in front of the world.

“Too often, stories about Afghanistan Centre around the various wars, the opium trade, and the war on terrorism. Precious little is said about the Afghan people themselves – their culture, their traditions, how they lived in their country and how they manage abroad as exiles”- Khaled Hosseini.

He is a doctor by profession so he is connected with people. As a writer, he gives information about Afghanistan which is unknown to the readers. The social system of Afghanistan, Economical condition of Afghanistan, the Caste system of Afghanistan, Gender discrimination of Afghanistan, Culture of Afghanistan Hosseini has pictured all these in his novels. Generally, gender discrimination is a simple word so we can understand the meaning of the word. As per the dictionary, gender discrimination means, *“a situation in which someone is treated less well because of their sex, usually when a woman is treated less well than a man”* (Cambridge Dictionary). As per definition when we give anyone less importance on the basis of their sex it is called gender discrimination. Women have to fight for their rights in any developed country. Afghanistan is a country where people are already struggling with lots of problems so this is quite natural that women have to struggle.

The focus of this study lays on the struggle against gender discrimination, therefore, uses the theory of gender to scrutinize the discrimination in the novels. The theory is important to support the women characters in the novels.

In his first novel, the story focuses on two boys Amir and Hassan, their relationship through the Afghani background. But he never forgets to portray Afghani women. Very intellectually he has included the struggles of Afghani women. The most important point is that he presented the discrimination of women, who cannot follow their dreams and passion. Nobody asked them their choice for their lives. Even marriages were done without asking them their choices. Only arranged marriages happened. It happened with Hassan's mother Sanaubar. She was nineteen years

younger than Ali thought she should be. She had never found happiness in this marriage, yet she had not been able to make a lot of decisions on her own or withdraw from this marriage.

Another character in the novel which shows presents the condition of women in Afghanistan is Soraya. About Afghan culture, Soraya says:

“Their sons go out to nightclubs looking for meat and get their girlfriends pregnant, they have kids out of wedlock and no one says a god damn thing. Oh, they’re just men having fun! I make one mistake and suddenly everyone is talking nang and namoos, and I have to have my face rubbed in it for the rest of my life” [The Kite Runner, 156].

She says that men have the freedom to do anything in a society where women do not have freedom. Hosseini has pointed out one more thing of Afghan culture that they are just pretending not to do the things but in an actual situation, they are doing the things. Baba the father of Amir was telling to Amir not to stand with the neighbors but on the other side, Hassan was his illegitimate child. In this novel, another incident of Amir and Soraya is also given. When they met the first time they did not allow talking with each other. They talked when Soraya’s father was not around them. Even their marriage was decided they did not allow going alone and meeting. Amir says, *“Soraya and I never went out alone together while preparations for the wedding proceeded” [The Kite Runner, 148].*

The Kite Runner mostly deals with the role of men as the great part of the novel reflects men and the story revolves around male protagonists in the society of Afghanistan. Amir’s mother died while she was in child labor and Hassan’s mother fled when Hassan was born. Amir recalls that *“there was a picture of my parents’ wedding night, Baba dashing in his black suit and my mother a smiling young princess in white” [The Kite Runner, 5].* Only the portrait of the Emir's mother remembers his mother. The absence of his mother is marked from this scene as it is only a memory for Amir and Baba.

Amir's description of the images shows the dominance of men and their important role in the traditional family Amir recalls that *"I am a baby in that photograph and Baba is holding me, looking tired and grim. I'm in his arms, but its Rahim Khan's pinky my fingers are curled around"* [The Kite Runner, 5].

In this scene, Baba who is a man taking care of his child is tired which means he has to work both outside and inside of his house. The absence of Amir's mother to take care of her child shows that as a woman she sees everything as trivial. Kite Runner is a literary text that reflects the everyday experience of men and women in the Afghan context.

However, Hosseini highlights their role in ignoring women. By focusing on men and only writing about their affairs and doings, he implies that whether passive or active, Afghan women were not of significant importance in society. More than anything else they were objects to be used by men and any move that may give them a voice or presence is regarded dishonorable for their male relatives. Thus these women had to act as if they didn't exist. Afghan women even when living in the western world, are under the limitations of their homeland Afghanistan, because their society consists of their families and friends who are mostly Afghan. This is the case with Soraya. Again, all the events that surround her signify she is living in a patriarchal society where both men of her society as colonized and men of the colonizer rule over.

"Soraya and I never went out alone together while preparations for the wedding proceeded—since we weren't married yet, hadn't even had a Shirini-short, it was considered improper. So I had to make do with going over to the Taheri's with Baba for dinner. Sit across from Soraya at the dinner table. Imagine what it would be like to feel her head on my chest, smell her hair. Kiss her. Make love to her" [The Kite Runner, 169].

This is another manifestation of the oppression of various groups. Amir and Soraya can't spend quality time together even though they are engaged. Their society does not approve of this kind of behavior. However, the audience will only get a glimpse of the Emir's thoughts. Soraya is a passive character with no thoughts or willpower. The insignificant and insignificant role of women persists throughout the novel, which is evident in the role of Soraya. In one scene, Hossaini highlights the importance of men to each other, thereby depicting how unimportant women are. Women are again marginalized and inferior compared to men.

In his second novel, we see several examples of gender discrimination. Khalid Hossaini's *Thousand Beautiful Suns* tell the story of two Afghan women, Maryam and Laila. Hosseini's female characters were a symbol of the much oppressed Afghan femininity until they realized their power and fought for their identity. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* closely depicts the strong improvement of patriarchy in which women were marginalized, abandoned, betrayed, covered up, abused, and punished. All of the female characters from Nana to Aziza, the little daughter of Laila encounter the brutality of patriarchy. These female characters were treated unfairly by all men, including the Taliban. The power of patriarchy is represented by legitimacy, marriage, and gender.

Through Mariam and Laila Hosseini depicted the picture beautifully. Mariam is one of the major characters because she is one of the most often observed characters in the novel. She demonstrates her capacity to change or to grow. Mariam is an obedient child. Mariam is an illegitimate child of Nana and Jalil. Mariam lives with her mother, Nana. Nana usually calls her a harami. Her mother forbids her to go to school because the only thing Mariam can learn as a woman is how to endure life. Mariam later lives with her father after the death of her mother. In the father's house also Mariam was obedient. Mariam decides to get married to Rasheed because Jalil asks her to do so even she does not want to get married.

“Mariam cleans the house, makes sure Rasheed always has a supply of clean shirts, cooks him his favorite dishes” [A Thousand Splendid Suns, 105].

After the marriage, she always obeys her husband Rasheed. Mariam is an imaginative person. Mariam always imagines going to school. She imagines living with her stepbrother and stepsister as a big family. Mariam lives with her mother only.

“She gave herself over to the new life that awaited her in this city, a life with a father, with sisters and brothers, a life in which she would love and be loved back, without reservation or agenda, without shame”. [A Thousand Splendid Suns]

As a harami, it is impossible for Mariam to in her father's house. She just wants to live with her father. To make it real Mariam goes to Herat to meet her father. Mariam is a patient girl. After the death of her Nana, Jalil takes her to his house. Jalil's wife tells Mariam that she is to be married off to Rasheed in Kabul. Mariam didn't react to this.

“You have a suitor Khadija said.

Mariam's stomach fell. ‘A what?’

A khastegar. A suitor. His name is Rasheed

As Jalil's wives began a new and more sprightly- round of reassuring.

Mariam looked down at the table”.

From this, it can be seen that she is very patient to face a bad situation like this. Even though she doesn't want to get married, she still stands silently.

"I am sorry Laila jo. I am not smart like you. He asked so many questions, I didn't know the answer".

This is the statement after she was being interrogated by the police. From this, it is clear that Mariam is an honest person. She cannot tell a lie to other people.

It was common for the Afghan patriarch to decide the fate of the womenfolk. They determined what ought to they wear, wherever ought to they are going, whether or not they ought to be educated or not, once and to whom ought to they marry, and the way long. The two males Jalil and Rasheed are truth agents of sexism; they may with success implement their political system over the weak, helpless, feminine characters within the fiction. Rasheed, United Nations agency was sixty, might skilfully lure the fourteen-year-old Laila once she was parentless and create her marry him. Rasheed was in nice hope that Mariam can bore him as a boy kid, however, once she falls within the prospect of constructing him a father he descends to be a cruel abusive man. She was not treated as a woman however a lot below a slave. He gave her orders and perpetually found faults along with her change of state and alternative menage works. Once Mariam makes an attempt to clear her purpose on a number of his trivial arguments he seems to point out his sick temperament and vanity.

And as her heart pounded, her mind puzzled what excuse he would use that night to pounce on her. There was perpetually one thing, some minor issue that will incense him, as a result of regardless of what she did to please him, regardless of however completely she submitted to his needs and demands, it wasn't enough. She couldn't offer her son back. During this most essential means, she had unsuccessful him – seven times she had unsuccessful him – and currently she was nothing however a burden to him. She might see it within the means he checked out her once he checked out her. She was a burden to him. [ATSS, 98]

Aziza, Laila's girl is another feminine figure UN agency whither beneath the clutches of the patriarchate. Her father unloved her for being a lady and ne'er thought of her as his kid. Rasheed says to Laila: "If the flowery ought to strike American state [Rasheed]...I would be inside my rights to relinquish Aziza away" (ATSS, 282). Her condition worsens once Zalmai was born. He was treated with several privileges by his father, he bought him several gifts and toys together with a receiver even once they had a money crisis. It had been finally Aziza UN agency suffered for her father's love for her brother, she was sent to the orphanage once they suffered a money crisis.

Religion acts as a very important thing about oppressing girls in conjunction with the politics within the country. Through the patriarchs and also the ruler's UN agency observes Muslim spiritual rituals, the womenfolk are marginalized and suppressed. Despite the fact that Rasheed pretends to be a devout Islam his acts prove that he's not. He won't to keep sexy magazines and want to take alcohol that is prohibited for Islam. He doesn't observe any of the Muslim rituals properly like Ramadan, despite the fact that Islam teaches the importance of observant them. We discover him sore and angry at the time of Ramadan. Rasheed isn't higher than the Taliban in suppressing the ladies. Like them, he created his wives to wear a garment in the image of physical property. Islam ne'er insisted on any dress code for his or her men and ladies however we have a tendency to Rasheed compelling his wives to wear the garment within the name of faith. I actually have customers, Mariam, men, UN agency bring their wives to my search. The ladies come back uncovered; they discuss with the American state directly, look American state within the eye while not shame. They wear makeup and skirts that show their knees. Generally, they even place their feet ahead of the American state, the ladies do, for measurements, and their husbands stand there and watch. They permit it. They suppose nothing of a trespasser touching their wives' blank feet! They suppose they're being trendy men, intellectuals, on account of their education, I suppose. [ATSS, 69]

Jalil associated Rasheed's use of faith as an agent to exercise their personal fancies on the ladies. Islam has given provision for men to observe spousal relationships beneath restricted conditions, however, several men took it as a chance to possess a liaison life. Jalil UN agency was married thrice wasn't condemned even by his family once they found that he had slept with the domestic Nana. Although Mariam showed her disapproval for Rasheed's second wedding with Laila he unheeded her and touched on it together with his call. He simply nonchalantly says to her that several of his friends have four or five wives.

The politics in Afghanistan had been acting as machinery in torturous the womenfolk. Whether or not it's the autarchy, foreign occupation or the Taliban monocracy the plight of the ladies was similar. There was a time after they enjoyed several privileges in a very society like education, university degree, job, and therefore the utmost freedom to try and do what they want. We'll surprise at the pathetic fate of ladies who had enjoyed a lot of freedom and liberty before the Taliban take over within the country.

Man's read on ladies supported whether or not or not that lady is carrying a burka. Burka symbolizes a decent lady. If there's a lady who doesn't wear a burka, men can suppose that she could be a dangerous lady and she or he encompasses a dangerous husband too. Like Mariam, Laila additionally shows her struggle to induce the liberty of selection in her life. She is such a rebellious person so as to induce gender equality. It will be seen from the method she shows her disagreement toward the condition of ladies in her society. It's common for a lady to possess a relationship with a boy. Laila encompasses a relationship with Tariq. All the folks around them observe it. Laila realizes her rights as a lady in society. She criticizes the stereotypes of ladies that society forms. Society thinks that it's common for a lady to possess a lover and build an in-depth relationship.

Laila's characteristics of being a rebellious person show that as a lady she is liberal to do one thing that she needs, regardless of however society

views what she will. Laila lives in a very non-secular society. She has sex with Tariq. As a result of she loves him and needed to try and do, therefore.

"What about the law then, Officer Rahman?" tears of rage stung her eyes.

"Will you be there to maintain order?"

"As a matter of policy, we do not interfere with private family matters, hamshira."

"Of course you don't. When it benefits the man. And isn't it?". [A Thousand Splendid Suns]

In society, the act of Tariq and Laila is taboo and positively illegitimate in Afghan society. Ladies don't seem to be allowed to mention one thing vocal-like what Laila will. Within the station, Laila shows her thoughts of the law that the Taliban makes to ladies. She criticizes the law underneath the Taliban coping with women's oppression by their husbands. Laila tries to interrupt patriarchies. Laila realizes that, therefore, she tries to vary it through its troublesome. Laila has the associate perspective of being assured as a lady that reflects the struggle against gender discrimination.

Mariam could be a Christ figure within the novel. Even Mariam had been defeated and marginalized since her birth she resurrects sort of a phoenix and marks her existence before the planet. The peace and happiness that Laila and her kid's relish is nothing aside from a most precious gift given by Mariam. Once she succumbs to death, she is really living her life to its fullest within the hearts of Laila and her kids.

"You will stay inside your homes at all times. It is not proper for women to wander aimlessly about the streets. If you go outside, you must be accompanied by a mahram, a male relative. If you are caught alone on the street, you will be beaten and sent home." [A Thousand Splendid Suns]

There are fewer rights that ladies and girls will get below the reign of the religious movement. Women's main selection is simply staying reception. The religious movement had positioned girls in associate degree inferior position to men.

Khalid Hosseini through his novel *The Thousand Splendid Suns* had voiced for the voiceless, victimized Afghan girls. He might with success implement the thought of Feminist Sisterhood that seeks commonness of ladies to overthrow the political, religious, and social structure within the fiction. Each Mariam and Laila represent the defeated girls' hood, and also the sisterhood that they shared gave them hope to fight back against all suppressions and eventually hold their dreams. The novel is really a tribute to defeated womanhood.

Hosseini's novels deal with the hardships Afghan people had to endure during the last century. While the focus of one is primarily on men, the other book solely deals with the hardships of women. But the persistent thing in these two novels is the way women are ignored. Even in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* which tells the story of female misery in Afghanistan, it focuses on the marginalization and otherness of women. *The Kite Runner*, Hosseini's approach to depiction ladies is that the same as Afghanistan's society. During this story, women are of no vital importance in presence or voice. They're passive, silent, and negligible. They're either someone's woman, daughter, or mother, with no opinion or selection of their own. Their sole responsibility is bearing kids and acting consistently with social norms to not stain the family's honor. There's a conventional read concerning gender that believed that gender is connected to biology in order that there exists a binary with classes of male and feminine. In this sense, gender is natural, innate, and stable since birth suggests that what might not be modified.

Moreover, it is argued that people are not born with masculine or feminine behaviors and characteristics, but gender identity is nurtured,

developed, and molded within a culture and society. People are expected to take action according to the norms within that culture and are socialized and gendered based on these social codes.

Mariam and other Afghan women become molded the way that colonizing system desires. Such shaping the personality of Mariam and other Afghan women in Afghanistan can later result in shaping their gender which is the matter of culture and society. Moreover, power relations that dominate society contribute to the formation of gender among these colonized women. Therefore, these women's sense of the self is partly shaped by others who live around them. If they see positive attitudes from them it helps them to build their self-esteem.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

Khaled Hosseini belongs to a rustic wherever a person's identity is outlined by the family to that he belongs. This is often mirrored throughout all his works wherever family remains the central theme. He delves into a world of fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, and friends and foes with all their manifest complexities and contradictions. Be it the daddy and son within the *Kite Runner* or mother and female offspring in and therefore the *Mountains Echoed*, Hosseini explores the magnitude of emotions that the characters have for every different beneath tight circumstances. He says: —I am keenly interested in the way parents and children love, disappoint, and in the end honor each other. All his novels are filled with the joyful spirit of a typical afghan family whether in its motherland or in the diaspora. In his interview Hosseini states that in his novels: —*it is ultimately love that draws characters out of their isolation, that gives them the strength to transcend their own limitations, to expose their vulnerabilities, and to perform devastating acts of self-sacrifice.* (2003).

Both of Khaled Hosseini's novels *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* shed light on the significance of friendship and the struggles in maintaining it with one-way communications. By comparing all the characters in the novels, it is evident that the process in which a relationship is made and sustained becomes struggling and the people in the relation face hardship in keeping together if there is only one person involved in sustaining it. While Amir and Hassan face issues in their relationship, it's attainable to imagine a poor kid risking his life for the supposed friend that owns him and reciprocally not even obtaining sympathy. Once it involves life challenges, Amir, Hassan, Mariam, and Laila demonstrate that the issue of the challenge doesn't matter. It's the person related to you in facing the challenge that matters as a result of that person beside you may be your soul friend.

From the Analysis, within the novel, Mariam is delineated as an associate dutiful lady, whereas Laila is rebellious. This characteristic of Mariam forms her to conform to all the principles for ladies in her society though really she criticizes those rules to indicate her struggle against gender discrimination. Laila is completely different from Mariam. She could be a good, courageous, confident, and freelance person. This makes her responsive to her rights as a lady. Rarely will Laila conform to the principles in society. Laila shows one thing completely different to society that girls aren't weak.

The society that Mariam and Laila live in also matters. They live in a patriarchal society where there is imbalance relationship between men and women within which women are positioned to be subordinate to men. The society itself has some rules and regulation that has to be followed by women. They should obey all the orders from men. Their society was uneducated and conservative. Women have limited freedom of choice. Women also have a lack of opportunity for education and career. Many women get oppressed by their husbands in their marriage and they get unfair treatment in front of the law of the Taliban. Women have no other choice to accept the activities in the house especially under the reign of the Taliban.

We could see how the women characters struggle against gender discrimination. They have different characters, so they faced the struggles differently. Women cannot make any kind of decision in a patriarchal society. If Mariam finds anything which is not true for she will criticize. It happens when she criticizes the condition of girls in her society and her marriage. She criticizes Rasheed when asks her to wear a burqa and when he wants to get married again to Laila. Because of the men around her, it is difficult for her to gets gender equality. The final struggle of Mariam is when she kills Rasheed. Mariam realized that a woman cannot be feared in marriage by a man appears. It arises her struggle against men's domination towards her life and gets equality in her marriage and the society. Mariam was illustrious within

the jail for her offense. Mariam is one in every of the only a few girls in Asian countries that have committed against the law.

Laila's struggle against gender discrimination is shown by her temperament. She often makes decisions that contrast with her society. Laila does something that women in her society are afraid to do so. After her marriage, Laila is not afraid to fight against her husband because he oppresses her, while in society a wife should always obey her husband. Laila believes that men and women are created equal and having the same opportunity in society, therefore, Laila does not agree with the law about going outside the house with a male relative for all women in Afghanistan.

We can conclude that Hosseini points out the value of relationships. How beautiful it is to have some good souls. Through this novel, he shows the small things that value the most. The qualities we should maintain throughout our life to have positivity and peace. We also come across that no matter what we face we will come out of it easily when we have a beautiful relationship. Hosseini also drew the real picture of women how strong they are. Women know how to deal with problems. Every individual has their own space and it is meant for them only. It is her right to express her feelings. Everybody should be treated as an individual and not based on their gender.

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