



GENDER INJUSTICE IN NURUDDIN FARAH'S NOVELS: EXPLORING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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Abstract

Violence against women and minorities in the name of religion, class, caste, gender is a threat to humanity in all over the world. All developed as well as undeveloped countries show their brutal, savage, uncivilised and atrocious nature to hegemonize and dominate the half part of the world i. e. female. The violence against women does not mean only physical violence. It is much broader and includes sexual, emotional, psychological and financial abuse. This paper delves into the thematic exploration of gender injustice, with a specific focus on the portrayal of violence against women in the novels of Nuruddin Farah. Farah, internationally acclaimed Somali novelist, address socio-political issues including gender inequality and various forms of violence in his works. This paper aims to analyse and critically assess the representation of gender injustice in selected novels of Farah and shed light on various forms of violence inflicted upon female characters. By examining the cultural, political, and historical context within which these novels are situated, the paper seeks to unravel the complex dynamics contributing to gender-based violence in Farah's literary works.

Keywords: Gender Injustice, Violence against Women, Uncivilised and Atrocious nature, Hegemony.

INTRODUCTION

Before the independence, Somalia was the colony of European rulers namely British, French and Italy and the territory was divided into several regions such as the Southern Somaliland and the Northern Somaliland. On

July 1, 1960, the two regions united to form the Somali Republic. This unification was a significant moment in Somali history as it marked the end of colonial rule. But after independence, Somalia experienced political instability as the Republic government was unable to cope with the nepotism and

corruption. So that in 1969, Major General Mohamed Siad Barre seized power in a military coup, overthrowing the civilian government. He became a ruthless dictator and ruled the nation from 1969 to 1991. He waged war against Ethiopia in July 1977 and lost in March 1978. That led to the revolt in army which eventually resulted into a civil war and clan base combat in Somalia. This power vacuum and absence of central government marked by humanitarian crisis in Somalia. To restore stability and order, to provide food aid, and political reconciliation The United States sent military forces in Somalia in 1992. It lasted for four years but cannot find out the desirable resolution to Somali condition. So that, the end of Republic Government, overthrowing of Berre's dictatorship, fail task of international intervention helped for the eruption of civil war, clan politics and warlords combats in Somalia that became the reason of extended atrocities and unjust against women in Somalia. This persistent conflict and war affect the mentality of women and creates the feeling of powerlessness and inferiority among them. They became psychologically depressed and traumatized.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF LIFE AND LITERARY CAREER

Nuruddin Farah, one of the leading postcolonial authors from African continent, especially from Somalia, achieved his fame in the World literary cannon as a novelist, essayist, dramatist and short-story writer in 21st century. Farah keeps his country alive through his literary work and provides access to the Third World country scholars like us to work on the culture, society and literature.

Nuruddin (means a light of religion) Farah was born in 1945 in Baidoa, in the Italian Somaliland. In 1947 his family moved to Kallafo, British occupied region of Ogaden where he received his primary education at Shashamane School. After his primary education at Shashamane the family move to Mogadishu in 1963 to escape from the war. He continued his

secondary education in Mogadishu at the Institute di Magistrale di Mogadishu at Teacher Training College. After his secondary education, he worked briefly in the Ministry of Education in Somalia. He went to India in 1966 to study philosophy and literature at Punjab University in Chandigarh and completed his bachelor degree in 1969. In 1974 he went to England and completed his master degree in theatre from the University of Essex.

His literary career span more than five decades comprising 13 novels, five plays, few short stories and number of essays. His novels are *From a Crooked Rib* (1970), *A Naked Needle* (), first trilogy *Variation on the Theme of an African Dictatorship* comprises *Sweet and Sour Milk* (1979), *Sardines* (1981) and *Close Sesame* (1983), second trilogy *Blood in the Sun* comprising *Maps* (1986), *Gifts* (1993), and *Secrets* (1998) and last trilogy *Past Imperfect* includes *Links* (2004), *Knots* (2007) and *Crossbones* (2011). His most recent novels are *Hiding in plain Sight* (2014) and *North of Dawn* (2018). His plays are *A Dagger in Vacuum* (1970), *The Offering* (1975), *A Spread of Butter* (1978), *Yussuf and His Brother* (1982) and *Tartar Delight* (1984).

He wondered all over the world including United State, Britain, Los Angeles, Germany, Nigeria, Gambia, Sudan, Uganda, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, India and South Africa and worked as a visiting lecturer at various universities. He was earned various awards and fellowship for his writing such as UNESCO fellowship in 1974, Corman Artist Fellowship in 1990, English Speaking Literary Award for *Sweet and Sour Milk* in 1980, Best Novel award for *Gifts* in 1991, Premio Cavour Award for Italian translation of *Close Sesame* in 1994, Neustadt International Prize for Literature in 1998 and St. Malo Literary Festival Award for French edition of *Gifts* in 1998.

SIGNIFICANCE OF FARAH IN SOMALI LITERATURE

In the colonial period Somali literature, especially poetry was the predominant form of

the literature and was the monopoly of the Ulema/Sheikhs or Islamic religious men who wrote poems in Arabic for private consumption. According to Andrzejewski the prose fiction in Somali literature has its beginning in 'the era of the lute' that is from 1944 to 1969 (roughly span for 25 years in both period colonial and independent) and he classify the writers of this era into three distinct groups. These groups are the preservers, the transmuters and the innovators. The first group, the preserver attempts to preserve the vast verbal art of Somali language for posterity. They collect and preserve perishable oral literature from extinction. The second group, the transmuters attempt to revitalise the present to the past. They transmute, what belong to oral literature and adopts it to the need of written. They not only preserve what is already their but to create a new form. The third group, the innovators, is belong to the post-revolutionary era. They adopted Somali orthography and wrote their creative works in Somali language. Their main focus is the agenda of scientific socialism propagated by Said Barre.

As said above, the transmuter group gives way to a new wave of writers, the growth and development of novel writing in English starts in this group with Farah. He used English language in his all novels to present history and culture of Somalia to the world.

Somalia is a part of Sub-Saharan African countries like Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda etc. In African countries, many writers present the essence of Africa in their writing. Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Ben Okri, Nadine Gordimer, Mariama Ba, Ayi Kwei Armah, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and Nuruddin Farah are the few African writers who dealt with a range of social and cultural issues of African continent. They have a unique voice and style, and their works often reflect diverse cultural, historical, and political contexts. The impact of colonialism on African societies and their commitment to decolonize African literature is one of the major

themes in the writing of these writers. But there are some aspects that differentiate Nuruddin Farah from the mentioned writers. His works often delve into the complex sociopolitical landscape of Somalia, exploring themes of war, displacement, and identity. His works are known for their political engagement, addressing issues such as dictatorship, civil conflict, and the impact of political turmoil on individuals and communities in Somalia.

His revolutionary nature forced him to live in exile (for 22 years in general and 24 years in particulars) in Europe and North America, where he taught language and literature in the university of various countries. Though he lived abroad, his all 13 novels set in Somali speaking lands and portrait the multilevel aspects of Somali culture, history, community, language and religion. Most of his novels portrayed the ongoing political, social, national and cultural turmoil of Somalia. As Patricia Alden and Louis Tremaine in the preface of their book stated, "*Farah's novels have multidimensional characters . . . and his novels straddle interdisciplinary areas of Somali history and culture.*" Nadine Gordimer described him as "*one of the real interpreters of experience on our troubled continent,*" while Chinua Achebe observed that Farah "*excels in giving voice to tragedy in remote places of the world that speak directly and familiarly out to our own hearts.*"

THEMES OF GENDER INJUSTICE IN FARAH'S NOVELS

Somali society is exorbitantly patriarchal in structure. Thereupon merciless, brutal and unjust in its dealing with women. It is one of the hellacious and horrifying places for women to live in. Patriarchy is a problem in Somalia, where women are regarded as inferior creatures. All women in patriarchal societies are oppressed and deprived of their own rights to be treated equally and to be offered the same opportunities that are offered to men. Societal development in terms of women's rights, among other things, has gone backwards during

the civil war over the last five decades. Women in Somalia are not only deprived of the economic empowerment that men have but are also treated like property, owned either by their husbands or by their male relatives. Nuruddin Farah, feminist male writer from Somalia, challenged this gender injustice in most of his novels. His novels *From a Crooked Rib*, *Sardines*, *Gifts*, *Knots*, *Hiding in Plain Sights* and all the other are staunch attacked on patriarchal society, bartered marriages, use of barbaric system of female genital mutilation, political violence, sexual violence, class, ethnicity, and religion and all male dominated discourses that stereotype women in art and literature.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This paper mainly focused on gender injustice and violence against women in the works of Nuruddin Farah. It explores the various forms of violence against women depicted in the novels of Farah. It also analysed the socio-political as well as cultural context of Somalia that affects the portrayal of women in the sense of gender injustice. This paper critically assessed the impact of gender-based violence in the narrative and character development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Though it is said that Feminism has its beginning in the late 19th century and early 20th century, it is deeply rooted in the works of John Stuart Mill's *The Subjugation of Women* and Mary Wollstonecraft's *The Vindication of Rights of Women*. Both of them assert the rights of women before the starting of feminist movement. The movement in 20th century spread all over the world and feminist like Simone de Beauvoir, Betty Friedan, Mary Wollstonecraft, Fredrika Beamer and so on attacked the patriarchal structures and demand equal rights in the society. They said that woman is not born but made by the society so that they challenged this traditional norm of gender discrimination on the basis of biological, cultural, social, religious

and political factors and advocate equal rights in the society.

This western feminism has divided into three phases by American feminist Elaine Showalter and these phases are feminine, feminist and female. In the first phase feminists focus on legal issues and they demand the rights to vote. It challenging discriminatory laws and promote legal equality between men and women. In the second phase feminist advocates issues of birth control, abortion rights, and women's control over their bodies. The third phase is the phase of self-discovery and self-rule in which feminists address such issues that affects women globally. This phase established the connection between the feminist scholars globally and address the global issues of sexual assault, workplace harassment, and LGBTQ rights.

Elaine Showalter and other feminists challenged this inequality and took more efforts to change the stereotyping of women. She coined the term gynocriticism where only female texts were discussed and misrepresentation of female by male writers were challenged. But all the feminist theories, groups and waves of western feminism remained only theory in the context of third world women. The western feminist movement which grappled in its own ideology, cannot capture the experiences of third world females. The most celebrated writers and thinkers generally did not adequately consider the plight of black women. So that few African scholars revolt against it and started alternative theory that could discuss the problem of African women. Bell Hooks states that "*we did not see womanhood as an important aspect of our identity. Racist, sexist socialization had conditioned us to devalue our femaleness and to regard race as the only relevant label of identification. In other words, we were asked to deny a part of ourselves – and we did. . . , we argued that sexism was insignificant in light of the harsher, more brutal reality of racism.*" (Hooks, 01)

The African feminists who challenged the western feminist ideology are Sojour Truth, Anne McClintock, Bell Hooks, Audre Lorde, Angela Davis, Patricia Hill Collins, Alice Walker, Clenora Hudson-Weems, Patricia McFadden, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, and Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi and so on. To talk about the African or Black feminism, then it can be said that the movement focused not only on black females but females around the globe. Alice Walker, a black writer for the first time used a word "Womanism" for all the females of the world. Later Barbara Smith an Afro American writer used a word "Sisterhood" to express that she was not writing only for herself but all the women in the world.

But the 'womanism' of Alice Walker, the *Africana womanism* of Clenora Hudson-Weems and 'sisterhood' of Barbara Smith is challenged by the indigenous feminists. The concept of global sisterhood is rejected and the alternative ideology of indigenous feminism or '*African Womanism*' is developed by them to shed the light on the problems of indigenous women. The best examples of this indigenous feminism are Omolara Ogundipe-Leslie's concept of '*Stiwanism*' which focused on inclusive role of women in social and political transformation of African, Catherine Acholonu's concept of '*motherism*' is an 'Afrocentric alternative to feminism', in which she integrates the African ideals of womanhood, wifehood, and domesticity and Obioma Nnaemeka's concept of *Nego-feminism*. All these concepts proposed by African feminists focuses on the needs of African women. It means that African feminism shows its respects to those cultural discourses which are not exploitative and oppressive to women and rejects those which are oppressive such as female genital mutilation, forced marriages, exclusion of girls from education and inheritance rights, virginity testing, widowhood practices, breast ironing and sexual ritual cleansing etc. Finally, it seems that all forms of African feminism discussed the gender roles in African context focusing on racism, neo-

colonialism, (cultural) imperialism, women's sexual and reproductive rights, socio-economic gender exclusion and exploitation, political disengagement, religious fundamentalism and extremism.

METHODOLOGY

The novels of Nuruddin Farah, that prominently features the theme of gender injustices and gender inequality are selected and analysed focusing on narrative techniques, character development and cultural and historical context that affects the lives of Somali women. To understand and investigate the gender inequality, different aspects of feminist theory were considered as a base and comparative and analytical approach is used by the researcher to analyse the themes of gender injustices and violence. All these methods are appropriate for the present study.

FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Nuruddin Farah, only Somali writer who write in English, wrote about political upheaval, constant ongoing wars and its impact on Somali society. His all, 13th novels spanned five decades of socio-political history of Somalia in which he captured social, political, cultural and religious aspects of Somali society that affects the lives of Somali women in multiple ways. Women in Somalia are always under the constant threat of political, sexual, religious and cultural violence. The basic social structure of Somalia is nomadic pastoralist and that is patriarchal in nature. This patriarchal structure dominates women at both private and public levels. At the private level family became one of the brutal and oppressive structures in Somali society in which bartered marriage system, force marriages or polygamy, female genital mutilation or infibulation and motherhood are the basic exploitative structures which maintained patriarchal domination and manipulate women as submissive. At the public level the prolonged conflict and political instability, clan centred politics and civil war, cultural norms and traditional practices, human trafficking and forced labour, limited

educational and economic facilities, and lack of legal protection are some of the structures of violence and exploitation of women in Somalia. According to Patricia Alden and Louis Tremaine Farah invites reader to attend women's oppression, focusing in particular on three ways in which women are controlled directly or indirectly by men: female circumcision, male prerogatives with respect to marriage, and rape. Through this paper, researcher extensively explored these three themes from the novels of Farah to record the injustices and violence against women in Somalia.

His most of the novels explored the sociopolitical issues that highlight the gender inequality in patriarchal Somali society. The **bartered marriage or polygamous marriage** is the prevailing issue explored by Farah in his novels. His first novel *From a Crooked Rib* began with elopement of main character Ebla to escape from this bartered marriage system. Her grandfather bartered her to the old man Giumaleh in the exchange of camel without her consent. In *Belet Wene*, when she reached at the house of her distance cousin, she worked hard to help him and his wife Aowralla. But her cousin sold her to the broker like an animal. When she come to know the decision of her cousin, she ran away with another man Awill to Mogadiscio. She married him as her dream husband and become his wife, but he treated her as his property and left her alone in that city with a widow, a tenant named Asha, after a week of their marriage. When Ebla comes to know that she is cheated by her husband, she decided to cheat him. She secretly married an old wealthy man named Tiffo and extract money from him but he too cheated her. She expresses her subordinate and unfortunate position and helplessly said: "A man needs a woman. A woman needs a man. Not to the same degree. A man needs a woman to cheat, to tell lies to, to sleep with. In this way a baby is born, weak and forlorn" (F.C.R., 12). All these experiences of Ebla show the condition of women in Somali

culture and their plight to be free from patriarchal domination.

The same theme is explored in his next novel *Sardines* in the context of older characters such as Fatima Bin Thabit and Idil. Both of them lost their first husband with whom they married without their consent. Fatima Bin Thabit's first husband commit suicide because of Gad Thabit, her father's maltreatment to him. She again married Barkhadle, an infant, found on the doorstep of the church, without her consent. But she was not happy with him. Idil lost her first husband in the war and then without her consent, she handed over by the patriarchal society to the brother of dead husband. After the death of second husband, she was compelled to exchange her body for a bread and butter with the restaurant owner. But no matter how they are subordinated and maltreated, both of them are traditional women and stand to uphold the culture of oppression without any protest.

The theme of customary marriage is explored in *Gifts* by Nuruddin Farah where the protagonist Duniya is offered by her father to his friend Zubair, a blind man, three time old to her. He has died as early as in the novel, offering Duniya two children Mataan and Nasiiba. After his death Duniya left the village and went to Mogadiscio, where she offered herself to Taariq, tenant-cum-husband and a heavy drunkard journalist, with whom she has another child Yarey. He is over demanding and sex driven person according to Duniya. As a single parent she suffered throughout the novel and depends on the men such as uncles, half-brothers, and husbands, *whose charge she is, and in whose houses she is temporarily accommodated*. At the end of the novel, she married with Bosaaso, her true love. At the beginning of the novel, she admits that although she has been married twice, she has never been in love, and she feels that Bosaaso would at last provide such a love.

The theme of force marriage is used in Farah's *Knots* in different way in this novel

Cambara, the protagonist twice married to Somali men in her adopted place Toronto. She married Zack, her cousin because of her mother's, Arda's interest, to acquire him Canadian citizenship and as such her marriage remains on paper. Cambara, later files divorce papers and marries Wardi. Her second marriage was not smooth, it turned a violent one a common type of violence found in closed Western doors. The second marriage of Zaak is also violent one in which he treats his wife very cruelly so that she left him and he get arrested by the police. Other women in this novel who are the victims of this force marriages are Kiin, Jijo and Raxma. They fought against the patriarchal structure in the novel. These examples of bartered marriages or force marriages show how female are exploited by this social structure. It is the tool that hegemonize women in Somalia. But all these characters revolt against it in a different way.

Infibulation, form of Female Genital Mutilation or physical violence against women, is one of the cultural practiced used in Somalia and Nuruddin Farah focused on this practice in his most of the novels to show the cultural and social presser or violence against women. Through the use of this practice patriarchal structure of Somalia manipulate women to be submissive to the patriarchal discourse. Farah was the first creative writer from African country who attacked the trauma of female circumcision in his first novel *From a Crooked Rib* in which he provides a detail picture of infibulation through the eyes of Ebla, the protagonist of the novel. In Mogadishu she saw one of the female tenants carrying a young girl who is stained with blood spots on her dress and on the dress of women who carried her. Suddenly she remembered the painful and barbarous act performed by the traditional matriarchs in her childhood. She said, "there were only two times that she wished she had not been, and one of them was when she was circumcised. It was not only painful but a barbarous act, she thought. She recalled everything. They had sliced out

her clitoris and stitched the lips together, thus blocking the passageway, also leaving the small inlet for urinating through. They had tied her legs together, and she had been laid flat on the ground without any mattress or anything underneath her, for she would bleed on it. They have beaten drum when the girls cried, so that the beating of the drum would drown the crying. If a girl cried too much, they tucked a piece of cloths into her mouth. The wound would not heal, they had said, if the boy saw it or the woman who had just committed adultery. So the girls had been confined in a hut for a period of between ten or twelve days. She also recalled that other night of pain- the first time she had ever had sexual contact. It was with Awill, and it was very painful, indescribably painful. She had bled and he rejoiced seeing her blood, as his manhood depended upon breaking her chastity" (FCR, 149-50).

In this paragraph Farah provided a detail description of the procedure of circumcision not through the actual incident but through the memories of Ebla. When she saw the small girl and blood on the woman's dress, she compared the pain of that girl to her own life and the procedure undertaken to operate the bodies of female. She also remembered aftermath pain of this barbaric act when she was forced into sexual intercourse by Awill. Patricia Alden and Louis Tremaine said, "Farah repeatedly represents female circumcision as an excruciatingly painful practice that has serious repercussions throughout women's lives and as an ideological inscription upon women's bodies, practice by women in the service of the male construction of women as a way of controlling female sexuality" (NF, 131).

The example of infibulation is used again in *Sardines*, the part of dictatorship trilogy, in the form of generation gap. Medina, the protagonist of the novel is threatened by her mother-in-law Idil to infibulate her daughter Ubox. "Idil haunts Medina's and Ubox's walking and sleeping thoughts, a knife-wielding figure threatening" both of them. Medina herself experience pain, trauma, and ongoing health complications of infibulation and she does not want her daughter Ubox to be the part of that social and cultural violence. She

fought with Idil throughout the novel and protect her daughter from this age-old concept. Medina recalled the pain of her own circumcision and the complication it created for child birth. The memories of her pain show psychological impact of circumcision on Medina. That is clearly reflected through following conversation. She said, "I fear the descending knives which re-trace the scarred wound, and it hurts every instant I think about it. If they mutilate you at eight or nine, they open you up with a rusty knife the night they marry you off; then you are cut open and re-stitched. Life for circumcised woman is a series of deflowering pains, delivery pain and restitching pains. I want to spare my daughter these and many other pains. She will not be circumcised. Over my dead body" (Sardines, 62-63). She also recalled the incident of sixteenth year old American-born Somali girl's infibulation and started to cry. She thought that it is an act orchestrated as a part of the state's harassment of her dissident parents. She recalled how female are victimised in this war ridden country. She said, "the women hired by the newly-stipend chieftain plotted. One night, while the parents were asleep in their room, they dragged the girl out of her bed, tied her to the bed-post, gagged her mouth with a cloth and circumcised her. Poor thing" (Sardines, 97). The incident of circumcision is repeatedly used by Farah in his novels and *Gifts* is not exceptional to this. Duniya remembered the pain of her own circumcision when she saw the daughter of her hospital companion. Hibo's daughter is infibulated by her mother-in-law without her knowledge so she brought the girl in the hospital for the treatment early in the morning. From this incident Duniya seeks Taariq's "assurances that Yarey would not be made to under go the torture of infibulation" (G, 15).

Motherhood is a patriarchal discourse used in African society to institutionalize patriarchal domination. It is the tool to instil or inculcate the norms of ideal motherhood in the society and the key to control women's lives. Ideal motherhood focuses on legitimate relation and communal values of the society in which women are projected/constructed as an object

to men. This biological construction of women is one kind of violence against them in which they are forced to internalized their secondary roles. These roles bestowed upon them by their male relatives such as fathers, brothers and sons. In *Sweet and Sour Milk* Keynaan is such kind of brutal and atrocious father who said, "women are for sleeping with, for giving birth to and bringing up children; they are not good for any other thing" (SSM, 82). Gad Thabit is another brutal and uncivilised patriarch from *Gifts* who used religious doctrine to exploit and oppressed women. He said, "woman need a man to intercede for her and present her to Allah; a woman's god is her husband" (Sardines, 57). In *Gifts* Shiriye, Duniya's brother reassures her that "a woman needs a man by her side, for people to take her seriously and for the world's door to open so she may enter with her head raised and her person respected" (G. 80). All these quotes shows that women are represented by male negatively and inaccurately, as whores, witches and traitors of their blood, to confirm their secondary roles and men are presented as superior to govern and control female sexuality.

In Farah's novels motherhood is idealized and associated with nurturer and caregivers. Nationalism often exploits this symbol portraying mothers as the ultimate caregivers and protectors of the nation. But the political instability, dictatorship, civil war, clan-based fraction, religious dogmatism, famine and ever ending war of Somali society distorted the concept of ideal motherhood and created physical as well as emotional and psychological violence against women. Jijo, pathetic character from *Knots* is the victim of such harsh condition of Somali society. she desires for the motherhood in her marriage life but her pre-married sexual relation force her for abortion and that brings the doom in her life. Ebla, her daughter Sagal and Nasiiba's friend Fariida from *Gifts* are the victims of political instability and dictatorship regime in Somalia. Medina, the protagonist of *Sardines*, is a victim of emotional and psychological violence perpetuated by

politico religious totalitarian regime of Said Barre. Medina, foreign educated intellectual, challenged Barre's regime by writing against him in her journal so that she is punished by the government and loses her job as a chief editor of the national newspaper. To torture and suppress her, her husband is forced to accept the post of ministry.

The instances of physical violence against women were recorded by Farah in his most of the novels. The polygamous marriage system gives more access to old men, they get more benefits from this practice by marrying young woman. So that older women experience both economical and psychological harm and became the victim of male violence. the economical and sociopolitical condition of Somalia is vulnerable. This vulnerable condition of nation creates violence against women in many ways. Duniya, with her fellow nurses discuss the condition of nation where the lack of public transport, petrol shortages, power failure, shortages of essential goods in daily life is a *curse for women*. According to them this worse condition of nation gives more advantage to men for wicked intention and women became prey for them. They became the victim of flirtation, seduction, molestation, violent attack or even the gang-rape. The incident of Fariida's pregnancy is one kind of violence against her body as she cannot abort it because of social pressure and could not become the nurturing mother of the infant. She suffers a lot as she stayed at secret apartment for nine months with the help of her friend Nasiiba and deliver a baby without any medical helps. The suicide of Yussur, Bosaaso's wife and his child is a psychological violence presented in the novel. As she was unable to suckle her child and suffer a lot emotionally and physically so she commits suicide with her child.

The rape is most extreme form of violence used by men to control the women. Misra in *Maps*, Ebla in *From Crooked Rib*, Damac in *Secrets*, Duniya, Hibo and Fariida in *Gifts* and Edil, Medina, Amina in *Sardines* are the victim of such violence. The incidence of Amina's gang rape is

a political revenge according to the rapist. They oppose the state dictatorship because Amina's father belongs to ruling group and they rape her by way of punishing her father. In the middle of rape, they tell her "*We are doing this not to you but your father. Tell him that*". Her father was a minister in the government of Said Barre and he used his power to torture the clan's men of rapists. The rapists took the revenge not against him but his daughter and did not get any punishment by the government. Her father and the General wanted to cover up the politically motivated rape and allow her attackers to flee the country. Her father suggests Amina to forget the rape as it is an "*unfortunate disgrace*". As he affirms, "*In this country rape is not punishable as other crimes of violence. The characteristic compromise arrived is usually that the rapist marries the victim, accepts her hand in marriage in the presence of the elders of his clan and her clan. I am sure you wouldn't want to marry all three, I am sure you wouldn't want to marry even the one who is in prison. That's why we suggest that you leave the country and leave behind you the unfortunate disgrace*" (Sardines, 128).

Amina is fully frightened, her lips trembled as she saw the youth unbutton their trousers and cut with the knives, the blood spread on her thighs. After the incident she is found by group of male villagers but they refused to help her. But the wives of same elders helped her and provide her food and shelter. They said, "*the pain is ours, the fat and wealth and power is the men's*". Later on, she is helped by Medina and her group to encourage her and protect her from psychological trauma. They established a new kind of female centred family in which Medina, Ubox, Amina, Ebla, Sagal are the core members. All of them helped Amina and made her life meaningful. During this period (the period of Amina's pregnancy and psychological trauma) they went about together with Amina in middle, Ubox holding Amina's litter finger, for evening walk. They provided her so many gifts, books to read and company of

friends to chat and built a motorway of possibilities for her.

The story of Jijo from *Knots* is also the story of gang rape in which she is raped by the war lords and used as mistress. She is a kept woman after the collapse. She suffered the daily humiliation as all armed youths came and took her to fulfil their sexual desires. Later Gudcur, the warlord came and claim her as his mistress and continuously raped her. When Cambara met her, first she wins her trust as a woman and then she listens brutal treatment to Jijo. Jijo Said, "I do not know who you are or why I am pouring out my heart to you. You could say that misfortune is my second name. if I am holding back nothing, it is because I know that nothing can hurt me more than I hurt already" (*Knots*, 177). Cambara, herself experienced a physical violence in her marriage life as well as on the civil war roads of Mogadiscio. Once she has a physical fight with armed men but she rescued by Dajaal and Bile.

The Somali Civil War had devastating effects on all segments of Somali society, including women and children. It has resulted in widespread displacement of women in refugee camps and various forms of violence, including sexual violence, rape, and abduction were used to torture them. This harsh reality is used by Farah in his novels and *Knots* is the best example of it. In this novel the picture of displaced families of Gacal and SilkHair reported by the author. The father of Gacal is shot by the armed men and his mother is tortured, molested and raped without the notice of any authority and left to death. The parents of SilkHair and faced the same problem in this civil war situation. The confrontation of Cambara with four youths or child soldiers, who are not given the name by author, is one kind of harassment to women. Their conversation indicates their attitude towards women. MereBoy said, "my mother walks to the market veiled, please let's leave this woman alone. Can't you see? She is respectably veiled." Red-Eyed Randy whisper in ArmedCompanion's ears before saying to MereBoy, "I'll kick you in the teeth if you

don't shut your mouth. She is not like your mother or mine. She is a city-bred whore" (K. 165). The discussion among the nurses of Binaadir Maternity Hospital highlighted the pathetic condition of women in harsh reality of civil war.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

All the novels, selected for this paper, of Nuruddin Farah unfold the pathetic condition of women in war ridden country like Somalia. The patriarchal structure and nomadic pastoralist culture forced women in miserable condition. The system of force marriage or Polygamy is the main cause of women's exploitation, oppression and loss of self-determination. This patriarchal structure is encouraged for continuous exploitation of women by political unrest, civil war, foreign intervention and emergence of religious dogmatism in which women became puppets in the hands of male domain. They lost their all rights and became the objects to fulfil the sexual desires of men as depicted in the age-old system of infibulation or female genital mutilation. Whenever women lost their husband, this age-old patriarchal structure, handed them to the husband's cousin. If woman is a victim in sexual assault, society punished the rapist by forcing him to marry the victim. They are seen as nothing more than a commodity like other commodities in a house, property of the males of the family, and as owners, the men have the right to make decisions for them.

But Nuruddin Farah, through his female protagonists shattered the notion of patriarchy by presenting them revolutionary. As his first protagonist revolt against the system of forced marriage and ran away from the house but she long to be a wife throughout the novel. His second protagonist Medina revolt on the one hand, against the dictatorial regime and on the other patriarchal domination by webbing her own circle of women. She translates many classical books for the intellectual feeding of her circle. The third protagonist is Duniya who creates equal society in which gender

superiority is rejected by supporting to the mutual relationship between man and women. According to her relationship between men and women should be gift to each other. The fourth protagonist of this study is Cambara, who revolt against warlords and tries to maintain peace in Somalia. She reconstructs the Somali society by culturing SilkHair and Gacal and rescuing Jijio from the brutal warlord Gudcur.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study of gender injustice and violence against women in the novels of Nuruddin Farah reveals a profound and sobering portrayal of the struggle faced by women in Somali patriarchal society. Through his novels Farah shed a light on the multifaceted forms of discrimination and violence that women endured were silenced and ignored hitherto in Somali literature. He underscores the pervasive nature of inequality from every aspect of women's lives, from familial dynamics to societal structures. His protagonist dwelled in such a landscape that were fraught with many oppressions and in such a fraught landscape they create their own voice to challenge the prevailing norms of gender-based violence and injustices perpetuated by Somali society. Moreover, Farah's exploration of violence against women extends beyond physical brutality to encompass psychological and emotional abuse, highlighting the insidious ways in which power dynamics manifest. By delving into the complexities of these issues, he fosters a deeper understanding of the root causes and consequences of gender injustice, compelling readers to confront uncomfortable truths.

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