

## **I. Introduction to Adichie's *The Thing Around Your Neck* as a Postcolonial Feminist Fiction**

This research concerns with the popular Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's short story collection *The Thing Around Your Neck*. The book contains twelve short stories and represents several strata of lives of the Nigerian people in the country and abroad. Nigeria, an underdeveloped country, where there is extreme colonization of the Western countries like the U.S.A., faces several problems. Among them male domination over female and victimization by the male is one of the burning problems. Yorubaland was in fact, divided into smaller states. With the rise of these smaller states the conflict between the older traditions that governed the more rural parts of Nigeria and the new way of urban life started to become obvious. After colonization the Nigerian society was further emphasized through the colonial experience and its aftermath which left many Yorubans in an ambivalent position, especially those of them who become the intellectuals of the nation and who were born to the rich tradition of African believes and concept but bred according to importuned Western ideas and concepts. After the colonial period Nigerian people suffered through identity crisis, inbetweenness, and political chaosness. These types of problems are seen in Nigerian postcolonial literature too. But Adichie's writings are mainly based on the female experience of postcolonial Nigeria. During and aftermath the colonial period Nigerian people were dominated by Western' ideology, ruling system and imposed authority, even in that period Nigerian women's condition was far worse than Nigerian male because they were doubly marginalized. On the one hand they suffered equally like Nigerian male from colonial authoritarianism and on the other hand, they were facing many domestic problems because of male chauvinistic society. After the colonial period colonial legacy continued in Nigeria and other countries where Nigerian people lived. This research mainly attempts to

find out the postcolonial experiences of Nigerian women and their silence, resistance against the situation through minute textual analysis of the book *The Thing Around Your Neck* with the spectacle of postcolonial feminism.

Society, a complex web of the human relationship, includes several of the problems. Mostly in the underdeveloped countries like Nigeria there are abundant of social problems. In the places with the lack of things and where people's demands are not equally fulfilled, there exist several types of conflicts, tortures, exploitation, pains and suffering. And the Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie rightly captures the true essence of the society where females have been victimized. The problem lies in the viewpoint of seeing those female experiences since the critical perspective too is male chauvinistic, dislocation, marginalization and alienation of the females during the post colonial Nigeria are represented in the seminal work of Adichie. The analysis of the female experience in Nigeria and aboard during the postcolonial era is relevant in the present context of postcolonial uprising.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's stories consist of the female characters who represent the state of marginalization, victimization, and alienation of the Nigerian women at home and aboard. By analyzing them in the context of postcolonial Nigeria the state of double marginalization of the female will be foregrounded in this research.

Highly inspired by postcolonial critic and writer Chinua Achebe Chimamanda's work incorporates themes of political and domestic violence, tolerance, loyalty, family, national identity, self realization and the effects of colonialism on the collective and individuals. In her play, *For Love of Biafra* (1998), she chronicles the expectations and shattered hope of Nigerian family around the time of the Nigerian civil war in the late 1960s. Her writing explores the tension between Igbo and Western culture mainly through the experience of Nigerian women

from different strata and age groups. So that Adichie is highly praised for her unique writing style with female experience.

In the story collection *The Thing Around Your Neck* published in 2009, the writer turns her penetrating eye not only on Nigeria but also on America, in twelve dazzling stories that explore the ties that bind men and women, parents and children, Africa and the United States with a few telling details that do not portray one culture superior to the other. In “A Private Experience”, a medical student hides from a violent riot with a poor Muslim woman whose dignity and faith force her to confront the realities and fears she has been pushing away. In “Tomorrow Is too Far”, a woman unlocks the devastating secret that surrounds her brother’s death. In “Imitation”, a young mother finds her comfortable life in Philadelphia threatened when she learns that her husband has moved his mistress into their home in Lagos. “The Thing Around Your Neck” depicts the choking loneliness of a Nigerian girl who moves to America that turns out to be nothing like the country she expected though falling sixteen in love brings her desires nearly within reach, a death in her homeland forces her to re-examine them. *Searing and Profound* is suffused with beauty, sorrow and longing, the collision of two cultures, and the deep human struggle to reconcile them. *The Thing Around Your Neck* according to the back cover of the book, “is a resounding confirmation of the prodigious literary powers of one of our most essential writers”.

Adichie’s *The Thing Around Your Neck* (2009) has received considerable critical attention since its publication. Regarding as one of the Nigeria’s talented young writers, Adichie is acknowledged for her well crafted stories and novels that explore the political and personal repercussion of Nigerian history, particularly the strife of the Nigerian Civil War and the doomed Biafra secession in the late 1960s. Critics praise her thoughtful treatment of history and her sensitive and honest

depiction of the effects of war and brutality on the individual. In recent literary works, Adichie addresses the challenge of the immigrant experience, focusing on issues of national identity, language, and female experience. For example, the title story of the book, *The Thing Around Your Neck* is a fictional, strong but intelligent rehash of Adichie's Biafra postcolonial elite struggle and scrape stories of personal loss, individual realization, critics against colonial power and female experience and protest against male chauvinistic concept. *The Thing Around Your Neck* has been analyzed from various perspectives. The majority of critical commentary on Adichie's novel views the text from various perspectives. Bernadine Evaristo, the critical commenter, has said in *The Times*:

This stunning collection of short stories confirms Adichie's position on of Africa's brightest new literary stars. The author of two important novels, her writing is even more poignant when applied to the short story: crisp, succinct, vigorous and loaded. ... Like all fine storytellers, she leaves us wanting more. (4)

Evaristo's commentary is about the entire book that deals with the overall evaluation of the stories which he calls concise, vital and dynamic. He finds them interesting as they truly represent the Nigerian people's true experiences in an artistic way.

Similarly, *The Scotsman* points out "Adichie has shown herself a powerful writer, moving with disquieting ease from humour to horror, and anger to tenderness . . . This is storytelling as its very best, its roots in an ancient tradition, giving all that precedes it a poignant and sobering context" (7).

The newspaper rightly reviews the book as the best storyteller as it includes the different stories representing the different strata of Nigerian lives.

When we read the entire book it sometimes provides humour and sometimes horror. Jane Shilling in *The Times* (2 April 2009) points out:

Family and exile are recurrent themes in this collection: by compulsion or choice Adichie's subjects are often far from home; alienated from the comforting familiarity of place and culture by violence, fear or the hope of a better life. Adichie's birthplace of Nigeria is the lone star of the collection: the place from where her characters set off to seek education and wealth in far distant places, the home for which they yearn when they are away. (13)

Shilling's remark about the family exile and alienation are the true essence of the societies of Nigeria which have realistically been represented in the present novel.

Holloway McCandless in February 2, 2010 has pointed out :

In *The Thing Around Your Neck*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's first collection of short stories to follow her award-winning novels *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half a Yellow Sun*, headstrong girls and women make the best narrators—they're sassy, agitated, and predisposed toward action once their inner injustice detectors calculate the full measure of their circumstances. Whether their subjugation is political, familial, romantic, or cultural, Adichie's headstrong and heartstrong heroines reach a point where they take action to loosen whatever is choking them. That their actions are often risky or severe, and still seem inevitable, is a testament to Adichie's empathetic storytelling. (5)

McCandless's commentary on its female characters is crucial. Several of the the female characters in the stories are headstrong and heartstrong, who show the female resistance despite the torturous environment. These are the focus points of the feminist remapping. In *The Financial Times* Isobel Dixon says, "Adichie's spare, poised prose, the coolness of her phrasing, ensures these scenes are achieved without

melodrama. And though she writes very specifically about Nigeria, the stories have a universal application” (9).

Dixon’s remark truly captures the essence of literature. The artworks that represent the societies are certainly applicable to each society to some extent. The theme of motherhood and mistress, love and dislocation, violence and faith and the moments of the everyday epiphany that illuminate the beauty and desperation of everyday ordinary lives are found in almost all societies. Similarly, the most dominant aspect of the book is its representation of the female experiences of the Nigerian societies and aboard. The colonization of the Western culture and language has impoverished the underdeveloped Nigerian land more. In such environment the female of the country have gained more sufferings. There is an instant need of analyzing such theme based on this book, which the present researcher is trying to do.

Adichie writes ‘postcolonial’ stories, i.e stories of women living between worlds, struggling with identity, with mapping, navigating, and trespassing boundaries. Her work is directly in the tradition of writers as various as Wole Soyinka, Arundhati Roy, and Amitav Ghosh. Adichie never disappoints in this regard; she goes into the psychology of Nigerians in diaspora, she explores their pains, struggles and travails. Adichie celebrates their struggle and praises their determination and courage. Her words are strong and her thinking deep. She, like the people in her stories, must have passed through or witnessed some of the things talked about. She clings to her roots so tenaciously that all you get to see are Igbo characters and Biafra experiences. She needs to be more Nigerian and spread her narrative across the country. This, however, does not take anything away from the freshness of the stories told. She writes them well.

Considering the analysis of *The Thing Around Your Neck* will focus on the suffering of females and the way they resist patriarchal domination where the stylistic

of the author and role of characters given by the writer are the conscious method to resist the colonial patriarchy. So, the methodological tool to analyze the text will be the postcolonial feminism. Many feminists have contributed to postcolonial feminism by using written words to express their ideas and opinions - which have been of great importance to the postcolonial feminist movement. About post-colonial feminism Weedon C., in an article “Key Issues in Postcolonial Feminism: A Western Perspective,” says:

postcolonial feminism, often referred to as Third World feminism, is a form of feminist philosophy which centers around the idea that racism, colonialism, and the long lasting effects (economic, political, and cultural) of colonialism in the postcolonial setting, are inextricably bound up with the unique gendered realities of non-white, and non-Western women. (7)

Postcolonial feminists criticize Western feminists because they have a history of universalizing women's issues, and their discourses are often misunderstood to represent women globally.

Thus, one of the central ideas in postcolonial feminism is that by using the term 'woman' as a universal group, they are then only defined by their gender and not by social classes and ethnic identities. Also, it is believed by postcolonial feminists that mainstream Western feminists ignored the voices of non-white, non-western women for many years, thus creating resentment from feminists in developing nations. Another critic Kramarae and Spender in *Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women*, Vol. 3, 2000 says on Postcolonialism as:

Postcolonialism can provide an outlet for citizens to discuss various experiences endured during colonialism. These can include: migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race,

gender, place and responses to the influential discourses of imperial Europe. Postcolonial feminists see the parallels between recently decolonized nations and the state of women within patriarchy - both take the perspective of a socially marginalized subgroup in their relationship to the dominant culture. (22)

Postcolonial feminists have had strong ties with black feminists because colonialism usually contains themes of racism. Both groups have struggled for recognition, not only by men in their own culture, but also by Western feminists.

Postcolonial feminism emerged from the gendered history of colonialism: colonial powers often imposed Western norms on colonized regions. In the 1940s and 1950s, after the formation of the United Nations, former colonies were monitored by the West for what was considered "social progress". The status of women in the developing world has been monitored by organizations such as the United Nations and as a result traditional practices and roles taken up by women—sometimes seen as distasteful by Western standards—could be considered a form of rebellion against colonial oppression. Third-world feminism has been described as a group of feminist theories developed by feminists who acquired their views and took part in feminist politics in the so-called third-world countries.

Postcolonial feminism is critical of Western form of feminism, notably radical feminism and liberal feminism and their universalization of women's experiences. Postcolonial feminists argue that cultures impacted by colonialism are often vastly different and should be treated as such. Colonial oppression may result in the glorification of pre-colonial culture, which, in cultures with traditions of power stratification along gender lines, could mean the acceptance of, or refusal to deal with, inherent issues of gender inequality. As another writer S. Mills says about postcolonial feminism in "Postcolonial Feminist Theory" (1998), "Postcolonial



feminists can be described as feminists who have reacted against both universalizing tendencies in Western feminist thought and a lack of attention to gender issues in mainstream postcolonial thought.”(98), postcolonial feminism is the most suitable methodology to deal about female experience in postcolonial text.

Feminist discourse shares many similarities with post-colonial theory and for this reason the two fields have long been thought of as associative, even complementary. Firstly, both discourses are predominantly political and concern themselves with the struggle against oppression and injustice. Moreover, both reject the established hierarchical, patriarchal system, which is dominated by the hegemonic white male, and vehemently deny the supposed supremacy of masculine power and authority. Imperialism, like patriarchy, is after all a phallogocentric, supremacist ideology that subjugates and dominates its subjects. The oppressed woman is in this sense akin to the colonized subject. Essentially, exponents of post-colonialism are reacting against colonialism in the political and economic sense while feminist theorists are rejecting colonialism of a sexual nature. Similarly another postcolonial author Uma Narayan in "Essence of Culture and a Sense of History: A Feminist Critique of Cultural Essentialism" says:

Given the significant dangers that varieties of cultural essentialism pose to feminist agendas, I believe that the development of a feminist perspective that is committed to anti-essentialism both about 'women' and about 'cultures' is an urgent and important task for a postcolonial feminist perspective. Such a perspective must distinguish and extricate feminist projects of attending to differences among women from problematically essentialist colonial and postcolonial understandings of 'cultural difference' between Western culture and its 'Others. (89)

Uma Narayan deciphers into the difference between the women in the different cultures like the western and the others. Though the women in Western as well as in Others have long been victimized due to the patriarchy, the women in the 'Others' have been doubly victimized by the patriarchy as well as the colonialism.

As the researcher aims to apply postcolonial feministic approach to *The Thing Around Your Neck*, it will dig out the author's conscious resistance against patriarchy. The term 'resistance' in postcolonial studies, stands for an act of resisting colonial mission in physical, psychological, and other different levels. But the research will see the resistance of female figures against colonial patriarchal domination. Because after knowing the colonizers, colonized can react in a very strategic way to defend by strategy of colonial mission. In the post independent era as the colonizing mission is subtle and unidentified, the colonized respond to these strategies in a very strategic way. Benita Parry theories it as a rehearsal of "question about subjectivity, identity, agency and the states of reverse discourses an oppositional practice, posing problems about the appropriate models for contemporary counter- hegemonic work" (*Resistance Theory* 84). And in the story collection too, the female characters undergoes through various suffering along with the sense of resistance against patriarchy.

As a whole Adichie's collection of the stories recounts the account of the females of the Nigerian land who have been under the shackles of patriarchy as well as colonial hangover. The females in the colonized countries like Nigeria are not only victimized at home but also abroad. The kind of culture and tradition that they originally have are not in the proportion of the colonizers. However, due to the hegemonic influence of the colonizers they have migrated to the countries like the USA in search of relief from the stigma of the underdevelopment. They manage to migrate with a great difficulty and hope for the better life in those lands. No sooner they step onto the foreign lands they begin to be disillusioned. There they are

victimized not only by the colonizers but also by the people who have migrated from the third world countries like Nigeria and have linguistic and cultural affinity to them and even their own relatives. For example, in the story "The Thing Around Your Neck" the central character Akunna migrates to America where she is seduced by her own uncle who had been migrated there years earlier as he had opined that "America was give-and-take" (117).

The present research will decipher into the text on the basis of the postcolonial feminist worldview. Scanning the stories of Adichie's collection, the researcher will find out the instances of the typical female experiences, their subordination, vicimitization, and their resistance. This introduction section is followed by the textual analysis and conclusion . By finding out the experiences of the females in Nigerian land and aboard, it will reveal how treacherous are the patriarchal cum colonial treatments on the women and show the double marginalization of women .

## II. Exploration of Double Marginalization of Females in Adichie's *The Thing*

### *Around Your Neck*

*The Thing Around Your Neck* by Adichie explores the victimization of the females in Nigeria and abroad. Oppression of females is the collective consequence of the hegemonic influence of the colonial legacy and the patriarchal social system where the colonizers (and) males are always supposed to be powerful, whereas the females are considered to be the weaker being. The collection has got twelve short stories entitled "Cell One", "Imitation", "The Private Experience", "Ghosts", "On Monday of Last Week", "Jumping Monkey Hill", "The Thing Around Your Neck", "The American Embassy", "The Shivering", "The Arranges of Marriage", "Tomorrow Is Too Far", and "The Headstrong Historian". Commonly through the collection Adichie traverses a landscape and a mode of writing we have seen before, in the works of — for example — Bharati Mukherjee, Amy Tan, Chitra Divakaruni and Jhumpa Lahiri. And as with these writers, there is occasionally the feeling that these stories exhaust themselves too soon; they collapse under the weight of all that cannot be said in the terse, monochromatic sentences of the conventional Anglo-American short story. This is particularly the case in two stories about Nigerian women trapped in the United States by marriage, "Imitation" and "The Arrangers of Marriage." In both cases the narration reveals so little about the protagonists' inner lives that we begin to feel, a little uncomfortably, that Adichie is delivering the "news" the West wants to hear about Africa: pitiful victims, incorrigible villains, inspirational survivors.

The female characters like Nkem, Akuna, the narrator of the title story, Kmara, Dozie and others represent the true essence of the female victimization in Nigerian lands and abroad. The title story, told in the second person, exemplifies her prevailing theme of homesickness as a physical, as well as a metaphorical, malaise. The

unnamed 22-year-old narrator gains a longed-for American visa and goes to live with her uncle's family in Maine. "They spoke Igbo and ate 'garri' for lunch and it was like home," recalls the girl, "until your uncle came into the cramped basement where you slept and pulled you forcefully to him, squeezing your buttocks, moaning... And you remembered what he said, that America was give-and-take" (116). The male members who have been migrated to the United States from Nigeria have been such a pendulum that they have forgotten their cultural ethics and pretend that they have been adapted to the American culture and want to impose the unnatural social values upon the females who come from their native land. The narrator's uncle is such a person who wants to molest his own nephew who has been to America with a great excitement and hope. Here she has got the torture and is attempted to be raped by her own relative. She is victimized simply because she is the female. If there were any male member in her place, perhaps, he would not have to suffer from such victimization. So, it is the collective effort of the age-old patriarchal convention and the oppression of the colonialism that had victimized the Nigerian women at home and abroad.

American colonization in Nigerian land has laid the direct effect in the people living in it. Their consciousness is shaped in such a way that they badly suffer from the concept that the American land is the land of superiority and their own country is the inferior one. They want to reach there in any way with the hope that "in a month they would have a big car and soon a big house" (115). Akuna, the girl whom the narrator addresses as 'you' as a second person point of view, also is impressed by the grand narratives about America and decide to migrate there. So, she reaches there with a heavenly dream. But her dream is almost shattered there too due to the patriarchal snobbishness. The same male member of her kinship, her uncle, whom she had trusted and had expected to get a parental guidance in the new land, attacks her in

the name of the so called American ideology that it is “give and take”(115). Does he want to enjoy her physically in exchange of the shelter he provides her? What is his point of view towards the females? Are they just the means of entertainment whom he can pounce upon whenever he likes? Seeing through a feminist angle, it is an unbearable behavior of an uncle towards an innocent girl. Taking the traditional American escape route of the Greyhound bus, the girl ends up in a small town in Connecticut, working in a restaurant, turning an outsider’s eye on the oddness of American life, rendered silent and invisible by loneliness: “At night, something would wrap itself around your neck, something that very nearly choked you before you fell asleep” (119). It indicates her pains and pathos she has to brone with in the strange land. She has been, on the one hand, the victim of the extreme neo-colonization and on the other hand the patriarchy. Neo-colonization has made her migrate to the strange land in search of the economic prosperity and patriarchy adds a fuel in the pathos she had been gaining.

She is harassed not only by the outsiders but also by her won relative, uncle. Being a bold young lady she leaves the house of her uncle where she has been taking shelter after she has arrived America. She reaches to the town of Connecticut. But there too she is not far from the treacherous patriarchal system, and its byproducts. She meets a young American named Juan, a university student, who too cannot be away from the patriarchal beliefs and attitudes. Whenever he met with Akuna, he began to behave in a manly way. Akuna says:

You said no the following four days to going out with him, because you were uncomfortable with the way he looked at your face, that intense, consuming way he looked at your face that made you say goodbye to him but he also made you reluctant to walk away.(121)

She has been just the victim of her uncle and is in the process of being introduced with others. A love affair with a restaurant customer seems to offer the dream of a happy ending: love, intimacy, and security: “The thing that nearly choked you before you fell asleep, started to loosen, to let go” (122). But the power of what she has left behind is strong and in the end it is the girl herself who lets her go.

Because of the conventional attitude towards the females, they have been relegated under the colonial-patriarchal grinder. The book reveals that their pains, pathos and their traumatic experiences are the representatives of the entire female race that has been badly dehumanized by the patriarchal social conventions. Moreover, colonialism has left an adverse effect in the relegation of the female race in the countries where the colonial rule had been practised.

The book is a collection of several stories reflecting the different strata of the Nigerian people's lives in the country and abroad. The stories present the Nigerians' activities and cultures, their pains and pathos and complexities of lives. Among the multiple stories of the Nigerian lives, as Adichie herself is a revolutionary female writer, she foregrounds the female experiences in this story book. Several of the stories have the principal female characters who have gone through a massive burden of the conventional patriarchal norms and values. Most of the females here have been affected due to the poverty, superstition, ignorance, hardships and discrimination that are prevalent in the country. The next important factor to victimize the females is the neo-colonial hegemony in the country.

Colonialism, as it began with the motive of ruling the world, it made the people of the colonized countries suffer a lot physically and mentally. Among the people too, it is the female race that has been severely victimized by it. As they already were the marginalized parts of the society, colonialism has added the fuel to the burning flame of the suppression, victimization and dehumanization.

In the course of the history of society in common, if there is one thing that has victimized the women from the ancient time it is the system of patriarchy. Patriarchy, that creates the logocentricism of the males, has been ruling over the female race and especially over the female body. It has raped and mutilated the female image and has been ascribed the guilt to the females themselves. It has stood as one of the major hindrances in the path of progress and development of the entire female race. The female race from the very ancient time has been relegated under patriarchy and has been so much hegemonized that they themselves follow the discriminatory convention without having any doubt of it. A typical conventional woman is either a sacrificing mother, or a submissive wife, or an obedient daughter. As Ketu Katrak in *Politics of Female Body* points out

My project attempts to name sexuality as the arena where patriarchal control is exerted most distinctively over the female body-whether in overt domination as rape, or in a variety of controls of the female body through traditions of the obedient wife, self-sacrificing mother, and in discrimination against girl children in terms of malnourishment, or as in the last twenty five years, technological development of amniocentesis being used as an instrument of female feticide. All these have a direct impact on women's bodies. (12)

In making the women subordinate the male dominated society has been a vampire of them. It neither gives attention to their physical and mental pains nor gives appropriate opportunity for their self development.

For a long span of time patriarchy has remained a black spot on women's self development and existence. However, in several of the developed countries the typical conventional practices have been removed and the females have leapt a lot. At least they have been free from the superstitions and humiliating submission. But, still,



in the countries of the “Third World” or in the underdeveloped countries the female race is still in victimization. The outward development seen in the countries has made them more pendulums. In the countries like Nigeria, there is the direct effect of the colonialism although the Nigerians are politically free. They are badly colonized in terms of culture and economy. They have a dream of going to the western countries or the US, get good education, earn a lot and live a sophisticated life. After a great struggle they reach to the countries. But there too they are tortured and victimized. They are either victimized by the colonizers directly or by the males of their own relations whose minds have been severely colonized. For example, they think that the sexual relationship even among the incest is not a taboo, which is the product of the colonization of their minds.

The female’s body has been mutilated and abused by the patriarchy and colonialism side by side. Colonialism takes a control over the entire nation and patriarchy takes the control over the females. In course of the control, they are curtailed, harassed and deprived of their rights. Hence, the females have been doubly victimized and marginalized by the legacy of colonialism and patriarchy. The legacy of the colonialism has still remained in the form of neocolonialism even after the end of the direct political rule over the colonized countries. Neocolonialism, the term refers broadly to the ways in which race, ethnicity, culture, and human identity itself are represented in the modern era, after many colonized countries gained their independence. However, some critics use the term to refer to all culture and cultural products influenced by imperialism from the moment of colonization until today. Postcolonial literature seeks to describe the interactions between European nations and the peoples they colonized. By the middle of the twentieth century, the vast majority of the world was under the control of European countries. At one time, Great Britain, for example, ruled almost 50 percent of the world. During the twentieth

century, countries such as India, Jamaica, Nigeria, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Canada, and Australia won independence from their European colonizers. The literature and art produced in these countries after independence has widely become the subject of study at present. Among them the popular Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *The Thing Around Your Neck* is one.

Adichie's stories in the collection *The Thing Around Your Neck* simply follow familiar recipes. At worst, they're leftovers. The only things distinguishing them are their unfamiliar settings (primarily Nigeria), sprinklings of a foreign language (Igbo), folk wisdom, and other cultural markers (foods, dress, customs, and sayings). Like the characters in the stories of her more accomplished predecessors, Adichie's characters are embroiled in questions of identity and allegiance, face the challenge of reconciling their upbringing with the demands and pressures of a new cultural environment (in this case mainly New England), and find themselves at odds deciding where they fit in, aching for familiarity, the security and comforts of "home." Adichie is certainly an accomplished technician, one deftly handling plots often hinged on misunderstandings, misreadings, doubts, and fears within unfamiliar settings.

Postcolonial feminism is an intervention of both postcolonial and feminist studies. It is the intersection of colonialism and neocolonialism with gender, nation, class, race and sexualities in the different contexts of women's lives, their subjectivities, work, sexuality and rights. It is identified with the work of feminists of Third World origin located in the metropolitan university and the agendas set by them to define a recognizable postcolonial feminism. Interlinking feminism and Postcolonialism Helen Tiffin, Bill Ashcroft and Gareth Griffith write in *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*:

Both feminism and Postcolonialism have often often concerned with the ways and extent to which representation and language are crucial to

identify formation and to the construction of 'subjectivity'. For both groups, language has been a vehicle for subverting patriarchy and imperial power ... Both discourses share a sense of disarticulation from an inherited language and have thus attempted to recover a linguistic authenticity via a pre-colonial language to primal feminine tongue. However both feminists and colonized people like other subordinate group, have also used appropriation to subvert and adapt dominant languages and signifying practice. (102)

The feminist and postcolonial studies get involved into a mutually investigative and interactive relation with each other. But when feminist perspectives are blind to issues related to colonialism and the international division of labour and when postcolonial studies fails to include gender in its analysis, then both theories fail to co-relate with each other to address the lives of women under colonization. Feminists "... complain that analyses of colonial postcolonial texts fail to consider gender issues adequately, bracketing them in favour of attention to supposedly more significant issues, such as empire building, decolonization, and the liberation struggle ..."

Using specific examples from Nigeria, this thesis analyzes the philosophical underpinnings of African feminism. The present researcher argues that African feminism is largely flawed by being couched in the discourses of African anti-colonial movement. By doing so, it is inevitably inherited part of the cultural setback of the movement. My point is African postcolonial discourse is the line between resistance to the evil of colonialization and resentment of the cultural world of the colonizer was largely blurred. There was, therefore, an overabundance of reactionary impulses. While in agreement with the discourse about the concern of women's human rights, the researcher suggests that African feminism as articulated by African women thinkers must free itself of resentment in order to focus on creating flourishing

communities in Africa. The researcher analyzes one of the most recent Nigerian narratives *The Thing around Your Neck* as an example of work that seeks the flourishing of communities with the liberation of women in the background.

Adichie remarkably dramatizes, in her work, women's determination to survive in the face of violence, sexual assault, extreme starvation, senseless brutality and careless threats to their lives and property. Through her main characters, Adichie reveals how the physical, psychological and mental abuse of women can have negative effects on their well-being. The liberation of women from all structures against their peaceful co-existence alongside men deserves the support of all humanity. This study, therefore, suggests that every African woman must face up to the realities of her sexiest culture and assert her rights. This is undoubtedly a demanding choice fraught with its own dangers but a woman needs to burst the system and set up her won parameters within the society or risk being treated as a doormat for life.

*The Thing Around Your Neck* encompasses the stories having the theme of colonial domination and the hegemony of the patriarchal ideology by which the whole Nigerian people have been suffering but the women in it have been suffering more. They have become the victims of the severe discrimination within their own families and also are victimized by the political scenario that is badly affected by the colonialism. In the first story "Cell One" the narrator, a girl, describes the activities of her brother Nnamabia, a male member of the family. He has learnt to steal the things from house and has fallen in the bad company. Yet the parents cannot take a serious step against him. It seems that whatever misconducts the boys do are pardonable but girls are not. Is not it a severe discrimination between the boys and the girls? Such discriminating treatment affects the boys themselves. Due to this they learn to do socially unacceptable activities. Because of their misconduct the whole society

suffers. So, the female discrimination is not only the problem of the women but it is widely pervasive to the whole society. Moreover, they severely punish the girls if they try to do such thing. It makes the people inhuman and the society uncivilized.

Similarly, in the second story “Imitation” Nkem has been tortured by her husband who is reported to have done the second marriage in Nigeria while Nkem is in America. In the opening of the story the narrator says, “Nkem is staring at the bulging, slanted eyes of the Benin mask on the living room mantel as she learns about her husband’s girlfriend”(24). Her husband Obiora’s such step of marrying another girl has given no peace in her mind. It is the form of the severe mental torture given to the women by the males. Despite their loyalty and honesty, the males become cruel to them and give them pain. The women try to make their husband happy but yet they ignore them and hurt them. Nkem is also anxious to please her husband despite his disloyalty

Nkem sighs, runs her hand through her hair. It feels too thick, too old. She has planed to get a relaxer touch-up tomorrow, have her hair set in the flip that would rest around her neck the way Obiora likes. And she has planned, on Friday, to wax her pubic hair into a thin line, the way Obiora likes. (27)

Patriarchy’s false notion that a female is the entertainer to the male has clearly been evident there. Nkem, being a woman victimized by the husband, is still decorating her so that she could impress Obiora. She combs her hair for him and she decorates her pubic hair so that he would get more pleasure from her. It shows the female subordination and the superiority of the males. It further shows the internalized patriarchy in the part of the females. Males can even have the extramarital relationship, whereas the female should still be a faithful to them and try to please them by undergoing different kinds of physical decorations. This sort of scenario is

seen in the conventional societies where the females are still kept within the narrow walls of the house and are forbidden to be exposed to the outside world. Nigeria is such a conventional society where there are deep rooted patriarchal conventions that constantly relegate women. Not only in the Nigerian lands but also in the American lands the migrants have been suffering from the same kinds of the practices of the males like Obiora.

Similarly, patriarchal society assumes females as the passive beings who do not have any decisive quality. Even in the matters of their personal life they decide themselves and impose their decision upon the females. For example, in the story “The Arrangers of Marriage” Adichie shows how the females are victimized by imposing others’ decision even in the life-long matters. Agatha Okafor, an orphan girl who is reared by her uncle and aunt, is married to a diasporic Nigerian in America. In the matters of her marriage she is never asked and directly after the marriage she has to understand him and follow him being passive and bear whatever he does and says. She mentions a humorous instance while they were in bed after the marriage.

I relaxed moments later when I heard my husband’s measured snoring. It started like a deep rumble in his throat, then ended on a hing pitch, a sound like a lewd whistle. They did not warn you about things like this when they arranged your marriage. No mention of offensive snoring, no mention of houses that turned out to furniture-challenged flats. My husband woke up by settling his heavy body on top of mine. His chest flattened my breasts. (168)

The narrator shows that in the conventional patriarchal society women are not included even in making the decision that affects their whole life. The example is of marriage. Though marriage is supposed to be a private matter, the conventional Nigerian society does not let any such chance that the women could make their own

choice and decision of their own for their lives. It is a form of the patriarchal domination. Nigerian land has been victim of such conventional attitudes mixed with the colonial legacy. Both of the factors are responsible for the underdevelopment of the nation as well as the females.

The European struggle to establish forts and trading posts on the West African coast from about the mid-1600s to the mid-1700s was part of the wider competition for trade and empire in the Atlantic. The British, like other newcomers to the slave trade, found they could compete with the Dutch in West Africa only by forming national trading companies. The first such effective English enterprise was the Company of the Royal Adventurers, chartered in 1660 and succeeded in 1672 by the Royal African Company. Only a monopoly company could afford to build and maintain the forts considered essential to hold stocks of slaves and trade goods. In the early eighteenth century, Britain and France destroyed the Dutch hold on West African trade; and by the end of the French Revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic Wars (1799-1815), Britain had become the dominant commercial power in West Africa.

The slave trade was one of the major causes of the devastating internecine strife in southern Nigeria during the three centuries to the mid-1800s, when actually abolition occurred. In the slave trade females bodies too were reified either directly or indirectly. Same to this was the practice of paying for the bride. In one hand the colonization had practiced the slave trade of which the females were the significant victims. On the other side the patriarchy makes them victim through different social norms. One of such norms was paying the bride kprice. In doing so female are obviously dehumanized. Adichie in the story on Monday of the last narrates the sufferings of newly-married bride Chinwe:

She called Chinwe and Chinwe began to cry after the first hello and kedu. Another woman was pregnant for Chinwe's husband and he was going to pay her bride price because Chinwe had two daughters and the woman came from a family of many sons. Karma tried to soothe Chinwe, raged about the useless husband, and then hung up without saying a word about her new life; she could not complain about not having shoes when the person she was talking to had no legs. (102)

Chinwe is a representative of the females who have been the victim of the patriarchal social norms. She is so much reified that her intellect and self respect gets destroyed on the monetary value of her. Because of such buying and selling their familial life also becomes troublesome. The males themselves have been helpless under the severe patriarchy.

In the nineteenth century, Britain was continuing the colonial legacy upon Nigeria. The practices of the colonizers to have a capture over the natural resources in the innocent lands like Nigeria along with colonizing the minds of the people living there were the primary activities. Their innocent minds were rotted by the colonizers and have influenced them in the multiple ways so that they will always be their followers under them. The cultural invasion the colonizers carry out is the main cause of the disintegration, fragmentation, conflict, violence, brain drain, pauperization, and economic bankruptcy.

Formal "protection" and--eventually--colonization of Nigeria resulted not only from the desire to safeguard Britain's expanding trade interests in the Nigerian hinterland, but also from an interest in forestalling formal claims by other colonial powers, such as France and Germany. By 1850 British trading interests were concentrating in Lagos and the Niger River delta. British administration in Nigeria formally began in 1861, when Lagos became a crown colony, a step taken in response



to factors such as the now-illegal activities of slave traders, the disruption of trade by the Yoruba civil wars, and fears that the French would take over Lagos. Through a series of steps designed to facilitate trade, by 1906 present-day Nigeria was under British control.

During the colonial period the colonies such as Nigeria became part of British imperial expansion that focused on exploiting raw materials, minerals, and foodstuffs important to Western industrial development. Britain tried to encourage tropical export crops in Nigeria and to stimulate demand there for British manufactured goods. The colonies built a railroad network between the 1890s and World War II, and constructed roads at an accelerating rate after the 1930s. These developments, along with the introduction of the pound sterling as the universal medium of exchange, encouraged export trade in tin, cotton, cocoa, groundnuts, and palm oil. Britain maintained its economic hegemony over the colonies through military power, strategic alliances, and the collaboration of indigenous rulers.

British rule exacerbated differences of class, region, and community in Nigeria. The emergent nationalist movement in the 1930s was spearheaded by a new elite of business people and professionals and promoted mainly by persons who expected to gain economically and politically from independence. The movement first became multiethnic--although limited to the south--between 1930 and 1944, when the real incomes of many participants in Nigeria's money economy fell as a result of deterioration in the net barter terms of trade (the ratio between average export and import prices). During the same period, the Great Depression and, later, World War II, reduced Britain's investment, imports, and government spending in Nigeria.

Colonialism has badly shaped and hegemonized the people's mind in Nigeria that they become ready to disown their own originality and culture if they get a chance to settle in the counties of the west like the US. They feel ashamed to speak

their language, to eat their food, and to wear their clothes. This kind of severe hegemonization is seen both in the males and the females. But females have been victimized more due to this. In the story the “Arrangers of Marriage” the narrator Chinaza Agatha Okafor describes the activities of her newly married husband Ofofibe who settles in America and brings her there after marrying her in Nigeria. The story shows how he has been hegemonized badly and consequently she has been the victim. After he reaches to America with the newly married wife he begins to show his true essence of the hegemonized pendulum. To her surprise he changes his name and says her to call him with the American name Dave. It shows his identity crisis due to the colonialism and its hegemonization. He tells his wife “I’m not called Ofofibe here, by the way. I go by Dave.” He changes his own Nigerian name because “Americans have a hard time” in pronouncing his name. He is so much colonized from his inner that he easily forsakes his own original identity and become a pendulum.

Once the wartime colonial government assumed complete control of the local economy, it would issue trade licenses only to established firms, a practice that formalized the competitive advantage of foreign companies. Also, wartime marketing boards pegged the prices of agricultural commodities below the world market rate, workers faced wage ceilings, traders encountered price controls, and Nigerian consumers experienced shortages of import goods.

Labor activity grew during the war in reaction to the heavy-handed policies of the colonial government. Among the expressions of labor unrest was a strike by 43,000 workers in mid-1945 that lasted more than forty days. Aspiring Nigerian entrepreneurs, deprived of new economic opportunities, and union leaders, politicized by the strike's eventual success, channeled their sense of grievance into nationalist agitation. Educated persons, whose economic opportunities were limited largely to

private business and professional activity, began to demand more participation in the colonial government.

Starting in 1949, when Nigerian's recently emergent labor, commercial, and professional elites were first consulted by the British as part of a constitutional review, the peoples of Nigeria engaged in ongoing debate over the pressure of decolonization, independence, and modernization. The two coups d'état of 1966 and the civil war of 1967-70 reflected economic as well as political elements. Between 1951 and 1960, the major political parties played leading roles in unifying and locally mobilizing the economic elite. Elites from majority parties in the regional assemblies who cooperated with the ruling federal coalition dispensed a wide range of rewards and sanctions, thus retaining their own positions and power and keeping the masses subordinated. Positions in government services and public corporations, licenses for market stalls, permits for agricultural export production, rights to establish enterprises, roads, electrical service, running water, and scholarships were allocated by the governing group to its supporters. Each major party was backed by a bank, which assisted in the transfer of substantial public funds to the party.

At all levels--local and regional after 1951 and federal after 1954--political leaders could use a range of controls, extending over local councils, district administration, police, and courts, to subdue any dissident minority, especially in the far north, where clientage was the social adhesive of the emirate system. Political superiors offered protection, patronage, and economic security in exchange for loyalty and the obedience of inferiors.

The elites attracted clients and socially inferior groups not only in the far north, where Islam legitimized the traditional hierarchy, but even in Igboland, an area of southeastern Nigeria where power had been widely dispersed before the twentieth century. The elites of the three regions preferred to close ranks to share the fruits of

office and to prevent challenges to their positions, but by the time independence was achieved in 1960, the kind of policies designed to enhance the security of one regional elite threatened the security of others.

Postcolonial feminism is taken as a form of feminist philosophy which centers on the idea of racism, colonialism, and the long lasting economic, political, and cultural effect of colonialism in the post colonial setting. Postcolonial feminist critics like Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Sara Suleri began to argue that Western feminism, which had assumed that gender overrode cultural differences to create a universal category of the womanly or the feminine, was operating from hidden, universalist assumption with a middle class, Eurocentric bias” (qud. in Ascroft et al 102). They charged Western Feminism that failed to account adequately with the experience of third world women. The western feminist assumption that all of us of the same gender across class and cultures are socially constituted as a homogeneous group is criticized by these third world feminists. They argue that this homogeneous group is criticized by these third world feminists. They argue that this homogeneity is produced not on the basis of biological essentials but rather on the basis of secondary sociological essentials. It is at this point that the postcolonial feminist critics find an elision between women as discursively constructed group and women as material subject of their own history. Mohanty argues that “the discursively consensual homogeneity of ‘women’ as a group is mistaken for the historically specific material reality of groups of women” (262). In the story “Imitation” the narrator says:

Nkem wishes she had not snapped. The madam/housegirl line has blurred in the years she has had Amaechi. It is what Amrieca does to you, she thinks. If forces egalitarianism on you. You have nobody to talk to , really, except for your toddlers, so you trun to your housegirl. And before you know it, she is your friend. Your Equal. (156)

The lines clearly represent the seemingly equality but fundamentally different and discriminatory underpinnings between the women of the western and the third world. Here Nkem represents the third world women who is reported to have blurred the line between the madam, the colonizer women, and the gousegirl, the colonized women. The Madams treat them as their friends rather than their slaves in America at present. Amaechi talks to Nkem as her friend. But why does she do so? Is it because she really has realized the equality among the human beings. No. Nkem's Madam does so because she has no alternative to talk to. She cannot talk with the dolls and it is not practical to pass time only by talking with the 'todllers'. She has befriended with Nkem for her own benefit. There is a selfish motive in befriending with her. The vast differences between the Western women and the third world women cannot be avoided simply by the apparent activities and by saying the things. For this the economic colonialism should be stopped and the females of the third world also should be given equal kinds of education and opportunities. Then only they can be self reliant and can prove their personal efficiency and can compete with the colonizer women.

Mohanty in her essay "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarlhip and Colonial Discoures" discusses about feminist texts and their performance required in the case of third world formation by western feminist:

The intellectual and political construction of 'Third World Feminism must address itself to two simultaneous projects-the internal critique of hegemonic 'western' feminism, and the formation of autonomous, geographically, historically and culturally grounded feminist concern and strategies. The first project is one of deconstructing and dismantling; the second, one of building and constructing. While these projects appear to be contradictory, the one working negatively and

ther other positively, unless these tasks are addressed simultaneously.  
'Third World' feminisms run the risk of marginalization or  
ghettoization from both mainstream (right and left) and western  
feminist discourses. (172)

Western feminists show middle-class urban African or Asian scholars producing scholarship on or about their rural or working class sisters which assumes their won middle-class cultures as the norm, and codifies working class histories and cultures as Other. Clarifying its nature Mohanty says, "this is the effect of the dominant representation of Western feminism which has a conflation with imperialism in the eye of particular Third World women" (175). Thus, as isolated 'women' category is formed on the assumption of women as an already constituted, coherent group with identical interest, desire, regardless of class, ethnic or racial location, contradiction, and implies a notion of gender or sexual differences of even particularly which can be applied universally and cross-culturally.

### **III. Resistance to Patriarchal and Colonial Ideology in Adichie's *The Thing***

#### ***Around Your Neck***

It is said that to change the system is easier but to change the culture or ideology or thinking is a complex thing. Of course, the deep rooted patriarchal and colonial ideologies are not easier to avoid from the people's minds. Yet, a considerable effort to resist the system will gradually spread the awakening among the people and one day the discriminatory system will end. Adichie also shows several of the instances of the females resisting against the Patriarchal and colonial ideology and practices.

Resistance and co-operation are the new ways to overcome against patriarchy and colonial domination for the third world females. In *The Thing around Your Neck* the women characters like Akuna, Nkehm, Tobechei, Chika and so on have shown the characters of the postcolonial females and are resisting against patriarchal cum colonial legacy. Using specific examples from Nigerian land this study examines the extent to which women struggle to overcome marginalization in a sexist and patriarchal society. Love, war conflict and the persistent inequality between the men and women are among the dominant themes in the potentialities which the patriarchal structure has repressed. Women's impassioned struggles to free themselves from the shackles of male brutality and dominance are clearly seen in the novel.

Postcolonial feminism is an intervention of both postcolonial and feminist studies. It is the intersections of colonialism and neocolonialism with gender, nation, class, race and sexualities in the different contests of women's lives, their subjectivities, work, sexuality and rights. It is identified with the work of feminist of the Third World origins located in the metropolitan university and the agendas set by them to define a recognizable postcolonial feminism. Interlinking feminism and Postcolonialism, Aschroft et al. write in *The Postcolonial Studies Reader* write:

Both feminism and Postcolonialism have often concerned with the ways and extent to which representation and language are crucial to identify formation and to the construction of 'subjectivity'. For both groups, language has been a vehicle for subverting patriarchy and imperial power [...]. Both discourses share a sense of disarticulation from an inherited language and have thus attempted to recover a linguistic authenticity via a pre-colonial language and a primal feminine tongue. However both feminist and colonized people like other subordinate groups, have also used appropriation to subvert and adapt dominant languages as signifying practices. (102)

The feminist and postcolonial studies get involved into a mutuality investigative and interactive relation with each other. But when feminist perspectives are blind to issues related to colonialism and the international division of labour and when postcolonial studies fails to include gender in its analysis, then both theories fail to co-relate with each other to address the lives of women under colonialization. Feminist "[...]" complain that analysis of colonial postcolonial texts fail to consider gender issues adequately, bracketing them in favor of attention to supposedly more significant issues, such as empire building, decolonization, and the liberation struggle [...]" (Bhari 201).

Using specific examples from Nigeria, this thesis analyses the philosophical underpinnings of African feminism. The present researcher argues that African feminism is largely flawed by being couched in the discourse of African anti-colonial movements. By doing so, it is inevitably inherited parts of the cultural setbacks of the movement. My point is African postcolonial discourse is that the line between resistance to the evil of colonization and resentment of the cultural world of the colonizer was largely blurred. There was therefore an overabundance of reactionary



impoues. While in agreement with the discourse about the concerns of women's human rights, the researcher suggests that African feminism as articulated by African women thinkers must free itself of resentment in order to focus on creating flourishing communities in Africa. The researcher analyzes one of the most recent Nigerian narratives- *The Thing Around Your Neck* as the example of work that seeks the flourishing of communities with the liberation of women in the background.

Adichie remarkably dramatizes in her work, women's determination to survive in the face of violence, sexual assault, extreme starvation, senseless brutality and careless threats to their lives and property. Through her main characters, Adichie reveals how the physical, psychological, and mental abuse of women can have negative effects on their well-being. The liberation of women from all structures against their peaceful co-existence alongside men deserves the support of all humanity. This study, therefore, suggests that every African woman must face up to the realities of her sexiest culture and asserts her rights. This is undoubtedly a demanding choice fraught with its own dangers but a woman needs to burst the system and set up her own parameters within the society or risk being treated as a doormat for life. Ketu Katak in *Politics of Female Body* writes:

Among different forms of resistance to bodily exile, it is necessary to demystify "resistance." Rather than glorify any and all resistance, I ask, resistance to what end? How does a resistant action or non-action enable a protagonist to grow, change, learn, or be destroyed? [...] Despite tragic and negative conclusions—madness, death, suicide, other forms of social exclusion and un-belongingness—in women's texts, it is important to recognize the strategic use of those same female bodies, often the only available avenue for resistance. Women writers portray how their protagonists resist patriarchy or colonial procession

covertly form within the system rather than overt political resistance or imprisonment depicted more commonly by male postcolonial writers. Female covert resistances are undertaken with self-consciousness and remarkable creativity that decides to take risks and confront domination selectively and strategically in the interest of self-preservation. (36)

Just as Ketu Katrak points out that the female resistance to the patriarchal and colonial domination is implied in several of their responses although they cannot overtly go against it. In their 'covert' motives to resist, they even fall prey, but keep on resisting against the male ideology either by refusal, or by indifference, or by disagreement. In the story of *The Thing Around Your Neck* titled as "On Monday of Last Week" the African-American woman named Chinwe shows a sort of silence resistance by refusal what her molestating husband Tobechei tells. He keeps relationship with other women and is going to have a baby but ignores his own wife's wishes. The narrator says:

Tobechei had brought her contraception pills because he wanted a year of just the both of them to catch up to enjoy each other, but she flushed one pill down the toilet each day and wondered how he could not see the grayness that clouded her days, the hard thing that had slipped in between them. One Monday of last week, though, he had noticed the change in her. (86)

Due to the patriarchal convention Chinwe cannot overtly reject her husband's idea but at the inner level she has got the consciousness that no male should have monopolistic decision on the matter of childbearing which is entirely her concern. Her husband thinks that he is the superior person to have a full control over her and can impose any sort of decision over. The males could have control over the females but they cannot control everything of them especially the matters of childbearing. So, she can easily

befool him and bear the child soon. It is the beginning of the resistance against the patriarchal treachery by going against their wishes and shattering their secret plans.

Another similar kind of resistance but a more overt one can be seen in the title story when the uncle tries to molest Akuna, she escapes from him. Unlike a conventional submissive and obedient girl she shows a bold resistance against his wishes. He had persuaded her enough by giving the instance that “America is give and take” but she is not so easily melted. Despite the shelter she has got in his house she dares rejecting his attempt. She says

You locked yourself in the bathroom until he went back upstairs, and the next morning, you left, walking the long windy road, smelling the babyfish in the lake. You saw him drive past—he had always dropped you off at Main Street—and he didn’t honk you. You remembered what he would tell his wife, why you had left. (117)

Akuna’s act of leaving the shelter is a much rebellious act. She was in the new land and perhaps was unknown where to go after leaving the uncle’s home. Yet she did not endure the treacherous acts and left the house. She wanted to protect her dignity even if she had to bear troubles. This shows the growing consciousness among the women that they should not be subdued without any reason. They also have the dignified self which they should protect and then only can be a free being. Otherwise, in being dependent on others they may have to give their dignity at every moment.

Patriarchy always wants the women be passive and silent. In it the males make decisions about their important personal matters like marriage. In the Arrangers of Marriage Adichie shows how a Nigerian girl named Chinaza suffers in the foreign land with a colonized husband and resists against it. Chinaza, who is cared by her relatives after the death of her parents, is married to Ofofode as per their decision. When she begins settling in America after the marriage she is disillusioned and dares

resisting. As the colonizers' important tool of domination is language, She is forced to change her name so that the Americans would find it easier to pronounce. Her husband, whose mind is fully colonized and hegemonized takes its initiation. But she resists it and proves that the females too have the self respect and self identity. Even in the foreign land she dares to do it. Adichie writes:

He got up. "You don't understand how it works in this country. If you want to get anywhere you have to be as mainstream as possible. If not, you will be left by the roadside. You have to use your English name. Her. [...]"  
 "I never have my English name is just something on my birth certificate. I've been Chinaza Okafor my whole life". (172)

Chinaza's bold insistence in keeping her original name with her despite being in the foreign land and the husband's wish is an instance of the female sense of rebellion. Although it was late she could ask her husband about his act of deceiving her for marrying her. In fact he had already been married on papers which he had not let Chinaza know. They talk like:

[...] "You were married before?" "It was just on papers. A lot of our people of that here. It's a business, you pay the woman and both of you do paperwork together but sometimes it goes wrong and either she refuses to divorce you or she decides to blackmail you." I pulled the pile of coupons toward me and started to rip them in two, one after other .  
 "Ofodile, you should have let me know this before now." He shrugged.  
 "I was going to tell you." "I deserved to know before we got married."  
 "It wouldn't have made difference. Your uncle and aunt had decided." [...] I stared at him in silence, shredding the coupons into smaller and smaller bits; broken-up pictures of detergents and meat packs and paper towels fell to the floor. (183)

In this conversation the tone of resistance by a Nigerian women in the foreign land is clearly realized. Such sense of rebellion is due to the severe kind of domination done by the patriarchy as well as the colonialism. The characters like her husband represent the both institutions. However the inner psyche of the females is full of revenge and resistance due to their growing awareness. Perhaps, therefore, in the assistance of Nia, another women in America, Chinaza makes a bold rebellious decision to leave the husband. Her very act of ripping off the paper is quite symbolic to tearing down the patriarchal-colonial norms and values.

#### **IV. Conclusion: Female Body as a Site of Domination and Resistance in**

##### ***Adichie's The Thing Around Your Neck***

Adichie's *The Thing Around Your Neck* is remarkable in delineating the double victimization of the postcolonial Nigerian women both at home and the aboard. The writer adopts the simple and illuminating narrative style to depict the true essence of the Nigerian culture and the people's activities. By showing the different strata of lives of the Nigerian lands, Adichie has foregrounded under the patriarchal cum colonial underpinnings. Both the patriarchy and colonization manipulate the knowledge and hegemonize the women to believe that they were unable to know and do anything the men would do. The dominant power and the discourses never provide women an access to the critical thinking about the other fields of possibilities. Especially they are hegemonized in such a way that their sub consciousness is already in acceptance of the discrimination and domination. However Adichie shows some women, who get the privilege to exercise their minds and innate qualities of critical thinking, question and resist the domination, discrimination and marginalization. The stories such as Cell One, 'The Thing Around Your Neck', 'Imitation' consist of the principal female characters who have some sort of resisting role against the domination discrimination and the ill-treatment. In their resistance, they are seen to be in liberation or at least they have freedom of choice and independence from the torturous male members.

From the very ancient period most of the societies in the world have been ruled by the patriarchal ideology in which the males become the center and the females become the margins. The social institutions, norms, values, religious beliefs, mythical stories, cultural practices etc have been influenced by the male ideology which always superiorize the males and inferiorize the females. The female body has been used as the object of utility by the males and they victimize them physically and

mentally. The kind of patriarchal domination and hegemonization is the hindrance on the progress of the females. In *The Thing Around Your Neck*, Adichie has included several of such instances.

Adichie in the story “Jumping Monkey Hill” portrays a typical female character named Ujunwa. She is the wife of Edward, a dominating male representative. The story hinges on Ujunwa’s interactions with Edward, his wife, and the haughty and aloof “Ugandan.” Throughout the week, Edward preys upon Ujunwa, leers at her and makes slimy comments.

Complications in the plot result from ‘rising action’ sequences like Edward referring to a story about a homosexual as not being reflective of Africa, really. Here, as everything gets stirred, the story builds in drama. “Jumping Monkey Hill’s” ‘climax’ is really two inevitable ‘explosions’, the first: where Ujunwa speaks out against her group’s silence after Edward’s remarks and looks, and the second, where she finally takes Edward to task.

In the final paragraph of the story the writer writes that there were other things Ujunwa wants to say, but she does not say them. There were tears crowding up in her eyes but she did not let them out. She was looking forward to calling her mother, and as she walked back to her cabin, she wondered whether this ending, in a story, would be considered plausible.

Hence, Adichie includes the most illuminating stories in a sweet and simple language. We find a quick interest in going through the stories. The stories as a whole are the replica of the women experiences of the Nigerian country. Their culture is the patriarchal one where the colonialism has added a fuel to the discrimination, domination, and alienation in the females. The forcefully established patriarchal and the colonial legacies should be rejected and everyone should start seeing the world differently. Then only the female victimization and the double marginalization can be avoided by means of female bonding.

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