



# Intersectional Approaches in Postcolonial Feminist Literary Criticism in Global Narratives

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**Abstract:** The purpose of providing a framework for understanding development problems in a postcolonial environment, the purpose of this research is to investigate the ways in which postmodernism and postcolonialism interact with one another. The focus of the study is on the development of postcolonial feminist literary criticism, which involves analyzing global narratives through the lens of gender, racism, and social class. Through the perspective of the South, this research investigates feminist postcolonial critical views, bringing to light the ways in which intersectionality influences development discourse. The work investigates the ways in which the feminization of employment and resource allocation influences the multiplicative effects of gender discrimination, subjection of women, and women's agency. Rather than the additive effects, the multiplicative effects are more prevalent. Furthermore, it underlines how important intersectional techniques are for appreciating these issues in the social and territorial South, as well as in the North as a whole, where problems of racial and social marginalization continue to exist as a result of migration, slavery, and other factors. In the last half of the paper, the author emphasizes the significance of intersectionality in feminist postcolonial literary criticism. This is done in order to present a full assessment of global narratives.

**Keywords:** Postcolonial, Race, Gender, Class, Criticism , Intersectional

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## INTRODUCTION

The intersectional approach is helpful for analyzing postcolonial feminist literary criticism because it provides a framework for thinking about how gender, race, and class interact in tales from all over the globe. This is because the intersectional method provides a framework for such thinking. In contrast to postcolonialism, which studies the long-term effects of colonization on nations that were once colonized, feminist literary criticism focuses on the gendered components of the legacy left behind by imperialism. When these fields of study are seen via an intersectional lens, which takes into consideration the multiplicative impacts of gender, class, and race, they provide light on the oppression, marginalization, and agency that women experience in a number of contexts. In this viewpoint, it is acknowledged that colonial and postcolonial power structures, in addition to racial, social, and economic dynamics, are essential components of any understanding of gender oppression.

### Perspective of intersectionality in postcolonial feminist literary criticism

When it comes to global narratives, the experiences of women of color, particularly those from the South, shed light on the several types of oppression that they face. These forms of oppression include gender, race, and class. In the aim of shedding light on these current concerns, intersectional postcolonial feminist

literary criticism seeks to examine the ways in which global narratives either sustain or challenge existent power systems. Additionally, it seeks to examine the ways in which these women's experiences are portrayed in literature. Due to the fact that racial injustice, slavery, and migration have left permanent scars on the "North," it is essential to take into consideration both the physical and sociological characteristics of the "South" while doing study on oppressed groups, such as women of color.

Through the perspective of intersectionality in postcolonial feminist literary criticism, the purpose of this critical research is to investigate the ways in which gender, race, and class are intertwined in global narratives. This article examines the ways in which the intersectional approach shapes literary depictions of women and how it shows the systemic inequality that affects the lives of women. As an example, it uses postcolonial settings. Taking into consideration the many types of oppression that women are subjected to, as well as the ways in which these narratives may provide chances for resistance and empowerment, the purpose of this article is to argue that an intersectional viewpoint is essential for grasping and analyzing postcolonial feminist literary criticism.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To critically examine how gender, racism, and class affect global postcolonial narratives of marginalized women.
2. To examine Intersectionally women's distinct experiences in postcolonial literature

## **METHODOLOGY**

When it comes to postcolonial feminist literary criticism, the objective of using an intersectional approach to the study of oppression is to determine the ways in which gender, race, and class interact with one another to degrade oppressed women. It investigates the ways in which sexism, racism, patriarchy, classism, and other types of discrimination interact to affect the ways in which women, people of color, and other socioeconomic classes are depicted in tales all over the globe. Specifically, it focuses on depictions of women, people of color, and other socioeconomic classes. When applied to literary criticism, the notion of intersectionality sheds light on the ways in which different forms of oppression interact to produce the identities of women of color, the ways in which these women's narratives are interpreted and formed within literature, and the ways in which this is particularly true in postcolonial nations.

Intersectionality is a critical approach that examines the ways in which particular literary themes and representations of policies and practices in the postcolonial world interact together. This is done with the intention of further restricting the agency of women who come from underprivileged backgrounds. For example, intersectional analysis demonstrates how gender, class, race, and ethnicity all have varied effects on the global narratives of oppression, despite the fact that these categories are often depicted as being unique in literature. The intersectional approach, in contrast to more traditional theories of gender and development, dives deeper into the lived realities of postcolonial women authors by paying attention to the ways in which power relations appear across distinct identities. This is accomplished by focusing on the ways in which power plays out across different identities. From its beginnings in the study of black women's lived experiences in the United States to its current application in the study of postcoloniality,

gender, and race in literary criticism by feminists in the South of the globe, the notion of intersectionality has gone through a process of dissemination.

When researching postcolonial feminist literature, it is essential to bear in mind that traditional gender analysis frameworks often ignore the intersectional experiences of oppressed women in favour of evaluating stories in isolation. This is something that should be kept in mind at all times. In spite of the common consensus that women are not a homogenous population, literary criticism has a tendency to minimize the unique experiences of some women, which have a greater influence on certain groups than on others. For instance, despite the fact that they are subjected to systematic racism and sexism, women of color and those who come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds regularly have their tales forgotten or overlooked. The work of literature that makes use of intersectional analysis not only provides insight on the representation of these women but also ensures that their specific challenges are not ignored.

In the field of postcolonial feminist literary criticism, the concept of intersectionality is a critical method that draws attention to the many identities of both the authors and the characters in global stories. It investigates the ways in which literary works reflect women's experiences and how these depictions are influenced by a variety of social, political, and historical variables. It draws attention to the ways in which women's overlapping identities result in distinct types of oppression and privilege. At the junction of gender, race, and social class, the narrative of a black woman in a postcolonial African novel is quite different from the narrative of a white woman in the same book. This is because of the intersection of these three categories. When we examine the experiences of women in postcolonial contexts via the lens of intersectionality, we have the potential to examine how the numerous identities that women possess contribute to the unique and often catastrophic realities that they face.

The purpose of intersectionality in postcolonial feminist literary criticism is not to create a hierarchy of oppression; rather, it is to bring attention to the similarities and disparities that exist in the way women's identities and experiences are portrayed in literature. This study focuses light on the ways in which many forms of oppression intersect in literature, which ultimately results in complex images of women who are on the receiving end of oppression. Intersectional literary criticism takes this approach in the hopes of drawing attention to the marginalization of women in postcolonial contexts while simultaneously empowering women through the promotion of a thorough awareness of the many experiences they have had. Within the realm of literary debate, the ultimate objective is to make progress towards social justice.

## **RESULT**

### **The Postcolonial Word: Situating the Destabilization of Discourse**

Post-colonialism, like other post-isms, does not intend to close down or reject what it encompasses (colonialism), but rather to open up a new field of research and knowledge after a period of relative closure. This is the goal of post-colonialism. Taking a look at the ways in which colonialism shows itself in a specific nation, across a variety of socioeconomic and cultural groups, is one method for identifying and defining colonialism throughout history. If colonialism is seen as a totalizing act that pursues finality, then the world may be understood as being eternally defined by the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, or between the edge and the centre, etc., if this is the case. As Edward Said pointed out in

his book *Orientalism*, imperialist powers need the development of an other, an Orient, in order to demonstrate their primacy. Additionally, colonial practices codified the colonized's experience of otherness and marginalization in respect to this centre, even though these policies varied from one "centre" to another. This was the case even when the colonized were marginalized. Postcolonialism, however, is not a prefix signifying "after" colonialism or "after independence," but rather a means of analyzing the textual and material vestiges of colonialism that are gendered, radicalized, and classized. Postmodernism is the most relevant and related concept to postcolonialism due to the connections between the two movements' attitudes to modernism and colonialism. Postmodernism is a result of the similarities between the two movements.

In view of the fact that modernism and colonialism both represent dangers to the canon of the Enlightenment literature, establishing comparisons between the two is not only fascinating but also relevant. What Lyotard refers to as "metanarratives" were frantically sought for throughout the "Modernism" period as a replacement for the evicted god of Western humanist thought. As imperialism and capitalism spread across Europe, there are many who have suggested that this goal evolved into the "modernist totalizing ideal of progress." As a result of the Enlightenment's promotion of reason and logic, this progressive ideal is a product of the mind and reason's ability to defeat superstition and assert dominance over nature. A mono-perspectival view on discourses such as gender, development, literature, economics, poverty, employment, human rights, and so on is challenged by postcolonialism, which is a critical postmodern discourse. As a result, postcolonialism calls for a multi-perspectival approach to all topics.

### **Post Coloniality and the Emergency of Critical Perspectives**

Since its 1970s founding, postcolonial studies has developed. Many academics were captivated by the evolution of anti-colonial nationalism and how colonies were founded via diverse control methods. Thus, spatial considerations can take precedence over temporal ones, such as when one is more interested in the postcolonial as a geographical space with a history predating or even external to colonization than as a period. One may better grasp the colony's colonial experience by looking at its pre-colonial cultural and social forms. "Postcolonial" may also apply to states that have not yet obtained independence, minority populations in First World nations, or former colonies enduring "neocolonial" persecution due to capitalism and globalization. The term "postcolonial" usually refers to the whole second half of the 20th century after colonialism peaked. The word "postcolonial" refers to a broad opposition to imperialism and Eurocentrism. Non-Western expression seekers then examine historical and present Western knowledge development and transfer mechanisms. As mentioned in the preceding section, the term mixes numerous cultures, experiences, and challenges, creating an intelligible confusion. The wide definition of "postcolonial" has provoked intense debates. Many find it inaccurate and lacking in historical and material detail, while others argue that most former colonies are still profoundly influenced by colonial control and cannot be labeled postcolonial. In this period of transnationalism and globalization, some historically colonized states are still under foreign authority, while others' hasty celebrations of liberation disguise neocolonialism's growth. The colonies' internal oppression is often overlooked in discussions of colonizer/colonized relations. Other critics argue that Western academic institutions disregard the critical realism of writers who concentrate on racial and socioeconomic injustice in favour of postcolonial literature

and philosophy that matches postmodern notions of hybridity, syncretization, and pastiche. Despite concerns and disagreements, Postcolonial Studies is growing because postcolonial critique allows a full assessment of power relations in various settings. It covers the rise of empires, the effects of colonization on postcolonial studies, economics, and culture, the cultural outputs of colonized societies, the relationship between feminism and postcolonialism, the empowerment of marginalized groups, and the current economic and cultural climate of post colony.

### **Post Colonial Feminism: The Intersectionality of Oppression**

During the 1970s and 1980s, feminist perspectives were formed by the conceptual repertoires that were offered by the "Modernist" theoretical and philosophical traditions of the European Enlightenment. These traditions included liberalism and Marxism. Critical practices that were feminist, antiracist, and anticolonial were the precursors to the "postmodernist" critique of these perspectives and their declarations of universal applicability. Postmodern theoretical frameworks were sometimes used in writings by Anglophone feminists that were produced in the late 1970s. Nevertheless, they grew prominent in the 1990s, particularly its poststructuralist offshoot—which was particularly significant. When the 1980s rolled around, one of the most highly disputed topics was how to theories the relationship between the dimensions that were described earlier in the sentence. Generally speaking, socialist, liberal, and radical feminisms were used to identify the fundamental differences in feminist ideology. Racism served as a uniting feature in all three of these kinds of feminisms. They have made important achievements in rethinking the interaction between gender, class, race, and other forms of oppression by emphasizing on the intersectionality of these forms and the lived experiences of women. Postcolonial feminists of color and feminists from developing countries have achieved these strides.

The term "intersectional paradigm" refers to a conceptual framework that aims to improve our knowledge of the many ways in which oppression manifests itself in various institutions, including households, schools, and governments, on the basis of criteria such as race, class, gender, and sexual orientation. This paradigm is based on the notion that oppressions do not exist in a vacuum, but rather as intricate systems of domination that cannot be effectively appreciated in isolation. This is the assumption upon which this paradigm is based. By claiming that "race," gender, and class are not independent and distinct spheres of experience, Anne McClintock provides an explanation of colonialism and postcolonialism via the perspective of intersectionality. On the contrary, they are born out of and into relationships that are very different from one another. It is not accurate to say that imperialism existed in other regions of the globe; rather, it is an unpleasantly unpleasant component of the history of the Western world. On the other hand, imperialism and the formation of race were the defining characteristics of industrial modernity in the Western world. As the urban metropolises started to define themselves in relation to the middle class and the "dangerous classes" (i.e., the working class, the Irish, the Jews, the prostitutes, the feminists, the homosexuals and lesbians, the criminals, the militant crowd, etc.), the construction of race became an integral part of this process.

The worship of domesticity, on the other hand, was not only a transitory trend that belonged in the secluded, "natural" world of families; rather, it was more important than that. It is important to keep in mind that certain power interactions are responsible for the consolidation of imperial cultures and colonial



administrations. These power relations include knowledge forms and institutions of sexual, racial, and sexual/caste domination. Imperialism manifested itself in a number of ways, including the racial and sexualisation of peoples who were colonized, the ideological growth of white masculinity, and the reinforcement of white masculinity as the norm.

### **Critical Perspectives on Gender, Race and Class**

When addressing development in the South (which includes Asia, Latin America, and Africa), some of the concerns that quickly spring to mind include poverty, uneven access to paid employment, and the continuous failure to identify unwaged work. These are just some of the obstacles that need to be addressed. Other issues that need to be addressed include discrimination against women in the fields of health care and education, cronyism and corruption, the spread of HIV/AIDS, structural adjustment programs, the burden of foreign debt, high rates of maternal and child mortality, and high rates of unemployment. It is not the presence of these obstacles themselves that eventually leads to conflict; rather, it is the urge to evaluate these development problems using theoretical and conceptual frameworks that are Western or Northern in origin. In the case of Western feminism, for example, there is a long-standing tradition of phallogocentrism when it comes to classifying ideas such as universal female subordination.

In addition to attempting to explain bias by using Western biology and the gender matrix, this paradigm has accomplished a great deal more. According to critical perspectives on gender, race, and class, it is difficult to completely appreciate development, poverty, the feminization of employment, and resource allocation, for example in the South, only by referring to gender. This is what is meant by the phrase "just by referring to gender." Having a better understanding of the reality that these occurrences are amplified by various characteristics, such as race, class, caste, age, sexual orientation, handicap, and ethnicity, is of greater significance. Women are placed on multiple terrains or trajectories of oppression, discrimination, and subjugation as a result of the interaction of each of these elements, which occurs in a multiplicatively rather than additive manner. According to Higginbotham, race is a social construction that is comparable to gender and class in the sense that it is founded on the identification of various groups and their need for differentiation and placement in relation to one another. In addition to this, racial identity is a reflection of the power relations that exist between many social categories that individuals use to identify and define themselves. She makes the argument that in cultures where racial demarcation is firmly ingrained in social, cultural, economic, institutional, rhetorical, and daily activities, gender identity is not only impacted by racial identification but also decided by an individual's racial identity.

### **Political and Structural Intersectionality**

In her work titled "Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Colour," Kimberlé Crenshaw, who is a legal theorist, makes a distinction between structural and political intersectionality. Because of their position at the nexus of race and gender, Crenshaw asserts that women of color experience rape, domestic abuse, and remedial reform in very different ways than white women do. This is due to the fact that they are experiencing these issues in very different ways. To better comprehend how gender, race, ethnicity, social class, and education all interact to generate specific manifestations of systematic oppression, Philomena Essed develops the notion of intersectionality. This concept is intended to help us grasp how these factors interact. The theory of intersectional analysis has been more popular as a

policy framework in the sphere of global women's rights, with a particular emphasis on the work of Crenshaw and Essed respectively. As an illustration, the fact that women are subjected to discrimination and other forms of human rights violations not only because of their gender but also because of their age, disability, health status, race, ethnicity, caste, class, national origin, and sexual orientation has been partially acknowledged by a variety of United Nations bodies and entities.

### **Intersectional Discrimination and the Nexus of disempowerment**

It is helpful to adopt an intersectional viewpoint in order to get an understanding of the consequences that several forms of oppression have had on historically oppressed women. It examines the ways in which discriminatory systems such as sexism, racism, patriarchy, and classism are some of the factors that contribute to gender, racial, social, and ethnic inequality at the present time. Furthermore, intersectionality is concerned with the method in which certain laws and practices interact with one another to cause further disempowerment. People often consider gender, class, race, and ethnicity to be separate spheres of experience that influence the economic, political, and social dynamics of oppression. This is a prevalent way of thinking about these categories. On the other hand, it is very rare for the systems to interact with one another, which might result in complex intersections where two, three, or even more of these axes may cross paths. When it comes to xenophobia, class, and gender, racially oppressed women usually find themselves at the junction of these three categories. They are at danger of being injured as a consequence of the congestion that exists along all of these highways.

### **Gendered Classes and the Feminization of Employment**

The racial/gender division of labor has changed, and with it, the nature of Black women's labor has changed, according to Brewer's categorical assertions. There have been three crucial shifts in the way Black women do their jobs: (1) the ongoing transition from domestic to industrial and clerical work, which varies by region and class; (2) participation in the global division of labor in low-paying service jobs that cannot support a family; and (3) the worsening poverty and family disintegration experienced by Black women, children, and households. The widespread decentralization of industrial operations and the workforce mirrors these trends. Examining these systemic shifts in Black women's work through the theoretical lenses of race, class, and gender reveals the material arrangements and norms that underpin the division of labor based on race. More recently, as a result of globalization and unequal economic development, black women have been entangled in the intricate web of women's work exchanges on a national and worldwide scale. Put simply, capitalist enterprises are not reliant on black labor, whether it be male or female. All around the globe, particularly in the South, you may find low-wage, low-cost workers. An inexpensive alternative to black labor in the United States is the global workforce.

## **DISCUSSION**

The feminisation of employment (low-paid women in the US and elsewhere) further complicates matters. Rooted in social structures that are recreated in the material context of social practices and the arithmetic of profit, a disproportionate number of Black women are at the bottom of this division of labor. As a result of this capitalist web, Black women endure the least amount of Intersectionality is not a new concept, but it does vary from some of the more well-known approaches to gender, diversity, and development.

Intersectionality has been utilized as a theoretical framework for more than ten years; it arose from efforts to comprehend the experiences of women of colour in the US. Feminists in the South of the world have just lately picked it up. Development actors rely heavily on gender analysis frameworks that isolate gender interactions. Although claims that women are not a monolithic group are prevalent, the significance of this insight is often overlooked when it is put into practice. Stating that "racialised women have different experiences" and "poor women are especially impacted" is usually deemed sufficient. Because of this, certain things that happen and problems that arise are not seen.

It is possible that issues that are specific to certain women's experiences or that impact certain women more than others may go unaddressed. An agenda for social justice action may be launched from the feminist theory of intersectionality, which is also a research approach. It is based on the idea that humans are complex multi-identity systems shaped by their past, present, and social connections as well as the power dynamics in their communities. A person may be a part of many communities at once, and they can be both oppressed and privileged (for example, a woman might be a well-respected doctor and yet be a victim of domestic abuse). Through the use of several identities, intersectional analysis seeks to expose the many forms of discrimination and disadvantage that arise from the intersection of these identities. Its stated goal is to remedy the unequal power dynamics that exist between men and women as a result of discriminatory systems such as racism, sexism, class oppression, and others. It acknowledges the distinct personal experiences that arise from the intersection of several forms of identity while also taking these factors into consideration within broader historical, social, and political frameworks. Consider how a Black woman's experience in Cape Town differs significantly from that of a white or indigenous woman in the same city.

## CONCLUSION

The 'postcolonial' worldview is inextricably linked to postmodern and postcolonial discourses that alter gender, race, and class in global tales. This intricacy in postcolonial feminist literary theory illuminates gender oppression, women of color marginalization, and identity intersections. Postcolonial feminist theory and practice emphasizes the need to examine gender oppression from several perspectives, rather than Eurocentric or Western ones, to properly understand power and subordination. This study emphasizes postcolonial feminism as a critique of Western feminism that ignores gender, race, and class in oppression and discrimination. Feminists of color and postcolonial feminists use intersectionality to relate gender oppression to classism and racism. Global literature depicts oppressed women and how these factors connect to create unique and compounded prejudice. Postcolonial feminist literary criticism blames neoliberal capitalism and other global power structures for the feminization, radicalization, and class-based marginalization of women in literature. These portrayals, typically based on colonial history and economic reality, emphasize the necessity for intersectionality. By approaching postcolonial situations through the lens of intersectionality, postcolonial feminist literary criticism may better understand how gender, class, and race interact in global narratives and how women experience oppression.

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