

**NARRATIVE IDENTITY AND THE  
RHETORIC OF SELF-CHANGE: A  
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED  
MEMOIRS**

**BY**

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**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES,  
ISLAMABAD**

**November, 2023**

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Comparative Analysis of Selected Memoirs**

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M. A., National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad 2018

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH**

To

FACULTY OF ARTS & HUMANITIES



NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES, ISLAMABAD

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**Thesis Title:** Narrative Identity and the Rhetoric of Self-Change: A Comparative Analysis of Selected Memoirs

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Master of Philosophy

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## ABSTRACT

### **Title: Narrative Identity and the Rhetoric of Self-Change: A Comparative Analysis of Selected Memoirs**

This research study seeks to investigate two selected memoirs, i.e., *Becoming* (2018) and *My Feudal Lord* (1995), by Michelle Obama and Tehmina Durrani, respectively. The theoretical underpinnings of narrative identity, through the qualitative mode of inquiry, are applied speculative lenses to unmask the problems faced by women while constructing their self-identity under the patriarchal constraints of conservative as well as black American societies. Moreover, the study focuses on cultural and social norms, patriarchy, religion, class, feudalism, and racism. These established standards are the root cause of women's oppression, stereotypical discrimination, sociopolitical and economic exploitation, and intersectional subjugation across the globe. Consequently, building an identity in a patriarchal environment is seen as an uphill task for women. In this regard, the personality psychologists illustrate that the self-narrative helps to reconstruct one's own identity as the narrators (autobiographers) derive redemptive meanings out of adversity, affliction, and calamities in their lives. They, consequently, tend to exhibit a higher level of psychological maturity, generativity, and well-being. Substantially, in the 1980s this idea of narrative identity was coined by Paul Ricoeur, a French philosopher. It is generally an integrative psychological concept that bridges cognitive neuroscience, developmental psychology, and the humanities in the form of literary narrative. Narrative identity, however, has been further modified by Dan P. McAdams and Kat C. McLean, in 2013. They have modified the critique under seven coding constructs, i.e., *agency*, *communication*, *redemption*, *contamination*, *meaning making*, *ENP (Exploratory Narrative Processing)*, and *CPR (Coherent Positive Resolution)*. The study foregrounds the redemptive nature of the selected autobiographers and their contaminations through the politics of memory in the selected memoirs under the lenses of these seven codes of identity construction. Furthermore, the feminist theoretical analysis of the study is based on Intersectionality, a concept introduced in 1989 by Kimberley Crenshaw.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

POTUS	President of the United States
FLOTUS	First Lady of the United States
ENP	Exploratory Narrative Processing
CPR	Coherent Positive Resolution

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All the praises due to Allah Almighty, the Lord of the Universe, and countless blessings and salutations upon Prophet Muhammad (SAW), his entire household, and all his companions. First of all, I am very thankful to the most gracious Allah; without whose blessings I would not have been able to complete this task.

I owe thanks to Prof. Dr. Muhammad Safeer Awan, Dean Faculty of Languages, and Prof. Dr. Inayat Ullah Khattak, my supervisor, and the Head of the English Department for their cooperation in the entire process. I am grateful to the worthy examiners, Dr. Shazia Rose (NUML), and Dr. Naleem Jabeen (IIUI), whose suggestions were very much productive in this journey and my future research studies. I am very much gratified to all my respected teachers as a whole.

I also give my sincerest thanks to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Inayat Ullah Khan for his encouragement, support, and guidance. He has consistently challenged my ideas with the intent of bringing out the best in me. Despite having to read through screeds of incoherent sentences, he has always given positive and constructive advice and has been extremely helpful in times of need. I am also thankful to the English Department at NUML for offering me the academic and creative space to bring this thesis to life.

I would also like to express my deepest acknowledgement and love to my late father Mr. Rahim Dad who, despite being a poor citizen, always supported my pursuit of education. I'm sorry to my father (late), as I couldn't fulfil his dreams in his mortal life. I am obliged to my dearest life partner, my mother, and my siblings, who have been sacrificing their ambitions for my academic study for years. I am indebted to all those who helped me psychologically, spiritually, and verbally in my research studies especially Sadaqat Tahir (PhD scholar at IIUI). I am also beholden to the people who gave me a tough time, and thus it has made me strong enough to fulfil my dreams more passionately.

## **DEDICATION**

This Research thesis is dedicated to my dearest father (late) and all those poor dedicated students who work hard to fulfil their dreams under any circumstances.



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Feminism aspires to unmask the isonomy in politics, ensuring economic, judicial, and sociopolitical justice and equality of the genders or sexes. It copes with social and political movements as well as different ideological schools of thought. The world's conception that women should be subservient, docile, and selfless objects has been renovated by feminism and feminist literature. The present study aims to investigate two selected memoirs, i.e., Michelle Obama's *Becoming* (2018) and *My Feudal Lord* (1995) by Tehmina Durrani. The selected female authors prefer to narrate their own stories of self-realization, dismantling the prevailing norms of being domestic cocoons as marginalized and docile selves in patriarchal societies. In this regard, Simon Munga argues that autobiography or memoir is the genre that provides readers and authors with an interconnected milieu of the deep-rooted psychological or social ingredients of the persona. He argues that this genre deals with the study of "what" and "how" people represent their stories in different sociopolitical contexts (66). We find that identity is a strong premise in many literary texts. Identity, or more specifically, what makes a person distinctive or unique, is defined by McAdams as "the collective aspect of the set of characteristics by which a thing is definitively recognizable or known" (236).

Moreover, feminist theory, which is feminism's expansion into speculative or intellectual discourse, aids in understanding gender disparity by looking at women's social roles, perspectives, and interests, among other things. Radical Feminism specifically assesses how the patriarchy contributes to the maintenance of male power. The notion of patriarchy, which organizes society into a web of interconnected ties based on the assertion of male superiority, is the main subject matter of this study. To incorporate the feminist issues of a woman while constructing her identity, the study incorporates the concept of intersectionality.

The feminist concept of intersectionality was introduced by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989. It is deeply rooted in black feminism and critical race theory. Historically, the paramount of *intersectionality* is referred to as the "Big Three" feminist school of thought. Substantially, the first-wave liberal democratic feminist framework dealt with political and legal equitability. Since,

feminism gets along with the venture to challenge the prevailing standards of patriarchal structures, gender stereotypes, and the overall subjugation of victimized women across the globe, numerous feminist movements as well as ideologies have emerged with various objectives. *Intersectionality* was, however, analogized by proletarian women's movements, which are the roots of Socialist and Marxist feminism.

Additionally, this study incorporates how an autobiographer constructs his/her identity through narratives. For that, the theoretical framework of narrative identity, a concept developed by personality psychologists is focused. Primarily, the idea was coined by the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur in the 1980s. Furthermore, in 2013, it was modified by Dan P. McAdams and Kat C. McLean under seven coding constructs, i.e., agency, communication, redemption, contamination, meaning-making, ENP (Exploratory Narrative Processing), and CPR (Coherent Positive Resolution). The study, under the lenses of the proposed seven identity coding constructs, foregrounds episodic memory, redemption, and contamination through the politics of memory of the personas in the selected memoirs. The suggested theory includes essential components, such as narrative identity, life narrative accounts, episodic memory of autobiographers, episodic anticipated future cognition, sociality, psychological development, theory of mind, cultural and social evolution, etc. It helps autobiographers to reconstruct their identity by narrating their past experiences in a self-rhetorical form. According to McAdams, it is one's subjective and psychological detriment that bottles up the evolutionary life account and integrates the renovated autobiographical past. It further anticipates imagined life in the future dealing with spatial-temporal differences versus a sense of unity, and moral purposes. Thus, narrative identity, in this sense, integrates the reconstructed autobiographical past and imagined anticipated future to provide life with a sense of unity, moral purpose, and spatial-temporal coherence.

Moreover, McAdams, about narrative identity, argues that psychological adaptation, redemption, and cognitive development have cogent significance in the construction or reconstruction of an individual's identity. Consequently, one's life account synthesizes episodic cognizance with imagined conception, which leads to a coherent account of the individual's identity. Moreover, McAdams observes that the narration of suffering leads to self-exploration, which provides deep insight and lessons that enrich one's life in the long run. This positive,

conclusive resolution gained from the adverse events helps narrators to have a higher level of happiness and psychological maturity (236).

The current study looks at how identity is constructed or reconstructed in two distinct environments. The study used the intersectionality and McAdams' proposed coding constructs of narrative identity in collaboration. The contextualized victimization of the selected autobiographers is viewed through the theoretical lenses of intersectional feminism. In this way, *intersectionality* has been mapped by feminist theorists like Crenshaw to be used internationally in a diverse range of spatiotemporal situations. They use the idea of *intersectionality*, which is still being developed, to look at problems that women face in many unexplored parts of the world (305). Second, they examine *intersectionality* inside academic disciplines as well as between them. Thirdly, they place a strong emphasis on *intersectionality*, functioning as a worldwide social movement for the oppressed peoples of the world that includes not just Black women in the United States but also the afflicted nations around the world.

Furthermore, the present study accentuates the narrative rhetoric of self-change in the selected autobiographies. In terms of etymology, the word "rhetoric" is derived from "rhetorica" which itself is derived from the Greek word 'rhetorikos', which means "oratory." Rhetorical practice encompasses communication-based persuasion. It is a way of speaking and utilizing language that uses reasoning and emotional appeals to inspire or educate people. Rhetorical analysis developed with democracy in Athens in the fifth century. To convince, they used political terminology in their remarks. Aristotle, for example, defines rhetoric as the "ability to discover the available means of persuasion" (05). On the other hand, Plato doubts his students' practical abilities. He views it as a feeble and dishonest communication tactic. Furthermore, Cicero, the Roman lawyer and philosopher, described eloquence as a "dramatic performance" in the first century B.C. (35).

Nonetheless, autobiographers craft their identity by narrating their stories of contaminations and redemptions by employing certain rhetorical or persuasive strategies. Aristotle proposes different kinds of rhetoric, or tactics for persuasion, in this regard. Aristotle's perspective is supplemented by Friedrich Nietzsche, who describes rhetoric as "a powerful essence of language" (21). In his view, according to Michel Foucault, rhetoric uses eloquence and persuasion

to guarantee the veracity of truth. Furthermore, rhetoric is the narrator's fight with language inside the analytical field. It is not intended to be "a systematic analysis of rhetorical procedures", yet "to study discourse, even the discourse of truth, as rhetorical procedures, as ways of conquering, of producing events, of producing decisions, of producing battles, of producing victories to 'rhetoricize' philosophy" (395).

Furthermore, in this comparative study, the prime focus is to investigate Michelle Obama's and Tehmina Durrani's contextualization of self-change portrayed in the selected memoirs under the theoretical lenses of McAdams' narrative identity. Comparative literature, in the words of Henry Remak (1961), aids in the interpretation of literary works "beyond the confines of one particular country" and discipline. He claims that recreating and reasserting cultural identity results from comparing literary materials. Similarly, the concept of intersectionality proposed by Crenshaw has been applied to examine the feminist viewpoints of the narrators in various spatiotemporal contexts. Renowned comparatist Arthur Marsh examines a thorough definition of comparative literature as literature in comparison, talking about, contrasting, arranging, and categorizing the literary works collectively to comprehend their causes and effects as well as their parallels and analogies (133).

Furthermore, the study investigates the world's renowned autobiographers i.e., Michelle Obama the former FLOTUS and Tehmina Durrani the previous First Lady of Pakistan. Michelle Robinson Obama was born on January 17, 1964, in Chicago, Illinois. As the 44th president of the United States' wife of Barrack Hussein Obama, she held the position of the first black First Lady of the White House from 2009 to 2017. She has been graduated from Princeton University and Harvard Law College. She served as an inspiration for underprivileged populations all over the world as well as black American women in her capacity as First Lady of the United States (FLOTUS). In several works, including her most recent memoir, *Becoming* (2018), she has spoken in favour of nutrition, education, and awareness of poverty. Her 2012 book *American Grown* contextualizes the White House Kitchen Gardens and the promotion of a healthy diet across the seasons. Michelle Obama in her book, *Her Own Words* (2008), mostly discusses her opinions on the election process and her vision for herself as the first black First Lady of the United States.



In her memoir *Becoming* (2018), Michelle Obama contextualizes the deeply personal experiences she experienced as a young child growing up in an upstairs rental apartment in Chicago's South Side with her parents, Fraser, and Marian Robinson. Raised by her loving parents, she started taking piano lessons and became more independent. The memoir's introduction, which paints a picture of Michelle Obama's life after becoming First Lady, establishes the setting for the story to begin. She tells the tale of her self-discovery and reveals that she is the granddaughter of Jim Robinson, an American Black slave. Numerous honours have been bestowed upon the biography, including the 2020 Grammy Award for Best Spoken Word Album. The American Library Association (ALA) has named the memoir one of the top ten Amazing Audiobooks for Young Adults.

Tehmina Durrani, conversely, a renowned Pakistani author and activist on women's and children's rights in the third world region, has served as the previous First Lady of Pakistan. She was married to Mian Shahbaz Sharif in 2003. He is the younger sibling of Pakistan's former prime minister, Mian Nawaz Sharif. In Karachi, she was born on February 18, 1953. Tehmina Durrani grew up in a prosperous, aristocratic family. She is the daughter of Mr Shahkur Ullah Durrani, the Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan and a former MD of PIA. She has placed all the abuses she endured as a dark-skinned lady in the framework of patriarchal, orthodox culture. First of all, she wed Anees Khan to get rid of her mother Samina, the family matriarch in 1976. Subsequently, she wed Ghulam Mustafa Khar, the former governor of Punjab and chief minister. She chose to file for divorce after fourteen years of excruciating agony at the hands of Mustafa's patriarchal brutalities, and she used this opportunity to contextualize her husband's violent brutality in her masterwork, *My Feudal Lord* (1995). She brings to light her inner struggles with Islam, feminism, and humanity. Following her divorce, she met the most well-known philanthropist and humanitarian, Abdul Sattar Edhi. In 1996, she penned *A Mirror to the Blind*, influenced by Edhi. Setting Edhi's life in perspective, she creates the "Tehmina Durrani Foundation" to carry out her master's humanitarian objective. She contextualizes the horrifying and sad tale of The Beautiful Heer, a victim of patriarchy who is brutalized and perverted by Pir Sian after being married at the age of fifteen, in her book *Blasphemy: A Novel* (1998). In addition, she wrote *Kafir* (2017) and *Happy Things in Sorrow* (2013).

Moreover, for obvious reasons, Pakistan's traditional society was rocked to its core by Tehmina Durrani's memoir, *My Feudal Lord*. After being brutally abused inside the patriarchal system, she rebuilds her identity. This is Durrani's first work, which contextualizes Pakistan's traditional culture's patriarchal system dramatically. In her autobiography, she illuminates the governmental, political, and feudal lord elites. She talked about the artificiality of the top class and characterized schizophrenia as an appearance of perfection that is more important than actual sentiments. She emphasizes that the only feasible and socially acceptable path for women was to wait for a man to propose marriage, even among the ruling aristocratic elite at the time. It was uncomfortable and unacceptable to have a dark complexion.

Comparatively, in *Becoming*, we find that, in the post-First Lady period, Michelle Obama narrates her story "in this new place, with a lot I want to say" (422). Tehmina Durrani, conversely, in the post-marriage retro, does not want to destroy her story of deep humiliation in the patriarchal structure, too. She thus contextualizes her account to trigger the victimized women to raise their voices against patriarchal oppressive injustice.

Additionally, the study accentuates the similarities and differences in the reconstruction of identity through narratives in the selected memoirs. Through self-narratives, temporal and spatial as well as socio-economic Variances are highlighted, comparatively. Although there are spatial-temporal differences in both the selected texts, there is still room to investigate the personal narratives under the theoretical head of narrative identity.

## **1.1 Thesis Statement**

Narrative Identity helps autobiographers to accentuate redemptive meanings as a positive resolution to adversity, hardship, and disaster in their lives. The self-narrative helps in the reconstruction of one's own identity. The memoir writers, consequently, show better levels of psychological development, generativity, well-being, and other positive indicators.

## 1.2 Research Objectives

1. To demonstrate how identity politics functions in post-apartheid versus third-world consciousness portrayed in the selected memoirs under the patriarchal confines of the social structure.
2. To emphasize the significance of narrative identity as a tool for realigning the distinct identity of "Who-Am-I" in the selected memoirs considering fictional/factional binaries in varied socioeconomic situations of women.
3. To accentuate how autobiographies' self-realized constructions of "I" are reflected in their narratives under the theoretical framework of the seven proposed coding constituents for Narrative Identity

## 1.2 Research Questions

1. What are the narratives (redemptive and contaminative) of the patriarchal victims which have developed Michelle Obama and Tehmina Durrani's psychological maturity and generativity through casual and thematic coherence in different spatiotemporal circumstances?
2. How do Michelle Obama and Tehmina Durrani reconstruct their identity through narrative under the patriarchal structure through episodic versus diachronic dimensions of Becoming 'Who-Am-I-self' in their memoirs?
3. How has post-apartheid narrative discourse been used as a tool in the dominant society as Michelle Obama has constructed in Becoming her unique self of "I" in different socio-economic status when compared to Tehmina Durrani's *My Feudal Lord*?

### **1.3 Delimitation**

To assure the validity of the research study, it is important to identify the delimitations while designing any research. This study is limited to exploring the selected autobiographers' reconstruction of identity in the memoir *Becoming* (2018) and *My Feudal Lord* (1995) by Michelle Obama and Tehmina Durrani, respectively. Through the theoretical underpinnings of Narrative Identity, however, the prime focus is given to using Dan P. McAdams's seven coding constructs so that the reconstruction of identity through narrative under the patriarchal structure can be illustrated. Kimberley Crenshaw's feminist underpinnings of *Intersectionality* are employed to illustrate the women's marginalization.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This comparative analysis of the selected memoirs is significant from various literary and social perspectives. The key method through which this study differs from others is that it analyses primary texts from two separate continents, demonstrating the diverse experiences of the chosen memoirs writers in a unique and crucial way.

To the best of my knowledge, no feminist studies have used Dan P. McAdams' theoretical underpinning of *narrative identity* that foreshadows how women authors construct or reconstruct their identity through narratives under the patriarchal edifice of society. Secondly, the research is noteworthy in that it aims to apply a recently proposed theoretical framework that has not been applied to the chosen memoirs separately or in comparison. Thirdly, the researcher's feminist theoretical analysis of the selected memoirs is based on *Intersectionality*; a concept introduced in 1989 by Kimberley Crenshaw, profoundly ingrained in Critical Race Theory and Black Feminism. It is the very first time being used in a comparative study in which two autobiographers from diverse cultures, races and ethnic backgrounds are selected to illustrate how they construct or reconstruct their identity using narrative identity as a tool.

This research is very significant to human society, especially the marginalized communities. It foreshadows that when an autobiographer narrativizes himself/herself, he/she resultantly, tends to exhibit a higher level of psychological development, generativity, well-being, and other gestures of favourable auspicious adaptation. It emphasises how autobiographers use narrative as a positive revolutionary weapon to redeem themselves from adversity and affliction towards encouragement, prosperity, and serendipity.

Moreover, the study is important as it deconstructs the prevailing notion that only poor women are marginalized in the patriarchal structure of society. It foregrounds Tehmina Durrani who belongs to the aristocratic wealthy class but is still marginalized by their feudal lords. Likewise, being the FLOTUS, Michael Obama is still a victim of racism and patriarchy.

Moreover, the selected unique coding constructs of narrative identity are very significant. Similar to how Aristotle's six formative constituents of tragedy i.e., *Plot, Character, Thought, Diction, Song and Spectacle* did in the prehistoric period of art and literature, the distinctive framework of narrative identity, likewise, incorporates seven coding constructs, aids in reviewing any work of autobiography. The study rationalizes the unfortunate fact that women across the globe are marginalized by patriarchal agents, though the ways of victimization are different concerning temporal and spatial binaries and socio-economic context.

It is highlighted that despite coming from distinct racial and ethnic backgrounds, both the selected autobiographers endure the same challenges. Their problems are not subjective but possess a universal appeal. The process of identity construction is different. For instance, *Becoming*, a memoir, was written when Michelle Obama hit the top of glorious fame as the First Lady of the United States (FLOTUS). *My Feudal Lord*, contrarily, was accounted for in the intense disgust and adversity of the writer. Michelle Obama's narrative foregrounds the rising actions towards glory, fame, and prosperity, i.e., once she was a Black-American street girl living in a rented apartment, but in the end, she became the First Lady of the USA (the highest place for a lady in this mortal world). Tehmina Durrani's contextualization, conversely, is upside-down. She is raised in a rich family and falls from the wealthiest position as an aristocrat to a victimized individual on the street.

It is the very first time being used in a comparative study in which two autobiographers from diverse cultures, races and ethnic backgrounds are selected to illustrate how they construct or reconstruct their identity using narrative identity as a tool. They both have diverse experiences.

Similarly, Kimberley Crenshaw's theory of *Intersectionality* is deeply rooted in Critical race theory and Black Feminism. Here, the theoretical framework has been used to foreground the comparative binaries of two patriarchal victims, sectionalized and then victimized in the third-world South Asian region as well as in the First World. So, the study encompasses the work-in-progress dimension of the theory.

Henceforth, they both have addressed the fact that, whatever the case, women suffer all around the globe where a society is ruled by a patriarchal structure. However, there are similarities between the two memoirs in terms of exploitation or marginalization but differences in treatment.

## **1.6 Organization of the Study**

In the very first chapter, named Introduction, the objectives of the study, the context, research questions, delimitation of the study, and rationale for the endeavour are presented. It contains a brief sketch of the theoretical framework, autobiographers, and their selected memoirs. The chapter works as a curtain-raiser, suggesting the 'road map' of the study. The key concepts, controlling terms, basic theory, key themes, and ideas unite the chapter. The writings of influential theorists on narrative identity and its roots are the focus of this study's second chapter, Literature Review. The development of the theoretical critique, different methods, aspects, and various forms of criticism are then discussed. The related existing literature on the selected memoirs and the application of the theory to different texts and fields are also debated. The third chapter of the study "Research Methodology" covers an explanation of the theory, research strategy, and description of the models utilized in this study. The proposed seven coding components of narrative identity are thoroughly addressed. The fourth and fifth chapters of the study bring forth the textual analysis of the selected memoirs under the theoretical lenses of Kimberly Crenshaw's *Intersectionality*. The proposed seven coding constructs of narrative identity are the speculative

lenses to examine how Michelle Obama and Tehmina Durrani have used self-narrative as a tool to reconstruct their identity in their memoirs. However, the study's sixth chapter, "Conclusions and Recommendations" offers responses to the study questions listed in the first chapter, "Introduction". The report summarizes the overall project's results and conclusions to determine whether the stated aims have been met or not. Given the results, the researcher guides aspiring researchers in this field of narrative identity.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter deals with the critical investigation of the research papers published by personality theorists, noteworthy scholars, and philosophers meticulously related to narrative identity and feminism. The section helps to understand the significance and validation of the study by identifying the study gap in the existing literature. Many studies on the psychological and philosophical dimensions of narrative identity have been carried out under the qualitative mode of inquiry. The personality theorists suggest that reconstruction of identity by narrating the past deals with the exploration of ‘*who am I-self*’. They further observe that the recounted series of events leads one to interpret or reinterpret his or her identity. In the second decade of the twentieth century, Paul Ricoeur introduced the idea of "Narrative Identity" in *Time and Narratives* (1985). Then different theorists explored the idea in different contexts, such as ill-narrative discourse, post-ill-narrative identity, post-apartheid consciousness narrative discourse, and redemptive as well as contaminative narratives. All these investigations can be encountered in the fields of Psychology, Literature, Linguistics, Sociology, and Feminist Studies. The chapter, however, is very much concerned with the related literature concerning the theoretical underpinnings of *Narrative Identity*, its origin, implications, modification, and debate among many theorists, psychologists, psychiatrists, literary intellectuals, and linguists.

Literature reviews have a vital impact on overall research studies, which encompass "ongoing dialogue," as Creswell observes, "establishing the importance of the study and comparing" it to the world's existing literature (23). It assists in filling in gaps and extending prior studies in the direction of determinism, whether the area is worth reviewing or not (26). So, in this regard, a literature review provides the vision to find out the conduct as well as the researcher's ability to limit the opportunity to a desirable area of investigation (28).



## 2.1 Early Developments in Narrative Identity

In the third volume of *Time and Narrative* (1985), Paul Ricoeur examines three claims related to the idea of narrative identity. Therefore, it is subsequently reasonable to support the following claims: Any personality's information can be analyzed; this analysis uncovers narrative among other symbols and signs as advantageous facilitation; this enablement pursues from the past as enough as narrative fabricating the narrative, a fictional past or, if you prefer, a historic narrative, equivalent to those big [sic] blended history and fiction (196).

Furthermore, Ricoeur observes the recounted events' plot construction as mediating in several different ways. Firstly, it mediates between events or happenings and the story of an individual. It can draw an expressive story construction after "a variety of events or happenings," which can be correlated with the *pragmatic* of Aristotle. Secondly, it can transform the events or happenings within the story. This reciprocal relationship deals with "the plot of the story facilitating actions and also a described story (45). The definition is taken concerning the contribution of development to the plot, and consequently, an event gets more than a single occurrence. Aristotle has, however, anticipated this concept of intervening personalities in different conducts. He has introduced a subdivision of three constituted chunks of narrative in Misfortune, i.e., plot, thought, and character, which leads us to have a subsequent embellishment of the reconstructed narrated plot (48). Moreover, Ricoeur extends the idea of Aristotle's *mimesis* that a story must be an ordinary inventory of incidents in sequential order. There should be an organization of a comprehensible, unabridged story, then we should be able to accentuate the "*supposed*" of the story. Thus, briefly, employment is an operation that draws an arrangement out of the simple progression (50).

Furthermore, Ricoeur has divided *mimesis* into two sub-narratives, i.e., *Historical* and *fictional* narratives. The fictional narrative as a temporal structure, he observes, can be categorized into "*narrative configurations*". The commonality between historical and fictional narratives is that they both stem from the same configurative operation, which has been named *mimesis*. However, the "truth-claim" separates them from each other as a whole. So, in the construction of memoirs or self-narratives, we often find *mimesis*, either in the form of truth claims or as narrative

configurations. The extension of the exploration of Aristotelian concepts of *mimesis* and plot theory has a significant role. Aristotle's age possessed a few literary genres worthy of philosophical reflection, such as comedy, tragedy, and epic. In modern and Postmodern fictional narratives, it is therefore highly needed to foreground philosophical endeavours. The idea of imitation of actions or just recounting of actions has been extended beyond the only categories of thought, incident, and character. Ricoeur explores *fictive experiences* as a paradoxical expression that deals with the designing of the projects of the work, proficient at interconnecting the common experience of actions in narration.

Moreover, in the book *Oneself as Another* (1992), Paul Ricoeur expresses his opinion on the convergence among three main objectives. Firstly, he observes, just before indicating the predominance of thoughtful introspection over the instantaneous hypothesizing of the topic, such as this is conveyed to the first individual singular: I consider, I stay (01). So, this primary purpose appeals to the language rules of natural languages, as they permit the conflict sandwiched between *me* and *myself*. Later in the second decade of the 21st century, McAdams addressed this reflective meditation as ENP (Exploratory Narrative Processing) (234). Ricoeur moves forward to explore the second and most fundamental concept of philosophical intention, "*Self*". He tends to distinguish the relationship between the terms *self* and *identity* (02). In short, the Latin terms *ipse* and *idem* cover both philosophical intentions.

In addition, this is rather diverse, while a pair mixes *selfhood* and *difference*. This othering, however, is different from the term *othering* used in Postcolonial theoretical underpinnings, where "*other*" is taken as opposite and different. In opposition, here in the philosophical realm of *narrative identity*, othering means the collective victimized or privileged selves having the same traits or experiences. The selfhood of the narrator triggers him or her to share the collective narratives of the community. Ricoeur, in the chapter *The Question of Selfhood*, has discussed otherness as "a kind of constitutive of selfhood as much" (04).

Moreover, Paul Ricoeur, in *Time and Narrative* (1985), manifests three modes of cogitos. He refers to them as "the intellectual processes of the self or ego". These three modes are named Cartesian Cogito, Shattered Cogito, and Wounded Cogito. Cartesian Cogito made the self very sturdy, as someone could instantly touch it and be equally assured of that. On the other hand, the

shattered cogito is partially strong as it is measured in spatial and temporal dimensions. Furthermore, Ricoeur introduces an interpretation of oneself and a "*stung cogito*," which deals with the attestation of one's presence and performance within the domain, as it is the personality that both performed and was performed on the one who might verify and proceed to charge for those activities (295). Furthermore, he introduced three modes of identity: *idem* identity, *ipse* identity, and *self-identity*. The first one remains constant and never changes. The second one, however, is dynamic and changes. Besides, the third one involves both dimensions.

## 2.2 Contemporary Literature on Narrative Identity Critique

Primarily, McAdams has the greatest role in developing the narrative identity critique. He states that the redemptive sequences are very influential in constructing identity through narratives. The persona accentuates positive outcomes or attributions out of emotionally negative events. (2) The reconceptualization of the past leads the individual to explore the negative event, which ultimately helps him or her for "*personal growth*," and the positive resolution of the events brings them happiness in terms of psychological maturity.

Secondly, Albert Stone has observed the personal narrative, i.e., memoirs or autobiographies, as simultaneously being a literary work of art, a historical document, a case study in psychology, a confession to a higher power, a didactic essay, and an ideological testament (02). Additionally, Professor Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan decides to break down the psychotropic version of Narrative Identity into two different oppositions. He foregrounds the subjectivity of the autobiographical author, whether narrative identity imprisons or liberates subjectivity as a whole. "On the other hand," he argues, "we would be able to discover, for instance, self-psychologists" who are going against the idealism of partiality. According to him, they consider it a hypothesized, fabricated, fictitious arrangement of oneself. Thus, we find coherence as well as continuity in the self-narrative. Besides, there is another idea that focuses on the capability of the personal self to break, communally, traditionally obligatory descriptions (02). He interrogates the concept of Narrative Identity's liberation or imprisonment in the autobiographer's subjectivity. Then, he

focuses on the suppression or disinhibition of the subjectivity of the persona and the bounded extent of generic rules of self-narratives. He uses Bakhtinian theoretical understandings of "philosophical anthropology" to foreground the descriptive, applied nature of Narrative Identity. (3)

Consequently, he states that the psychological framework of the "Bakhtinian-Dostoevsky shift from aesthetics to ethics" is the revolutionary act in poetics, which is a paradigm shift. He argues that it may be human culture and self-perception at work when someone narrates himself or herself in a tale form fully decorated with rhythmic patterns of aesthetics. Moreover, according to him, Bakhtin, in contrast to some of our modern advocates of the Narrative Identity proposition, is fully aware of the risks associated with this drive for fulfilment (11). We must remain completely aware of the eventuality of our descriptions in an authorless lifespan even as we acknowledge the insatiable drive to aestheticize the self, secure it within a narrative framework, or ground it in the authorial word (12). As a self-narrativized responsible, one is completely receptive to and accountable for others, as literature takes the narratives as a universalized entity. As a storyteller, one would be the persona, or author's mouthpiece, who willingly desires to be narrated in coherence. Thus, it's fundamental to go out of the cocooned domestic self within those narrative frameworks and into the broad spectrum of world literature.

Furthermore, John Seed discusses that the identity constructed by nonconformists or dissenting groups is usually confronted by *insecurity* and its fragility. He explains that, like every group identity, the dissenting identity was constantly insecure. It was tormented by its frailty and challenged by historic and generational change. It was also constantly redefining borders and asserting continuity (47). He believed that the historical realities of nonconformists' long-gone past needed to be preserved exactly as they were. He says that as Puritan and Dissenter afflictions became a thing of the distant past, memories of them began to disappear (63). It was the moral and ethical duty of the literary characters to preserve and strengthen their history through storytelling. However, dissenting identities are seen to be travelling through time like an item through space rather than being coherent and independent entities (47).

Moreover, Ronald Barthes deconstructs the traditional standards of interpreting literary texts in his masterpiece, *The Death of the Author*. He focuses on unmasking literary hidden binaries

without keeping in mind the author's intentions for understanding. All the hidden voices are to be highlighted as follows: The whole writing is this unique voice, made up of many indistinguishable voices, and literature is the creation of this voice, to which we cannot place a particular origin. Every subject slips into literature's neutral, composite, and oblique nature, falling into its trap and losing all of its identity, starting with the characteristics of the body that compose (01).

Furthermore, as stated by Professor Vulcan, Bakhtin is pretty suspicious of the limited framework and blocked boundary lines within the narrative frames. Bakhtin, he observes, is not imprisoned by the supreme ideas—humanistic or otherwise carnivalesque—of partiality. He renounces the appealing longing for the concrete core of oneself. For that, according to him, Bakhtin kept an eye on the Dostoevskian Copernican revolt through the enlargement of discourse and the formation of partisanship. Consequently, the author has taken on the role of social agent, being a personality in a narrative, without an author who, with his or her narrativized self, has been fully embodied to be positioned as a spatiotemporal being. On the other hand, he/she (the autobiographical narrator) has "sovereign inner territory, always facing the other," as he/she is willingly disposed of himself/herself into a broad spectrum of literature. (221)

Moreover, B.E. Ashforth defines identity as the multiple meanings that are assigned to an individual by both themselves and others; these meanings might be based on the societal identity a person has or on the unique, idiosyncratic qualities that they possess or that others attribute to them depending on their behaviour (231). So, identity is not static, but its fluidity provides concerning temporal and spatial melting pots. Ashforth adds that self-narrative is a very influential and powerful instrument that constructs a "transition bridge" between the old and new roles of transition while constructing identity concerning transition-related social interaction for an individual. Our identity, undoubtedly, is "plural and partial," as Salman Rushdie has mentioned in *Imaginary Homeland*, as we live under the shadow of imagined communities. Thus, we construct our identity through the sovereign narratives, as stated by Benedict Anderson: an imagined political group that is simultaneously imagined as being restricted and sovereign (154).

Additionally, T. Habermas and Bluck have introduced two influential elements involved in the reconstruction of self-identity: fundamental consistency (a considerable description of casual relationships on initial and later occasions) and confined rationality (the seed of unifying trends or

themes within a complete life span). Hence, when persons move from childhood to puberty, their lifetime narratives foreground expanding examples of fundamental lucidity versus confined reason, along with further indicators of a well-rounded Narrative Identity (98).

Moreover, C. Linda foregrounds Narrative Identity as a theoretical framework, which makes a point about the narrator (16). Secondly, Burner esteems self-narrative as "an expressive and constitutive of identity" (35), controlled by the consciousness, though McAdams has esteemed the characteristics as the adopted as well as developing story, which concludes from somebody's chosen assumption of earlier, existent, and upcoming (3). Furthermore, Herminia Ibarra and Roxana Barbulescue have foregrounded narrative theory as a work-role transition in literature. They state we create a process model where individuals utilize their narrative repertoires to achieve their identity aspirations in the communal collaborations that are essential to the macro-role transition process. While the predominance of narrative identity work is influenced by aspects of role transition, the effectiveness of the tale communicated and the storytelling process in any specific contact varies along dimensions (9).

Furthermore, they suggest alternative narratives for addition, subtraction, or revision of the self-stories, which modifies the collection. They claim that prosperous changes enable the storyteller to incorporate a new character self as incoherent or divergent repertoires. (14) They add that the interaction between relational chronicles and the intrapersonal range foundation permits people to construct forecasts about individuality and predict the consequences of work role transitions.

Additionally, according to M. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, macro-role shifts have been linked to many types of identity work (189). The writers are very concerned about the dynamic nature of identity in a role transition concerning both temporal and spatial dimensions' the other hand, according to Daphna Erdinast Vulcan, "for Bakhtin and Ricoeur," the ethical boundaries deal with a distinct pattern of time and place; they are the support of a singular story; they are a real admission of someone's involvement in the unitary Being-as-event (5). He further adds the perpetual experience of both the "I"s: "I am for myself" as well as "I am for others", where "I for myself, is not able to give an independent depiction of myself, as one cannot directly perceive

his birth or death through perception or consciousness under Bakhtin's phenomenological project of self (79).

Ritivoi, however, takes into account two selected comparative identity narratives, i.e., "An American in the Making" by E.M. Ravage (1917) and Christopher Clausen's *Grandfathers: A Memoir*, to strengthen her point of view against Strawson. Thus, she foregrounds the analytical purchase in narrative identity. She observes that these stories possess the same lived experiences as a diasporic community settled in America in the first decade of the twenty-first century. She foregrounds the story, which is identifiable in linking by specific chief plots. It provides us with the explanatory competing relationship to take the life of an immigrant through the same actor but explore contradictory accounts (26). Thus, she endorses the notion that the tensions, surprises, disappointments, reversals, and victories of authentic, temporal experience can all be included in the story form with analytical underpinnings (27). Moreover, she has observed narrative with the collaboration of counter-narratives, especially in the identity reconstruction case, and this "*competition ultimately* crystallizes particular lar positions that become available to certain social actors. She concludes that "Strawson does not think that narratives describe how people are. But whether they do or not..." (39).

### **2.3 Personality Psychology and Narrative Identity**

Personality psychology and narrative identity both work in collaboration. In personality psychology, Revelle (1987) first makes a distinction between two categories of trait taxonomies. In contrast to causal taxonomies, which offer more thorough explanations of the causes or motivations behind human behaviour, descriptive taxonomies, such as the Big Five, offer surface descriptions of often occurring behavioural patterns that are easily noticed. Revelle cites Eysenck's descriptions of Extraversion, Neuroticism, and psychoticism, as well as Gray's division of impulse and anxiety, as examples of causal taxonomies (340).

Secondly, in his philosophical essay, McAdams emphasises the major conceptual advancement in character consciousness. The five factors in the Five-Factor Model are I. Surgency

(Extraversion), II. Agreeability (Warmth), III. Conscientiousness (Will), IV. Emotional Stability (Neuroticism), and V. Culture (Intellections, Openness to Experience), which are pretty much beneficial and have considerable generality and applicability while taking several different selves as well as aristocratic statement measures of character qualities (331). McCrae and Costa, conversely, go against the prevailing standards and notion of personality trait measurements based on conceptualism. They observe the foolish legacy of humanistic psychology, social learning theory, and other disciplines. They contextualize and promotes the idea that people may undergo continuous change as a result of their experiences, interventions meant to foster personal development, or natural ageing and the passage of time (176). The point of view foregrounds the life conditions that change according to the contextual background, but the traits of the personality, however, remain constant without any change. Secondly, this context is not supposed to have a direct influence on Big Five personality traits as well.

Thirdly, according to Polkinghorne, McAdams views the problems of modern and postmodern Western people's stories of themselves as integration and amalgamation of the tradition's stories, whose responses to their interrogations of character are unproblematic. For instance, in the South Asian context, people in the third world are emotionally attached to their religion. The answers are set according to the religious perspective of God's confrontation, as all humans would be questioned on the Day of Judgement. Moreover, they do believe that in this world, those who commit evil and go against the jurisprudence, teaching, or preaching of their respective religions will be cursed here and hereafter. Consequently, the theme of their stories has the answers, as they narrate their selves of well-being or the good life concerning God's will. God is considered and regarded as the supreme authority. They come with an identity just to pursue salvation and focus on Eternal happiness rather than this worldly, mortal charm. They have a set pattern of rules, according to which eternity is observed as the fundamental source of happiness, and thus, life in this world is considered mortal and a test in the temporal episode of time.

Moreover, Gendlin observes that the narrativized self can never be taken as a factual representative of a personality. According to him, it is impossible to translate the identity stories "transparently into language". The written manuscripts of the personality and the experienced foregrounding of a story of identity endure a transformation. There is a considerable difference between a lived personality and one that is expressed on paper. In other words, the documented or



narrativized-self variant of the actual life. It may be the requirements of the genre, i.e., autobiography or memoir. There may be exaggerated expressions to increase melancholic bliss or to increase ethos or pathos in a literary piece of writing. It can be a possibility to globalize or universalize the domestic problems faced while reconstructing one's own identity within the spectrum of world literature. Consequently, aimed at empirical meaning to be expressed in diction, Gendlin states, that it should be changed into the fictitious form. Therefore, this literary form has a requirement to go beyond the calculated boundary-line contextualization (223).

Furthermore, McAdams has foregrounded the special term for the stories as "*life stories*". This phrase has been modified by Polkinghorne to "identity story". People tell many stories, both orally and verbally, about their past experiences. They are sometimes responsible for shaping or reshaping their reconstructed selves. Polkinghorne argues that ordinary stories without specific meaning and purpose in life are not the stories that can be configured as "identity stories" or "life stories," as McAdams observes. These stories are just the situational narration of one's past. However, in memoirs like Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle's Tom Cabin* (1852) and Solomon Northup's book, *Twelve Years a Slave* (1853), we find an intelligible and grand purpose and meaning to the stories recounted by the victimized Black Americans. Both the "life stories and identity stories" possess a determined proposition to unmask the inhumane brutalities of white Americans during slavery. They have foregrounded the helpless, tapped-out, unprotected, and vulnerable lives of thousands of black slaves. These factual narrations, full of melancholic bliss, had a considerable influence on American history. It is claimed that the great American Civil War was kicked off under the impact of these memoirs. So, in this regard, Polkinghorne is pretty much right to claim that identity story is the term used to describe the unique story that serves as the foundation for people's sense of purpose and unity in their lives (366).

Additionally, Galen Strawson, in his article entitled *Against Normativity*, has raised some objections to the monolithic belief of personality psychologists that those tales figure in our intellect of identification. He argues on two selected contradictory fronts. Firstly, he goes against the conceptual framework that "*human experience is narrative in nature*". In other words, he doesn't believe that the self-identity is experienced and to be taken as a story. Secondly, he foregrounds a very critical objection that one doesn't need to be able to tell a good narrative to be able to live a worthy life (432). Of course, he is right in this regard that it is not essential to recount

our own stories to be a certified possessor of a good life, or that it is not essentially important to have a recounted story for a good life. Of course not! But to universalize one's voice of conscience, it must possess some worthiness in world literature. It is a normative and ethical claim that should not be taken as a monolithic statue of the good life; similarly, self-stories can never be discouraged as a whole.

## 2.4 Identity and Post-Illness Narrative

Most modern psychotherapists recommend self-narrative to reconstruct and restore the lives of their patients to a state of psychological maturity. The narration of positive outcomes through redemption is used as a tool in psychotherapy to heal the mental health of a psych patient. The stories of patients who recovered from a deathly disease can be used in this regard, as J.M. Adler and Skalina have foregrounded. Secondly, it helps psychiatrists reevaluate the patients' lives through the narration of emotionally negative events. (11)

Furthermore, Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan talks about the self-narrative in a post-illness context. He adds how the experience of discontinuity does work indirectly as a "*personal confession*" and how the psychological effects can be foregrounded by exploring through a reading of other subjects' stories concerning their illness. This illness narrative helps the patient to be well with good mental health psychologically. To examine this *autobiography*, he chooses to study first-person nonfictional narratives—the ill subject's narratives. (14)

Additionally, Shlomith Rimmon-Kenon suggests that illness changes the physical as well as psychological self of an individual, which creates "a sense of discontinuity in the subject's identity". To prove his point, he exemplifies Gilda Radner and her life as a cancer patient. He foregrounds narrative as a subjective construction of "identity." Furthermore, he states that a chronological connection between the past, present, and future is known as continuity (16). It serves as a link between narrative tales and Narrative Identity with either implicit or explicit continuity assumptions and disruption, which may be the traumatic effects of illness. McAdams takes this disruption as redemption, which is formal continuity for Oliver Sacks. He suggests that there is an absolute gap between then (before illness) and now (post-illness), where the formal

temporal conscience has vanished (110). This alienation in body, the pause stuck between the current and the older (memories), is suggested by Sack as a "hole in identity" (186) and by Murphy as "the damaged self". After these disruptions, in illness narratives, memories and anticipation about the future are restructured through self-consciousness, creating a new kind of continuity.

In addition to illness narratives, Arthur W. Frank differentiates between two main styles of self-change, i.e., "who I always have been" (42) and "who I might become" (44). Since this suggests past possession to deal with epiphany crises, the 'might become' self-discovered new resources that did not previously exist. Sofia Kostelac, therefore, interprets the narrative identity in *The God Doctor*, in post-apartheid disillusionment, concerning white South Africans in the aftermath of apartheid as a hermeneutically examined life, as suggested by Paul Ricoeur in his concept of Narrative Identity (42).

Furthermore, Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, while observing Narrative Identity under the ill-narrative spectrum (pro or post-ill narrative), argues that narrators, while recollecting their past, tend to focus on the events that were pleasant before the ill-fated life experiences. Thus, they try to forget the immediate past, which is an ill-fated episode of their lives, and jump back to the blessed days of the past to "re-establish) continuity between past and present, unconsciously or consciously. It is being observed while "narrating the past in the light of the present." It's a kind of bisected construction of self-identity dealing with "before" and after," having a sort of "unbridgeable gap between them, which may gradually reshape their narrative identity around a series of earlier crises experienced and survived" (16).

She, then, encounters the reconstructed identity of Audre Lorde, a Black-American feminist poet, in narratives. Lorde, as a post-mastectomy woman, constructs her story more radically as she takes the present as a rectification and repetition of the past. She reshapes the past from the perspective of the differences she faced to create continuity between her past and present. She concludes that she has a lesbian identity after losing one of her breasts. In every group she belongs to, she is classified as the other. She is not only a dual-gender woman as a Black-American lesbian but '*other*' as well. In the lesbian community, she is being observed as others," as she is being observed within the society of dark females. Having a badge of otherness," she characterizes herself as: As she exists as a woman, just because she is black, since she is lesbian, since she, a

black struggling writer performing her work, just comes to question us, are we just performing ours? (11). This image of a warrior is the master narrative, which leads her to think of "herself" as someone with glory instead of being more concerned about her illness. She observes herself as a brilliant archer like *Amazon of Dahomey*, who cuts off her right breast to become a brilliant archer. Thus, she reconstructs her identity based on myth as she narrates, "They were only little girls. But they did this willingly, for something they believed in" (34). We find the same kind of narrative identity construction in the memoir *My Feudal Lord* (1995) by Tehmina Durrani. The protagonist of the said memoir, though, does not lose her body parts completely; we find her fragmented full of wounds that dent her psychology. The physical shortcomings or wounds can be healed with time, but the inner miseries caused by traumatic insults can never be recovered so easily.

## 2.5 Existing Literature on Selected Memoirs

We find, while reviewing existing literature on the selected texts, that Michelle Obama's memoir has been highly esteemed by critics. Erin Kaplan's crystalized manifestation of the legacy of Michelle Obama as a courageous Dark-American lady triggers the less blessed communities to have a deep look at her life and struggles to be galvanized. She is Michelle Obama's age, has the same social background, and esteems Michelle Obama for having been raised in a black working-class household that believed that education was the key to success (23) It is a source of inspiration for all the marginalized communities, especially women across the globe, to construct their own identity, like Michelle Obama does a contemporary description of dark women only through herself (01). One of the best fundamental ingredients in her biography is what Kaplan glorifies. She demonstrates how being cognizant of one's race and being an individual are not mutually exclusive but rather a normal state of existence (01). She is a soldier in the racial battles that all Black people are involved in, but she is also human—vulnerable, unsure, pleased to be in love, and eager to be accepted (02). The legacy she earns is not just because of her prestigious designation as the First Lady of the superpower; the way she contextualized her past story of "*Becoming*" is marvellous. She is not too well off as compared to Tehmina Durrani, but "a middle class" who earns glory in the world started from this position is something "which may be the most radical part of this narrative" (02). She is the mouthpiece of the courageous Black American

community and must be esteemed as the true Black-American lady, as it is considered that black people with wealth and status don't have any real issues (they are, on the other hand, genuinely black) (02).

Secondly, Agnes Zsofia Kovas observes the memoir as the first post-First Lady Tenure contextualization, which changed the terminology used to define both (the role of First Lady and the First Lady's memoir genre). Undoubtedly, instead of encountering her husband's life as the most important public or political figure and the glorification of his political endeavours, the memoir foregrounds the classic American tale of a self-made, powerful woman actively involved in her neighbourhood (01). The contextualization of the facts can be esteemed while reading "being politically interpreted in the sense of antebellum autobiographical slave narratives, which sought to incite political change by firsthand account (11). It is, therefore, a highly esteemed narration that possesses an intertextual influence both as an Afro-American women's fiction and as an autobiography in which Finding one's voice in the face of dual oppression is an important issue (23). This marvellous, recounted account explores "the focused position of a black female subject who is "empowered" ", second to none. The essential events highlighted in the memoir, including connections to family dynamics, the value of education, and pivotal moments in life, are the source of inspiration for the persona towards "psychological transformation, almost self-help" (3).

Thirdly, Simon Munga has observed Michelle Obama's memoir under the philosophical consideration of the flexibility in the relations of pictures that describe her in *Becoming*. He tries to foreground the philosophical narrative strategies that are "used to inscribe herself in the autobiography" (112). He unmaskes the hidden images, which subvert the intergenerational stereotypes that society uses to categorize women, particularly black women and established women (3). Indeed, women, especially those who possess roots in the marginalized Black community in the USA, are double marginalized. Munga's work is very close to the current study as it aims to explore the "*narrative styles*," which appear to be a driving force triggering her to reconstruct the past holistically into an autobiography (04).

Fourthly, Jennifer Szalai in *The New York Times* honours Michelle's work: "Having gone from a working-class upbringing in South Side Chicago to the rarefied precincts of the Ivy League, she was already a self-described "control freak" who took her minority status at Princeton as a

"mandate to over-perform" (14). Her glorification is very much concerned with the exploration of Michelle Obama's Who-Am-I self under the social and political shades of life. But still, the memoir has yet to be explored under the psychological effects of the circumstances that took place in the lifecycle of the former "First Lady" of the USA. She adds that the sections of the memoir sound like the "stuff of inspirational self-help". She argues that Obama stresses the value of role models, particularly for young females of colour in a culture that isn't changing quickly enough. Here, Szalai has foregrounded Michelle Obama's personality through feminist lenses. She has constructed her personality as a role model for the less blessed black community of the United States.

Furthermore, Alexandra Alteer glorifies Michelle Obama's work under the psychological effect of being a good-tempered lady of steadfastness. Alteer argues that the former first lady, "Becoming," Michelle Obama, largely adheres to her well-known maxim of remaining upbeat in the face of political and personal attacks in her much-awaited memoir, she writes, that when they go low, we go from top to bottom. But she doesn't completely restrain herself. (24). Further, she esteems the courage of the former First Lady, as she has unmasked the true face of Mr. Trump, not as a political rival but as an immoral personality. As Alteer states, Mrs. Obama strongly criticizes President Trump for his sexism, misogyny, and involvement in the "birther" conspiracy theory that cast doubt on Barack Obama's citizenship. (24).

Moreover, Muhammad Ehsan, along with two selected co-authors, has foregrounded sexual harassment in feudal society as contextualized in *My Feudal Lord*. They have foregrounded that psychological abuse and, frequently, sexual assault go hand in hand with physical violence (54), which triggers Tehmina Durrani to go against the patriarchal tyrants. It is also highlighted in the 2014 Announcement on the "Elimination of Violence Against Women" that women are being oppressed physically, mentally, and psychologically. The United Nations General Assembly declared, that one of the key social factors that forces women into a position of inferiority to men is violence against women. (2014) The inhuman attitude of the feudal lords as typical patriarchal tyrants has been unmasked frequently in feminist literature, as we find in Khar, *My Feudal Lord*, which embodies a ferocious monster that, through his dominance and incredible rights, ruins the lives of countless innocent women (56). It is highly appreciated that this contextualization of women's abuse and violence instead of concealing the facts because of the what people would say'

issue is done. It is undoubtedly an accurate portrayal of gender inequality, male dominance, and women's marginalization in Pakistan's patriarchal society (57).

Additionally, Hira Arain has foregrounded "Female oppression, exploitation, and gender discrimination" in Tehmina Durrani's memoir. She observes all the said modes of exploitation, which are based on "individual ignorance, economic power, and the concept of SELF and OTHERS by males" (701). The research article explores the estrangement of women in capitalist societies. Women are used as selfless toys or a commodity in patriarchal societies, as Arain observes. Women in Third World countries, especially in the South Asian region, are subjugated and traumatized. This traumatic exploitation has an "exploitative relation with tyrants," and consequently, "women shift from being normal beings to being psychotic patients, just because males in our society" (702). Consequently, it is an uphill task for a woman to go against the prevailing norms set by the patriarchal tyrants in the feudal system.

## 2.6 Feminist Studies

The number of studies has been accompanied by Tehmina Durrani's memoir, under the feminist lenses of criticism. Hassan Bin Zubair, for instance, along with two co-authors, has foregrounded the traumatized conditions of Muslim women in Pakistan in a post-colonial context, as contextualized in *My Feudal Lord*. They have used the theoretical underpinnings of Deniz Kandiyohi's theory, *Practical Bargain*, which encompasses Muslim feminist critique along with Western feminism. As far as the selfhood of the protagonist, Tehmina Durrani is concerned, she doesn't have her own identity or voice, even at home. She does not belong to a low-class, illiterate, poor family, but still, her voice is controlled, as Hassan observes: Tehmina Durrani was unable to be her true self at home due to her mother's strictness. This kind of excessive rigidity is a form of psychological torment (114). So, this mental torture leads her to go against the prevailing standards and say ditto to the patriarchal or matriarchal subjects of feudal society. The notion of matriarchy in the Muslim world is being observed by Kandiyohi as follows: The cyclical nature of women's influence in the home and their expectation of inheriting the power of more senior women encourage the women to fully internalize this type of patriarchy. In traditional patriarchy, older

women's power over younger women offsets women's servitude to males (279). So, the females here in Third World countries like Pakistan tend to shatter the clouds of patriarchy as well.

Hassan concludes that the restrictive environment that always imprisoned Tehmina Durrani, the mental and physical torture of her family and parents, and the insecurity have "made her somewhat schizophrenic" (121). Additionally, Najia Asrar Zaidi and Misbah Bibi, the scholars of the University of Baluchistan and the University of Sindh, respectively, explore the memoir as a good way to communicate challenges and experiences specific to women, an expression of their deference and resistance here in Third World countries to the developed ones. They explore how the memoir sheds light on the deeply ingrained cultural practices of marriage and family institutions (03).

Additionally, Asifa Qasim, a PhD scholar from Qassim University, foreshadows how women use narrative as a tool to unmask the black faces of patriarchal tyrants. She argues that women authors communicate their experiences, differences, and internal difficulties through autobiography. To communicate their thoughts and the complexity of their lives, they depict how different people and events in a household or societal context relate to one another (33). Asifa has foregrounded the memoir from a linguistic point of view. She has masterfully explored how women writers use narrative as a tool to reconstruct their identity.

Furthermore, Sawati Srivastava and Avneesh Kumar observe that the twentieth century, undoubtedly, has unmasked the hidden evils of patriarchal structure across the globe, but still, While the wealthier women of the continent rose to prominence through their writing, third-world women's voices remained ignored (56). Srivastava observes Tehmina Durrani's way of reconstructing her identity as the most difficult task of her life. It is considered an audacious approach to have such courage in the feudal system to raise a voice against the patriarchal tyrants. Tehmina Durrani is courageous enough to have jotted down the hidden binaries in opposition to the so-called political heroes. She states that Tehmina Durrani has chosen to undertake the most challenging task—to write while disclosing her marriage as a means of illuminating feudalism in all its brutality". The memoir is esteemed as "the ideal representation of women's suffering and their suppressed condition (63). In this regard, Tehmina Durrani does cater to the world's literary audience as the mouthpiece of the marginalized women's community in the third world region.



There are, however, very few qualitative research studies in the arts and humanities that have been conducted under the theoretical underpinnings of Narrative Identity. The researcher has tried his level best to review the maximum possible amount of existing literature and scholarly articles on feminism and identity crises, both in the Third World South Asian context as well as in the developed countries of the First World. However, there is no comparative study that encompasses the identity crises highlighted in *My Feudal Lord* and *Becoming*. It is, no doubt, the debut research study in world literature that foregrounds the comparative analysis of narrativized selves having spatiotemporal differences under the philosophical critique of *Narrative identity*.

Consequently, it can be stated that many studies have been done on both texts, namely *Becoming* by Michelle Obama and *My Feudal Lord* by Durrani, but none of them have focused on comparative analyses of the selected texts under the psychological theoretical underpinnings of narrative identity developed by Dan P. McAdams and Kate C. McLean. Although the texts have been explored via feminist lenses, this study is novel since it anticipates both the comparative analysis of the chosen memoirs through the use of seven coding constructs of narrative identity and intersectional feminism.

## CHAPTER 3

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This comparative study aims to explore the reconstruction of identity through narratives. The researcher has taken the self-narrative account of two renowned political women, i.e., Michelle Obama, the former First Lady of the United States, and Tehmina Durrani, the previous First Lady of Pakistan. Through the theoretical underpinnings of Narrative Identity formulated by Dan P. McAdams and Kat C. Mclean, the selected memoirs, i.e., Michelle Obama's *Becoming* and Tehmina Durrani's *My Feudal Lord* (1995), are investigated. Because of their differing cultural, political, and social upbringings, both writers reconstruct their identities in different ways. Their challenges, obstacles, and approaches to life are different. Thus, the comparative analysis of selected literary texts entails a bridge across cultures that is interdisciplinary. It tackles patterns of alliance affiliations in literary texts across the spatiotemporal spectrum of world literature. In this regard, Susan Bassett recalls Matthew Arnold, who has admired comparative literature, as "a connection". The independent single event, according to him, cannot be comprehended fully. So, consciously or unconsciously, a reader tends to compare or relate what he or she has already read and thus draw a conclusion (210).

Moreover, the study focuses on investigating two selected memoirs through the qualitative mode of inquiry. Victor Minchiello and J. A. Kottler suggest that a qualitative framework deals with the understanding of human behaviours from the informant's perspective, where the data is analyzed by themes from descriptions by informants (45). The researcher applies textual analysis as a method to interpret the selected memoirs. It is beneficial to seek out many interpretations by considering a variety of readers' perspectives, alternative viewpoints from various ideologies, or varied applications of the texts under different ideological positions by various groups (113). The textual analysis aids in identifying and capturing the themes and ideas as well as understanding how they are organized and presented.

### 3.1 The Origin of Narrative Identity Critique

In the third volume of *Time and Narrative* (1985), a French philosopher, Jean-Paul Ricoeur (1913–2005), who coined the term "narrative identity," defined it as an amalgamation of history and fiction with relation to the individual as well as the historical community. He argues, "We have an intuitive pre-understanding of this fusion" between history and fictional narrative. Thus, this intuition is confirmed by "the epistemological status of autobiography" (353).

In short, Ricoeur dissects identity into *Personal* and *Narrative* binaries. So, he clarifies that private identity can be uttered only within the worldly dimension of an individual's presence. Then, he reconstructs the theory of narrative, which does not cope with "*the constitution of human time*", but deals with "*the constitution of self*" (114). As far as the identity in the narrative is concerned, Ricoeur has discussed it as a *Person and Identify References*. According to him, to identify something means to be identified, to have identification, or to make oneself "apparent among others," where we expect to express ourselves in the milieu of particular things of sameness. At the fundamental stage, however, recognizing is not recognizing oneself but recognizing "something". This "something" can be taken as oneself - collective marginalization, decisiveness, etc. So, we individualize something more borderline or globalize something more personal. However, in both cases, *identifying references* works simultaneously (27).

### 3.2 McAdams' Theory of Narrative Identity: Coding Constructs

Dan P. McAdams and Kate McLean have introduced the basics of narrative identity as "a person's internalized and evolving life story, integrating the reconstructed past and imagined future to provide life with some degree of unity and purpose" (223). They have established the fundamentals of narrative identity as an individual's adopted and ongoing life story, merging the reconstructed past and envisioned future to provide life with some degree of coherence and meaning. This notion is based on psychological theories of self-identification (234). They contend that those autobiographers who accentuate the redeeming values in tragedies, sufferings, and

adversity grow psychologically more mature within society. This positive outcome is generated by narrating the self-stories, which feature personal agency and exploration of the persona and lead to higher levels of psychological maturity (234).

The suggested theory includes essential components, such as narrative identity, life narrative accounts, episodic memory of autobiographers, episodic anticipated future cognition, sociality, psychological development, theory of mind, cultural and social evolution, etc. McAdams’ framework, apart from the unproblematic and smoothly accomplished stories of the narrativized selves, provides a framework to identify the modern Western problems and identity crises of society. However, a period of transition does affect culture as they no longer provide their members with a single, authoritative set of identity stories; as an alternative, they are presented with a variety of contradictory narratives (335). Furthermore, he values the scientific approach to focusing on personality traits and measurements. McAdams observes that this is essential to containing an investigation of the narrator’s uniqueness, traits, and situational behaviours of the persona (366).

To incorporate the construction of identity through narratives, McAdams and McLean have formulated the idea under the seven coding constructs, i.e., agency, communication, redemption, contamination, meaning-making, ENP (Exploratory Narrative Processing), and CPR (Coherent Positive Resolution). According to them, these seven codes can be discussed as shown below in Table 3.1.1.

<b>S. No</b>	<b>Coding Construct</b>	<b>Defined Explanation</b>
01	Agency	The degree to which personas can transform their own lives or have an impact on those around them, frequently by showing signs of self-mastery, autonomy, achievement, or any other aim or status Highly agentic narratives value success and the capacity to influence and control one's destiny.
02	Communication	It foregrounds that how much a protagonist exhibits or feels interpersonal connection—whether through romance, friendship,

		conversation, or a sense of belonging to a large group—is determined by these factors. It emphasizes closeness, intimacy, concern, caring, and belongingness with a sense of community.
03	Redemption	It deals with Scenes where a manifestly "bad" or emotionally troubling occurrence or scenario results in a demonstrably "good" or cheering ending. The subsequent good "redeems" or "salvages" the initial negative situation.
04	Contamination	It works as the antonym of redemption. It deals with instances where a good or positive occurrence takes a drastic turn for the worse or is negative, so that the negative impact overpowers, obliterates, or eliminates the positive impacts of the earlier positivity.
05	Meaning Making	The extent to which the persona learns something or derives a lesson from an event code might range from having no value to discovering a significant and profound life lesson through deep insight.
06	ENP	ENP stands for exploratory narrative processing, which deals with the depth of self-discovery as depicted in the story. Highly scored items imply in-depth and intensive investigation or the growth of a deeply detailed self-understanding.
07	CPR	CPR (coherent positive resolution) determines how well the story's conflicts are resolved to provide resolution and a satisfying conclusion. It foregrounds the degree to which the plot's conflicts are settled and resolved.

### 3.3 Kimberle Crenshaw's Theory of *Intersectionality*

To incorporate the feminist issues of a woman while constructing her identity, the researcher has taken the feminist underpinnings of *intersectionality* coined by Kimberly Crenshaw, an American renowned feminist. Since 1989, the framework has helped to investigate the

universality of the problems faced by victimized women under patriarchy across the globe. The globalized lenses of *Intersectionality* also help to analyze the selected memoirs comparatively, as both the autobiographical texts have their own different social, religious, and political contexts.

Firstly, feminism gets along with the venture to challenge the prevailing standards of patriarchal structures, gender stereotypes, and the overall subjugation of victimized women across the globe. Numerous feminist movements as well as ideologies have emerged with various objectives. Historically, the paramount of *Intersectionality* is entitled the "Big Three" feminist school of thought. Substantially, the first-wave liberal democratic feminist framework dealt with political and legal equitability. It was, however, analogized by proletarian women's movements, which are the roots of Socialist and Marxist feminism. Beginning in the early 1990s and lasting into the 2010s, the third wave of feminism arose. Rebecca Walker, in her article, coined the term third-wave feminism in "Becoming *the Third Wave*" (40). The wave witnessed the emergence of new currents in feminism such as women's individualism, *intersectionality*, vegetarian ecofeminism, transfeminism, and postmodern feminism.

Moreover, the theoretical concept of *Intersectionality* covers the demarginalizing intersection of women under the shadow of race, sex, gender discrimination, and the feminist panorama of sexes' stratification in patriarchy. Crenshaw suggests that gender or sex, colour or race, class, and ethnicity are among the many social, biological, political, and cultural variables that interact and fuel systemic socioeconomic inequity to subjugate women across the globe. Therefore, different types of oppression, like racism and sexism, don't function independently of one another; rather, they are linked together to create a system of oppression that represents the "intersection" of diverse types of discrimination (140).

Intersectionality is a method and a disposition that is deeply rooted in black feminism as well as critical race theory. It is a hermeneutic and explanatory tool that foregrounds the fact that gender stratification happens when male dominance and authority over females increase as a result of gender disparities. The proposed framework unmask the hidden binaries of mainstream hegemonic feminist approaches as biased.

Additionally, Crenshaw explores the hegemonic prevailing standards of feminism as "the most privileged group members" of mainstream feminism, "marginalizing those who are multiply burdened [sic] women's experience" or "the Black experience". Crenshaw criticizes the court's ruling as being racially discriminatory, biased, and prejudicial against black women. She unmasks the racial facts that, as a result, the typical sexual and racial discrimination claim is that of prejudice against a white female; claims that deviate from this paradigm look to present a hybrid allegation (139). According to Kimberly Crenshaw, women having Black experiences possess deeper and more traumatic experiences than the general categories of feminism that feminist discourse provides which are being neglected (149). Women possessing Black backgrounds are facing "double discrimination—discrimination based on race and sex. Moreover, they are occasionally treated unfairly and double marginalized as Black women as well as the total of racial and sex prejudice. She urges the foregrounding of white and non-white women's rights, which should be highlighted equally (166). According to Carbado, there is no a priori position for *intersectionality* in either its field of origin or more broadly in the university itself, even though it is embedded in Black Feminism and has a global appeal or more in the academy itself (304). The conceptual framework of the theory has been further broadened to the international arena to draw attention while dealing with the contextual alterations that provide alternative engagement with the theoretical movement of the proposed framework. Thus, the notion empowers this feminist endeavour to look beyond cultural, national, and ethnic boundaries.

Consequently, Crenshaw observes the prevailing standards of feminism as a half-done, inadequate version that must be modernized. She contends that any explanation that ignores *intersectionality* will fall short of addressing the specific ways in which Black women are oppressed since the intersectional experience is bigger than the sum of racism and sexism (140).

The present study investigates the construction/reconstruction of identity in two different contexts. The research has taken McAdams' coding constructs of narrative identity and Crenshaw's theoretical framework of *intersectionality*. Under the feminist theoretical lenses of *intersectionality*, the victimization of the selected autobiographers is focused. In this regard, feminist theorists have mapped the *intersectionality* to be applied across the globe in different spatial-temporal circumstances. They use *intersectionality* as a Work-in-Progress conceptualization to explore problems faced by women in different unexplored spaces of the world

(305). Secondly, they explore *intersectionality* within and across the discipline spectrum. Thirdly, they foreground *intersectionality*, working across national boundaries as a social movement for the world's marginalized communities, engaging not only Black women in the United States but all over the world. This modification of mapping the proposed hermetical framework helps to have a comparative investigation of the selected memories possessing spatial-temporal differences.



## CHAPTER 4

### NARRATIVE IDENTITY: THE RHETORIC OF SELF-CHANGE

The key objective of this study is to examine Michelle Obama's and Tehmina Durrani's construction of narrative identity, comparatively. The process of self-change as it is illustrated in the selected autobiographies has been investigated under the theoretical framework of McAdams' theory of narrative identity. However, Kimberly Crenshaw's feminist lenses of intersectionality have been used to examine the narrators' feminist perspectives in various spatiotemporal contexts. A well-known comparatist, Arthur Marsh, explores a thorough definition of comparative literature as literature in comparison, which discusses contrasting, organizing, and categorizing the literary works as a whole to comprehend their causes and effects as well as their comparisons and analogies (133). Reconstructing and reasserting cultural identity is facilitated by literary works. Henry Remak (1961) says that comparative literature aids in interpreting a literary work "beyond the confines of one particular country" and field. He contends that comparing literary works allows for the reconstruction and reassertion of cultural identity. It dispels the misconceptions of Eurocentric assumptions and value judgments about indigenous literature.

The study concentrates on the rhetoric of self-change used by female memoir writers in a patriarchal society. Cicero, the Roman philosopher, outlines the five tenets or canons of rhetoric in his work *De Inventione*. These five tenets are *invention*, *arrangement*, *style*, *memory*, and *delivery*. While the original intent of these canons was centred around oratory or public speaking, the majority also used the prewriting, drafting, and revising phases of the persuasive writing process.

Primarily, Cicero's first tenet of rhetoric, *invention* deals with the act of generating ideas for a text. Find, in her memoir, *My Feudal Lord*, Tehmina Durrani describes how she devises a goal to achieve her aspirations of breaking free from patriarchal constraints. As a result, she empowers all the female victims of a patriarchal society to speak out against injustice. Invention is the prewriting/idea generation stage of the writing process. We find that Tehmina Durrani, in the post-

metamorphosis period, claims "I don't want to waste what I have learned and felt" (373). Likewise, in Michelle Obama's coherent account written in the post-First Lady era, we find that she claims, "In this new place, with a lot I want to say" (422). Thus, she contextualizes all the racial segregation and patriarchal marginalization, a woman endows in the United States.

Secondly, Cicero's concept of *arrangement* deals with the procedure of selecting a text's content order. In this study, we focus on how the coherent life accounts of the selected autobiographers have been arranged systematically and chronologically. We find similarities in the construction of the selected memoirs and their sequences. For example, there is a strong parallel between Michelle Obama's *Becoming* and Tehmina Durrani's episodic phase of her lost self. The memoir, written by Tehmina Durrani, is divided into three sections that correspond to the three stages of her life i.e., *Lion of the Punjab*, *Law of the Jungle*, and *Lioness*. Likewise, Michelle Obama has also divided her life narrative account into three sections which cover three phases of her past i.e., *Becoming Me*, *Becoming Us*, and *Becoming More*. Firstly, Durrani's memoir section \_\_\_\_ *The Lion of the Punjab* deals with the family background and childhood under matriarchal restrictions in search of a suitable life partner. Secondly, section \_\_\_\_ *The Law of the Jungle* deals with the manifestation of the exploitative and abusive authority of the selected patriarch, Mustafa Khar, her husband. Here, we find that her self-identity is crushed. The final episode of Durrani's life \_\_\_\_ *Lioness* deals with the climax and anticlimax of her life narrative account. On the other hand, in Michelle's contextualization, *Becoming Me* deals with the initial family grooming and the construction of her 'who Am-I self'. Secondly, *Becoming Us* foregrounds how she selects Barrack as a life partner to fulfil her dreams. Thirdly, *Becoming More* provides the readers with how she becomes the most important lady in the world, the FLOTUS. Therefore, even though the contents, subject matter, and tensions of the stories vary, we find similarities in the construction of the selected memoirs.

Thirdly, Cicero's concept of *Style* is the procedure for selecting the precise words to be used in a text. We find plenty of persuasive statements full of inducements, incitements and exhortations. Michelle Obama has quoted barrack Obama's persuasive eloquences and how they have brought change for the nation. On the other hand, Durrani's style of persuasion is different and upside down as compared to Michelle Obama. She rages against the cruelty of the patriarchs.

Fourthly, Cicero's fourth canon of rhetoric — *Memory* deals with the process of committing a text to memory. There are still circumstances in which writers need to commit their texts to memory to improve the delivery (the fifth canon), even though this canon is more relevant to oratory than writing. In this study, we find how the episodic memory of the selected memoir writers has been arranged in systematic ways. Michelle contextualizes her post-First Lady era and the story of her contaminative self. Likewise, Durrani's *My Feudal Lord* is the rage against social and political injustice in feudal societies. She recounts that very specific episode of her memory, which deals with the traumatic treatment she has received in a patriarchal society. Cicero's fifth canon of rhetoric, *Delivery* deals with the art of presenting persuasive language to the audience. The tenet is very much correlating with the above-mentioned strategies of rhetoric as it is less prominent in writing than in oratory.

Furthermore, according to Aristotle, a speaker's capacity for persuasion depends on how successfully they appeal to the audience in three distinct ways: through *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*. According to later rhetoricians, when combined, these arguments create what is known as the rhetorical triangle. First, Logos makes a rational argument. The study focuses on the argumentative skills of memoir writers. We discover that the focus of Durrani and Michelle Obama is extremely distinct and well-defined. Tehmina Durrani investigates the traumatizing effects of women being marginalized and victimized by colour discrimination. Michelle Obama, on the other hand, is an optimistic nominee. We find compelling arguments and reliable data in a well-thought-out and methodical order. We can see through pathos how Michelle Obama and Durrani are related to the subject at hand. The three sections of the selected memoirs, for instance, are very much correlated to the specific episode of the personas' account. They provide solid evidence to show respect for different points of view. The cheerful spirit of conviviality in the Heyday setting of Michelle Obama's post-First Lady era is a major theme of her memoir *Becoming*. Durrani's life narrative account, on the other hand, addresses just one topic: rage against the atrocities committed by patriarchal rulers. Thus, we discover the memoirs' understandable language. Because *Becoming* and *My Feudal Lord* have different contextualization goals, the tone used in *Becoming* is softer than other one. The vivid descriptions, examples, and details that arouse the reader's emotions and imagination are what we find when we examine the pathos employed in the memoirs. The chosen memoirists speak to the ideals and principles of a particular community and culture. Since the

rhetoric emphasizes how the construction of the self-narrative plot strikes a balance between logos, ethos, and pathos, we conclude that this rhetorical triangle is equilateral.

Furthermore, the chapter focuses on highlighting a variety of structural bodies, including class, racism, patriarchy, feudalism, patriarchy, and cultural mechanisms. The oppressive suppression, gender stratification and exploitation, and subjugation of women worldwide are mostly caused by these subordinate patterns. The theoretical lens of Narrative Identity helps narrators to foreground the redemptive as well as contaminative accentuations from the casual as well as thematic coherence in their life accounts. Michelle Obama and Tehmina Durrani, for instance, while possessing narrative identity, acquired a higher status of psychological maturity. These life stories, when seen through the lenses of literary narratives, have a pretty significant impact on dealing with factual and fictional binaries to enhance aesthetic beauty in literature. Paul Ricoeur believes that, far from being inherently exclusive, literary tales and life histories are complimentary (163). He expresses that while narrating our past, we often recount things which we suppose as *true* in nature and “the predictive nature of the events as we foresaw them” according to the situational context (11). The language of the text, on the other hand, he foregrounds, deals along with the experience of the actor. The framework of “where” leads us further forward to the notions of narration as well as *predictions*. Narration, therefore, implies memory i.e., the past recollections of the events and predictions, which implies exactions. So, the important to remember is the imaginary fog of the past. The image of the past has an impression left by events, which ultimately drives forward our narrative. It is just because of the impact that rests within the concentration (23). These images of the past not only hold our vision or the subject matter of the narration but also help to reconstruct our identity.

#### **4.1 *My Feudal Lord and Becoming: An Overview of the Selected Memoirs***

Michelle Obama, in *Becoming* (2018), contextualizes the incredibly personal experiences she experienced as a young child while residing in an upstairs rental apartment with her parents, Fraser and Marian Robinson, in Chicago's South Side. The memoir's prologue sets the stage for

Michelle Obama's narrative to begin by sketching a scene from her life after serving as the First Lady.

Additionally, Obama has contextualized her story of *Becoming* under three headings, which cover three phases of her life: *Becoming Me*, *Becoming Us*, and *Becoming More*. Likewise, we find the three parts of Tehmina Durrani's narrative account, which are titled *Lion of the Punjab*, *Law of the Jungle*, and *Lioness*. Michelle Obama's episodic memory has the first phase (*Becoming Me*) dealing with the initial family grooming and the construction of her "who Am-I self. The second phase (*Becoming Us*) foregrounds how she selects Barrack as a life partner to fulfil her dreams. Michelle Obama's third phase of episodic memory (*Becoming More*) provides the readers with how she became the most important lady in the world, the FLOTUS. The first episode is the initial step towards self-realization. The second deals with the construction of her identity in collaboration with Barrack's aims. However, the third one is the practical phase of her life to show who she has become.

Tehmina Durrani, besides, has shared a coherent account of her lost self. The First phase, titled *The Lion of the Punjab*, deals with the family background and childhood under matriarchal restrictions in search of a suitable life partner. The second episodic phase of her reconstructed past (*Law of the Jungle*) is the manifestation of the exploitative and abusive authority of the selected lion (Mustafa). Tehmina Durrani's identity is crushed during this episode under the tyrannical whims of patriarchy. The final episode of her coherent account deals with the climax and anticlimax of the story. She works hard for her jailed husband, and when he escapes, Mustafa again forms a sexual relationship with her sister, Adila. She catches them red-handed and, thus, gets divorced from the debaucher. In her memoir, she deals with the single subject matter of how women are being victimized under the cruel whims of patriarchy in Third World countries, especially in feudal societies. She rages against the subjugation of women treated inhumanely by tyrants. A person's life narrative account integrates their episodic experiences with their aspirations to produce a coherent account of who they are (234). In the post-metamorphosis period, the well-being maturity level leads her to claim that "I don't want to waste what I have learned and felt" (373).

Consequently, Michelle Obama ends her stories with thanks for her husband, Barack Obama, whom she calls “my love . . . . my partner of twenty-five years, and the most devoted father to our girls,”. She wants to have a life partner she could only have dreamed of, giving her readers reason for optimism (423). Tehmina Durrani, contrarily, concludes when her rage against patriarchal victimization hits its peak.

## **4.2 Self-Discovery and the Role of Family: A Comparative Analysis**

The process of discovering oneself involves a lifelong introspective inquiry. It results in the discovery of ‘who we are’, our potential, tendencies, emotions, purpose in life, hopes, and dreams, as well as what guiding principles are leading us down the various transit routes we choose to travel. The goal of the self-discovery process is to help people come to their self-understanding by guiding them through self-questioning and an analysis of their ideas, words, and actions. McAdams refers to this self-reflection as the well-being of psychological maturity. He takes it as an ongoing process of stripping away the insignificant episodes of life and visualizing the ideal self. When it comes in narrative form, it helps to construct or reconstruct one’s identity by cultivating deep self-mastery. McAdams claims, "Human beings are natural storytellers" (234). All humans, however, differ from one another in terms of their innate preferences, dispositions, and worldviews. They influence each other. They seek guidance and motivation. Michelle Obama, for instance, explores how Barack Obama's story influences the audience. She claims that after introducing himself, Obama promotes a discussion by "inviting others to share their experiences and discuss their worries about life in the neighbourhood" (118). By telling "his tale", Barack can investigate if they are giving serious thought to reconstructing their identity. In this regard, McAdams claims that an individual may develop and internalize a continuous and comprehensive life narrative regarding the significance of those experiences "out of the episodic particulars of memory" (234).

Secondly, according to McAdams, there is abundant evidence of casual and thematic consistency in people's life narratives as well as other indicators of a distinct narrative identity (237). The same idea may be found in Michelle Obama's self-identification process. She describes

how her capacity for self-examination led her to develop her own identity as her self-questioning shows, “where I want my life to go. What sort of individual do I aspire to be? And who were we? What did we care about? How could we proceed?” (132). This self-questioning is the first step towards realizing who they are! Her account of *Becoming* is deeply rooted in internalizing her family’s education. Likewise, we learn that Barack has a "purpose and meaning" for communicating his story to the black community as he preaches an influential message of self-realization (118). He wants them to function as "one unit" because of the linkages between their separate stories. These relationships encourage individuals to link discontent and transform it into something valuable and persuasive, which may ultimately encourage them to "create change" (116). Secondly, Michelle Obama, an autobiographer, narrates the impact of the stories of others on her self. She acquires some degree of unity and purpose in her life. She, for instance, narrates the story of Suzanna's cancer, which left a significant impact on her consciousness (127). She recounts her "fifth-grade classmate McCullom", who, alongside his siblings, was trapped by flames in his bedroom and died (36). She knows the story of Dandy, a black man who lived through the Great Depression and was from South Carolina, a region where tens of thousands of slaves toiled on large plantations (37). She relates the incident of the Great Migration, "fleeing racial oppression and chasing industrial jobs" (37). She contextualizes Southside as an old black man who takes "pains to keep" the black children safe from the white ones. She states that the person used to "scare them (children) with real, imagined stories" about the consequences of crossing the wrong neighbourhood for black kids and "lecturing them about avoiding the police" (11).

Additionally, she talks about Reverend Jackson, who "had bodyguards," as he has "threats against his life" just because he is "a black father" (63). She refers to Susan, a divorced lady with her own set of financial and emotional hardships (169). All of these stories of her past show how she constructed her distinct personality despite belonging to the same ethnic and social group. She also wants them to find redemption out of the adversities and acquire a higher degree of psychological maturity. She wants to trigger them to "see the power of their own stories" (301) while avoiding "messy social situations" (258). Likewise, she is influenced from the powerful story of Nelson Mandela, a name of hope, optimism, struggle, courage, and inspiration. Contrarily, Tehmina Durrani possesses different ingredients while constructing her identity. Durrani’s story begins in a society where "a dark child was condemned to neglect". She was well aware of her future, as she narrates, "And yet there I was, arriving in the world in 1953 with a dark skin". The

mother's embarrassment in presenting her "ugly" girl to friends is "detailing particular episodes" of her memory. This is the special "period" in the narrator's life about which McAdams claims that the specific "experiences mean to them". Tehmina Durrani, "even as a baby", for example, when the circumstances appeared antagonistic to the way she looked, felt inadequate being other in her own family of patriarchal society. She possesses a "condemned-by-nature-self who has never been "kissed or hugged" by her mother. Within her own home, she appears to be extremely "an outsider" and "other". This leads her to possess some "deep-rooted internal complexes" (23). However, we find a grand meaning and purpose behind the contextualization of her past. Tehmina Durrani, like Michelle Obama, "out of the episodic particulars of autobiographical memory" through which they "construct and internalize an evolving and integrative life story", adopts narrative as a tool to reconstruct her identity with redemptive adoption (234).

Thirdly, according to McAdams, paying close attention to the individuals' life narrative accounts encourages the formation of narrative identity (238). Thus, narrative identity is constructed through the amalgamation of different stories and experiences being narrated. So, the interlinked connections between the experiences provide thematic coherence in one's self-realizations of Who-Am-I self. This institution of family is crucial to the creation and moulding of an individual's identity. It is one of the most important elements in the internalized and developing life stories of the narrators. According to McAdams, reorganizing the identity while incorporating the projected future and reconstructed history contributes to giving life a sense of coherence and direction, or unity and purpose (234). Tehmina Durrani belongs to a conservative family of aristocrats in a feudal society with an "imperial past" where "wealth equates with honour and power" (40). Her prime focus in narrating the stories is to unmask the hidden exploitive binaries of the patriarchal tyrants. She recounts how the British Crown granted Mustafa's father the title of Great Khan Sahib (her father-in-law) in the 1940s. When Muhammad Yar Khan married Mustafa's mother, a sixteen-year-old girl, he was 64 years old. Tehmina Durrani's husband, the astute feudal lord Mustafa Khar, was skilled at seducing and enticing ladies into his care too (41). Thus, Tehmina Durrani considers this feudal heritage of her family as a permit or a license to rob, rape, or even kill the women. Durrani narrates how Mustafa, at the age of seventeen, married his uneducated cousin Wazir. The unfortunate woman was used, gave birth to a son, and divorced, which is "a dismal destiny" for Durrani in conservative society (42). Michelle Obama's parents



trigger their children to have their own Identity and voice too. Her husband and household are not patriarchs or matriarchs with absolute authority. Their children are free to use their voice, for instance, to "lecture" their parents about "lung cancer". They can guide them. Having her own Identity, Michelle Obama does not want the exact "life like my parents had" (140). Her mother teaches her the value of the family's story, her own story, and the wider story of the great nation (03). These values are the vital ingredients for extracting casual and thematic coherence while constructing Michelle Obama's self-rhetoric. Tehmina Durrani, comparatively, being "a dark-skinned girl," is marginalized by her mother. Her own family's matriarchs and patriarchs, including her mother and her husband Mustafa, have crushed her identity and silenced her voice.

Fourthly, McAdams foregrounds that the life narrative accounts are the "tales of redemption," which reinforce long-term commitments to improve one's life. We find that people come and narrate their "own miscarriage stories" to heal Michelle Obama by sharing their experiences with love and support (188). People narrate their life accounts to Tehmina Durrani to keep her silent too. Durrani narrates that a great deal of people live their lives hiding their tales out of shame or fear. Michelle Obama, conversely, triggers the individual as everyone grows up "with a message". By constructing Narrative Identity, stereotypical sectionalizing like "our skin is dark, our hips are wide, our language is odd, thus others" can be dismantled. Michelle Obama suggests people begin sharing their stories to establish their identity. How you perceive or try to redeem the situation (415) The accentuation of redemptive meanings pushes her forward. She takes them as "boosters" and the "personal gospel choir" instead of barriers (356).

Furthermore, everybody's past has a fundamental impact on the individual's personality. Michelle Obama views people as the products of how they have been raised. According to her, individuals are the total of their respective genetic codes in the form of their parents' investments (161). When we compare Michelle Obama and Barack Obama, we see the difference. Michelle Obama's grandparents were slaves (37). Her parents lived in the "rented apartment" of Robbie and Terry in Chicago (01) which is often "unbearably hot in the late afternoons" (23). Barack, on the other hand, comes from a different family, as Michelle Obama puts it: After all, he's a unicorn—shaped by his weird name, his peculiar heritage, his hard-to-pin-down ethnicity, his missing dad, and his unique thinking. Ann Dunham, Barack Obama's mother, is a white woman who fell in love and later married a black student from Kenya named Barack Obama. As a result of his mother's

multiple marriages and divorces, Barack views marriage as "ephemeral." We find the inherited glimpse of these "brief and confusing" marriages as "misplaced Midwesterners" in Barack's psychological adoption(114). Thus, we find a coherent account in Michelle Obama's "episodic memory". The story of her past seems to be the leading guideline for her relationship with Barack Obama. The maternal behavioural shift shapes Michelle Obama's consciousness. For example, with her life partner, she is always content to show that they have been together for "twenty years now and are still connected by a visceral and grounding love" (302).

Additionally, McAdams notes that narrative identity typically leads to self-exploration, which results in lessons learned and insights gained that, in the long run, enrich a person's life (236). We find an absolute difference between the family's consciousness enriching the autobiographer's life in different spatiotemporal domains. Michelle Obama, for instance, has her voice, which can be used against her husband, too. Some topics like "smoking", the "cerebral man of intellect," and his "logic seemed to leave (Barack) altogether" (102). Michelle Obama was not raised within the patriarchal set of boxed rules, but her family raised her to run her own life (114). Her mother possesses a truly parental mentality (46). Tehmina Durrani, conversely, has been educated differently. She does not have her own identity or voice. She knows that "even a sullen look would send him (Mustafa) into a rage" and that severe torture, both physical and mental, will be started (105). In feudal society, patriarchal tyrants' "unpredictable words" are obeyed as laws. Instead of you-can-do-it behaviour, as we find in Michelle Obama's case, Mustafa crushes Durrani's "sensuality" (107). Tehmina Durrani's mother, Samina, is not the kind of mother like Michelle Obama's mother, who provides according to the moods, but Samina dictates the household. Samina, Tehmina Durrani's mother, is not like Michelle Obama's mother, who makes decisions based on the family's moods; instead, Samina dictates as an absolute matriarch. When she becomes a mother, she transfers this beauty of intellectuality to her children, as she wants them to be raised strong, forward-moving, and confident. Contrarily, Tehmina Durrani is raising her kids under a patriarchal order, as she was once raised under matriarchal and patriarchal structures. She has to save her children from Mustafa's agonizing torture. Mustafa punishes Tehmina Durrani and his children to educate them right from childhood as subdued objects. These are the lessons internalized by the family's treatment. Moreover, when Sasha is born, for instance, Barack's maid Glo gives notice, and Michelle Obama "wept and wept that night [sic] how hard it was to balance without her". They are fortunate," but now they feel "losing their arm" (199). In Tehmina Durrani's

case, maids are treated as "bloody bitches" (160). Die Ayesha is beaten, for example, when Tehmina Durrani forgets to "eat 16 fluid ounces of milk" every day (99). Tehmina Durrani narrates, "Mustafa thrust his foot squarely against Dai's backside, sending her flying through the doorway" (99). Poor Die asks Mustafa's dog, Bueno, to "pray to God that He will get me out of here" (204). She thinks this 'bezaban' will be responded to soon. The poor old woman can never think of leaving the Sahib, as she belongs to a poverty-stricken family.

Moreover, this idea of psychological growth with learning requires education as the main ingredient. In the selected memoirs, Michelle Obama, and Barack Obama versus Tehmina Durrani and Mustafa's intentions unmask their storied account of positive personal transformation. Since Barack enjoys reading Toni Morrison as well as history and biographies, he, a bibliophile, spends a considerable portion of his strength on books, which serve as "ballast for his intellect" (113). For Michelle Obama, however, the study room is "a hole, a closed-off little warren [sic] undisturbed (181). It is like a spiritual oxygen for Barack, "where insights are birthed, and clarity comes to visit" (182). Michelle Obama, conversely, being educated but poor, is "smitten" and focuses on "thinking about income inequality" (113). It is a family inheritance, as Michelle Obama's ancestors were marginalized and deprived because they were deeply rooted in slavery. Their focus is on economic injustice. Likewise, Michelle Obama's father adores Barack but "still doesn't like his odds" of the reading habits he possesses" (114).

Furthermore, Michelle Obama was inspired to learn, when she was learning to read at the public library (13). However, her father just didn't have enough money to cover the cost of tuition (26). Of course, they are from the "poor side of the neighbourhood spectrum" and Michelle Obama has an intensifying spark of "Just go and do your best" to prove "who am I!" (21). Contrarily, Tehmina Durrani says that when she brings "some magazines to read", it is taken as a "waste of time and money" (161). The patriarchal tyrants of feudal society never allow their women "to go out" of their cruel whims, both physically and cerebrally (131). We find a clear difference between two minds having different episodic memories of the past and the imagined future. Mustafa, being a patriarchal tyrant from feudal society, does not allow Tehmina Durrani to read or even think.

Tehmina Durrani, however, accentuates the redemptive meanings of the agonized humiliation, and thus she earns a great name as an influential feminist activist in world literature. Furthermore, in anger, Michelle Obama tends to yell. Barack, contrary to popular belief, does not

lose temper and manages to stay cool and rational (161). Tehmina Durrani, on the other hand, can never think to "yell" but "shuddered in fright". She laments physical pain or psychological damage, which she considers "worse" than physical torture. Her early marriage is used as a "stick" for beating and to prove herself as an "adulterous slut" being divorced (105). Mustafa threatens her, saying he will "break every bone" in her body or "fling acid on your face" (105). She suffers a lot under the monster's wrath (189). Michelle Obama, contrarily, states that Barrack, the brainy superhero, is "openly affectionate" to tell her that she is "beautiful," which ultimately made her "feel good" (101).

McAdams observes that people who possess narrative identity obtain a "higher independent measure of psychological maturity". It leads them to construct narrative accounts that accentuate "learning growth and positive personal transformation" (203). Hence, Tehmina Durrani, being a divorcee, recontracts her identity to share the positive personal transformation. Comparatively, Tehmina Durrani's and Michelle Obama's life narrative accounts possess a big difference. It is the result of Michelle Obama's internalized psychological family heritage, which triggers her to prefer the inner beauty of a platonic lover to its physical appearance. Additionally, Michelle Obama considers pregnancy a mission, feeling "never alone, never lonely" (189). Conversely, pregnancy appears to be a "curse" in Tehmina Durrani's life. She takes it as God's most severe trial, "whenever the seed nestled in my womb". She does not have the shelter of her father or mother. She is not only secluded like Michelle Obama but also "barefoot and pregnant" (225). She is agonized both physically and mentally in the torture cell savagely.

Furthermore, Barrack takes responsibility "to raise" his children. It shows that it is not only the duty of Michelle Obama to raise the children, but the president too (220). Michelle Obama knows that "Barrack would be a great father if he devoted himself to children". The typical responsibility of raising children only seems to be dismantled in Michelle Obama's case. It is a pleasure for both when Malia is born, as their "lives have changed forever" (270). She is being honoured as "mom in chief" in the family (329). They love children as "a balm for my spirit" in the White House to get momentarily away from the "First Lady's worries" (322). Mustafa, on the other hand, likes children to be born. Tehmina Durrani unmasks the hidden binaries of the tyrants' exploitation: "Mustafa has children in various pockets of the country". A child, in his opinion, is a victim of his fate (97). Tehmina Durrani's daughter, Naseeba, cries out when Mustafa torments the

tiny girl as well. Tehmina Durrani sees her daughter yelling, "flustered, helpless, and desperate to avert." Naseeba is typically grabbed by Mustafa while he howls and "pushes her head beneath the water." He interprets it as a lesson for the kids to follow from an early age, treating them more like trained animals than human beings with cognition. When her "baby was drowning," she pleaded for his mercy. When Tehmina Durrani's baby's fight in the water tub subsided, the beast let go of his hideous hold as the child coughed and spluttered (142). Additionally, Mustafa takes up Amina (Mustafa and Sherry's kid) as she cries and "shoves her beneath the bed [sic] and suffocates her." The beautiful baby girl, rather than being a source of joy, became a cause of new, frightening stress for Tehmina Durrani (113). Now, she must protect herself along with the kids from being suffocated, drowned, or beaten by their father.

Moreover, in Michelle Obama's story, we find you-can-do-it notion. Barrack always triggers her to realize her powerful inner voice, identity, and intellectual maturity. Tehmina Durrani, on the other hand, is being suppressed by her husband and other family members. Michelle Obama thinks that along with her children, she should not be identified as Mrs. Barack Obama or the daughters of the POTUS, but they have their own identity to be glorified. She triggers Sacha and Malia to make "real friends" outside the White House. For Tehmina Durrani, she is warned that "you are nothing anymore. Once, you were Begum Tehmina Durrani Mustafa Khar. Now you are just Tehmina Durrani" (372). As we see in the form of change, McAdams contends that narrative identity lends a person's life a certain amount of coherence, direction, and meaning (234). According to Tehmina Durrani, revealing a woman's confidentiality is frowned upon in patriarchal societies. However, the realization triggers her to ask questions to expose the injustice of patriarchal tyrants. She, for instance, thinks that silence would be a great crime because it breeds "subservience and fosters malignant hypocrisy" (372). So, it is the moral duty of victimized intellectual minds to raise their voice against oppressive injustice. It helps patriarchal tyrants like Mustafa victimize poor souls under their cruel whims.

In contrast, Michelle Obama's motivation for narrating herself is to remember the pride of black people and to visit her former neighbourhood (117). Though she is not among the most "demoralized parts" of the USA, having inherited the identity of a black African American, she knows the miserable condition of her community. Although Michelle Obama is measured by different yardsticks, this street girl becomes "Ma'am" in the White House but is humbled. It was a

component of this greater change, this bizarre transition, in which they were bulletproofing everything (284). They represent the First understanding that any mistake or slip in judgment would be exaggerated and read as something more than what it was (295). She has now evolved into the most unique superpower personality compared to an average woman. Despite being the First Lady of the United States, her clothing resurrected the dreaminess of my family's metamorphosis (301). Her identity has changed, but her consciousness has humble roots.

Contrarily, Tehmina Durrani's prime focus is to unmask the inhuman attitude of patriarchal tyrants in feudal societies. Like the black community in the USA, she is double marginalized, too. Her mother, the family matriarch, Samina, looks like an absolute dominant authority. Tehmina Durrani, being a dark-skinned child and female, is not only victimized by the patriarchal tyrants but also marginalized by her mother, who is "insecure about Rubina" (the fair-skinned younger daughter). Her father is a "distant figure"; he loved her but "chances were rare" His father has no authority and "had to live by the mother's rule [sic], who took all the decisions regarding the home" (23).

Furthermore, Durrani, as a child, was never taught to construct her own identity, as Michelle Obama does for her kids. Because of her father's status, Durrani believes that she will undoubtedly find a suitable husband. The marriage is the only "escape from (her) family" (37). A "budging blade" appears for Barrack and Michelle Obama when Michelle Obama loses her father. As a shooting remedy, he takes on her sorrow, curling himself around her and kissing the top of her head (152). On the other hand, Durrani claims that her husband is waiting for her grandma to die, and when she died, Durrani bemoaned the loss of her grandmother, saying "I was an orphan in my parents' lifetime" (348). Durrani used to confide in her as the only other woman.

### **4.3 Identity Politics: Race-Gender Subordination and Redemption**

Identity politics refers to politics that are based on a certain identity, such as a person's race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic class. Although it has predecessors in the writings of people like Mary Wollstonecraft and Frantz Fanon, the word "identity politics" didn't appear until the late 20th century. A lot of today's identity politics

proponents use an intersectional approach, which takes into consideration the variety of oppressive systems that interact and may have an impact on people's lives as a result of their numerous identities as we find in *Becoming* and *My Feudal Lord*. The goal of identity politics is to better understand the interactions between racial, economic, sex-based, and gender-based oppression and to ensure that no one group is disproportionately impacted. It places a focus on the lived experiences of those who are subject to systemic oppression. These modern identity politics categorize people according to their racial or ethnic background, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic level, education, religion, language, occupation, political party, veteran status, stage of recovery, and geography. While not mutually exclusive, these identification categories are sometimes combined into one when characterizing hyper-specific groupings.

The goal of narrative identity, on the other hand, is to understand how to explain emotionally good situations in a way that is more uplifting and developmental (236). In Michelle Obama's *Becoming*, for instance, we find that being female and black, she possesses a marginalized identity. She belongs to the black community in Chicago, which is stereotypically considered to have a "ghetto mentality" (43). The poor community has a set pattern of thinking about themselves as they have been subjected by the upper class. Michelle Obama, however, possesses the spark to be a nonconformist. This self-realized nonconformist approach leads her to think outside the box, asking, "Am I good enough?" (55) to make a dent in the prevailing less blessed standards of the black community. This is the step to re-story her community's past, targeting to discover supplementary positive and progress-affirming ways of Becoming her up-with-hope self (62).

Likewise, "Black Feminism and Critical Race Theory" serve as the foundation for the multidisciplinary theoretical framework known as *intersectionality*. It may be respected as a technique, a disposition, and an analytical instrument. In 1989, Kimberly Crenshaw first used the phrase. In the era when mainstream feminism was at its zenith, black women in the United States were marginalized and victimized, and this is one of Crenshaw's key areas of investigation and focus. She focuses on mainstream feminism, antiracist philosophy, and political antidiscrimination legislation (140).

Secondly, Crenshaw, coauthored with other theorists of the proposed framework, broadens the concept of localized version to be globalized. The contributions from other fields aid in understanding *intersectionality*'s evolution and extend our perception of where the theory still has

space to go (303). She makes the case that a variety of biological, social, and cultural factors, such as gender, race, class, and ethnicity, are the key components that not only interconnect but also feed into a system of social inequality. They contend that the many forms of oppression, such as racism and sexism, do not exist in isolation. They collaborate in ways that are connected and linked to one another. This partnership is creating an oppressive structure that "intersects" many types of discrimination (303).

This study discovers that in the selected memoirs, people, particularly women, are categorized based on their culture and social standards. Primarily, we find how the biological category contributes to social inequality in the form of gender discrimination, as explored in the selected memoirs by Tehmina Durrani and Michelle Obama. The critical lenses of sexism and racism, or the collaboration of both, are used to interpret the discriminative oppression.

While "Mapping" the theory, Crenshaw's interventions explore, "to dismantle the instantiations of marginalization that operated within institutionalized discourses that legitimized existing power relations e.g., law! [sic] and discourses of resistance e.g., feminism and antiracism! could themselves function as sites that produced and legitimized marginalization" (304).

In *Becoming*, we find how the stereotypical hate hits Michelle Obama physically and emotionally. However, she takes a positive, redemptive meaning out of the stereotypical victimization. Since she is female, black, and strong, people translate her as "angry," which is another sort of "damaging cliché" (265). She is being judged on whether she is an asset or a liability (265). She acquires the "psychological adaptation" of well-being through narrative identity and proves herself to be the best among others. Michelle Obama the first black FLOTUS in history, blends herself into a slightly different official mood. She wants her true identity back, being Michelle Obama Robinson from a South Sider within the context of this greater historical perspective (361). She knits her old life into the new one. Every private concern has been made public, and she has to manage according to the new blended identity, which matters a lot. She is a sort of "curiosity" for human beings: a mother, a woman, etc. The dressing and physical outlook, i.e., hairstyles and makeup, become topics of public interest. People want to explore her background identity "in the context of where I was and why?" (272). Michelle Obama's reconstructed past has led her to have a complete sense of pride. Being Black, she feels proud and likes her story. As she states, "I liked my story," which gives solace and comfort (237).



Secondly, the prototypical representatives, like "white women and African American men," according to Crenshaw, define the relationship between patriarchy and racism, which is legitimized or shrugged off by the mainstream resistance movements. In Princeton, one of the world's most prestigious institutes, Michelle Obama, for instance, witnesses that there are several black identities in the USA. Their identity is segregated and sectionalized. Kids with Dominican, Cuban, and Puerto Rican ancestry, for example, can be found in East Coast cities. Women from Haiti, Nigeria, and Jamaica have their sections. Black people on Chicago's east and south sides face discrimination. All of them belong to the black community, having the same race and colour but being sectionalized and divided. Everyone varies, and their ancestors may have been long buried or may have just fallen into obscurity. About their ancestry (slavery), they remain silent. According to Obama, the anonymity that comes with being poor, female, and of colour would have to be overcome by them (87). They are to discover their voices to prevent themselves from being demoralized, but it takes hard work, intellect, and labour (319).

Like Michelle Obama, we find "the early signs of rebellion" in Tehmina Durrani's attitude too. Although Durrani claims, "I always complied," she does not look obedient. Like Michelle Obama, who seems to talk like "whites", Durrani's "expressions and body language" look rebellious against the matriarch of the family. She, although she belongs to an aristocratic, wealthy family, still "was sullen," and thus, she feels resentment. It is just because of her "dark-skinned" appearance that she feels like a foreigner within her own family. Intersectional segregation is being practised in the aristocratic family, as Tehmina Durrani claims: "Almost every word and action indicated her (mother's) preference for her white-skinned children, her son Asim and her daughters Minoo, and especially the baby Adila Rubia, Zarmina, and I—the darker daughters—who never seemed able to please her" (25).

Additionally, Michelle Obama, being black and female, is twice marginalized. Her claim that Americans cared more about upholding white supremacy than they did regarding God highlights how pervasive racism and male dominance are! (230). Michelle Obama and Tehmina Durrani, both political wives, are becoming known just because of the men they select as their life partners. Michael Obama is "becoming known as someone's spouse and as someone interested in politics" (241). Moreover, being a political figure, she is sectionalized. She is associated with Barack Obama, so all of the oppressed stereotypical labelling is seen as legitimate. Likewise,

being Black and female, Michelle Obama is considered “a crummy writer, declared fully ‘other, as her language seems foreign to them. She takes it with a serious tone, but Barrack reminds her, “This is just politics,” where all is permissible (266). In the third world region, feudal lords use religious teachings as a weapon and extract the meanings while interpreting the verses according to their interests and requirements. *Intersectionality* prevails everywhere. Ayesha is another of them from the working class. Mustafa delivered Ayesha's boyfriend to an asylum, where he shortly went insane and died. Then he marries her as the Koran allows him polygamy (46). Mustafa's wife in Kot Addu waits for him as she cannot do anything else since she is working too. Mustafa marries Naubahar is installed once more. Naubahar belongs to the "dancing girl" sect of the women in patriarchal. Marrying a dancing girl is often considered a dent in the social and political status of the patriarchs. Bhutto, Mustafa's leader, summoned him and admonished him not to abuse his power without consequence. Politicians would never believe that a sitting Punjabi governor could choose a "COMMON dancer as his bride." Under pressure, Mustafa divorces Naubahar. After being saved from the Kot Addu chamber, Safia is placed in the Governor's House as the lawful and respected wife. Women are treated as dead things, decorative elements, and commodities. So, the women in the third world region are sectionalized differently.

Additionally, female oppression is usually based on sexual exploitation as well as gender discrimination. In *Becoming*, we find Obama segregated by individual ignorance, economic power, and the concept of SELF and OTHERS among males. Michelle Obama, the FLOTUS, for instance, is "mocked and threatened [sic] for being black, female, and vocal" as well as a political spouse (409). Michelle Obama, however, triggers the ladies, even the political rivals, to keep fighting against the injustice "amid the misogyny" (269). She is a woman of intellect who knows who she is. She proves wrong the stereotypical assumptions and hastily made judgements about blacks. She claims: And when it came to judgement, I was as vulnerable as ever to the unfounded fears and racial stereotypes that lay just beneath the surface of the public consciousness, ready to be stirred up by rumour and innuendo" (284).

Likewise, we find *intersectionality* working in the conservative feudal society in South Asia. The women are victimized not only through patriarchal constraints but also under the cruel whims of matriarchy in feudal society. The mainstream feminist movement shrugs off such types of injustice. *Intersectionality*, however, is the framework to unmask the unhidden voices of the

poor. Tehmina Durrani, under the matriarchal structure of the conservative society, was, for instance, never allowed to leave the house. She is banned from picking up the phone. Thus, she feels imprisoned at home. (32) She is raised in a family where her mother, the matriarch of the household, demands "total obedience, instant submission, and "blind acquiescence" obeying all the orders "in silence". Her mother always sounded aggressive. Her father, on the other hand, "always sounded apologetic". The father can never use any sort of alcoholic drink before his wife. In sixty years, he claims that he has only responded once (331). Last but not least, this initial response brings a new woman into his life. Additionally, if a person wishes to "be themselves," they will be condemned. According to Tehmina Durrani, she presented a submissive front: "In contrast to my genuine nature, I formed a personality". It shows she is not what she pretends to be. Although she is subdued and a true subject of the patriarchy, she thinks "I must be incorrect and unacceptable" (35).

Along with other *intersectionality* theorists, Kimberle Crenshaw maps the theoretical lenses in feminism to address contextual binaries all around the world. Typically, *Intersectionality* is a critical race theory that deals with black feminism. However, since it has been broadened "As a way to frame dynamics," it has expanded globally. It deals with domestic spheres of patriarchy or patriarchy and also "as a way to contest material and political realities that are, by some measures, part of global and trans-historical relations of power". As a result, the movement has generated a different type of interaction by drawing attention to the contextual distinctions in the global arena (308).

Furthermore, Michelle Obama recalls the story of Hadiya Pendleton, a black student who wanted to go to Harvard someday. She was killed in Chicago at a public park just because of her gender and skin colour. Michelle Obama states, "I wish I'd seen her alive," but unfortunately, she has been declared a symbol of the wrong thing. (381) many episodic accounts in Michelle Obama's story show the intersectional cruelties that have been shrugged off by mainstream feminism. Along with her husband, Michelle Obama has pledged to transform the world's perception of black people. (401) She illustrates how black leaders are killed. The mainstream resistance movements, on the other hand, regard it as part of their daily political routine. Martin Luther King Jr. and John F. Kennedy were assassinated (2). Now Barack Obama is also under threat. Though he challenged the threat, Since the black community was divided and sectionalized, the leaders of mainstream

politics from the same community went against Barack Obama (173). It is not a matter of economic status but of the hegemonic version of racism. Being black and FIRST, for instance, the Obamas are haunted by the black community too. The suspicious stereotypical notion is so severe that it seems as if racism is officially legalized by law. Being FLOTUS and POTUS, they feel the "lopsided fragility" of African Americans and poor individuals of all colours. Racism is at its peak. Even among Blacks, eminent politicians warn against a black takeover (221). They claim Obamas are not the same as they are. They are considered Foreigners. Their identity and perceptions of the world are considered different—alien and mutating (262). The politicized notion explores Crenshaw's arguments that *intersectionality* is more destructive than racism and feminism alone. These divisions between political figures silence mainstream feminists and antiracist figures.

Furthermore, to compare the marginalization of women in the first and third worlds, the study uses this expanded definition of *intersectionality*. Even though Tehmina Durrani and Michelle Obama are political spouses, their family histories and social standards are completely dissimilar. We find South Asian women are strong and courageous in politics, continuing the fight started by their male counterparts. They entered politics as a result of the violence and adversity. Like Black leaders in the USA, they are often killed. Indra Gandhi, Cory Aquino, and Benazir Bhutto, for instance, are assimilated. In Tehmina Durrani's case, she steps into politics because "Only when Mustafa was imprisoned". Thus, she becomes "a political animal" (258).

Moreover, Michelle Obama describes the social standard of a common black man and how he is discriminated against. We find that white families are "moving out of the city" to the suburbs in order to gain better education "more space, and probably more whiteness, too" (2). For them, space is open; for blacks, it has been narrowed down. According to her, a union card was a requirement for employment as an electrician in Chicago or at any of the major construction sites. For blacks, it is an uphill task to get the card. Likewise, Michelle Obama's brother Craig purchases a new bike. Being black and poor, he is picked up by the police, who accuse him of stealing it. It is a stereotypical image of a black guy to have a bike, honestly. It seems as if the officials have the right to humiliate the blacks. She claims, "The colour of our skin made us vulnerable. It was a thing we'd always have to navigate, and Stewarts" (2). It shows how male and female workers in poor Black societies are being oppressed just because of their social standards and skin colour by their officials.

Contrarily, in the third world region, in the patriarchal structure of feudal society, men's sins are taken as mistakes, like a pebble that sits at the bottom of the water. Conversely, women's sins are considered "supreme" eternal crimes, which often sail-like leaves at the surface of the water. In the seven years of their marriage, there have been hardly any months that Mustafa has spent with Safia. Women come and go in Mustafa's life simultaneously. Thus, Safia is 'simply' divorced for being unfaithful (instead, she must be killed). The brother of Mustafa is chastised and exiled to Britain to find redemption. There is another section for women that is required. Thus, the quest for a "modern lady" in politics who would make the perfect hostess at the governor's mansion. Now, Bhutto is on her way to the USA for the first time. Mustafa visits Shahrzad (Sherry), whom she describes as "extremely beautiful and westernized." The girl belongs to the section that is considered pretty fit. Mustafa must accompany Bhutto to the USA. He needed a decorative piece (a woman), so he carried a lovely, well-educated, and, above all, gorgeous woman into the White House. Bhutto despises who she is. She would not find Mustafa's feudal upbringing suitable because he is upwardly anglicized, but Mustafa is tenacious and marries her anyhow" (52).

Additionally, it is more intriguing for Michelle Obama that there is an aristocratic as well as a poverty-stricken group of African Americans. A black but elite female has a clear difference from a black but poor female. So, they are classified on socio-economic grounds. For instance, Michelle Obama's classmates are black, but it does not necessarily "translate" uniformity in their experiences as they discussed topics that she was unfamiliar with (58). In her Black neighborhood and in Princeton, which is overwhelmingly white and male-dominated by students, she feels alienated and discriminated against (71). While "riding on an old wave of dominance" of the white and patriarchal, she discovers otherness everywhere (78). In the patriarchal structure, she is privileged as "Craig Robinson's little sister". At the same time, "big black guys" are classified as problems and grotesque in the white-dominated culture (73). Feudal lords, having a powerful influence, used the fluidity of the laws to segregate women. In Obama's family, the door is always open for poor women and common people. In Khar's family, the door is always open for the women to come and go too. Safia, for instance, a lower-middle-class working girl, is trapped in being 'liberated' poor. This section of women is triple marginalized: being a woman, working in the lower middle class (uneducated), and being dark-skinned. She gives birth to Bilal, the son of Mustafa.

Moreover, Michelle Obama visited Barrack's family in Kinia, where she experienced a different sort of intersectional division. She meets the community "even with our black skin" but feels awkward. There is an extra amused curiosity in the questioning eyes: "Which one of your parents is white?". It shows the collective "*Intersectionality*", the amalgamated mixture of racism and feminism (161).

Additionally, *intersectionality* deals with sexual and racial segregation. Crenshaw observes that "the most privileged group members marginalize those who are multiply burdened [sic] by the women's experience or the Black experience" (144). Michelle Obama, likewise, having a Black and Chicagoan identity, has realized her sectional stereotypical image: the perfectly coiffed doll woman with the painted-on grin who looks up at her husband with sparkling eyes as though she's hanging on every word. On the other hand, being a human, she could never be "a robot," as she is classified. (231) *Intersectionality* works, and Michelle Obama is considered "other" and foreign just because of her skin colour as well as her language. For Michelle Obama, it is a "minded and ludicrous insult" to be mocked for her intellect. The opposition has legalized feminism and racism, at least in politics. One of the sitting members of Congress has made fun of Michelle Obama's buttocks, a sexually abusive act of harassment. Secondly, the racism through crafty and stereotypical images is fed as a "pissed-off harpy," which is another trick to victimize the FLOTUS. She is to frame her as a scold, as this is the simplest method to ignore a woman's voice. (267) In politics, for the leaders of the USA, Michelle Obama argues, "an ocean of whiteness and maleness dressed in dark suits" (312).

Furthermore, we find Crenshaw's notion of women's double marginalization in third-world countries too. Tehmina Durrani, for instance, is victimized and rejected because of her "dark-skinned" appearance as well as being female, even in her own family. The pigment of their skin classifies them into certain sections of privilege. Durrani, for instance, does not remember ever being loved by her mother. However, she recalls her mother's mother as the source of all the maternal affection (27). Tehmina Durrani's maternal Grandmother, Shamshad, knows well "the stigma of a dark complexion". (26) Since Shamshad likes Durrani's mother because of her fair complexion over her darker sister Samar, she wants her granddaughter to get rid of "the dark curse". She says, "Cucumber juice, lemons, fresh cream, and a pungent-smelling bleaching agent called Amex were rubbed into our mud-coloured faces" (26). The more she emphasizes Durrani's

appearance, the more Tehmina Durrani loses her confidence. Unconsciously, the statement "Parents like pretty children" defines her as ugly. Durrani's sister Zarmina, conversely, is a fair-skinned sister and so the beloved bright star of her mother—the "Cinderella" of their family (171). Durrani, however, is the dark-skinned girl of the household and a "stay-at-home Cinderella" (172). She is considered a dent in the family's reputation as "mud-coloured faces" are often rejected to be married "well". She has all the sections to be cursed.

Furthermore, being a black-skinned girl, Durrani's family has rejected her. Thus, Tehmina Durrani wants a "lion" with a macho mentality in her life as a companion to win the race. However, she romanticizes the lion but forgets his fierce nature. Contrarily, Mustafa, "The Lion of the Punjab," is the focal point of numerous famines that "orbit about him." Tehmina Durrani experiences "nervousness and a trifle guilt" due to her guilty consciousness (57). At the party, Mustafa, a stereotypical patriarchal tyrant, invites Durrani to dance with him while simultaneously inviting Anees (Durrani's first husband) to do the same. She hears "Will you marry me?" as the first word (68). Durrani has entered a new stage in her life, marking the beginning of her dehumanization in the pursuit of glory. Sherry, Mustafa's first wife, warns Tehmina Durrani as if she will be ruined. Finally, after her request for divorce, a "Trusted Mullah", on July 25, 1976, offered Nikah (wedlock) between Durrani and Mustafa (89). In this, she is "installed" in a secret house, a prefabricated cabin. When guilty consciousness strikes her ego, Durrani thinks Sherry's tears will be answered by the Supreme Court. She classifies herself as "unclean like a slut". Durrani, being the true victim of the "professional seducer", feels "acquiescently guilty", when, being an "irresponsible mother", she pushes away her daughter Tanya (83). Such an unfaithful woman in the patriarchal society of feudal lords is considered dead by her parents. The next husband can use all sorts of torture to assure her faithfulness in the future.

Kimberle Crenshaw observes that the victimized community of Black women is triply marginalized, feeling "other" within their society. This marginalization includes intersections concerning social, political, and financial standards, as well as diaspora and racial and gender oppression. The subjects of society experience themselves as "other". *Intersectionality* correlates with anarchy-feminism, which incorporates the notion that traditional manifestations of the spontaneous coercive hierarchy must be reconstituted by decentralized free feminist associations. Before the critical considerations of *Intersectionality*, mainstream feminists' lines possessed an

unhealthy dynamic. Consequently, it was desperately needed to have a specific ethnic and multicultural diverse sort of feminist theory. Michelle Obama, likewise, recalls her past, when the word "ghetto" haunted her like a threat. It contains connotations of both "Black and hopeless". It signals the foretold failure, but she accentuates the positive resolution out of the negative stereotypes. (385) She is vilified as a bitter black lady who hates her nation, yet she defies every cliché that is used to describe her. Michelle Obama has known how to deal with bullies since she was a little girl. She recalls Donald Trump using the phrase "sexually abusing women" on television in 2005. Even the media finds the language to be "lewd and disgusting," but since it is political, they are allowed to use "the worst form of power" (408). However, as the First Lady, Michelle Obama works for all the vulnerable young women across the globe. She appreciates Malala's courage when she visits them. She is re-storying the Nigerian girl who was kidnapped by the extremist group "Boo Haram." She encourages girls to be bold and educated, as it is their weapon and strength to dismantle all sorts of injustice, gender suppression, and subjugation. Michelle Obama, along with Barrack Obama, has a mission to change the perceptions of the world regarding women being divided under *intersectionality*—a sort of "overwhelmingly white and male tableau" (418). Conversely, feudal lords have their ways of subjugating women in the third-world region. For them, a woman is a lifeless object, a sex toy, a children's making machine, a meek and submissive slave, and "a bloody bitch". They use all the social, political, judicial, and religious tools to subjugate a woman. They have children in "different pockets of the country". Their sins are "forgiven" by their elders. Mustafa, for instance, marries Firdaus, takes sexual pleasure in sending the divorce papers, and leaves her on a hospital bed while "recuperating from Bilo's birth" (42).

Furthermore, Michelle Obama has exposed how *intersectionality* works: not only black women but also white women like Hillary Clinton—the bitter rival of Barrack—are marginalized. This abuse in politics is considered a daily routine. She argues: "Hillary's gender was used against her relentlessly [sic] from all the worst stereotypes. She was called domineering, a nag, and a bitch. Her voice was interpreted as screechy; her laugh was a cackle" (268).

Additionally, the feminist theorists of *Intersectionality* explore those contextual differences and other modes of theoretical lenses as an alternative engagement (308). In *Becoming*, we find that there are sections of women who are institutionalized in hijab. They can find girls. There are



females whose complexion is every shade of brown and for whom English is a foreign language. All of them fall into certain stereotypes. They are defined by males, or the privileged class, before they define themselves. Michelle Obama wants them to have their voice and their own identity. Crenshaw has highlighted that Black women are discriminated against, reflecting the overall sex disparity in many upper-level jobs. The discrimination is not based on ordinary women's marginalization but "only" on black women. Moreover, the double discrimination that Black women frequently face—the combined consequences of racial and sexual discrimination—is a topic Crenshaw addresses. Black women are victimized not as the result of racial and gender inequality but as Black women. She argues that mainstream feminists do not bother to go deep into the roots. Consequently, feminism under racial segregation is much broader and deeper than the general category of feminist discourse provides (148). This notion can be illustrated in Michelle Obama's narrative. She claims she will be more noticeable, "showy and high end", being black and female, and would be criticized more severely than an ordinary lady.

On the other hand, Tehmina Durrani's mother considers her to be "an ugly duckling" and wants her to continue to be the family's standard bearer for beauty (30). Apart from this colour discrimination, Durrani does not want to be like her mother, and her mother does not want to be like Durrani, the dark-skinned. A dark-skinned girl in a feudal, patriarchal society can never be accepted as an ideal wife. The matriarch or patriarch of the family selects the right person for their daughter, and she has to be an ideal wife. "Personal happiness" however, "would be a bonus". If the mother's selected boy turns out to be a beast or brute—Mustafa in Tehmina Durrani's life—it is the wife's responsibility to persist till she manages to alter his behaviour. Otherwise, it'd be a woman's failure (28). A divorcee, on the other hand, is considered a curse for the conservative family and thus triple marginalized. As far as the dark-skinned Tehmina Durrani is concerned, it is an uphill task for her mother to find a suitable boy. Tehmina Durrani concludes "Marriage may be purgatory, but divorce is hell" (77). Virgins, however, always "commanded the premium price" in patriarchal society (59). Finally, Tehmina Durrani is thrown onto Anees's shoulder. But she wants to "elevate" herself in "mother's eyes" by marrying the Lion of Punjab, forgetting his brutal attitude. Thus, all she finds is "additional humiliation and pain"(155). Now, if she wants to rage, he controls her nerves "with his fists or his shoes" (159).

Furthermore, Michelle Obama's mother seems to be under the matriarchal clutches of Robbie, her aunt, and the owner of the apartment. It shows the section of women segregated based on wealth. Her mother was "secretly happy" when Michelle Obama challenged Robbie's authority (12). She is the first to question Dandy (the patriarch) as well as Robbie's authority as the family's matriarch. She was the first to respond when he roared (37).

Contrarily, Tehmina Durrani is internalized and schooled to be subdued and submissive. She does not dare to inform her mother that she likes boys. Tehmina Durrani, being a rebel in her family's materialist exhibitionism, wants to get rid of the matriarchal family, and for that, marriage is the only solution. Thus, finding a boy who will adore Durrani as much as Anees does won't be simple for the mother (34). So, she decides to rethink the decision as she has three other daughters to strengthen her position in society.

Michelle Obama, however, has been sectionalized differently. She is discriminated against because of her confidence and boldness. Thus, she is asked, "How come you talk like a white girl?". It seems to be a superiority/inferiority complex of being bold and black. Sometimes, it is problematic to talk like "whites" as she is discriminated against for being "perceived as a betrayal [sic] denying our culture". Although her family encourages her, society takes it negatively. This bold, redemptive nature leads her to have a self-realized personality (40).

Additionally, in a patriarchal society, Tehmina Durrani, for instance, possesses a "don't list". She has to avoid the marked section of the female community. The restricted list of females includes "modern girlfriends, "girls with older brothers,", "dark skinned", "muddy faces", fair versus black complexion girls, divorcee versus married women, and so on. This classification to segregate the women is used to victimize the girls right from their childhood. The classification has a prime focus on marrying well, not learning well. For conservative parents, marriage correlates with the social standards they have or would gain. Ultimately, the children, especially girls, are classified accordingly. Being mature, Tehmina Durrani has a "lengthy list of don'ts". All these "don'ts" have some links to the masculine world. Tehmina Durrani, when she reaches puberty, feels the biological classification of being female as "men were alien creatures," except for her close family members.

Moreover, Crenshaw's concept of the *intersectionality* of place' can be figured out in the divorced section of women being cursed, humiliated, and considered "black sheep," who are

"always a prime target for malicious groups" (83). In the feudal, conservative societies of the Third World countries, a new mother is classified differently. Tehmina Durrani's mother, the matriarch, was "married by arrangement" in "strict Purdah," and she never saw her husband before wedlock. Tehmina Durrani states that she left for Lahore to give birth as the wife has to stay away from her husband for forty days to be "healthy enough to return to him again" (28). It is pretty interesting to know that the matriarch of Durrani's family has been branded divorced, too. The Durrani family once rejected her because she was a divorcee and Punjabi as well. The regional history of working-class women is more divesting in nature than the others. In the hospital at Multan, for instance, Durrani gives some 500 rupees to a sick child of a working-class woman for medicine. The next day, the girl was not present at her bedside. The nurse tells Durrani that they have taken her home because, with this money, they need to support five additional kids. Having a purpose in her life, Durrani is determined to work for the poor, and we find that just after her divorce, she joins Edhi, the most influential philanthropist in the world (269). On the other hand, in a pseudo-democratic state, Mustafa's unannounced arrival in Kassowal creates great irony. He, the Governor of the Punjab, wants to see Durrani. The news media interprets it as a surprise inspection of the great leader, a kind public servant anxious to demonstrate his concern for the hinterlands. The "poor residents of Godforsaken Hamlet" are shocked and mostly thrilled that their votes have chosen the ideal candidate for their promising future. Because of this, "No one realized that he was just after a lady" (73).

## CHAPTER 5

### NARRATIVE IDENTITY: THE CODING CONSTRUCTS

Dan P. McAdams and Kate C. McLean have introduced the basics of narrative identity as "a person's internalized and evolving life story, integrating the reconstructed past and imagined future to provide life with some degree of unity and purpose" (223). They contend that autobiographical authors who see the redeeming value in tragedies, sufferings, and adversity exhibit greater psychological development in society. This beneficial result is produced by telling one's own story, which emphasizes individual agency and personal discovery and helps people achieve higher levels of well-being and mental health (175). They have formulated the idea under the seven coding constructs, i.e., The researcher applies McAdams' framework to the chosen memoirs, such as Michelle Obama's *Becoming*, which represents the reconstructed self of a black American woman, versus Tehmina Durrani's *My Feudal Lord*, which suggests how a marginalized third-world woman reconstructs her identity through narrative.

#### 5.1 Agency

McAdam argues that in narrative identity, agency is the degree to which personas can transform their own lives or have an impact on those around them, frequently by showing signs of self-mastery, autonomy, achievement, or any other aim or status. Highly agentic narratives value success and the capacity to influence and control one's destiny (234). This study focuses on highlighting Tehmina Durrani and Michelle Obama's achievement of self-mastery in the selected memoirs. Durrani, for instance, asserts that she pushes herself to the maximum in her academic, physical, and professional endeavours. Since then (the time of her divorce), she has essentially achieved every objective she set for herself (285). Tehmina Durrani, after her self-realization, wants to get rid of the patriarchal tyrants' whims to show the world that there is a life after being divorced too. She redeems the positivity out of the negative circumstances under patriarchal oppression. Thus, she takes pen to unmask the hidden cruelties of the conservative and feudal societies, and thus, she claims that Mustafa and his family had slammed all the windows of

psychological grooming and lured her into their world (285). She has a spark that triggers her to raise her voice against the tyrannized oppressions of the patriarchal masters. She decides to "react to injustice". After having the narrative identity and mastery of herself, she views her life and marriage as "outdated and restrictive". She exhorts women to speak out against cruel tyranny by disregarding the type of life that was once "like a kaleidoscope in the hands of a fidgety child" (321).

Firstly, McAdams claims that over the course of development, selves build stories, and stories in turn produce selves (238). Michelle Obama states that "Becoming" is not about hitting the peak or achieving the desired objectives or aims; it is a means of moving forward, an evolution, and a constant striving for a better version of oneself (419). It is, therefore, a lifelong journey for her. For Michelle Obama, Becoming a mother is just the beginning of her journey. She has a lot to absorb and give to her children. The story of how she has become is the most important to internalize in their lives too (419). She was once Robinson, then a passionate college student, and eventually the first one who was black (which was significant to note their presence within the greater history of the White House) (413). Thus, one's identity matters a lot since "You belong. You matter" (384).

Secondly, Michelle Obama's nonconformist approach to her community's thinking is the result of being influenced by her parents, she hits the emotional jackpot. This intellectual level of thinking outside the box leads her to benefit "the ivy-strewn walls of Princeton". Apart from the prevailing standards of being subjected to whites as stereotypical victims, Robinson's internalized factor of throwing away the stereotypical hasty judgments of the whites proves her teacher's first hasty judgment wrong: "You're not Princeton material". She demonstrates in the final exams that "she was Princeton material after all" (67).

Likewise, Tehmina Durrani's mother, the matriarch of the family, affects several members of the household. Being one of the antagonists in the family, she marginalizes many lives. Durrani, for instance, learns to be a subdued woman from her mother. She wants to get rid of the matriarch but is eventually trapped under the tyrannized whims of the patriarch, Mustafa. All we find in Tehmina Durrani's account is a representation of negative impacts. *My Feudal Lord* is a significant primary text that empowers oppressed women all around the world to speak out against any form

of injustice. Tehmina Durrani has realized that women in the feudal society do not bother to break away because of the humiliating lack of confidence and self-esteem (285). Durrani decides to control her fate by challenging the prevailing social standards. Her post-marriage persona has received high praise in literature from all around the world as the authentic voice for women's rights in the Muslim world. She thus resolves to contextualize all the persecution she has had to endure by writing this book and breaking the customary silence (373). She has changed her own life by re-storying her account, thus influencing others to have their own identity and voice. It is the first stone she has thrown at the patriarchal bubble.

Contrarily, Barrack's family is the First Black family in the White House. They have mastered themselves, having their own unique identity. Michelle Obama asserts that she and Barack Obama are dedicated and committed to altering societal notions of what constitutes a young lady useful to society (401). Moreover, they are the custodians of their fate, possessing grand dreams right from the beginning. The family iconoclasts all sorts of stereotypical assumptions, under the lenses of which blacks are segregated and subdued. Their intentions are marvellous for the less blessed communities across the globe: "to give them a reason to hope". Becoming is the story that possesses an invisible history of being black. They trigger people to realize themselves. She claimed to have been invisible in the past. She frequently mentions that she is the great-great-granddaughter of Jim Robinson, a slave who was most likely interred on a plantation in South Carolina, whose cemetery is unknown (405). Michelle Obama's self-mastery has led her to gain empowerment; thus, she became the most powerful lady in the world—the FLOTUS. She asserts that she was gaining notoriety as a spouse and a political activist working to improve the lot of the oppressed and mistreated black people in the United States (241). She frequently questions how she can pursue a meaningful job while upholding her morals and values (268). She takes law as her profession but then moves to the hospital job and many other community missions to affect change in society.

Moreover, Michelle Obama, being black and female, is twice marginalized. *Intersectionality* works, and political figures criticize her severely. She is labelled an "angry Black woman". She tried to figure out the most important word from the phrase, "angry, black, or woman". She demonstrates her self-mastery and shrugs off all the stereotypical labelling. She is the controller of her fate; being a strong and steadfast optimist strengthens her self-mastery of

"who I was" (271). She has a great aim in thinking about "the young African women" (370). Michelle Obama is the name of courage for the whole black community in the USA and across the globe too. Michelle Obama, having mastered her identity, has learned in her life how to use her voice to fix her destiny. She observes that the stories foreground the lightening truth of oneself (307). She triggers the people to have their own narrative identity, which leads to their psychological maturity.

Additionally, Michelle Obama's intellectual beauty is highly remarkable, as she focuses on "Education". For her, education is the primary instrument of change in her life and many others. She indoctrinates the less blessed marginalized communities to use education as a weapon against injustice and any sort of oppression. Through her status, achievements, and demonstrations, she proves herself the custodian of women's rights. She raises funds and voices for women's education. As she watches, she cheers them all on and offers encouragement. The whole family seems after a flame of change she had inside of her (13). They pay attention to young people's well-being and nutrition to observe how community changes are influenced by the arts and culture, which help children grow into mature adults (358).

## **5.2 Communication**

According to McAdams, in narrative identity, communication foregrounds that how much a protagonist exhibits or feels interpersonal connection—whether through romance, friendship, conversation, or a sense of belonging to a large group—is determined by these factors. It emphasizes closeness, intimacy, concern, caring and belongingness with a sense of community (234). Their stories, McAdams observes, accentuate intimacy, caring and belongingness as a whole.

Substantially, in Michelle Obama's contextualization, we discover many interpersonal links. She particularly shows her admiration for Barack Obama when she says the following things about the intelligentsia: the sentiments came rushing—a toppling wave of lust, appreciation, fulfilment, and surprise. As she debates, she always feels emotional and intimate since she sees everything through the prism of their intense romance; it feels like home (111). She loves Barack

not because of his physical look but because of his intellectual beauty (124). Michelle Obama ends her stories with thanks for her husband, Barack, whom she calls "my love," "my partner of twenty-five years, and the most devoted father to our girls," and who has been a life partner she could only have dreamed of, giving her readers reason for optimism (423).

Secondly, Michelle Obama shows intimacy towards children who belong to the black community as a broad collective and those who have helped to reshape their identity across the globe. She dears to guide the children to figure out well-dressing for an office job. The desire to speak up in front of a group of intelligent, self-assured people is the most crucial for her (179). She triggers them to identify their unique identity. She likes teaching and raises funds for the youth and women's education. She argues "I like teachers" (17). Even, though Mrs. Burroughs, her teacher, has a stereotypical eye on Michelle Obama still she respects her.

Thirdly, the wedding is a source of pride and a joyful event for Michelle and Obama's families. They were surrounded by love for the first time when they met: the cosmopolitan, multicultural Obama type and the firmly rooted Robinsons from the South Side kind, all of it now visibly intertwined (164). Michelle Obama loves Barrack and Craig -her elder brother. Moreover, Michelle Obama's belongingness for the soldiers, their families, and the rescue volunteers is overwhelming when she remarks that she enjoyed how the room became raucous as more people entered, dumped their backpacks in the corner, and peeled off layers of clothing as they formed a circle (332). She loves to help them for a better life in solving their issues.

Furthermore, she contextualizes the intimacy she possesses for her friends. She claims these friends have made her whole and triggered her up to be steadfast. Though she is the FLOTUS, but she enjoys some real interpersonal connections with them. She claims that whenever she felt low, frustrated, or had less access to Barack, they would give her a lift (362). Secondly, she is prejudiced and oppressed stereotypically under the patriarchal, intersectional, and racial whims. Michelle Obama's friends, when she faced the burden of being criticized, they triggered her to be strong. Her story shares belongingness and caring everywhere.

Conversely, Tehmina Durrani's love leads the reader to explore 'contamination where a positive or good event turns dramatically negative or bad. Tehmina Durrani, for instance, loves



Mustafa's macho personality being "the boss, the wise, the soul". She is completely under the romantic spell of the patriarch who has masked and camouflaged himself under her physical charm. She states, "his words (that) hold me, but his eyes had me riveted". Being 'the perfect victim' of his outer look, she" was drawn like a moth to a flame" (21).

Moreover, she wants a powerful macho personality in her life and her first life partner Anees lacks that quality. Her father has a submissive role in the family. Finally, she finds the Lion of Punjab but later, she is brutalized savagely. Before her marriage, in the romantic spell of his love, she thinks as if "Failure was with Sherry not Mustafa" (62). He rapes Tehmina Durrani's sister Adila, as she concludes this psychological damage is worse than the physical torture. The love has turned into fear as even a sullen look sends Mustafa into rage (195). There is always a negative interpersonal relationship with Mustafa. Tehmina Durrani's affectionate behaviours towards Mustafa turn like a pendulum of a clock. She tells how the return of the exiled leader caused her to unexpectedly fall in love with a noble notion (252).

Furthermore, Tehmina Durrani, being a dark-skinned child, is neglected as an outsider in her own home by her mother. In her childhood, she was completely submissive and obedient but still, she does not look obedient. She displays her love for her mother by remarking that after having six kids, her mother still has a little waist and keeps a sweet, innocent face that hides her bossy nature. Conversely, her mother labels her as an 'ugly duckling'; a standard barrier to family's beauty. Tehmina Durrani recalls her past as "I never remember my mother hugging or kissing me when I was little" (23). There is only Durrani's "mother's mother" who loves her, and Durrani glorifies her too. When she thinks back to her childhood, she never remembers her mother caressing hugging or kissing her (23). The only person who adores her is her grandmother whom Durrani also loves.

### **5.3 Redemption**

McAdams explores that in narrative identity, redemption deals with the scenes where a manifestly "bad" or emotionally troubling occurrence or scenario results in a demonstrably "good" or cheering ending. The subsequent good "redeems" or "salvages" the initial negative

situation (234). In narrative identity, redemption works as the antonym of contemplation. The events which look initially in the 'negative state' are "redeemed". To ensure the well-being of psychological maturity, Michelle Obama being pretty much optimistic, always tries to accentuate positive meanings out of the negative circumstances. She manifests that "every sadness, when it came, turned out at least to be redemptive in the end" (379).

In Michelle Obama's contextualization, there are plenty of events that show how the less blessed black communities redeem the positivity and gain the glory. Historically, Michelle Obama, being the granddaughter of an American slave, has been branded as 'other'. Barrack's family is branded as 'others' and "other" because their vision is foreign, rooted, and schooled in a Muslim Madrassa (262). Barrack triggers her to think positively as an "asset" who can do whatever she wants for the USA. She is not "liable," as she has been labelled by the racists (267). For them, Barrack is a foreigner who has emerged from obscurity with an odd backstory, an odd name, and a strange past. Thus, he is supposed to be a threat to the nation (214). Things seem bizarre for the black family, but their optimism leads them to rule the country. Barrack is adamant that even if he loses, it is still okay because their work would be recognized in some way (245). Barrack's self-realization triggers him to ignore the rumours and eschew political rhetoric. In Boston, John Kerry believed in this black lawyer at the Democratic National Convention in 2004, when their splendid eloquence and the quality of oration made his speech so powerful that, finally, it led him to be the honored First Black President of the USA.

Additionally, it was the renowned political rhetoric that "Don't let the black folk's takeover" (263). Under such circumstances, Michelle Obama thinks, "Obama would fail". Apart from many racial segregations, threats, and warnings, Barrack won the Illinois Senate in November 1996 (184). Additionally, Barrack's optimism and steadfastness brought a series of positive redemptions; thus, he finally won the Wilson primary by the best margin on February 19, 2008. Michelle Obama contextualizes his victory as "this man who no longer had a father or a mother" has become the First Black and the 44th president of the USA. Finally, when the family has to go out of the White House, Michelle Obama, it is nothing to be worried about, but it leads her to "gain herself again" (278).

Furthermore, Michelle Obama has been experiencing racial segregation and apartheid since her childhood. She recalls how blacks were considered "Ghetto", a threat to others. Being female and Black, she is double marginalized, stereotypically (385). Mrs. Burroughs, for instance, scolds her in school. Michelle Obama recalls the lesson for which she was admonished. The embarrassment seems weighty, but she takes a redemptive meaning out of that humiliation. She left Mrs. Burroughs impressed, winning the trophy at the end with the identity of "little black ghetto girl". This black ghetto goes with the head up and has a gold-foiled star on her shirt (19). Additionally, once in the school, Deedee, a white fellow, bullies Michelle Obama. Being nervous and upset, Michelle Obama hits a punch on the nose at the end. Morally and ethically, even though it is horrible, she says, at least she gained her respect (24).

Moreover, "Being black and from the South Side", Michelle Obama has learned something positive to work on in her future (147). The racial classifications triggered her to work for the Black community, having a narrative identity and life story with a purpose and meaning. Michelle Obama dislikes politics because historically, it has been used against black people to keep them segregated, disenfranchised, and ignorant, leaving them without employment or pay. But when she meets Barrack, he exhorts her to use her positivism to counteract the bad effects of her political background. Finally, she discovers that the beauty of this nation and its people has left her speechless. Every time she encounters dismal pessimism, she assumes that she is well-versed in the subject and that it will pass. It constantly does (262). Thus, this accentuation of the redemptive meanings in her life leads her to become the First Black Lady of the USA to help the black community (151).

Additionally, Michelle Obama narrates the story of the great African leader, Nelson Mandela, the anti-apartheid activist. Mandela redeemed himself and his entire nation from the deepest agony of the apartheid regime. Michelle Obama claims that he endured 27 years of hardship and imprisonment. All of the comrades were murdered under the apartheid regime and subjected to torture. Finally, Mandela served his nation as the First Black president of South Africa from 1994–99 (369). The story contains a lesson for all the leaders of the world who have realized the meaning and purpose of their lives.

Contrarily, in Tehmina Durrani's reconstructed past, there are very few glimpses of redemption. She suffers under the patriarchal standards of a conservative society. Michelle Obama has contextualized her story in the post-First Lady era, when the anti-climax of her life account starts. Tehmina Durrani, conversely, has contextualized her story when she is just starting her self-realization of who she is. Patriarchal tyrants have been humiliating her for decades, and now it is the beginning of her glorious future. The redemption in her narrative identity can be traced in her later works, *A Mirror to the Blind* (1996) and *Blasphemy: A Novel* (1998). When the memoir, *My Feudal Lord*, ends and is published, it is the start of her narrative identity. She has an intellectual mind with cerebral qualities that were crushed. When she decides to iconoclast social standards, she feels great pressure. In feudal society, being a divorcee is supposed to be a curse for the parents. But finally, in her post-marriage period, when she takes up the pen against social, political, and racial injustice, she acquires glory. When she gets divorced, she is repeatedly criticized by the family in a patriarchal society. It seems as if she has lost everything, but the international publication of her memoir brings happiness and prosperity into her life. The negative publicity fell, she claims, and "my account began to receive its glory". Now that she has her own narrative identity, she is completely committed to announcing that Well Mustafa will soon only be known to the world as Tehmina Durrani's ex-husband (382). She has contextualized his account portraying him as a debauched patriarchal dictator, and thus he is alive and included in history.

This is the casual relationship between the "features of life stories and positive psychological adaptation". Once, Tehmina Durrani was not allowed to read a magazine. We find positive psychological adaptation in Tehmina Durrani's post-marriage adoption when she writes brilliant books like *A Mirror to the Blind* (1996) and *Blasphemy: A Novel* (1998).

Secondly, during the anticlimax in her story, Tehmina Durrani does not want to go back to Mustafa but, suddenly, she is smitten by the lofty notion of the exiled leader's homecoming (252). It seems bad to help him, but after his release, she is honoured as the Lioness of Punjab, at least for the time being. Likewise, Tehmina Durrani's husband, Mustafa, was captured and jailed during Zia's dictatorship. It seems humiliation and shame for Durrani's father as his son-in-law is behind bars, accused of being a traitor. Durrani accentuates the redemptive meaning as her husband, a politician, would rise to fame because he is suffering for the country and democracy as a whole. Mustafa, a political prisoner, views the situation as a source of pride. It was proof of his bravery

and dedication to Bhutto and democracy, too. She states, "My politician husband would become a hero"(257).

Thirdly, Bhutto terminates Tehmina Durrani's father's post as Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan and sentences him to jail. The redemption works, as it seems traumatic for the family at that time, but the American First National City Bank invites Tehmina Durrani's father to serve as vice president. He accepts the offer, and thus, the family's prosperity has been regained.

## 5.4 Contamination

McAdams foregrounds contamination as the antonym of redemption. It deals with instances where a good or positive occurrence takes a drastic turn for the worse or negative, so that the negative impact overpowers, obliterates, or eliminates the positive impacts of the earlier positivity (234).

In the selected memoirs, several events seem good or positive, but in the end, the negative effects are overcome. We find a dramatic change in the characters' fortunes from prosperity to devastation. In the memoir, *My Feudal Lord*, for instance, we find that Tehmina Durrani struggles to gain freedom. Firstly, she wants a "speedy escape" from her mother, Samina, the Family's matriarch, who is married to Anees. She has suffered under the weak role of her father before the matriarch, i.e., her mother. Furthermore, when she marries Anees, she feels dissatisfaction too. Thus, she betrays him and decides to marry the Lion of Punjab. She wants to empower the man of macho—the lion—imagining herself as "an incorrigibly romantic schoolgirl". She is trapped under the romantic spell of the lion, but she forgets its barbaric nature. When the patriarch traumatizes her, she groans, and her eyes display excruciating pain. Something cracked. Something grew larger: "Then the pain merged into one deep, enthralling sense of agony" (103). She romanticized herself as if she were going to be the mistress of a powerful political figure as a wife to uplift herself in her mother's eyes, whom she has neglected because of her dark skin. The contamination occurs, and she "finds additional humiliation and pain". She is beaten by Mustafa with the stick of her dishonest history. She asserts that her divorce and subsequent marriages showed him that she was capable of adultery (107). She is branded with the scandalous reputation of a divorcee, which

sinks her confidence and self-esteem into "rock bottom" leaving her feeling passive and acquiescently guilty (74). She is treated, tortured, and humiliated as an adulterous slut. The overwhelming love has been turned into fear, as "sometimes even a sullen look would send him into a rage" (105). Finally, after two decades of severe humiliation, she gets separated from Mustafa. She thinks freedom would bring happiness, but unfortunately, she faces mortification from the conservative society (39). "For a few days", Tehmina Durrani claims, she was "the crusading wife," and now she has been turned into "the woman everybody loved to hate" (280).

Secondly, Tehmina Durrani contextualizes Bhutto's assassination. Once, he was installed by the military as "subject to the demands of the generals". After being glorified, Bhutto replaces them all. Finally, he is sentenced to death by the same generals. For Bhutto, it seems the best, but the "negative effect" overwhelms and takes his life. Likewise, Mustafa becomes the custodian of Bhutto's political agenda. Mustafa is captured and jailed, but just after the death of General Zia, he forms "a secret alliance" with the military generals (310). Moreover, when Tehmina Durrani works tirelessly to free him, the media portrays her as wanting her old uncle to stay behind bars due to her Indian agenda (319).

Thirdly, Tehmina Durrani tries her level best to release Mustafa from the prison cell. When he is released, she catches her again red-handed with her sister Adila in sexual relations. Mustafa, instead of apologizing, "growled" at Durrani; thus, the old days of physical and psychological traumatization return (338). Henceforth, their marriage is ended. She was excited for his freedom, but it turned out dramatically.

Furthermore, in Michelle Obama's memoir, we find that Barrack, along with his family, is pretty much enthusiastic about running the country as the First Black and 44th president of the USA. Once, it was his dream that came true. Instead of being honoured and esteemed, the whole family is labelled as 'others', 'foreign, and a threat to the country. Michelle Obama takes it as a dent in our souls. He has a great vision for controlling racism. It seems as if the "post-racial" era is going to start again. But a few days later, Staten Island police killed a black man there by the name of Eric Garner (396). Barrack was supposed to be the custodian of the Black community, but people were killed by the law enforcement agency. The homicide rate across the states, especially in Chicago, rises gradually too. When Michael Brown, a Black child, was shot dead by

a cop, the road was blocked to gain justice (396). They have gained the power to control racism, but it works upside down.

Additionally, when the family's dreams come true and they become the First Family of the USA, they feel in confinement; they are always double-X-rayed by the community and intelligence agencies as "being in the bubble." Although the protocol of police escorts is provided as their "vehicles no longer stop at traffic lights" they feel "a form of confinement" (325). The common lady's freedom has gone. Now, she is the First Lady of the USA, the collective honour of the country. Even they require a security detail to stroll down the street.

Moreover, Barrack once preferred to be with his family, taking care of his sick daughter, and not go to cast his vote (195). He thinks that the life of a human, and especially his daughter's, is more important than any political assignment. However, the majority only lost by five votes, making it impossible for the most significant "crime bill" to pass. Being a front-line politician, Barrack is severely criticized. He, along with the other four legislators, is considered "a bunch of gutless sheep" and a liar who has used his child "as an excuse" (179). They feel the worst humiliation, as Michelle Obama claims, "I heard my husband's character questioned like that" (197). Thus, all three years hard work have been "wiped away". Finally, he has been labelled "the white man in blackface" in the black community (198).

Likewise, when the biggest threat to the USA after Nine-Eleven, Osama bin Laden, was killed, it seemed all the miseries had been uprooted (364). In the event of failure, Barrack's presidency would have been gone. Fortunately, the operation was done, and "his approval ratings had spiked". It is a time to enjoy, but soon after, there is a fight over the debt ceiling, and concerns of a new recession reach their lowest point yet (367). Additionally, Michelle Obama was surprised when he was elected as the first black president of the United States to dispel bigotry and injustice, as the first shots that were fired at them were from the black community (230). Thus, we come to know how contamination works while constructing identity through narrative.

## 5.5 Exploratory Narrative Processing (ENP)

In the theoretical framework of narrative identity, McAdams observes that ENP deals with the depth of self-discovery as depicted in the story. Highly scored items imply in-depth and intensive investigation or the growth of a deeply detailed self-understanding (234). In Michelle Obama's reconstructed past, she explores "A First Lady's power" as something complicated and curious. Being Black, female, and a mother of young kids, she elaborates on herself as "the form of being something of a curiosity". Michelle Obama's development of richly elaborated self-realization leads her to read people's intentions towards her 'clothes, shoes, and hairstyles'. She realizes how she is being X-rayed in the context of "where I was and why" (372). She feels as if "it was me against the world".

Additionally, she glorifies Barack Obama before his presidency as "being like an old copper pot—seasoned by fire, dinged up but still shiny" (371). She has realized the cerebral capabilities and steadfastness of her life partner. Being an optimistic, strong woman, she has a great plan to serve the nation and then explores her deep insight: "Do we settle for the world as it is, or do we work for the world as it should be?" (119). The rhetorical question explores her highly energetic dreams, which possess some grandness. They have served as the First Black Family of the USA, with great aim and optimism, as instead of fear and division, they have chosen hope and unity of purpose (299).

Secondly, she wants barracks for her family; besides, "Everyone else seemed to want him for our country" (225). Then she compromises according to the will of the Black nation as a whole. Since she possesses a richly elaborated self-understanding, Barack Obama must grant her permission to rule the superpower as the First Black POTUS.

Thirdly, her questioning, "Is Michelle Obama an Asset or Liability?" shows her quest to gain self-mastery (265). She does not want to have an influential identity just because she is the First Lady. The deep exploration of her strong self can be explored when she leads her daughters to have their 'real friends' instead of being privileged as the daughters of President Barack Obama. According to her, one must have their own identity constructed through struggle.



Moreover, a person is to be honoured or dishonored on practical grounds instead of being haunted by racism, stereotypically. She understands that those who had judged her harshly based on the colour of her skin had done so because they had misunderstood her (366). The U.S. representative who made fun of her butt is now harassing her sexually. She has sustained damage. She was indignant. Her main strategy has been to laugh it off. All the usual humiliations that emphasize the notion of redemption are thrown away by her. She has developed a mastery over her ability to understand the world's dichotomies. Births, conflicts, and betrayals occurred; she is aware of this. Hope, animosity, and occasionally sex all existed (19). Every single one of these binaries cooperates.

In the memoir, *My Feudal Lord*, the protagonist seems to have no voice in patriarchal society. She is not even allowed to think without the permission of the patriarchal tyrant, Mustafa. Firstly, Tehmina Durrani wants freedom from her mother, Samina, the matriarch of the family. She tries to concentrate on her studies, but her intentions revolve around Anees. She thinks marriage is the only way to get freedom. She has internalized from her grandmother that she is not too beautiful to be loved by her parents. Therefore, it is quite challenging for her to have a husband who cares for her in a way that no other man could (33). Additionally, she has realized that because of her dark skin and being the eldest, her mother is very insecure about other daughters like Rubina. She realizes that "A dark child was condemned to neglect" (27).

Moreover, Tehmina Durrani does not like Mustafa just because of his power and wealth; she was raised in an aristocratic family, but her father has no authority over her mother, Samina, the matriarch of the household. Tehmina Durrani's father is a wealthy man but powerless. In Anees' behaviour, she finds the same personality traits, lacking manliness in her attitude. Her deep elaborations lead the reader to unmask the actual reason behind the selection of the beast. She romanticizes a 'lion' with a macho personality as her life partner and ignores the cold-bloodedness.

Furthermore, she explores the pain, which has "merged into one deep, enthralling sense of agony" (103). She feels as if she is a slut who has betrayed her ex-husband. This agony stirs her to have a life with purpose and meaning. Thus, it leads her to contextualize her story to trigger the marginalized community's uprising against all kinds of oppression. The act of narrating herself leads her to see her face 'flushed' with self-conscious pleasure.

## 5.6 Meaning Making

According to McAdams, meaning-making is the degree to which the persona learns something or derives a lesson from an event. Coding might range from having no value to discovering a significant and profound life lesson through deep insight (234).

Firstly, in Michelle Obama's *Becoming*, we find that her father's story foregrounds his act of meaning-making. On the spectrum of stereotypical black selves, for instance, it is Michelle Obama's dad's "credo" that if you treated people well, the majority of them were excellent people (23). It depends on one's attitude. For him, everyone is kind, as he accentuates positivity by shrugging off the static labeling. Though they are the grandchildren of the slaves, they have some redemptive positivity for the world. He trusts that everything would turn out well if someone followed their values (153).

Secondly, based on injustice and inequality in wealth distribution, Michelle Obama's mother extracts meaning from her life story and guides Michelle Obama to "Make the money first and worry about your happiness later" (153). She has gleaned the message that all the happiness can be found in the money. Additionally, Michelle Obama, the protagonist of the memoir, possesses keen and deep observation skills. For her, communities of black kids are not always "bad kids," as they are often labelled stereotypically. Nevertheless, they are only attempting to endure difficult situations (22). Hence, they should not be treated under racial lenses of oppression. Being double marginalized in her childhood, Michelle Obama concludes that Princeton is "extremely white and very male" (71).

Thirdly, Michelle Obama manifests her meaning-making ability as the marriage is a social contract that must be renewed again and again, and "even a happy marriage can be a vexation" (51). Teenage affairs might occasionally be permanent and real, according to Michelle Obama. They should be honoured (57). Comparatively, Tehmina Durrani suffers under the cruel whims of a patriarchal tyrant, Mustafa. So, the social and spatiotemporal differences led Michelle Obama and Tehmina Durrani to extract different meanings from their life experiences. (173) Additionally, Tehmina Durrani, in *My Feudal Lord*, explores the deep insight of a woman's life being oppressed

under the cruel whims of patriarchy. Physically and mentally, she is beaten and humiliated by Mustafa. She concludes that the severe physical torture is bad but not too bad, as "The psychological damage was!" (103). After being brutalized for several years, Tehmina Durrani extracts the meaning out of the deepest humiliation: "Silence condones injustice, breeds subservience, and fosters malignant hypocrisy". Thus, patriarchal tyrants, i.e., Mustafa Khar and many other patriarchal agents, flourish different sorts of oppression to silence the women for subjugation (372). Finally, the epiphany prompts her to declare that Muslim women must learn to speak out against injustice (371). She has taken a stand against the hypocritical roles of patriarchal oppressors.

Furthermore, in Michelle Obama's memoir, we find that many people die in the early stages of their lives. Michelle Obama's 5th-grade classmates, father, and a friend named Suzanne have died. Thus, she foregrounds that life is unfaithful. It can never be relied upon as "Life is short" hence, it must "not be wasted" (64). She has a very positive attitude towards life and its end, saying that "Grief and resilience live together" (343). One must bear with all the ups and downs of life. Likewise, in Tehmina Durrani's story, we find the same notion: "Joy and sorrow came hand in hand" (321). Finally, when she gets separated (freedom from the patriarchal beast), she comes to know that her father has married another woman named Sabiha Hasan, leaving Tehmina Durrani's mother distraught. It appears anguish and agony for her mother, while her father starts a new life of happiness. Secondly, money had only been a man's concern for the whole thirty-four years of Tehmina Durrani's life, she adds. Firstly, it was the custody of her father, then Anees, then Mustafa. Women have their submissiveness (381).

Additionally, Michelle Obama, who is politically affiliated, draws out the fundamental premise that on election day, you couldn't stay at home if you desired change. Today is the day to rise to power and honour (167). The hardest individuals to contact were the younger ones, according to Barrack, a prominent figure in American politics. The young people, being corrupted, have no faith in politics at all (167). Barrack, however, focuses on internalizing that African-American votes matter and that it is the only solution to making change. Secondly, being a steadfast, optimistic hard worker, he knows that there is no such thing as conquering fertility. There isn't a direct correlation between effort and reward (187). He works to teach the community that when one becomes more popular in politics, proportionally, he or she faces more haters as

"adversaries put money into opposition research" (258). So, one must be steadfast, keeping all the negative propaganda in mind. Moreover, when the family hits their climax of glory in the White House, Michelle Obama shares her keen insight about the attitude that, in comparison to convention or formality, humanity is more vital. Holding office in the White House does not alter who you are; rather, it makes you more aware of who you are (406). Thus, humanity must be preferred even in a museum like the White House (296). Being the First family, apart from enjoying the White House's nice weather, since the gangs were more active and the gunfire worsened in the pleasant weather, they had to consider the weather outside their most privileged home (386). She concludes that though Politics can be used to change the destiny of the country, it's a hard job for the Blacks; "a mess" (387). She has accentuated the meaning that the people do not depend on politicians but "we depend on them," hence, society should be preferred (322).

Finally, Tehmina Durrani has gained insight into the hypocritical role played by patriarchal actors like Mustafa to subjugate women (364). However, she extracts the meaning that she has to be with him and prepares herself "to live with the lie," as "escaping" is impossible because Mustafa will take the children, money, and also her life. She realized before her separation that there are some hurdles in women's lives by which they are traumatized both physically and mentally. Mustafa rapes Tehmina Durrani's sister. In a conservative society, Tehmina Durrani cannot make a dent in her sister's social status, nor can she unmask her husband's debouching mentality, as it is considered the wife's failure. The foremost weapons are the inner self of a woman who has internalized the fears of failure, the status of being married, her ego, and the respect of the family. In a patriarchal society, Tehmina Durrani extracts the meaning that "Virgins always commanded the premium price" (59). The pain a woman suffers gives pleasure to the patriarchs. It is the license for a chaste woman; conversely, there is no tool to measure the chastity of a male in a patriarchal society.

## **5.7 Coherent Positive Resolution (CPR)**

McAdams defines CPR (Coherent Positive Resolution) as determining how well the story's conflicts are resolved to provide resolution and a satisfying conclusion. It foregrounds the degree

to which the plot's conflicts are settled and resolved. In Michelle Obama's contextualization, we find several stories narrated by the people, producing closure and some fruitful impacts. Michelle Obama, being black and female, has always been haunted by the word "*First*". They are labelled as unfaithful, untrustworthy, and unreliable to be honoured as the leaders of the black community. Stereotypically, they are considered a threat to the whole country. But in 1996, finally, Barack proved his political intellectual abilities as, in November, he was elected to the U.S. Senate with the biggest margin of victory in Illinois history, garnering 70% of the state's votes. As it was the first step to realizing the dreams of leading the country as president, the marvellous victory matters a lot (217). Michelle Obama seems not to be as optimistic as Barack Obama. All those dreams that seem abstract have been demonstrated practically. Michelle asserts that she married him because she knew about his capabilities. She claims that this "political rock star" expounds tolerance and optimism with such poignancy and fervour that he suddenly has a hornet's buzz of expectation trailing behind him (220). He is the man who is the master of his fate. Finally, the series of "lucky twists" in his life, as Michelle Obama claims, led him to become the 44th president of the USA. He won the Wisconsin primary On February 19, 2008, which is the result of his steadfast hard work and brilliant optimistic courage (262). Secondly, in Michelle Obama's memoir, we find the tension being resolved in the world's most hilarious story, the execution of Osama Bin Laden, with a positive ending. Michelle Obama, along with Barack Obama, seems optimistic too. The most wanted person, the greatest threat to the world, has been traced out of the "*mysterious compound*" near Abbottabad, Pakistan, and killed by the elite team of U.S. Navy SEALs. Hence, the terrifying mystery of Osama Bin Laden's story reaches a positive ending (363).

Moreover, when the First Lady's tenure is over, the family hits upon the agenda regarding children's well-being. They serve the nation, especially children, through the Let's Move: Active Schools program with quality education, food, and good nutrition. As a consequence, 45 million children were eating healthier breakfasts and lunches, and 11 million were engaging in 60 minutes of daily physical exercise (414).

In Tehmina Durrani's contextualization, as the wife of a patriarchal tyrant, we find many conflicts between the victimized Tehmina Durrani and the oppressor Mustafa. It seems like a tug-of-war between marriage and separation. She leaves Mustafa three times, however, and gets back to give a chance to their marriage, not to spoil the lives of their children. Additionally, she has

been working hard for his freedom for months. Finally, when Mustafa is released from prison, he becomes the political hero of the people. In the end, when he gets back, he doesn't only impose his patriarchal orders, but he also has sexual intercourse with Durrani's sister, Adila.

Secondly, no one believes that Adila and Mustafa have had some sexually illegal relationships. For MATLAB (Adila's husband), according to Tehmina Durrani, after waiting for their mother, he played the tapes again and stunned her. Finally, armed with proof of infidelity, he travelled to Lahore and played the tapes for her and several other family members. Her sanity was finally demonstrated here (371). So, finally, Adila's adulterous acts and Mustafa's debauchery have been unmasked with evidence. All the family members have "openly acknowledged the truth". For Tehmina Durrani, it justifies her separation from the tyrant in a conservative society. Thus, Tehmina Durrani claims, "A great burden was lifted from my shoulders. I was no longer Theanine Khar" (182). It shows her freedom and the great change in her life to start a life as a philanthropist and a voice for women's rights. Long ago, she claimed, "I had buried my physical fear," but now the psychological torture has been wiped out (223). She says Mustafa got ready for the hunt on June 24, 1989. With a smile on her face, she waits for him to go while remaining still. In the same way that he had entered it, she left the home for the fourth and last time as he marched toward the door and out of her life (357).

Thirdly, Tehmina Durrani contextualizes 'the case of exploding mangoes'. On August 17, a C-130, she claims, caused extreme happiness across the country as the greatest "*dictator was dead!*". The Zia-ul-Haq story comes to an end, which has been a burning issue for many jailed and exiled political leaders. Tehmina Durrani feels bad for General Rahman, who appears to be in the process of orchestrating Mustafa's release (313). Now, after Zia's execution, Mustafa, 'the Lion of Punjab, is roaring from behind bars'. (317) The final execution of the dictator gives more strength and power to the jailed leader. On the other hand, Tehmina Durrani is highly honoured, being regarded as the "lioness; congratulations, you have succeeded in freeing the lion," and the profusion of rose petals caused Tehmina Durrani's white clothing to get stained scarlet (327). Finally, the great threat to democracy has ended, producing closure and a positive ending.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The prime focus of this research was to reconnoitre ways to undermine the stereotypes about women as feeble, tame, weak, docile, and submissive by emphasizing women's victimization under patriarchy, racism and gender discrimination. It was an aim to illustrate the reimagination of women's identity through narrative to transform them into powerful, active, and brave selves. Since the viewpoint and contributions of males are valued more highly in patriarchal cultures than those of women, women are silenced and marginalized as a result, which has been highlighted under the qualitative mode of inquiry. Racial segregation and intersectional divisions are used to suppress women under the patriarchal structure in the USA and the South Asian region. Additionally, in feudalism and aristocratic conservative families, women are subjugated by the matriarchs of the household too.

The study, under the lenses of the proposed seven identity coding constructs, has foregrounded episodic memory, redemption, and contamination through the politics of memory of the personas in the selected memoirs. It is discovered that by viewing our own experiences as stories of salvation, victims can maintain the faith or assurance required to maintain long-term sensibility. The study has accentuated the essential components of the theory, such as narrative identity, life narrative accounts, episodic memory of autobiographers, episodic anticipated future cognition, sociality, psychological development, theory of mind, cultural and social evolution, etc. It has been concluded that narrative identity helps autobiographers reconstruct their identity by narrating their past experiences in a self-rhetorical form. It has been proven that one's subjective and psychological detriment bottles up the evolutionary life account and integrates the renovated autobiographical past. It further anticipates imagined life in the future dealing with spatial-temporal differences versus a sense of unity, and moral purposes. Thus, narrative identity, in this sense, integrates the reconstructed autobiographical past and imagined anticipated future to provide life with a sense of unity, moral purpose, and spatial-temporal coherence.

The qualitative investigation of the selected memoirs, however, explores that the redemptive life narratives, in which a manifestly "bad" or emotionally troubling occurrence or condition results

in a demonstrably "good" or psychologically uplifting conclusion, are found in both the memoirs. In Michelle Obama's life account, for instance, being black and female, she accentuates redemptive meanings out of the negative stereotypical marginalization in patriarchal society. She is the granddaughter of a black American slave, thus labelled 'Ghetto'. Being optimistic, Michelle Obama, however, focuses on having positive redemptive endings, thereby acquiring the psychological maturity of well-being. Henceforth, the thematic coherence of her redemptive accentuations leads her to become the most powerful lady in the world, the FLOTUS. Likewise, prejudice and racial segregation labelled the First Black family as foreign, and others should not be accepted as rulers. Barrack, conversely, because of his odd backstory, is stigmatized as a threat to the whole USA. Barracks' optimism and steadfastness, however, brought a series of positive redemptions; thus, he finally won Wilcon-Primary Elections by the best margin ever on February 19, 2008. "This man", Michelle Obama claims, who no longer had a father or a mother" has become the first black and 44th POTUS. Secondly, Michelle Obama recounts the story of the great African leader, Nelson Mandela, the anti-apartheid activist, as a sign of encouragement, as he redeemed himself and his entire nation out of the deepest agonizing apartheid regime, thus Becoming the First Black President of South Africa from 1994–99 (369).

In Tehmina Durrani's reconstructed past, conversely, we find very few glimpses of redemption. Michelle Obama has contextualized her story in the post-First Lady era when the anti-climax of her life story starts. Tehmina Durrani, paradoxically, has contextualized her story when she is just starting her self-realization of who she is after being humiliated for decades. The well-being of psychological maturity is yet to be started; thus, we find the redemptive generativity in her later works, *A Mirror to the Blind* (1996) and *Blasphemy: A Novel* (1998). The memoir, *My Feudal Lord*, however, kicks off her narrative identity. The casual coherence in her narrativized self leads her to iconoclast the prevailing standards of women's subjugated victimization in patriarchal society.

This study has foregrounded plenty of examples where a positive event turns dramatically negative, and the negative effect overwhelms the persona. The qualitative investigations help to conclude that in Tehmina Durrani's life account, we find more contamination than in Michelle Obama's story. Tehmina Durrani wants freedom—the 'speedy escape' from her mother Samina's matriarchal restrictions. She marries Anees and feels dissatisfied. She betrays him and decides to



marry Mustafa. She romanticizes the macho personality of the 'Lion of Punjab' and forgets its vicious attitude. She faces severe, agonizing tortures under the patriarchal structure of the tyrant. Once she was an honourable wife and thus turns into "an unfaithful slut". Finally, after two decades of severe humiliation, she gets separated from Mustafa, imagining that freedom would bring happiness, but being a divorcee, she faces severe mortification from conservative society. (39). Moreover, Tehmina Durrani tries her level best to release Mustafa from the prison cell. When he is released, Tehmina Durrani catches the professional debaucher again red-handed with her sister Adila in sexual relations. Mustafa, instead of apologizing, "growled" at Tehmina Durrani; henceforth, their marriage is ended. She was excited for his freedom, but it turned out dramatically.

Moreover, in Michelle Obama's account, we find severe racial mortification when the family's long struggle reaches its climax. Being honored as the world's most glorified position, they feel themselves in confinement, double X-rayed by the community and intelligence agencies as "being in the bubble" always (325). The common lady's freedom has gone. Since they are the First Family of the USA, the collective honour of the country now, they require a security detail to even stroll down a street, as they have transformed their past identity as a collective honour of the superpower. Secondly, Barrack has a great vision to control racism, starting the "post-racial" era. Just a few days later, however, police fatally shot a black guy named Eric Garner on Staten Island. Barrack was supposed to be the custodian of the Black community, but people were killed by the law enforcement agency. The homicide rate across the states, especially in Chicago, rises gradually too (396).

Consequently, it is proven that the self-narrative identity helps to reconstruct one's own identity as the selected autobiographers derive redemptive meanings out of the suffering, deep agonizing humiliation, and hardship in their lives. Additionally, when we narrate our own story of who-am-I, we (being an autobiographer) often exhibit higher levels of generativity, psychological well-being, and other indicators of effective adaptation, all of which are correlated with higher levels of adaptability. There are many research studies have been conducted to foreground how narrative helps psychotherapy. It helps to shatter the clouds of disappointments and discouragement which often lead to some deadly end such as committing suicide or severe depression etc.

Moreover, the study intended to foreground Michelle Obama and Tehmina Durrani's realization of their Who-Am-I selves through the theoretical underpinnings of seven coding constructs in the spectrum of *narrative identity*. It has been emphasized how narrative identity is used in the selected memoirs as a tool to realign the unique selves of 'Who-Am-I' in *Becoming* and *My Feudal Lord* concerning spatiotemporal differences. Additionally, the fictional and factional binaries in the different socio-economic statuses of the personas have been explored.

Additionally, based on putative analysis of selected narrativized selves, it can be concluded that Michelle Obama and Tehmina Durrani have reconstructed their identity through episodic memory as well as diachronic dimensions under different spatiotemporal circumstances. For example, Tehmina Durrani's being a dark-skinned girl is supposed to be a barrier to an aristocratic family's reputation. Michelle Obama, conversely, being Black and female, faces typical racial oppression. Stereotypically, they both suffer from the cruel grip of patriarchy, though their challenges are different. Moreover, Tehmina Durrani is dehumanized as a lifeless decoration object right from her childhood by her family and society, having no voice or opinion. Michelle Obama, conversely, has been triggered to make a dent in the prevailing standards of the marginalized Black community right from her childhood. Thus, they both possess the unique "Who-Am-I" in different spatiotemporal contexts.

Henceforth, they both have addressed the fact that, whatever the case, women suffer all around the globe where a society is ruled by the patriarchal structure. However, there are similarities between the two memoirs in terms of exploitation or marginalization but differences in treatment. The qualitative findings illustrate how they both have constructed or reconstructed (in Durrani's case) their identity through narrative by using their pen as a weapon against patriarchy and radical and intersectional segregations.

Furthermore, it has been illustrated that a comparative study helps to maintain the bridge between cultures and interdisciplinary connections. It tackles patterns of alliance affiliations in literary texts across the spatiotemporal spectrum of world Literature. The comparative analysis helps to unmask the hidden binaries beyond the confines of one particular country and discipline. Additionally, a comparative look at these two divergent literary texts leads to the reconstruction and reassertion of cultural identity. It shatters the clouds of Eurocentric assumptions and value judgements about indigenous literature.

Hopefully, it is its debut work in academia, through which it has been grounded in how narrative identity can be used as a tool to iconoclast the prevailing notions of women's subjugation in patriarchal oppressions by comparing two selected memoirs possessing different socioeconomical contexts. Psychology theorists like McAdams and McLean have regarded it as psychotherapy, as we find in many post-illness narratives. The study would provide a fruitful development in future investigations of any autobiographical texts applying the seven coding constructs proposed by McAdams and McLean, the psychology theorists. The less blessed victims being marginalized under any sort of oppression can iconoclast the clouds of brutality, manipulation, exploitation, and subservience as elements of their fortune. Narrative Identity leads people to have the psychological maturity and well-being to raise their voices against all kinds of tyrannical severity.

To better understand the implications of these results, future studies can address ill-narrative discourse as well as post-illness narrative as psychotherapy. It is highly recommended to foreground narrative identity as a tool as a consequence of the current feminist investigation, and it is suggested that patriarchal oppressions be exposed globally. The theoretical framework could be used in different sorts of life accounts with different subject matters.

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