



# BLACK FEMINISM IN ALICE WALKER' S NOVEL “THE COLOR PURPLE”

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## **ABSTRACT:**

*Since the inception of slavery in the United States, the preponderance of African-Americans have been oppressed. Internalized oppression, the controlling images, culture of dissemblance were all impulse for ascend of black feminism. Black feminist Scholars felt it obligatory to address the issue. The novel "Color Purple" of the black woman "Alice Walker" kingpin many same issues of African-American women's life in the 1930s. Color purple was controvertible when it came out in 1982. Novel often becomes the goal of critics and censors. The article attempts to show that Color Purple is based in black feminism.*

**Keywords:** *Slavery, Black women, Color Purple.*

## **I. INTRODUCTION:**

Oppression (any bigoted circumstance where comprehensively and over a prolonged period of time, one kind quash another kind access to the assets of community) (Collins). To investigate how The Color Purple is based in black feminism, I will put in the black feminist theory to the novel and will see how the two adjunct each other, predominantly using Black feminist intellect Patricia Hill Collins, writer of Black Feminist Thought. Collins dispense a fairly comprehensive insight discussing a significant amount of black feminism. However, she only says that the Color Purple in short does not analyze its significance within black feminism. In spite of that, key points of black feminism that Collins mentions can also be seen in The Color Purple.

The first aspect with reference to economic oppression, associated with the swindle of black women's labor, is seen in the facet that Sofia is more or less contrived to work for the mayor because she is punished if she opposes. The mayor's wife offer her to become her maid, but Sofia deny her propose. In mean time mayor then slaps her for contempting him and his wife, to which Sofia retaliate by striking him back. As a result, Sofia is convicted to work as the mayor's maid for twelve years. Furthermore, Celie is economically reliant on Albert, though this aspect remains in the backdrop.

The second aspect related to political oppression is described by Collins as the denial of the vote, but it is seen in the novel on a high distinctive level in the male domination that prevail in the novel. Celie does not undergo the appropriate education, because her stepfather takes away from school due to pregnancy. She is only knows to



read and write because of her sister. Her childhood also perishes because her stepfather rapes and beats her, not only this he also propels her into marriage with Albert, who assault her as well, his justification being that it is because Celie is his wife. Even though the political aspect may not be as lucid at first sight, it is certainly existing in a way in which women are regarded as the inferior persons in the American society.

The third and last aspect, which describes ideological oppression in terms of stereotypical images of black women, can also be seen in *The Color Purple* in many sections where images are thrown back upon the characters. The characters are clued-up of the gender roles that American society predict from them and experience stress to act as per to these socially constructed images. For example, Sofia and Harpo sense like they require to cling to the specific gender roles that are spotted as usual in society, even though it is not what either of them wants. Harpo adores to do 'women's work', while Sofia likes to do more physical job. This evidently illustrate the reality that the characters know what society expects of them, and feel the requisite to adhere to them, even though they will be gratified if they let go of that stress and take on the role in the marriage that they would want for themselves. In a way, Walker disparage this ideological oppression, by altering the stereotypical gender roles and producing female characters who are having more masculine nature, and vice versa. Furthermore, Celie criticizes Albert when he says to her that he presume Shug like a man. Yet, *The Color Purple* also drift at various points from the aspect of oppression, as the muscular female characters in the novel do combat the oppression they face. For instance, Sofia does not let herself be assaulted by her husband as a resistless wife, and Shugyike for Celie when she comes to know that Albert beats her. A feminist scenario can be recognized in the fact that the characters do not passively undergo the oppression they encounter.

## II. CONCLUSION:

Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* has had a noteworthy part in black feminism. Black female scholar Patricia Hill Collins fractionates black female oppression into the economic, political, and ideological aspects of oppression. Traditional feminism has assisted in the oppression of black women in the sight that feminist theory by white scholars frequently does not concede the intersectionality of sexuality, race, gender, and class, or does not even present black women. Another one, oppression in terms of sexuality is the stereotyping and the appearance of controlling images in American society. In addition, the "culture of dissemblance" startemanating. Acquired from the additional aspect of oppression that women confronted as African-American women, black feminism arose, concerning not only with gender and sexuality but also with the facets of race and class that come with being African-American and female.

## III. BIBLIOGRAPHY:

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