

## **The Male Domination in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Purple Hibiscus**

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### **Abstract**

The male domination in Adichie's Purple Hibiscus was reflected in Afro-American Literature. Adichie's novel explained the different strategy of this subject. The main character Kambili who narrates the story of her family's disintegration due to patriarchy. In *Purple Hibiscus* was about the culminates in military rule. Papa and his news paper, The Standard, was critical of corruption that was supported by a leader who is not elected by the people. Ironically, Papa was a self-righteous dictator in his own home. Several characters in the play were submissive throughout the novel.

**Keywords:** *Characterisation; Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie; male domination; Nigerian fiction.*

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### **Introduction**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie was one of Nigeria's more prominent new generation female writers. In 2007, she was winner of the prestigious Orange Prize for fiction for her second novel, *Half of a Yellow Sun*. Her novels, *Purple Hibiscus* (2003) and *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) were about the traditional constructs of the woman. In this aspect, she pointed out that women had to rise above from these traditional constructs, especially as 'good women,

they need to realise their self importance and they need to express their experiences. For that, self-knowledge and self-expression become sine qua non for action. In this essay, we will examine how her first novel brings out the patriarchal violence and with understanding the Adichie's Purple Hibiscus adopts the issues of male violence dominate over the weaker sex.

The novel opens with Jaja was rebelled against his devout Catholic father by not attending the communion on Palm Sunday, an important religious holiday. The following story was about the events of Jaja's defiance. This was narrated by Kambili three years after this incident. Since she had been shocked by the severe punishments of her father. Her descriptive was interesting that it can be concluded that she trace her own identity throughout this ordeal. Both Kambili and Jaja take steps towards adulthood by overcoming their suffering and being exposed to new thoughts.

### **Male Violence On Weaker Gender**

Kambili was fifteen years old and modestly shy. She suffered at most, unable to speak against injustice done by her father. Her silence proves that even she didn't have courage to tell about her situation at home. When her classmates tease her for being a backyard snob, she never explained to them that she did not have such fear. Her secret language had reflected in her innocence but also naïveté. This was the beginning of a coming-of-age story.

Liberty life comes to Kambili when Nigeria was agitated by military rule. It forced the Kambili and her brother to live in her aunt's home, where she experienced her freedom. Adichie's Purple Hibiscus can be considered as radical and the way used by the protagonist to liberate herself. She notes that "I felt as if my shadow was visiting Auntie Ifeoma and her family, while the real me was studying in my room in Enugu, my schedule posted above me" (Purple Hibiscus 125).

Kambili's Christian belief has left her in a state of dividing line. First she realised herself and finally learned how to speak when she was teased continuously by her cousin Amaka. Auntie Ifeoma encouraged her to defend herself and make Kambili to speak more confidently, laugh and even sings without fear of her papa's imperialism. Her change was contrasted to the change in her brother Jaja, in order to show the reason for their development in different directions.

Kambili and Jaja learned to be more accepting in Nsukka, when he was in Aunt Ifeoma's flat for his illness. She watches the beauty in this ritual and understands that the difference between herself and Papa-Nnukwu. On knowing this bonding, her father calls them back to home. On seeing the painting of Papa-Nnukwu, Papa poured the hot water over kids' feet for "walking into sin." It reveals the Papa's male violence. Adichie explores the double-consciousness of Black America through the character of Ifemelu.

As the novel progresses, Eugene's authority power that separates Aunt Ifeoma's to make a decision on that time when she was depressed. When Ifeoma and Eugene's father, Papa Nnukwu, dies, Aunt Ifeoma was broken down by Eugene's compulsion for Papa Nnukwu having a Christian funeral. Enraged at the notion, she cries, "I ask you, Eugene, was he a Catholic?" Adichie in her work highlighted by using a binary opposition that the dominant white society is in direct contrast to blacks in America.

Papa's image was portrayed as an oppressor. Mama was always traced by the narrator as having swollen eyes or face in tears or bleeding from the violent assaults of her husband. The family was always experienced the nervous moments due to paternal brutality. They were silent or talk with suppressed voices.

The Purple Hibiscus novel deals with the issues of male domination and how these issues, in turn, challenge nation-ness in Nigeria. In this novel, the author brings about the women's struggles to overcome marginalisation in a sexist and patriarchal society. This was undoubtedly to fight with its own dangers but a woman needs to explode the system and set up her own identity instead of being treated as a doormat for life.

America was not the Eden that Obiora hopes it to be. Though he struggled in America when the rest of the family struggles in their new home. Aunt Ifeoma joined in two jobs to make ends meet. Amaka isolated from her roots. And though in the Nsukka, Kambili's visit was fruitless for the people who once made it a home, Kambili still seeks refuge there. Odim Hill was there to spread the air scented with hills and history. She visited there to restore herself, Kambili had roots now. She was listening to Fela's tapes and reminisces about Amaka. Now the music had become her own.

The book closes on the present. It was nearly three years later and Jaja was in the prison for murdering Papa. As the title of this section suggests, there was a different silence in Enugu. Mama was in her grief. Before, the silence was a necessity to maintain Papa's image. But, now the silence was self-protection. 'Mama tightened her wrapper, then went to the window; she pushed....when she spoke, her voice was just as calm and slow. 'I started putting the poison in his tea before I came to Nsukka. Sasi got it for me; her uncle is a powerful witch doctor''. (Purple Hibiscus 290).

Jaja no longer speaks with his eyes. Mama tried to expose the truth to everyone about the cause for that murder, but it had fallen on deaf ears. She gave Papa's money in the form of bribes with prison guard and lawyers who involved in the corrupt system. In this new silence, Kambili compares with the old silence, when Papa was alive. But she longs to meet him in her dreams.

When they leave the prison, there was a ray of hope. Kambili told Mama that they had chance to release Jaja to Nsukka and to America to see Aunty Ifeoma, then to Abba to plant new orange trees, and he would plant purple hibiscus again.

## **Conclusion**

Hibiscus novel was about the violence of Christian religion, colonial forces, and patriarchal domination. This paper analysis the psychological abuse suffered by the family and also the torture of different strategy adopted by Papa Eugene to stay in control. Moreover, it was evidently proved that power can be lost if there was too much control and it shows how such actions ultimately lead to rebellion. The author tried to reveals the negative side of Papa who was responsible for the cause of what that happened in his family and as with many other rebellions and uprisings, the lack of humility and compromise eventually became his downfall.

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