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Article:	Analyzing Jameson's Double Consciousness in the Novel "Confessions of a Teenage Hermaphrodite"
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ABSTRACT

Intersex individuals are grieved with elimination and deprivation. It has been a general observation that they are destined to remain unknown or low-caste. The societies do not provide them the opportunities to fulfill their basic needs, but rather add to their miseries and despairs. The present study tends to analyze the role of other people in the growth of double consciousness of intersex through the application of Du Bois' (1903) theory of Double Consciousness on the intersex character of Jameson from the novel "*Confessions of a Teen Age Hermaphrodite*". By adopting the qualitative approach and through textual analysis, the study interestingly highlighted that not only harsh, rigid, and degrading attitudes but sometimes care and affection of people also cause double consciousness of intersex. Moreover, it was also noted that some people do not deliberately become the source of intersex' double consciousness, it is done unintentionally.

Keywords: Double Consciousness, Intersex, Confessions of a Teen Age Hermaphrodite

Introduction:

Human beings in the world are largely divided into two categories, male and female. The male waiting area and female waiting area, male queue and female queue, male washroom and female washroom, these specifications refer as if there is no third group that needs to be identified as a separate human category other than male or female. There is a dare need to acknowledge the third gender, i.e. intersex. Intertextuality is a phenomenon which mostly disregarded or not commonly recognized, however, it does exist. It exists in humans, animals, and even in plants. There are many conditions of intersexuality, Johnson (2018) believes that the word “intersex” serves as an umbrella term; it is used for an individual who has a physical or biological condition where female and male chromosomes are joined together.

It is a common observation that intersex individuals are rejected in all walks of life almost everywhere in the world. They face unbearable circumstances where they are deprived of basic human rights. From the time of their birth till later in life, they face rejection. Nazir and Yasir (2016) examined their condition in Pakistan. They concluded that intersex people are bullied and harassed everywhere. At first, their own families disown them, and then school fellows and neighbors reject them. The degrading attitude of their schoolmates makes them run away from school, so they remain illiterate and ultimately lose all the opportunities of getting a respectable job.

The intersex people in Pakistan are given different names such as Khusra, Murat, Hijra, and Khawaja-Sara (Nazir & Yasir, 2016). Ridiculously, they are known by several names, yet they are destined to remain unknown because they are neglected on all the platforms. Their identity is traumatized and they suffer from namelessness. Their life is a hidden mystery and unfortunately much is not known about them. They hide and remain in isolation due to the harassment and oppression they receive from society. This paper may help educate people to revise their attitude towards the intersex community because they do not lack intelligence or physical strength as compared to male and female members of society.

Shutting all opportunities to them, disrespect, harassment, oblivion, and their invisibility lead them to have a distorted identity. Those who remain unheard and unseen become nonexistent for others; so is the case with intersex. For centuries they have been suffering from a lack of recognition. They are identified as sex workers, baggers, or dancers. It is hard for them to rebuild their identity as respectable members of society.

Everyone has his identity through which he is known. The identity is built gradually and keeps on building every day. Identity is formed through the interaction with others, others' judgment about one, one's behavior, and social and cultural role (Hewstone, Stroebe & Jonas, 2008). Once it is shattered, there occurs a disturbance and the process is halted. The disturbance may occur from both sides; from society or within a person. The outcome appears in the form of double consciousness. Du Bois (1903) defines Double Consciousness as

“[A] sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world—a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body” (p. 2).

Du Bois' theory of Double Consciousness emerged from the identity crisis of African Americans. The Blacks who live in white-dominated American society suffer from double consciousness. A veil of the color line is held between the two groups and never lets them merge together. Blacks see themselves as Americans whereas Whites consider them as African. Africans are forced to see themselves from the eyes of the Whites. This domination of the other world never allows Blacks have their true self. The two warring ideals are never at peace. Thus the two identities create double consciousness of the oppressed ones.

The theory can be applied to study the double consciousness of any oppressed individual or group who is one way or the other different from the majority. The difference may be of color, caste, appearance, or mental or physical form. Intersex people may fall into the same category by being biologically different from males and females. Intersexuality can be defined as having atypical genitalia, which makes one neither a boy nor a girl. For the present study, the theoretical background is provided by the concept of Du Bois' Double Consciousness (1903) in which African Americans are replaced by the intersex and the "other world" by non-intersex. The theory is applied to study the intersex character of the novel *The Confessions of a Teen Age Hermaphrodite* written by Lianne Simon published in 2012. The qualitative approach has been adopted to analyze the text of the novel by which it is investigated how others (cisgender/non-intersex) play their role in the development of double consciousness of intersex.

It is agreed that intersexuality has more than forty different conditions and the term "intersex" accommodate all of them. The physical or chromosomal feature that is generally classified as either male or female is combined in one body, which is the common factor present in all the conditions (Feder & Karkazis, 2008; Feder, 2009). Intersexuality is an emerging issue in the modern world. It is addressed in different forums of research. Such as Johnson (2018) examined the viewpoint of intersex people on the medical treatment they are provided with. The study also focused on how they handle their difference being intersex on various occasions of their lives. Jones (2016) explored the educational problems of intersex people. He observed that due to their atypical biological condition, many of them couldn't go to school, and some left their studies very early. They were also bullied at their educational institutes. A few of them who could complete their studies emphasized on development of their support structure. The present study tends to analyze the double consciousness of the intersex character in the novel *The Confession of a Teen Age Hermaphrodite*. The main character is intersex, and the novel is based on its journey in life. In the said study, particularly, it is researched how others contribute to the development of the double consciousness of the intersex character named Jameson/Jamie. The study becomes significant because through the application of the theory of Double Consciousness it figures out how others play their role in the development of intersex double consciousness or to get their divided identity. By highlighting this factor, it will raise the conscience of common people about how they can add positivity to the well-being of intersex people.

Discussion

The Novel "*Confessions of a Teen Age Hermaphrodite*" is written by Lianne Simon and published in 2012. It is the story of a person who from childhood suffers from an identity crisis. Jameson, the leading character, is brought up as a boy as per his parents' will. His father had lost his eldest son and he then started seeing him in Jameson. Jameson has a younger sister

and both are very close. Mother, is closer to Jameson as compared to his Father. she knows that Jameson is more inclined towards the feminine side of his being, yet she respects her husband's desire.

As Jameson grows up, the elfin princess hidden in him becomes more enthusiastic to make her public appearance. Thus there occurs a war inside Jameson to find his true self. Finally, Jamie wins over Jameson and lives happily with her husband and two adopted children. It was not easy to get to the true self of the character. It had to fight with its double consciousness so hard that at times it thought to give up.

To analyze how the rest of the characters in the novel contribute to the development of the double consciousness of Jameson/Jamie, the qualitative method is adopted. The textual analytic approach is used to analyze the passages and examples from the text of the novel in the theoretical background of Du Bois' (1903) concept of Double Consciousness.

It was observed that the non-intersex characters' behavior, gestures, words, and accent cause the double consciousness of intersex characters. Moreover, with some its double consciousness maximizes whereas with some it is minimized. As Mother is one of those who sometimes contributes to the maximization of the character's double consciousness.

Is that true? Are you pretending?

A muscle in my arm twitched. I forced myself to take deep breaths. "Yes, ma'am."

Green

lightning flashed across the sky.

You could talk to Sharon about this, but not your own mother and father?

A cold wind stung my eyes. "I'm sorry, Mom. I was afraid. I'm a girl. Okay

"You're a girl? Fine." The wind hissed, icy breath turning to crystals.

I stared at the handset in terror. "Mom, I can—"

.....Yes, ma'am." The storm abated, leaving utter devastation in its path. (Simon, 2012, p.62-63)

It happened when Sharon informed Jameson's mother that Jameson wants to be a girl and that it is only pretending to be a boy. She called Jameson and scolded him for telling this stuff to Sharon and not to any of the parents. It all happened so unexpectedly that he was not prepared and described it as the storm had approached and Jameson was not prepared for it. The mother's aggression caused him mental and physical paralysis. It was hard for him to justify his actions. She didn't let him say anything but rather asked him to do what instead she wants him to. In terror, he could say nothing although tried and finally agreed. At the end of the phone call, he realized that there is nothing but utter devastation all his way.

Jameson wanted to be a girl. Elfin princess lived in him and is seen many times in the mirror. While fighting with his double consciousness, when he just expressed his desire to be a girl, he had to face harsh criticism from his mother. The double consciousness which he faces is one is what he thinks he is and the other is what his parents want him to be. In the African American context, the white community was dominating. In this case, his parents are dominating and force him to see himself through their eyes. As Lister (2018) says the veil which is held between the dominating and the oppressed blinds the dominated to seeing the real identity of the oppressed as well as damages the capability of the oppressed to reject the imposed identity and see his actual self. So is the case in the above scenario in which the mother's authoritative attitude didn't let him say anything. Moreover, he has to accept her

orders. In other words, his obedience becomes the hurdle on his way to achieving his true identity. He felt devastated and wretched. Thus it can be observed that the mother's harsh behavior and words emotionally blackmailed him and pressurized him to fulfill her and her husband's desire rather than pursuing his own will. The mother's words, way of uttering them, and her dictatorship cause Jameson to suffer from double consciousness. He is forced to himself from the eyes of his mother, as says Du Bois (1903) that:

...a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world. (p.2)

Jameson had to suffer from the divided self of his being since his childhood. His inner was naturally attracted him towards the stuff like dolls and kitchen sets with which usually girls play. And he liked the company of his sister and cousin Kaylah. When the parents noticed his inclinations, they snatched his toys and got him to have short hair. The childhood memories were like a nightmare to him. As he expressed his feeling "Tattered images from my childhood swirled like large snowflakes in a blizzard. Mom taking away my dolls and the miniature china tea sets. My hair falling to the floor as clippers buzzed across my skull. Dad making me sit on my hands so I wouldn't use them when I talked" (Simon, 2012, p.69). It shows that when as a small child he could not exactly figure out what he is going through, since then the inner and the outer conflict existed. The unpleasant childhood memories remind him of that conflict that caused him uneasiness. It was actually the division of himself into two parts. He was at war with him and the outer world. In the words of Du Bois (1903) "One ever feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body" (p. 2). The twoness in the theoretical background of the Double Consciousness is that of being a negro and an American. Replacing them in the context of the novel, *Confessions of a Teenage Hermaphrodite*, the twoness, two unreconciled strivings, and two warring ideals are the to and fro movement of being in between the sexes. The "one dark body" is not of a negro but that of an intersex body.

The parents in the above situation seem to be cruel, however, they may not intend to be so in reality. They did it in order to fix their child in either category of male or female, and it may be out of love and care. Nonetheless, it can be considered one of the causes of developing double consciousness in an innocent child. The outer world is at hardest in conflict with his inner. The parents impose their will on the child without taking into consideration his approval or rejection of their decision regarding his gender fixing. Thus in the example, parents' love and care along with the imposition of their decision on the child became the cause for triggering double consciousness.

This did not end till he was grown up and could decide about his gender concern. While living at Saint Andrew's, Jameson converted into Jamie and was enjoying the beginning of her new journey, the father appeared to drag her on the same route of desolation and despair. The father brought Jamie home back and forced her to be a boy. Jamie describes her feeling in such a way "My stomach churned as I waited for his parting instructions. Dad drew me aside and handed me his list of Things Boys Do. The document was formatted like some technical specification, orderly down to the small check box next to each item" (Simon, 2012, p.90).

This time it seems unfair on part of the father who knows his child longing to be a girl, yet imposed his desire on her.

It was also observed that several times he was called by different fanciful names by the people around him on different occasions. Such as once he gave the account of his fifth birthday, his friend and cousin Kaylah who was older than him knew his desire to be a girl. She gave him a beautiful princess dress to wear and helped him get ready like a girl. It was the first time that as a child he felt something fulfilled and had instilled him with happiness and satisfaction. He was then addressed by Kaylah by fanciful names such as “birthday girl” (Simon, 2012, p.14), “my lady” (Simon, 2012, p.14), and “princess” (Simon, 2012, p.15). These names added very strongly to the double consciousness of Jameson. It was the time when parents were very cautious about their intersex child behaving or acting like a boy, whereas at the same time while being among his friends and age fellows he was encouraged to dress up like a princess and called by the names mentioned above which are specifically used for girls. Some people in his life see him as a girl and some see him as a boy, keeping aside how he sees himself. Thus at the same time providing the two altered perspectives of his being doesn't help him have any strong and firm identity status. Rather, it brought multiple divisions in himself, resulting in double consciousness.

In the other place, when he was living in a boy's hostel, Ron, his fellow student used to bully him. He once pulled his hair and called him “Sleeping Beauty” (Simon, 2012, p.34). Ron teased him because Jameson's looks were feminine. Ron's appearance always caused discomfort to Jameson. It was because, on one hand, he was already going through mental torment since his childhood whether what his actual identity is and the double consciousness always haunted him. He was at war within himself. On the other hand, people like Ron are a continuous reminder to him of his gender ambiguity. People's words, actions, and behavior powerfully add to the double consciousness of the oppressed ones.

In the above situations, there are two external gazes provided at the same time. Some of the people around him give him a feminine identity and some masculine. Moreover, when Kaylah called him by the fanciful names it is done out of love and concern and when Ron called him Sleeping Beauty, it was entirely out of contempt or hatred. However, what the matter might be, both play their role in creating double consciousness. The emergence and development of Jameson's double consciousness is fortified when later it is observed that he also called himself a “Little queen” (Simon, 2012, p.58). Thus the above examples go in line with Itzigsohn and Brown (2015) point of view. They believe that due to the sense of twoness, the outer world's view that is external gaze becomes internal because it is more powerful and dominating.

Conclusion and Findings

The veil is strongly held between the mother and Jameson. She is unable or blind to see Jameson's vision of himself. Her authoritative attitude contributes to Jameson/Jamie's double consciousness. Similarly, Father's dominating role in the life of his family and particularly his intersex child's life creates twoness of his being, he severely suffers from the two unreconciled strivings. Moreover, his parent's love and concern majorly cause Jameson the twoness of his being.

Ron's bullying directly multiplies the problems of his rejected self. It doesn't only make him unconfident but also intensifies his psychological complications leading to initiating double consciousness. Ron became the source of his mental and physical torment and unrest.

Out of love, people give nicknames to their dear ones. They call them by different fanciful names to show their love and affection for their beloved relations, as Kaylah did to show her love for Jameson/Jamie. Unintentionally, she also added to the double consciousness of Jameson, because her actions and words motivated him to be more inclined toward the female side of his existence.

Thus it can be included that people's behavior, actions, and words directly or indirectly contribute to the development of the intersex character's double consciousness. The rigidity and stubbornness of his parents, bullying, and mistreatment of Ron are directly proportional to the rise in his complicated self and double consciousness of Jameson. It was also found out that along with the authoritative, dominating, and harsh attitude, sometimes affectionate and thoughtful attitude may also cause the trouble of double consciousness to the already rejected and repressed fellows in the society. It is also noteworthy that some people may not intentionally create double consciousness but unknowingly or intentionally become part of the process. Thus it is recommended or suggested that we should be cautious while interacting with intersex, so we avoid playing a negative role in their identity development. Furthermore, we can provide them with a healthy environment so they may come out of identity crisis or double consciousness and gain a respectable position as well as contribute positively to the country's or the world's progress as any other male/female member of the society.

It is suggested that in order to reduce the double consciousness of intersex people and their social, economic, and psychological problems, we should first stop considering them or discussing their issues as taboo. They should be given a proper platform where they may bring forth themselves and their grievances.

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