

Received: 15 September 2024 ,Accepted: 20 October 2024

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## Use of Adjectives to Represent of Female Characters in Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Corpus Assisted Feminist Stylistic Analysis

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### Abstract

The study uses a Corpus Assisted Feminist Stylistic Analysis to look at how women are portrayed in Hamlet by William Shakespeare. This current study carries out these analyses with the help of adjectives. The adjectives are identified from the play with the help of computer software Sketch Engine. The study examines how women, notably Ophelia and Gertrude, are portrayed in the play by means of thorough examination of linguistics patterns and discourse structures. Through the integration of stylistic analysis and corpus linguist approaches, this work illuminates the intricacies of gender representation in Shakespearean literature, providing valuable perspectives on the social and cultural milieu of the period. The results advance our knowledge of the creation and interpretation of female characters in one of Shakespeare's most well-known tragedies, Hamlet.

**Key Words:** Hamlet, Feminist Stylistic Analysis, Female Characters, representation

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## Introduction

All over the world, throughout the history, depiction, portrayal and representation of female characters is a continuous subject both in research and of discussion. Studies on women characters have long been the subject of numerous fields, including gender studies, developmental studies, linguistics, and literature (Machaba, 2011). Several researchers have conducted different research works and portrayed women mostly from the male writers' perspectives and have shown women to be weak and dependent. It is general view that male authors portray women as derogatory and negatively. Male writers have portrayed women as dangerously weak, slack, and reliant on men. (Chitando, 2011). A feminist examination of how women are portrayed in Hamlet places a strong emphasis on the language employed. The play has only two female characters and both the characters are victimized. This is made clear in the play when, after Ophelia's father is killed by Hamlet, she starts to go insane. Shakespeare has presented a broader social image in Hamlet through the portrayal of Ophelia and Gertrude, he has shown us the picture of Elizabethan era. These characters are illtreated by their male characters living in that society. Women were considered so weak that they absolutely dependent on their males in society or upon the environment in which they were living, for instance, in the case of Ophelia and Gertrude. Feminist theory in conjunction with stylistic analysis and corpus-assisted analysis have shown to be incredibly helpful in providing a fresh viewpoint for interpreting underlying feminist themes in literary works. Feminist stylistic serves as a link between the fields of linguistics and literary criticism, primarily focusing on the investigation of how feminist ideology is communicated through language choice (Mills, 2005). Above all, the play as a whole show how completely women

are objectified inside the patriarchal system. Hamlet calls her “chast gem”, in refers to her virginity. Most importantly, Hamlet is a tragedy with constrained views on women.

Similarly, this study also discusses the importance of using linguistic choices that convey special meanings. These linguistic choices entail adjectives identified with the help of computer software Sketch Engine (Kilgariff et al. 2014). These lexical choices consisting of adjectives have been analyzed through the analytical lenses of Leech and Short Checklist of Lexical Features. These adjectives highlight the main theme of the study that is to represent the female characters in Shakespeare’s Hamlet. This study represents women through feminist stylistic analysis. This study will try to analyze Shakespeare’s Hamlet from the perspective of feminist stylistic analysis to explore that how Shakespeare, represents women in her drama, Hamlet. The purpose of thesis is to analyze women’s place in society, their representation by male authors in Hamlet which is written by Shakespeare.

### **Significance of the study**

This study is significant because it sheds light on the representation of female characters in Shakespeare’s Hamlet through the lenses of feminist stylistic analysis which helps the reader to understand the power dynamics, gender roles and social norms that are present in that society and in Shakespearean literature. This study will elaborate that how female characters have been shown, their roles and the impact of their representation on the broader level. It also provides a sophisticated knowledge of gender representation in classical literature and its relevance to the current conversation on gender equality and representation in media and literature. This study also uses another lens theoretical frame work that is Leech and Short’s

Checklist of Lexical Features in Style in fiction. Furthermore, it is a Corpus-Assisted studies which means it discusses the linguistic choices which are taken through Hamlet by using Corpus tool, Sketch Engine.

### **1.1 Statement of the problem**

The representation of female characters in Hamlet and its implications for gender representation, power relations, and societal standards in the setting of Shakespearean literature are the issues this study attempts to explore. This study specifically attempts to examine how female characters are portrayed as having agency and how their representation either supports or contradicts prevalent gender stereotypes and cultural views of women. The study aims to investigate the language and discourse to generate female characters in Hamlet and its wider implications in literature and society by emphasizing corpus-assisted stylistic analysis.

### **1.2 Research Objectives**

1. To examine the use of adjectives to portray female characters in the Hamlet by Shakespeare.
2. To explicate the representation of female characters to in the Hamlet by Shakespeare through the use of adjectives

### **1.3 Research Question**

1. What type of adjectives are used to portray female characters in the play Hamlet by Shakespeare?

2. How has the use of these adjectives presented female characters in the play Hamlet by Shakespeare?

#### **1.4 Limitation of the study**

The researchers claim no perfection of wholeness in this study. The study has its limitations. The focus of this study is to examine the portrayal of female characters on in Hamlet by Shakespeare with the help of Feminist Stylistic Analysis a tool proposed by Sara Mill (1995) for analyzing characters and their language. Primarily, the study only examines adjectives to highlights the main theme of objectification or representation of the female characters.

#### **2 Literature Review**

Primary goal of the study is to show portrayal of female characters in Hamlet by Shakespeare. The character of Hamlet has been analyzed through several viewpoint and hypothesis: background of illness or connection to the Oedipus Phenomenon. However, there are two female characters\_ Ophelia and Gertrude who are presented as weak characters for their supporting roles. Feminist critics examine Shakespeare's works in the context of female oppression and male anxiety. Men's fear of powerful women may have its main cause of this anxiety.

It is the best to start by learning about the most recent advances in stylistics and feminism. Three stages can be distinguished in the development of western feminism: post-structural feminism, radical feminism, and liberal feminism. In the 19th and 20th centuries, rhetoric and interpretation served as the foundation for the development of modern stylistics. A

1958 conference in America and England suggested that stylistics originated as an interdisciplinary field combining literature and linguistics. As a branch of linguistic science, it upholds the importance of researching textual styles while also incorporating novel concepts and theories to expand its fields and provide a greater range of options for appreciating works. There are many important figures in area of feminist stylistic such as, Sara Mills (1995), Simpson (1942), Annette Kolodny (1975), and Deirdre Burton (1982), etc. Burton (1982) uses this technique to examine The Belle's transitivity system. However, the conclusion is that it is difficult to remove gender inequality from society so that there would be a stable community can be created.

Furthermore, the topic's representation of female characters in Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Feminist Stylistic Analysis (by Sara Mills), her work adds to the current conversation about gender portrayals in Shakespearean literature, with a special emphasis on Hamlet's female characters. Using a combination of corpus linguistics tool and stylistic analysis, these techniques provide a sophisticated critique of the play's portrayal of women. This study sheds light on the varied roles and portrayals of female characters in Hamlet, building on previous research that examines the complexities of gender relations in Shakespearean works. Through the application of corpus linguistics methods, Mills enhances her research with a detailed analysis that facilitates a more thorough examination of language patterns and textual representations. Moreover, her stylistic analysis and her study on the representation of female characters in Shakespeare's Hamlet provides a thorough analysis that blends corpus linguistics with feminist analysis. This study offers insightful information about how language shapes and communicates the identities of female characters like Ophelia and Gertrude. Additionally, Mills' incorporation of stylistic

analysis gives her research a socio-cultural component. She investigates how gender portrayals in Hamlet are influenced by their social set-up.

The use of corpus linguistic in Mills' study is a novel and important choice. She is able to find recurrent linguistic patterns and investigates how language shapes the identities and experiences of female characters by gathering and examining a corpus of text from Hamlet.

### **2.1 Corpus-Assisted Feminist Stylistic Analysis**

A method called corpus-assisted feminist stylistic analysis combines feminist theory and corpus linguistics tool to study how language is used and gender is portrayed in texts. In order to find patterns and trends in language use connected to gender, power dynamics, and identity, a sizable corpus of texts must be analyzed. Researchers can learn how language either supports or contradicts gender stereotypes, unequal power dynamics, and patriarchal norms by using feminist theory to this examination.

### **2.2 Sara Mills' Stylistic Analysis**

Sara Mills is a well-known academic in the fields of stylistic analysis and feminist linguistics. Her approach frequently focuses on the ways in which language constructs and maintains power relations and gender roles. Through stylistic analysis, Mills looks at how language decisions, such as discourse structure, vocabulary, and syntax- affect how gender is portrayed in text. Mills' stylistic analysis entails close textual analysis, it analyzes certain language elements in texts to reveal underlying gender-related meanings and beliefs.

The study Feminist Stylistic is a theory of Sara Mills', it makes the uses of two approaches and these are, feminist and stylistic. The basic principles of feminist analysis are to

discuss that women are treated unfairly and ultimately, they are maltreated and oppressed. However, feminist is concerned with the representation of females in particular and feminist stylistics concerned with gender representation in general. Its main aim is to see how men and women are shown at an actual level. (Mills' 1995, p. 207). To study feminist stylistic is more popular than stylistics, which entails both linguistics and literary criticism as a subfield of applied linguistics (Sadia et al. 2015). According to Carter and Simpson (1989), literary stylistics concentrate literary and author centered texts, in order to critically analyze the usage of language, whereas linguistic stylistics investigates style and language to add to the linguistic theory. Feminist stylistic which combines stylistics and feminism, uses literary and linguistics traditions to inform its tactics. According to Mills' (1995, p.207), feminist stylistic is a type of politically driven stylistics that aims to raise awareness about how gender is handled in texts and supports the investigation of textual language.

Sara Mills' Stylistic Analysis is a linguistics technique that looks the text's style by dissecting its linguistic elements and how they affect interpretation and meaning. In order to identify patterns and themes in the text, it entails examining a variety of factors, including sentence structure, figurative language, rhetorical devices, and vocabulary choice. Mills' method places a strong emphasis on the dynamic interplay between language, society and ideology as well as significance of context and cultural elements in interpreting style.

It also discusses interdisciplinary approach because it contextualizes and interprets language patterns by utilizing knowledge from sociolinguistics, feminist theory, and discourse analysis. It also has Critical perspective as it dissects and opposes accepted notions of gender, language, and power, frequently by exposing inequality in society.



### **2.2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis**

A conceptual framework and research movement known as critical discourse analysis looks into how language mediates power and privilege relationships in social interactions, institutions and bodies of knowledge by acting as a cultural tool. (Gu & Catalano, 2022).

Mills' uses discourse analysis techniques to examine the use of language within different contexts. She investigates both discourses, written and oral to explore hidden power structures and identity and ideologies within the text.

Similar claims were made by Wodak and Meyer (2001), who claimed that CDA is particularly interested in the relationship between language and power. Today the term CDA is used more specifically to refer to the critical linguistic approach of scholars who believe that the large discursive unit of text serves as the fundamental unit of communication. CDA is defined as an attempt to illustrate a text on social issues in order to identify the hidden meanings.

### **2.2.2 Critical Stylistic Analysis**

Sara Mills' adopts a critical stylistic technique to explore different texts from a critical perspective. This perspective involves analyzing language choices, narrative techniques and different stylistic features to express ideologies and power relations.

In short Sara Mills' stylistic analysis is an interdisciplinary approach that emphasizes how language is used in socially and politically in order to reveal underlying meanings of language use.

## **3 Methodology**

In every research article, selecting an appropriate research methodology is a crucial step in the data collection process. The process of choosing a research methodology begins with taking the study's philosophical context into account. (Chitand,2011, p.1).

This paper concerns qualitative and quantitative research and its main purpose is to provide detailed analysis of female characters in Shakespeare's Hamlet by doing corpus assisted analysis. This paper also talks about Sara Mills' feminist stylistic analysis which is adopted to analyze the representation of female characters in William Shakespeare's well-known tragedy\_ Hamlet. Sara Mills' stylistic analysis is a systematic approach to examine stylistic and linguistic items within the text exploring the gender portrayal and depiction. This study attempts to shed light on the female characters, Ophelia and Gertrude, in Hamlet within the framework of Elizabethan society by using Mills' model. Moreover, Corpus tool is used to further analyze the data in detail in order to unmask female characters, Ophelia and Gertrude, in male dominant society.

It is important and purposeful that Shakespeare 'a Hamlet be used as a main text for examination, one of Shakespeare's well-known and extensively studied play is Hamlet, which is well-known for its deep themes, complicated storyline, and multifaceted characters. The portrayal of female characters in Hamlet, especially Ophelia and Gertrude, offers a wealth of material for analyzing gender roles and Elizabethan social mores. Through the research of Hamlet, this study seeks to investigate how Sara Mills' framework of stylistic analysis can explain the stylistic and linguistic features used to delineate the female characters. Through detail analysis of their dialogues, their characterization and their actions, this methodology gives complete understanding of the women's' representation in literature furthermore, it highlights

issues of gender, identity and power dynamics. In order to collect data, this study includes detailed reading and taking notes on the interactions. Conversations of female characters within the Hamlet text. Coded data is used to analyze the representation of female characters. Respecting the textual integrity of Shakespeare and avoiding distorting interpretation that would change the author's intentions are the two main ethical considerations in this study. Furthermore, great effort will be taken to sensitively depict the female characters in Hamlet while avoiding perpetuating negative stereotypes. Additionally, an attempt will be made to respect the historical setting in which the play was written without forcing modern ideas upon Elizabethan social mores. Ultimately, appropriate reference and recognition of sources will be made to maintain scholarly integrity plagiarism. In order to use quantitative method, the study also uses Leech and Short checklist, in which adjectives are discussed in order to highlight the main theme of the study. The study has used Sketch Engine to take these adjectives from Hamlet. Overall, this methodology provides a methodical way to find out more about how gender is represented within the play.

#### **4 Analysis and Results**

In the analysis section, the researcher will analyze Hamlet by using two theoretical frameworks. First is used Leech and Short's Model (2007) to analyze adjectives that is taken through the use of Corpus Tool, that is Sketch Engine and the other is Sara Mills' theoretical framework that will be used to analyze women's' suppression and their marginalization. Leech and Short's work show that Corpus Linguistics choices can be applied on different literary analysis and it offers a systematic approach for data analysis in order to study language in literature. By examining the lexical features of a literary text, the researcher can show different patterns, directions and

stylistic choices that will increase the overall effect of the fictional work. By focusing on adjectives, the researcher will need to see the following areas.

### **3.1 Adjectives**

This study will discuss the adjectives from the above-mentioned list these adjectives are chosen from the list which are the most frequent. It will further discuss the attribution of these adjectives either physical, Psychological, Visual, Auditor, Color, evaluative, Emotive, Referential, etc.

#### **3.1.1 Frequency of Adjectives**

Frequency tells about the number of the occurrence of these adjectives in the text. It means how many times these adjectives are used in the text, if they are used lot in a text then they are called frequent adjectives.

#### **3.1.2 Classification of Adjectives**

Adjectives can be classified, by looking at their attribute they incorporate. These attributes are, physical, psychological, visual, auditory, referential, emotive and evaluative. According to Leech et al. (1982, p.47) “adjectives usually indicate a quality or trait attached to nouns; they are most frequently employed to define or restrict the scope of noun references.

#### **Physical Adjectives**

Physical adjectives describe attributes about physical appearance. According to Leech et al, (1982 p.47) express that physical qualities are, “of color, shape, etc. large, heavy short, tall etc.

For instance, long, heavy, golden short, large. These examples are taken from the Hamlet.

### **Psychological Adjectives**

These adjectives express the emotional state of a person. According to Leech et al. these psychological traits are related to, horrible, violent, cruel, honest, doubtful, sensible, harsh, shameful, shamefule, humorous, dire, happy, mad, etc.

### **Visual Adjectives**

These adjectives are referred to seeing and sight. Examples of these adjectives are: Dramatic visual effects

Having wonderful visual memory, etc.

### **Auditory Adjectives**

According to Givon (2001, p.82), these adjectives may cover numerous auditory features such as, mute, hard, soft, quiet.

### **Color Adjectives**

Givon (2001, p.82) states that these adjectives are used for colors, for instance, black dull, light, green, blue, golden etc.

### **Referential adjectives**

Another name for Referential adjectives is “relational adjectives”. Relational adjectives are those that are employed to “classify entities, according to Lieber and Stekauer (2014,p.279), identifying the domain they are a part of or other entities they have established relationships with of different kinds.

### Emotive Adjectives

They are used to express emotions, whether positive, negative or neutral. For instance, angry, fearful, pitiful, unskillful, etc.

### Evaluative Adjectives

These adjectives “signal subjective judgments of desirability along physical or social dimensions, pertaining to either inherent traits or temporary states”, according to Givon (2001,p.82).These adjectives are used to express evaluations, judgments about the nouns. Examples are, good, bad, horrible, god-like, slow, humble, etc.

*The table below shows the use of adjectives to represent female characters in the Hamlet by Shakespeare*

Adjective	Category	Associated Character	Connotation	Analysis
"Frailty"	Emotional/Judgment	Gertrude	Negative	The use of this adjective reflects that Hamlet views females as weak and morally flawed characters. Moreover, this reflects the misogynist attitude of the society towards women.
"Virtuous"	Moral/Ethical	Ophelia	Positive (but ironic)	The use of this ethical adjective spotlights perceived purity if Ophelia. This adjective is contrary to her eventual breakdown and death.
"Obedient"	Behavioral	Ophelia	Neutral	Reflects Ophelia's passive role, adhering to patriarchal expectations in her relationships.
"Fair"	Aesthetic	Ophelia	Positive	Suggests physical beauty but also foreshadows vulnerability and fragility.

Adjective	Category	Associated Character	Connotation	Analysis
"Treacherous"	Moral/Judgment	Gertrude	Negative	Implies betrayal through her quick remarriage, reinforcing Hamlet's disillusionment with women.
"Chaste"	Moral/Ethical	Ophelia	Positive (but restrictive)	Reflects societal expectations of women, reducing Ophelia's identity to her virtue.
"Willful"	Psychological	Gertrude	Ambivalent	Suggests Gertrude's independence but also her moral ambiguity in Hamlet's eyes.
"Sweet"	Emotional	Ophelia	Positive	Emphasizes her innocence and endearment to others, juxtaposed against her tragic fate.

## Analysis

The above-mentioned adjectives are used in the Hamlet. These adjectives are the most frequent adjectives that can be seen in Shakespeare's Hamlet.

### Case Study of the Adjective "Good"

The very first adjective which the study is going to analyze is, "Good". This adjective has been used for 144 times which is the maximum number any adjective has been used in Hamlet.

"Good now, sit down, and tell me (Act 1, Scene 1)

Here the use of adjective, "Good", is used to talk to someone (Marcellus) in a favorable manner.

This shows that both of them have friendly relationships, the tone is informal between the

Horatio and Marcellus. Saying, "Good now, sit down", the speaker expresses his intention to speak and to continue his conversation. "Good" can also be considered a respectable attitude towards the other.

### **Case study of the Adjective Green and Dear**

Another adjective for analysis, is "green".

"Though yet Hamlet our dear brother's death

The memory be green, and that it us befitted".

(Act 1, Scene 2)

Here adjective, "dear", is used to explain Hamlet's brother. It tells the affection, love and their closeness to each other. Another adjective is, "green", which indicates the memory of King Hamlet's brother's death, that is still fresh, it is vivid in the mind of King Claudius as fresh as that it is just happened. This adjective suggests the impression of the event.

### **Case study of Adjective "Slow"**

Next adjective for analysis is, "Slow", which belongs to the category of evaluative adjective.

"He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave", here the adjective, slow modifies the noun that is "leave", it tells the way in which the Lord Polonius takes permission, it tells that he was reluctant and having delay in giving his consent.

"Seems, madam; nay it is; I know not 'seems'

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,"



(Act1, Scene 2)

Hamlet's use of adjective, "Good", is an irony and he might carry a tone of sarcasm, another adjective is, "inky", it is used here metaphorically to talk about Hamlet's grief, melancholy and his sadness.

"Let me not think on't—Frailty, thy name is woman:

A little month, or ere those shoes were old

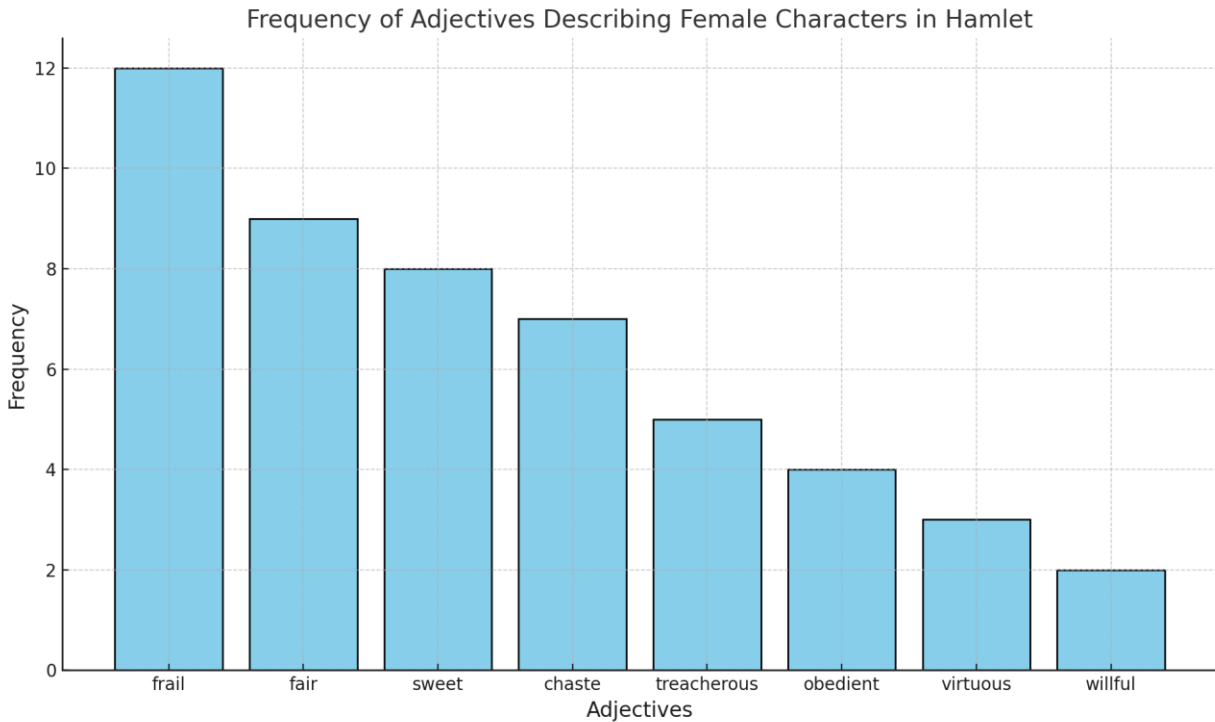
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,"

(Act 1, Scene 2)

The adjective, "old", Hamlet uses this term to characterize the state of the shoes. The fact that the shoes were worn for only a short while ("a little month") before they were worn out emphasizes how quickly time flies and the events leading up to his father's burial fly by. In the passage more attention is paid on Hamlet's emotional response, The use of "frailty" is important because it shows Hamlet hateful attitude towards his mother because of her hasty marriage after the death of his father. It shows his hate towards women and nature.

"Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon." (Act 1, Scene 2)

The adjective, hard in the above line talks about the abruptness of marriage of Hamlet's mother soon after the death of his father, it is shock for Hamlet. This adjective highlights the theme of haste and immediate decision in the royal court.



The above bar chart shows the graphic representation of the flagrant adjectives use portray the female characters: Ophelia and Gertrude in the play Hamlet by Shakespeare.

It is quite evident that that the adjective “Frailty” has the highest frequency of 12 times. This adjective is primarily used to show perception of Hamlet about female. This particularly evident in the iconic line in the play where Hamlet says: “*Frailty thy name is woman*”. This stance of Hamlet strengthens the theme of ethical and emotional weakness ascribed to female characters in the play in particular and women in general.

Similarly, the use of adjectives such as “*Fair and Sweet*” 9 and 8 times respectively are used for Ophelia. These adjectives show the true attributes of beauty and innocence which were also a societal norm of that time and were idealized by in that time.

In the same vein, the use of adjectives “Chaste and Obedient” 7 and 4 times respectively show the chauvinistic ideal of a woman to be chaste and obedient to the male members. These attributes are being imposed on Ophelia in order to show her to be virtuous and submissive.

Negative adjectives such as “*Treacherous and Willful*” 5 and 2 times respectively are associated with Gertrude. This highlights Hamlet’s view of moral and ambiguous role she had in the death of King Lear.

The use of these adjectives clearly demonstrates that how the linguistic choices in form of adjectives have been used to portray female characters in the play. further, the use of these supports the thematic elements of disloyalty, moral weakness and negative nature of women.

### 3. 2 Sara Mills’ Stylistic Analysis

#### Representation of Gertrude in Hamlet

The study has used another theoretical framework in order to see representation of female characters in Shakespeare’s Hamlet. In order to see women’s representation, Sara Mills’ feminist stylistic analysis framework contribute to explore how women are represented in the play, for this reason, the study analyzes their language, discourse and power dynamics which surrounds female characters. The main focus of the study will be the analysis of the transitivity choices. It is the analysis of who does what to whom, this means the use of language of men for women. Basically, the study is going to analyze the linguistic choices of males and how these choices represent women. Through the use of language, the study will explore the patriarchy in Shakespeare’s time. There are just two female characters in Shakespeare’s Hamlet which are Gertrude, (queen and the mother of Hamlet, and the other one is Gertrude) In order to see Sara Mills’ stylistic approach, the study does analysis of Ophelia and Gertrude two female characters, how they are marginalized through the use of language.

“Frailty, thy name is woman” (Act 1, Scene 2)

This phrase is spoken by Hamlet in Act 1, Scene 2. This phrase talks about Hamlet's negative attitude towards women, especially towards his mother when she married soon after the death of his father. Hamlet spoke these lines to his mother, it reflects Hamlet's hate for his mother. By looking at feminist perspective, this line shows Hamlet's patriarchal attitude and hatred for women. The use of, "frailty" for women, suggests that Hamlet's view about women is negative as he considers them weak, and morally corrupt. By analyzing through Stylistic analysis, it shows how women were treated in Shakespeare's time, how gender discriminations were there. Here Hamlet targets his mother directly it shows that her mother, although she was the wife of a king, still society has influenced and she is not free to take any action freely according to her own will. In order to analyze power dynamics in Hamlet, hamlet as a male character is so privileged that he has the authority to judge women, like Gertrude, it shows gender issues of inequality and patriarchy.

So, in short, the above-mentioned sentence, through Sara Mills' perspective approach involves the examination of gender dynamic, power structures and how culture represent women in Hamlet by William Shakespeare. Hamlet's statement reflects the patriarchal society.

The researcher sees that in most of the time Hamlet and the Ghost, in the play describe Gertrude as a, "wanton widow and lustful woman", this phrase represents a negative image of Gertrude. According to Sara Mills' stylistic analysis, how language is used for women in order to see their representation culturally, "lustful woman", and "wanton widow", support cultural expectations about women's behavior and gendered stereotypes. The term, "wanton", reflects concerns about female autonomy and desires and connotes a woman who is ethically lenient. Similar to this the

word, “lustful”, implies excess and immorality and presents a judgmental image of female sexuality.

By applying Critical Discourse Analysis on these phrases to expose hegemony and power relations, the use of slang language for women it is the reflection of patriarchal control over women . By using Hamlet’s such language for his mother shows his control and authority over her. By addressing her mother in such derogative terms shows insecurities and fear about women who assert their independence. Through a feminist lens, it is highlighted how language is used for women to portray them as an inferior to men. Through the use of language women have been marginalized. In a nut shell, analyzing, wanton widow, and lustful woman through Sara Mills’ stylistic perspective, it involves exposing the male dominance and power relations, gender differences imposed in Shakespeare’s Hamlet. This study has exposed power relation through the use of stylistic analysis of Sara Mills.

### **Representation of Ophelia in Hamlet**

In Shakespeare’s Hamlet, Ophelia is another victimized character, she is the beautiful young girl, and the daughter of Polonius, the Lord Chamberlain of Claudius’ court. Ophelia is an important character and valuable for royal family of Elsinore, but she has not freedom to act as she wants, Royal family always controlled her and her wishes because women in Royal family were not free. They are under the suppression of patriarchal society. This suppression and men’s’ power has affected their rights and their personal lives. So, Ophelia and other women of Elsinore all live in a patriarchal society. In the following lines, “The fair Ophelia-Nymph, in thy orisons/Be all my sins remembered”, these lines are taken from Hamlet, and are analyzed through Sara

Mills' stylistic perspective, these lines highlight different themes such as, gender discrimination, power, and language within the play. To see the language and women's' representation through language, Hamlet has used the term, "fair" and "Nymph" for Ophelia, for her objectification, turning her into a romanticized representation of pure, lovely femininity. This reflects how women are expected to be objects of fantasy and desire in society. In order to analyze power dynamics through Sara Mills' perspective, it can be seen as despite of that Hamlet show his affection to Ophelia, through the language Hamlet wants to control over Ophelia. This mirrors patriarchal attitudes towards women's as they are considered as passive objects of male desires. Ophelia is silences character in the Hamlet. Ophelia's character is revealed through Hamlet. According to Lee Edward, it is not possible to understand Ophelia's biography from the text, one can imagine Hamlet's story without Ophelia, but Ophelia has no story at all without Hamlet. (1979: 36). This shows that women's' in that era were silenced and they spoke and they did what the men want.

Another example of women's' objectivity and transitivity is:

I think nothing my lord

That's a fair thought to lie between maid's legs.

What's my lord?

Nothing (Act 3, Scene 2)

In the play, Hamlet, "nothing" is used for women and especially for Ophelia. Nothing, suggests that Ophelia's life has no meaning at all. In Hamlet, nothing, represents Ophelia as a weak, silence and passive character. According to Shakespeare, she is incomplete without men. To live

his life, she needs men. Her father, Polonius and her brother, Laertes' attitude towards her as she is a child and she is not confident enough to take care of herself.

Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well

What I have said to you

Tis in my memory lock'd, (Act1, Scene 3)

And you yourself shall keep the key of it (Act 1, Scene 3).

The above-mentioned lines taken from Hamlet, spoken by Laertes, brother of Ophelia, by using the lenses of feminist stylistic analysis, the study will analyze the use of language by the men, the study would explore how gender role and women's' suppression can be seen through the use of language. The use of language of Laertes and his address to Ophelia, "Farewell Ophelia", it might be seen as the representation of the norms of patriarchy where women were usually addressed in a possessive way by the males. In the phrases, "remember well", seems as an order which shows how male characters control women's' actions through the use of language, and another example is taken from the same phrase is, "memory lock'd", this phrase shows how male characters have control on their thoughts and memory and their actions too.

The analysis has revealed how linguistic choices are used to depict the women's marginalization, these lexical features have shown the women's condition in Shakespeare's Hamlet. The female characters have been depicted as weak, secondary, and marginalized. The choice of language for female characters shows the patriarchal bent of mind and anxiety of the male dominant society in which male are afraid of independent and powerful women. The analysis based on the limited

data sets have shown that female characters are treated through norms of the society not based on their abilities or existence.

### **Conclusion:**

The study was conducted to sought the answers of two questions: What kind of adjectives are used to represent female characters in the play Hamlet by Shakespeare and secondly how have the female characters been portrayed through the use of these adjectives. The analysis based on data have shown that the various adjectives: physical, psychological, visual, auditory, referential, emotive and evaluative have been used to portray female characters. The analysis of the data through the application of Leech and Short's Checklist of lexical features and Sara Mills' Stylistic Analysis used to provide an insight of the representation of female characters of Shakespeare's Hamlet have shown the victimization and marginalization of women in Hamlet.

By applying interdisciplinary methodologies, we can strengthen our understanding that how gender discrimination is depicted through language. The study has discussed adjectives that were taken through Sketch Engine and analyzed those adjectives in order to show women's condition and also Sara Mills stylistic analysis is used to further interpret women's victimization in Hamlet.

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