



Reflection of Immigrants' Identity Crises in Kamila Shamsie Home Fire vs Mohsin Hamid Exit West: A Gender-Based Thematic Exploration

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Abstract

Kamila Shamsie's "Home Fire" and Mohsin Hamid's "Exit West" both discover the displacement and acknowledgement in a world that is becoming a global village. "Home Fire" throws light on the crucial integration of a loyal family member as a Muslim in a post-9/11 Western society scenario. It finds out the social and political identities that can cause conflicts. Migrants from the Western world, in contrast to "Exit West", have suffered emotional and physical suffering in the journey of refugees. It shares the love and barriers through the borders of countries. Both have different approaches to narration, and both the novels share belonging and feelings of human burdens they face during migration to the Western world. This research aims to identify and analyze themes of Kamila Shamsie's "Home Fire" and Mohsin Hamid's "Exit West". Along with this, it sheds light on the writing styles used to construct the plots of the works that share a lot of similar elements. This is qualitative research, and for analyzing themes, this study takes the help of 'Critical Theory', which was propounded in the early 20th century by the Frankfurt School. The primary source for this research is the text of the novels, through which the researchers identified major themes, and the secondary source to support the arguments is already published works by different scholars to analyze and deepen understanding of the issue/s. This research concludes that migration, identity, and political conflict are the major themes in both novels, and these themes serve a significant role in constructing the plots/stories of the novels. As an implication, this study would help readers understand the texts from several new perspectives.

Keywords: Displacement, Identity Crises, Immigrants, Love and Political Conflict

1. Introduction

Home Fire by Kamila Shamsie and Exit West by Mohsin Hamid are novels of great importance in Literature. Both prominent writers published novels in 2017. Kamila Shamsie is a British-Pakistani author famous for her bold and evoking way of storytelling. A reader can find common themes like love, politics, and conflict in most of her works. She was born in 1973 in Karachi, Pakistan. Her rich family's literary background is a major reason for her wonderful achievements in Literature. Kamila got the opportunity to get an education in the United States; she completed her Bachelor's degree from Hamilton College and later her Master of Fine Arts from the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Similarly, Mohsin Hamid is mostly known for his themes in novels like identity, migration, and globalization. Moshin was born on July 23, 1971, in Lahore, Pakistan. Hamid contributed a lot to fiction writing while navigating life in Pakistan and Western countries, and this element influenced his writing style. Hamid earned his Bachelor's degree from Princeton University, where he met with prominent writers like Toni Morrison and Carol Oates. After his Bachelor's degree, he got a chance to explore further ways in his life; he got his Master's degree from Harvard Law School. Besides his law and legal education, he chose a writing career to achieve his life goal in writing.

Kamila Shamsie and Mohsin Hamid are both contemporary writers because they write about the present or current society in their works. Kamila Shamsie portrays a woman's role in her works as independent, bold, and optimistic in society. She uses different techniques to engage her readers to read the issues she wants to reflect on in her works. The conflict she presents here in this novel is the treatment patterns of upper-class or government officials with working or middle-class people. They treat them unjustly, do not bother to listen to their problems and show clod behaviour towards them. According to Althusser (2006) and Marxist Theory, both individuals and political groups have the power to threaten social order, and these threats later raise repressive roles.

In Mohsin Hamid's work, readers can find major highlighted problems such as racial, religious, and ethnic identities that are common worldwide. When a person faces problems like he is not getting any importance from the other members of his society, no one involves him in their matters, and no one is paying attention to him, that becomes an identity crisis. Similarly, if a member of any culture, religion, or race migrates to another culture where the norms and religious practices are different from his own, and he needs to learn how to correct things or deal with them effectively, problems arise from there.

Research Questions

1. What similarities and differences can be identified in the thematic exploration of love, family, and political unrest between 'Home Fire' and 'Exit West'?
2. How do Kamila Shamsie and Mohsin Hamid portray migration and identity in 'Home Fire' and 'Exit West'?
3. In what ways does the gender of the authors influence the narrative strategies, character development, and thematic emphasis in both novels?

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Statement of the Problem

Males and females form two hemispheres of the human cognitive universe. Writing styles of male and female writers who share the same backgrounds and how they present characters' roles, plots, contexts, and themes is an interesting area of research. It explores striking themes, especially those of love, political issues, and migration, that one can face if one has migrated to another country. It also explores how one particular situation is represented or how male and female writers with similar backgrounds present similar themes. Exploration of this nature can open various gender-based literary research paradigms, which have been under-researched in the past.

Research Objectives

1. To identify and outline the central themes in *Home Fire* and *Exit West*.
2. To apply Critical Theory to novels in order to analyze how these themes are constructed.
3. To investigate the role of gender in shaping narrative strategies.

Significance of the Study

This research bridges literary analysis with Critical Theory, enriching the understanding of contemporary Literature. This approach explores similar themes like migration, identity, and political conflicts in a critical theoretical framework. It also explores how gender can influence narrative choices, adding in-depth analysis of contemporary literary works.

2. Literature Review

The present study will analyze the writing style of male and female writers with the help of similar and dissimilar themes presented in 'Home Fire' by Kamila Shamsie and 'Exit West' by Mohsin Hamid. This research probe analyzes writing styles and presents information about the plot, character development, and different ideas presented in the story to its readers, which will help them understand the novels and the reason behind writing these novels. In-Home Fire, Kamila presents different geographical areas. The novel starts in the United Kingdom, then America, after Syria, and in the last part of the novel, set in Pakistan. The novel seems to be a simple story, but it has multiple implicit perspectives. Some of the prominent concepts are class conflict, hegemony, and resistance against the developed social norms, social hierarchies, and last but not least, the un-belongingness of the characters from the society they are living in.

The writer explicitly depicts the elements of un-belongingness and racial identities. These concepts are not new, but many Eastern and Western writers wrote about them from different perspectives. In his book *Black Skin and White Mask* (1952), Frantz Fanon writes about racial identities and shares his experience of the West while living there. According to him, in the West, racial differences are serious issues, and he shared one of his personal incidents: he was drinking coffee in a hotel when he was snubbed by a white man who used bad words for his skin colour instead of saying sorry.

In this novel, Karamat Lone presents the mentality of the typical Western elite class. He plays the role of the home secretary of London, and he continuously uses the power of his position to dominate the Pashas Family. He is able to dominate them completely, but one of the family members, whose name is Aneeka Pasha, resists until the end of the novel to support her brother, whom the state declared a terrorist. Parvaiz is an innocent victim of society and wants to return to his family for a happy life. However, no one knows the reality and builds opinions without knowing the other side of the story. As Bressler (2011) says, the reality of an individual is shaped by the society in which he lives. He adds that someone's socio-economic circumstances are directly responsible for manipulating how and what he thinks.

Many famous writers discuss the concept of cultural hegemony through their writings to present the true reality of society. 'A Tale of Two Cities' (1859) is a compelling example in this regard. Charles Dickens writes about cultural hegemony, where characters with political powers impose orders on common people by shaping their cultural views, considering themselves the ruling class of the society. Kamila Shamsie constructs a world for her characters in which Muslims struggle with an identity crisis that further leads the characters towards inequality, alienation, and a sense of minority. Claire Chamber reviews Shamsie's *Home Fire* and says that the writer writes a piece of Literature in which she presents socio-political issues and constructs a true image of the attitude of Westerners towards the minorities who migrated there.

On the other hand, 'Exit West' by Mohsin Hamid has been explored by multiple scholars to investigate major elements constructed by writers using different tools and theories. Farooq et al. analyzed the characters of both protagonists in the novel *Saeed and Changz* by using the Dramatism Theory developed by Kenneth Burke in the 1950s. Using this theory, the researcher analyzed the consequences that Saeed and Changz faced during different circumstances in the novel until the end. Liaqat (2022) uses the narrative technique, especially deconstructive study, as a research methodology in which he sheds light on the sufferings that migrants face and how they live a hard life far from their native country. In addition, after completing his research, he concludes that Mohsin Hamid has portrayed Saeed's character as more realistic than Changz. Mckee, E. conducted research in 2022 on *Exit West* using textual analysis in which she compared Hamid Saeed and Sara's *Ana Jurik*. She focused on how the characters respond to warlike situations in both novels. Hamid et al. (2021) study the relationship of characters with each other in warlike situations.

Exit West has been analyzed by Mehmood et al. (2021). In their research, they use Karen Horney's (1952) framework to describe the character description of Nadia, and the research presents Nadia's character as a strong

woman after facing many hard challenges throughout the novel. Rivaldy et al. (2020) studied *Exit West* to explore issues of identity while living in a country by the groups of people who are in the minority. Wahala et al. (2020) studied the characters of Saeed and Nadia to analyze gender roles before and after their migration.

Kayani et al. (2020) explain the role of a woman in Western society as portrayed in *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid. They also explain that the role of a woman in Eastern society is different due to limitations in culture, religion, and social setup. They conclude that modern women are not happy with the roles that society assigns to them. Manzoor (2018) discussed the issues refugees faced during the war in *Exit West*. In 2017, Pequena J. specifically focused on the female protagonist in the work *Exit West*.

Aqeel et al. (2020) studied Roy's novel keenly and critically. They critically reviewed the relationship among societal factors, including discrimination among casts, less patience in religious matters, and marginal community vulnerability in the context of migration through the lives of her diverse characters, including Anjum, a Hijra, and others from various minority groups. Roy shares that deep-rooted power system and low-enforced laws. There is the integration of caste, gender, and religion to see the identities that shape individual and collective experiences of oppression and resilience.

Aqeel et al. (2020) also critically reviewed Arundhati Roy's "*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*" and shared how the novel's physical and social spaces reflected the segmentation within contemporary Indian society. There is displacement in the crowded streets of Delhi, where people are forced to live in the settings of graveyards. The displacement shows belonging amidst the displacement of people living in slum areas. These places are hubs for the placement of marginalized people.

Naeem et al. (2022) reveal in a discussion on Mohsin Hamid's "*The Reluctant Fundamentalist*" that post-9/11 changed the geographical and political perspective around the globe, especially for Muslims and minorities. The novel's protagonist, Changez, navigates that there is a crucial environment for socio-economic settings, and the balance of power is challenged for the east and west sides of the globe. There is also a shift in the relationship between the US and Pakistan as, being a Muslim country, Pakistan faced many challenges and, as a result, favoured the US in matters in which other Muslim countries were not convinced. There is a history of the power structure and political dealing between the US and Pakistan; a relationship between a superpower and a poor country exists.

Aqeel et al. (2022) conducted a study on comparative analysis of the shifting of style from native to non-native English fiction in Jane Austen's "*Pride and Prejudice*" and Soniah Kamal's "*Unmarriageable*." The study reveals that both authors adopt a universal language based on the cultural context to best fit in. Austen's original work, set in early 19th-century England, shows a fine exposure of social classes. Kamal's retelling in contemporary Pakistan is conducted the same way as the local idioms, cultural values, and modern living patterns in Pakistan. English fiction's versatility in almost all cross-cultural, especially the boundaries, underscores the universality of Austen's themes of love, marriage, and societal expectations.

Naseem et al. (2022) conducted a surrealist reading of Mohsin Hamid's "*Exit West*." They uncover how the novel's use of magical doors as portals transcending geographical boundaries serves to disrupt conventional perceptions of time and space. This surrealist element illuminates the fluidity and impermanence of borders, emphasizing the arbitrary nature of national divisions. The doors symbolize escape and transformation, reflecting the inner turmoil and emotional journeys of the protagonists, Nadia and Saeed. By blending the real with the fantastical, Hamid critiques the harsh realities of displacement and migration while offering a vision of hope and interconnectedness that transcends physical limitations and redefines the concept of home.

Hussain et al.'s (2022) study of marriage failure in Tayari Jones' "*An American Marriage*" reveals how systemic social and racial injustices contribute to unraveling personal relationships. The wrongful incarceration of Roy, the novel's protagonist, places immense strain on his marriage with Celestial, exposing the vulnerabilities and limitations of love under duress. The novel highlights how external pressures, particularly those rooted in racial discrimination and the criminal justice system, can undermine marital stability. Jones poignantly illustrates that despite deep emotional connections, the compounded effects of institutionalized racism and personal trauma often lead to the failure of marriages that might have otherwise thrived.

Banerjee's (2020) study reveals the complex situation immigrants face in maintaining their cultural roots and adapting to a new country as basic survival needs in an entirely new country. This novel shines a light on the complex situation its characteristics face to know their identity in the intersections of British and Pakistani identities. These immigrants have many challenges as they are stuck in a multicultural situation. Traditional values and roots are necessary for these immigrants to keep new generations aware of their real roots while at the same time learning and adopting a new culture, which has the same importance as walking with the world and fulfilling the purpose of adopting a new life.

Javaid et al. (2021) also studied Mohsin Hamid's "*Exit West*." They highlight how the novel fully discusses the political conflict through its major characters, Nadia and Saeed. Critics share that Hamid, in this novel, shows the life of an unnamed war-torn city, reflecting real-world conflicts. The country, like the region of the Middle East, illustrates the adverse effects of political decisions on the lives of ordinary residents.

Panossian (2022) conducted research on novels, including Kamila Shamsie's "*Home Fire*" and Mohsin Hamid's "*Exit West*." This study reveals a central theme of love having deep roots experienced and expressed by characters trying to keep their identity alive while living a life of immigrants. In "*Home Fire*," the issues and challenges of

migrants in meeting love under societal, cultural, and political pressures are challenging. Characters such as Aneeka and Eamonn face their lives badly disturbed due to the challenge of maintaining their personal relationship and expectations of family and society. In "Exit West," there is a love story of Nadia and Saeed. This love story evolved as a relation of multi-country interaction. This novel shares how romantic love has evolved, how the lovers face a migration journey, and how the relationship got affected. Both novels show that love is a central point, a binding force, and a common strength for the lovers of two countries. People living as immigrants test love on many parameters and find love a resilient force.

Research on Kamila Shamsie's "Home Fire" and Mohsin Hamid's "Exit West" reveals the impact of migration on individuals and their collective identities. In "Home Fire," Shamsie explores the tension between cultural heritage and adapting a new culture to a new life. The writer focused on the challenges faced by British-Pakistani characters. These characters have to navigate between their dual identities and how they bear societal and political pressures. "Exit West," on the other hand, reveals a touchy relationship between two migrants in a country torn by war, and the desperation and misery in their lives are depicted beautifully.

3. Research Methodology

The current research focuses on two novels, 'Home Fire' and 'Exit West,' which are the primary sources, and the work further applies Critical Theory as a theoretical framework. The core aim of selecting this Theory is that it fulfills the actual spirit of the work. The researchers want to identify and compare the themes within both novels. Later, it wants to shed light on the writing styles of male and female writers while portraying the same elements in their work. In the end, this work wants to focus on how these themes and character development techniques contributed to the construction of the plot.

This qualitative research analyses two literary texts, 'Home Fire' by a female writer who holds Pakistani and Western nationality and 'Exit West' by a male writer who also holds Pakistani and Western nationality. Researchers chose these works because both novels were published in the same year, 2017, and both writers almost share similar backgrounds. They were born in Pakistani society and got higher education from abroad. Along with this, they migrated to the United Kingdom. That is why they can narrate the true picture of racism, identity crisis, political issues, and problems in religious fulfillment. Moreover, after identifying different themes in the text, the researchers classify them into sections of Critical Theory. Furthermore, this research highlights text lines for better understanding of its readers, lines where writers capture the images of love, religion, political problems, and war with self and society.

Critical Theory originated in the early 20th century by Frankfurt school, and the primary purpose is to analyze various aspects of society, culture, and politics. It sheds light on power structures to determine how power is distributed and how it is used to maintain social order. It analyzes economic systems, class struggle, inequality, and wealth distribution. What is the role of cultural norms, beliefs, and ideologies in social inequality and injustice? Later, it investigates many points: identity and representations influenced by societal attitudes and inequalities, societal institutions, colonialism and post-colonialism elements, and environment and ecology.

4. Analysis

The major themes readers can explore in the 'Home Fire' text are identity, loyalty, betrayal, and social expectation vs. personal desires. This section is the excel of this work as it will present themes by presenting textual lines along with an explanation of these themes and how they construct the plot of the stories. In addition, this part will explain how a gender portrays themes in stories that reflect in their writing style, and for this task, Critical Theory is playing the role of scaffolding to balance the quality of this work. Here are some of the explicit lines in 'Home Fire' by Kamila Shamsie:

“She had always been aware of the power of names, but never had it seemed so absolute as choosing a name for a child. A name was more than just something by which you were called; it was who you were; it was your destiny”.

These lines express the theme of 'Identity,' and in these lines, we are setting the cognitive patterns of the protagonist. According to this theme, identity sets the goal of life, but some people think that names are names and have nothing to do with a child's identity. However, some people believe that names reflect identity and can even make our problems easier if our name belongs to an elite class of society. If our name and identity are a part of a respectable family, this can positively affect us. On the other hand, if one has a common name and identity by common name, it means that when one belongs to a working or middle-class family, no one listens to you, even if you are innocent. Just like Isma Pasha, she missed her flight because of her name, although she was innocent.

“The Weight of family expectations hung heavy on her shoulders, putting her in one direction while her heart yearned to follow a different path.”

These lines are a clear-cut presentation of 'Social expectations vs. personal desires and simultaneously add more about the character of Isma Pasha; as an elder sister of two siblings, she has extra pressure from society, and even her personal wills are coming her way as hurdles. However, she goes to Boston for her studies and chooses personal desires without considering social expectations. The step taken by Aneeka also presents that she has followed personal desires without taking care of social expectations.

“Betrayal cuts deep, like a knife slicing through the fabric of trust that binds people together. Once served, it’s hard to mend, leaving behind scars that never truly heal”.

The above lines explain the theme of 'Betrayal' and everlasting wounds by someone. The best example in the story is when Adal Pasha leaves the family and joins ISIS, and the second time, he comes and leaves Isma Pasha and her mother while she is pregnant. This theme is also present when the grandmother goes to Karamat Lone to request him to save her son Adal, but Karamat Lone says, “They are better off without him.”

“In a world where prejudice and fear reign, it is easy to lose sight of what is right and wrong. But true courage lies in standing up for what you believe in, even when it seems like the whole world is against you”. These lines express the theme of 'courage' and the message that the writer wants to convey: If you are on the right side and society is against you, stand without fear and do whatever you can to promote the right act. The writer portrays Aneeka as a bold woman who stands with her brother Parvaiz despite the pressure and injustice from society.

“The search for identity is a journey fraught with uncertainty, as one grapples with the question of who they are and where they belong. But in the end, it is the journey itself that defines us, not the destination”.

These lines depict the theme of 'identity and belonging' and express that a person's whole life is a struggle with self-discovery, and it is not a process of days, weeks, or months but an ongoing journey that never stops. Sometimes, destination is not important, but what is important is experience and personal grooming. The line suits the character of Parvaiz, who started his journey without knowing its destination. However, the experience and responses he gets from this journey stop him from moving back to where he started.

Loyalty and love are themes in the novel. Eamonn Lone shows loyalty towards Aneeka even when he goes against his father, Karamat Lone. Eamonn prefers Aneeka's life over his own because he loves her more than anything. When Eamonn first sees a photo of Aneeka, he starts showing interest in her. He even goes to Pasha's house to meet Aneeka, and he comments on Pasha's family: "An attractive family."

Let us analyze *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid. This novel explores themes such as love, migration, war, and modernism. Other important themes are navigating the challenges of globalization, the limits and benefits of technology, and modernity and traditions.

“In a world of constant change, where the only certainty is uncertainty, love becomes an anchor, a refuge in the storm of life.”

This line explores the theme of love. Love is the only key in the world that can open any lock. Moreover, when someone is in an environment of chaos and destruction with us, the outcome can be milder and filtered. Love provides energy to stand still in a storm because it supports the ship as an anchor that does not let the ship move away. Even love is deeper than the anchor when it goes under the deep sea.

“The doors offered both escape and entrapment, promising a new beginning while simultaneously serving ties to the past.”

The above lines show the theme of 'migration' and a person's emotional attachment to his homeland. They further explain that when someone leaves his native country, he feels homesick and lonely wherever he moves. In *Exit West*, both protagonists use the magical door three times, but wherever they go, they find themselves more in trouble.

“Globalization has made the world smaller, yet it has also widened the gap between the haves and have-nots, creating a stark divide between those free to move and those trapped by circumstance.”

These lines address the theme of 'globalization' and discover how already-set patterns affect people's lives. They show how globalization benefits rich people and makes it tough for poor people to live on this earth. What are the psyches of those free to move around the world and those who leave their area and migrate to a new place due to political chaos?

Moreover, both writers portray each character effectively and similarly because both novels deal with almost the same themes. However, the art of characterization of female characters in both novels is a little bit different. Let us talk about the characters of Isma Pasha and Nadia. They share one common element in their characters: whatever the circumstances, they will just focus on personal desires. Being an elder sister of the family, Isma goes to fulfill her desires instead of supporting her younger twin brother and sister. It goes the same for Nadia; instead of spending her life with Saeed, she leaves him without informing him. Both the characters of Eamonn Lone and Saeed are portrayed as more loyal and caring.

5. Discussion

Kamila Shamsie wrote *'Home Fire'* between 2014-17 in London. The work was published on August 15, 2017, and became popular after being publicized. Its literary period is contemporary, and its genres are political fiction, domestic fiction, and romantic fiction. The novel's settings are London, Amsterdam, Istanbul, Syria, and Pakistan. Some of its important themes are Xenophobia, racism, feminism, politics, terrorism, fundamentalism, and love. The story is based on one element that is ISIS, a terrorist group that Parvaiz joined unconsciously and reluctantly. He has two sisters, Isma and Aneeka, facing different challenges due to this act of Parvaiz. Many years ago, Adal Pasha, father of Isma and Aneeka, was a member of the same group, and so was the Parvaiz, which ruined the reputation of the Pashas family.

Kamila Shamsie's "Home Fire" and Mohsin Hamid's "Exit West" show a deep view of love, relationships, and migration. "Home Fire" explains the lives of British-Pakistani characters and explores the tension between cultural identity and absorption in the face of political and social challenges. In contrast, "Exit West" shows a relationship between lovers from different countries due to war and the worst conditions of migrants and refugees escaping conflict. In both novels, these characters face the emotional and psychological impacts of displacement, the complex situations of migration, and how they have to navigate to adapt and reshape their lives.

The story began at Heathrow Airport when Isma Pasha travelled from London to Boston for academic purposes. When she was about to board, some security officers stopped her further proceedings because she was wearing a Hijab and due to the act of Adal and Parvaiz Pashas. It took two hours of Isma Pasha to take them in confidence. Moreover, all these happenings increase Isma's hatred of Parvaiz Pasha. She considers him the only reason for all the bad coming her way. She reached her destination where she started further study, and along with her studies, she started a job in a café. One day, Isma met with Eamonn Lone, the son of Karamat Lone, a British home secretary. Soon, they became friends, but there came a moment of clash between them on the matter of their father because Isma used negative words for Eamonn Lone's father.

Meanwhile, Aneeka came to know that Isma had filed a complaint against Parvaiz. Later in the story, Eamonn Lone and Aneeka fall in love with each other. Farooq, a member of the ISIS group near the British embassy in Istanbul, killed Parvaiz. Both Isma and Aneeka wanted to bury their brother in the UK, but Karamat Lone again played the role of barrier, and he did not allow Pasha to do this. Parvaiz's dead body was sent back to Karachi, where Aneeka reached to support her brother and. Eamonn reached to support Aneeka, but some terrorists put an explosives jacket on Eamonn in a park where Parvaiz's body was kept. Aneeka ran towards Eamonn, and under an old tree, the story ended.

On the other hand, 'Exit West' by Mohsin Hamid is a political fiction. The setting of the work was an unknown city in the Middle East. There was war, destruction, and chaos everywhere in this city. There are two main characters in this novel, Saeed and Nadia. Both were doing a marketing course, and they met for the first time in a class; right by that moment, Saeed showed interest in Nadia. This novel has themes like War (Violence, chaos), religion, love, and independence. Nadia represents the modern age as she wears a vale, rides a scooter, and has an apartment where she lives alone. All these things attract Saeed towards Nadia, and he asks Nadia for a cup of coffee with him one day. However, this time, Nadia refuses him, and later, they have many meetings with each other. After the death of Saeed's mother, Nadia decides to move to Saeed's house, and she serves both Saeed and his father with full heart. Saeed starts thinking that it is not good for him and Nadia to live together without marriage, so he proposes to Nadia for marriage.

Meanwhile, Saeed and Nadia lose their jobs; this is when they think of moving somewhere else to search for a better future. Therefore, they meet with an agent who claims he is an agent of one of the magical doors. At first, his father refuses to accompany them because he does not want to leave the place where the memories of his wife are present and where he has spent his whole life. Saeed's father dies due to pneumonia, so the couple decides to move to another place. After that, they pass through that door and reach Greece. They observed that there were many people already living in camps. Some of them are new, but some of them are recognizable. Some people guide them not to trust others blindly and try to spend quality time with each other.

One night, a group of unknown people approach to kill Saeed and Nadia. They start running to save their lives and reach the top of a mountain, where they find another magical door. After using the door, they reach an old house in the middle of a city. From here, their life turns in another direction. They started spending time separately, and now their interest had changed. Due to the pressure from that city's government, they moved to another place outside London. Saeed and Nadia's relationship starts crumbling, and there are many clashes between them. After realizing they are doing wrong with each other, they use a new magical door to escape elsewhere.

Then on, Saeed and Nadia are in California, having a modest living style among the refugees. However, after living here, instead of sorting out the clashes, they decide to depart from each other for a better lifestyle in the future. Nadia left Saeed without saying goodbye, and sometimes later, they also found new partners. The final chapter of Exit West's story opens after fifty years of their life, and fate plays its role. They meet again in their old city where they first met, and while sitting in a café, they tell each other about their previous years. In the last part of this novel, after this meeting, they separate again, and the story ends.

6. Conclusion

This article starts with a summary, introduces general information about the writers' lives, discloses the background of both novels and describes the purpose of writing these two works by their writers. After supporting details in the literature review, the methodology part says this work falls under the category of critical discourse analysis and Critical Theory used as a framework. According to this work, the important themes in 'Home Fire' are Xenophobia, racism, feminism, politics, terrorism, fundamentalism, and love. Similarly, in 'Exit West' the main themes are War (Violence, chaos), religion, love, and independence. The work's limitations lie in the sample size; this work does not analyze complete novels but rather initial chapters where writers set their novel's introduction. Lastly, both works present a true picture of the modern world where people are actually suffering, just like the characters in the story.

Kamila Shamsie and Mohsin Hamid, in their theme-based novels "Home Fire" and "Exit West," respectively, reveal how gender shapes the experiences of displacement and identity. "Home Fire" describes the roles and expectations associated with women in a Muslim family and examines the roles and expectations placed on women within a Muslim family to see Muslims' downfall from the West. At the same time, "Exit West" presents this perspective in the context of migration. Both books present the gender roles in different political systems, cultures, and values to shape personal and societal values.

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