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# AFFECT ANALYSIS OF TARIQ RAHMAN'S "DEAF, DARK, WALLS": A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS STUDY

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#### **Article Info**

#### Abstract

feminism and marxism.



The study aims to investigate the relations among the participants and their influence on others, called affect, by applying Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory to Tariq Rahman's short story "Deaf, Dark, Walls" while focusing on the language use and its interpersonal meanings. The study was conducted via mixed methods. By applying affect, the part of tenor, in Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory, the study found that the participant Javed is self-oriented twice while Javed and the other participants Sarmad Shah and the old guard are otheroriented once throughout the short story. The affect of the participant Sarmad Shah was positive five times, while Khaista Gul was negative twice. It has a permanent affect on Sarmad Shah four times and a temporary affect on the participants Khaista Gul and Sarmad Shah once. There is the affect of emotional charges once on Sarmad Shah. It is suggested to investigate the short story through literary theories, including



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**Keywords:** Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Affect, Short Story, Tariq Rahman, Pakistani Literature in English

#### Introduction

Tariq Rahman is a Pakistani academic scholar, newspaper columnist, researcher, and great writer. He was born on 4 February 1949. He started his education at Burn Hall School and then joined the army in 1971 as an armoured corps officer. Then, he decided to leave the army and obtained three master's degrees as a private candidate. He won a British Council scholarship in 1979, which later enabled him to get master's and doctoral degrees from Sheffield University in England in 1985. He did his first PhD in literature, but later he left the field of literature because his main interest was in social sciences (Another History is Possible, n.d.).

In 1985, he joined the academia as an associate professor in the English Department of Peshawar University. He became professor and head of the English Department in 1987 at the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir in Muzaffarabad. He also introduced the subject of linguistics at this University. In 1989, he also did a Master of Letter (MLitt) in Linguistics from the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow. In 1990, he joined the National Institute of Pakistan Studies. In 2011, as a Dean of the School of Education, he joined the Beacon House National University Lahore, and later on, he was appointed as the Dean of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at the same university in 2014. He continues to serve in this position. He has been an Academic Visitor at Wolfson College, University of Oxford, and a Visiting Research Fellow at the Centre of Islamic Studies at the University of Oxford (Pakpedia, 2018).

The short stories of Tariq Rahman, a Pakistani writer, give great entertainment to the readers of the lives of people facing ups and downs, particularly in war-like situations, and he openly discusses it with a bold tone. Further, the way he expresses and tells a story such "Transformation" is appreciable. His stories try to open the bitter reality of life (Mahmood, 2022). Societies have myths, and to analyze Rahman's short stories, the idea of the deconstruction of myths can be noted. He deconstructs the myths present in society so that he gives an objective analysis to the readers to

make them aware of reality. In addition, he opens the misconceptions of Pakistani societies, including political and social ones (Rasool et al., 2022). Last but not least, Shamsie (2017) asserts that the beginners in critical studies in Pakistani Literature in English were none other than Tariq Rahman. He published *A History of Pakistani Literature in English* (1988), which discusses every genre of literature in Pakistani Literature in English.

He has been given many awards for his famous works. He was a bright scholar in the USA from 1995 to 1996. He was awarded the Pride of Performance Laurel 2004 by the President of Pakistan. In 2007, he was officially appointed Director of Islamabad Ouaid-e-Azam University's National Institute of Pak Studies. Later in 2010, he was designated as Professor Emeritus. In 2009, he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Pakistani Higher Education Commission. After completing his tenure as Director of the National Institute of Population Studies, he accepted the post as the Dean of 'The School of Education' Beaconhouse National University Lahore in September 2011. The President of Pakistan awarded him Sitara-e-Imtiaz in 2014 (Pakpedia, 2018).

He wrote many famous books, short stories, and articles for which he was given many awards. He wrote books about language, social sciences, and the history of literature. Some of his famous books are, From Hindi to Urdu (2011), Language and Politics in Pakistan (1996), Language Education and Culture (1999), A History of Pakistani Literature in English (1991), and Linguistics for Beginners (2010) (Pakpedia, 2018).

Tariq Rahman wrote many short stories that he listed in his book *Complete Short Stories*, written between 1968 and 2024. Some of those short stories are "The Mystery of Bald Spot" (1968), "The Innocent Thief" (1968), "The Mistake" (1968), "A Game of Chess" (1969), "Just a Child" (1969), "Out of Darkness" (1970), "The Artist" (1974), "Bingo" (1975), "Babu" (1979),

"Betrayal" (1980), "The Choice" (1986), "Deaf, Dark, Walls" (1991) and many more (Rahman, 2024).

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985) aims to find out the relations among the characters and the roles developed due to the language use, their correspondence, and their influence on one another by examining the language that is present in the form of a text. By applying Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985) to the short story "Deaf, Dark, Walls" by Tariq Rahman, the study is conducted to identify and analyze the impacts of contact on the participants called affect.

# **Research Objectives**

- 1. To investigate Tariq Rahman's "Deaf, Dark, Walls" on the level of affect through Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory.
- 2. To analyze as to how affect suggests various layers of meanings through Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory in Tariq Rahman's "Deaf, Dark, Walls."

#### **Research Questions**

- 1. What are the linguistic tools utilized as affect in Tariq Rahman's "Deaf, Dark, Walls"?
- 2. How does affect suggest various layers of meanings through Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory in Tariq Rahman's "Deaf, Dark, Walls"?

#### **Literature Review**

The prose genre emerged in 1940 with Ahmad Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* (1940), the first novel published in the sub-continent in the English language (Junaid, 2021). This novel is set in the year 1910 during the British Raj and focuses on the Muslims of old Delhi. It tells the story of a Muslim man who experiences dramatic changes in his life and the lives of his family during this period. The prominent themes in the said novel

are colonialism, alienation, gender roles, nostalgia, and the passage of time and empires (Super Summary, n.d.). "This body of literature carries a plethora of themes, such as feminism, identity, power, war, injustices, peace, love, politics, etc." (Khan et al., 2024, p. 1413). Twilight in Delhi (1940) was Ali's novel which depicts the negative effects of British colonialism. Today it is considered one of the great early modern Indian novels (Super Summary, n.d.). Ahmed Ali's other works are Dilli ki Sham, Qaid Khana, Khalq e Muhammad, Hamari Gali, and others (Rekhta, n.d.).

As the prose genre emerged, many writers started to write long and short prose using different themes. Mumtaz Shahnawaz was a great writer and political activist who was concerned with the rights of women. One of her most famous works is The Heart Divided (1957). It was the first post-independence English novel written in Pakistan. This novel is about the acts and events that caused the partition of the subcontinent. Prominent themes discussed in this novel are partition issues, feminist highlights, gender roles, generation gaps, and the impact of colonization on Pakistani cultures and traditions. Mumtaz did not write any other works because she died in 1948. Her work The Heart Divided was published by her family after her death (Fatima, 2021).

Moreover, Zulfiqar Ghose is also a Pakistani English writer and poet. He has written *The Murder of Aziz Khan* (1967), which is the most significant novel. This novel depicts the social reality of Pakistani people in the 1960s, and there are references to sexual acts and tabooed expressions. Ghose has written fiction that has two dominant major themes, alienation and deracination. This is important because he was an exile from the land where he was born, so Ghose's alienation from his society and his work should be seen in light of that consideration. He expressed his consciousness in his autobiography *Confessions of a Native-Alien* (Rahman, 1991).

Another Pakistani writer, Kamila Shamsie, was born in 1973 in Karachi, Pakistan.

She is a Pakistani-British writer and novelist who writes works in the English language. She wrote five famous novels. These novels are A God in Every Stone (2014), Home Fire (2017), Burnt Shadows (1999), In The City By The Sea (1998), Kartography (2001), Salt and Saffron (2000), Broken Verses (2005), and The Muslim Case (2009). Her first novel, In the City by the Sea (1998), was shortlisted for the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize. Her second novel, Salt and Saffron (2000), won the Orange Award for Fiction of the 21st Century. Kamila Shamsie received the Prime Minister's Award for Literature in Pakistan in 1999. Her third novel, Kartography (2001) is written about the strained relationship between soulmates against a backdrop of ethnic violence (O'Reilly, n.d.)

Tehmina Durrani is the latest Pakistani writer and activist. She wrote her first book, an autobiography, My Feudal Lord (1991), which is all about her sufferings in her marriage to Ghulam Mustafa Khar. The book was read on the international level. This book highlighted the violence and hypocrisy in Pakistani society. After her divorce, she raised her voice for women's rights. Her books focus on social issues in Pakistan (NH, 2015). Her second book, A Mirror to the Blind (1996), is the biography of Abdul Sattar Edhi. She wrote this book during the three years in which she lived in his home. In 1996, the book was published by the National Bureau of Publications of Edhi Foundation. Her third book, *Blasphemy*, was published in 1998, which was her other success. In this novel, she explains the secret lives of the clergymen and spiritual leaders. Durrani declares that the story is factual and also delves into a critical approach to the tradition and practice of Nikah Halala. This book was added to Pakistan's best-seller list. She, in her works, highlights gender-based violence in Pakistan's rural and urban society (Sawnet, n.d.).

Bapsi Sidhwa is a Pakistani-American novelist. She was also a women's rights activist. She was born in 1938 in Karachi, Pakistan. Her first languages are Gujarati and Urdu, but she writes in English. She is most famous for the novel *Cracking India* (1988); she wrote several

other famous novels, including *The Crow Eaters*, *The Bride*, *An American Brat*, *The City of Sin and Splendor*, *Their Language of Love*, and *Water* (Wikipedia, n.d.). Her books mostly focus on colonialism in India, the Partition of the Subcontinent, the experiences of the people in India, and the struggle of immigrants from South Asia to the United States (Gradesaver, n.d.). Her novel *Cracking India* shows how Partition affected women, particularly those who were kidnapped or raped. Sidhwa has also been active in women's rights. She is the winner of many awards, including Pakistan's Sitara-i-Imtiaz, the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Writer's Award, and a Bunting Fellowship at Harvard (Wikipedia, n.d.).

Mohsin Hamid was born in 1971 in Lahore, Pakistan. He is a great writer. He wrote his first novel. Moth Smoke, in 2000, for which he was awarded the Betty Trask Award and also selected for the Hemingway Award. In Pakistan, Moth Smoke was made into a television miniseries and in the New York Times Notable Book of the Year in 2000. His second novel was The Reluctant Fundamentalist in 2007, shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize for Fiction. Mohsin Hamid's third novel, How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia, was published in 2013 and won the Tiziano Terzani International Literary Prize, KLF Embassy of France Prize, and the Haus der Kulturen der Welt International Literature Award. His fourth novel, Exit West (2017), was published in 2017 and was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize. He also wrote a book of essays, Discontent and Its Civilizations (2014). His short stories are "Don't Fall in Love" (2013), "The Third-Born" (2012), "Terminator" (2011), "A Beheading" (2010), and "Focus on the Fundamentals" (2006) (Procter, 2009).

Some Pakistani fiction and non-fiction writers discuss the challenges of being a writer of Pakistan and the issues involved. Mushtaq Bilal is the author of the book; Writing Pakistan, Conversations on Identity, Nationhood, and Fiction (2016). His work has appeared in different popular journals, and he currently teaches Pakistani Literature in the Department of Asian and Asian American Studies at

Binghamton University. Farah Habib is an English teacher at Bristol Community College in Massachusetts. She writes creative nonfiction essays about the experience of being a Pakistani-American (American Pakistan Foundation, 2020).

In the genre of prose, Soniah Kamal has also made great contributions. She is an award-winning novelist, essayist, and public speaker. Her novel *Unmarriageable: Pride and Prejudice in Pakistan* (1971) is the best novel in 2019 and the nominee for a 2020 Georgia Author of the Year for Literary Fiction. In the 1950s, Zahir Farooqi was a prominent writer and a young diplomat in Pakistan. He wrote his first novel, *Love and Ruins*, in 1960. This novel was based on his stay in Italy and reflects Farooqi's love for cities like Rome, Florence, and Venice. These cities were represented as the symbol of homosexuality and sexual freedom (Azam, 2014).

Khan et al. (2023) observe that lack of interest is shown by the scholars in Pakistani Literature in English which is why a great part of this literature is unexplored yet. Therefore, in order to explore it, the short story "Deaf, Dark, Walls" by Tariq Rahman is analyzed through Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985) on the level of affect.

# Methodology

The study attempts to analyze Tariq Rahman's short story "Deaf, Dark Walls" by applying the level of affect in the theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (1985) by M.A.K. Halliday. The collected statements are analyzed and interpreted through the data analysis tool which is Systemic Functional Linguistics. The study is conducted through mixed methods.

# **Theoretical Framework**

In the scope of Systemic Functional Linguistics, there are basic components of meaning called Meta-function. According to Michael Halliday (1985), the basic elements are ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning, and textual

meaning. The Ideational meaning represents patterns of experiences. It enables humans to build a picture of what happens around them and inside them. Interpersonal meaning deals with the interaction between speaker, listener, writer, and reader. Its function enables exchanging roles collaborative interaction: statements, in questions, offers, and commands. The textual meaning deals with the organization of the text in which the logical, experiential, and interpersonal are bound together. Those basic meanings are regularly made in a text to perform social functions. Thus, meanings are always related to the context in which social functions are performed (Fitriatuddiniyah, 2016). Hence, language is functional, semantic, contextual, and semiotic.

This study tries to analyze Tariq Rahman's short story "Deaf, Dark, Walls" by Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), which aims to find out the relations among the participants and the interpersonal meaning among the participants. In Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), tenor concerns the relationships between those who are taking part in communication.

At the level of register, the tenor is the projection of interpersonal meaning. Tenor refers to the social role among participants. It describes the interpersonal relationships of the participants (Martin, 1992). Tenor is further divided into three dimensions: affect, contact, and status, which determine how people use their language. Affect refers to the influence of the language used by one participant on the other participants.

#### Affect

According to Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), affect is the influence of one participant's statement on the other participants. It is categorized into "Self-oriented" and "Other-oriented". Self-oriented is the category of the affect in which the participant reacts but gives preference to himself/herself. "Other-oriented" is the second category of the affect in which the participants react but give

preference to others. Some other aspects of the affect are emotional charges, positive and negative affect, and permanent or transient. Emotional charges mean that the words used by the participants evoke the emotions of the other participants. Positive affect means that the words used in conversation by the participants have positive impacts on other participants, while Negative affect is the negative impacts on other participants. Permanent affect is the affect that lasts throughout the story, while transient is the temporary affect on the participants.

# **Data Analysis**

According to Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), "affect" is categorized into "Self-oriented" and "Other-oriented". Selforiented is the category of the affect in which the participant reacts but gives preference to himself/herself. "Other-oriented" is the second category of the affect in which the participants react but give preference to others. In the short story, the first statement that shows affect is, "But that is no concern of ours," ... "for there are girls who like to be teased..." (Rahman, 2024a, p. 677, para. 2) said the old guard to Khaista Gul. The affect of the statement is otheroriented because the old guard is trying to tell everything that he observed in his past times while doing this duty. He is warning Khaista Gul that whatever happens in the village, you have to stay away from it because you are just a guard and you have to protect the village. The mentioned statement also has a negative affect on the participant Khaista Gul because the old guard is telling him the reality of the villagers, but he does not pay attention to the guard. This statement has a temporary affect on Khaista Gul because at the spot, he was listening to the old guard, but after some time, he forgot everything.

"This new guard is a bloody nuisance," (Rahman, 2024a, p. 677, para. 3) said Javed to Shahid. They were talking about Khaista Gul. The statement is self-oriented, as Javed used the words "bloody nuisance" for Khaista Gul because he felt that this guard would create issues for them. This statement has a positive affect on

the participant Shahid because he starts disliking Khaista Gul. When Javed says this about Khaista Gul, then it has a permanent affect on the participant, Shahid, because he thinks that this guard will create a problem for them, and he hates Khaista Gul throughout the story.

"He pokes his nose in everybody's affairs," (Rahman, 2024a, p. 677, para. 5) is said by Javed to Shahid. He is saying that Khaista Gul is interfering in everyone's issues. This statement is others-oriented because he knows that everyone in the street does not like it when he interferes in their matters, but he is still doing this. The affect of the statement is positive because it creates a bad image of Khaista Gul in the mind of Shahid, and the affect is permanent because these words of Javed about Khaista Gul remain in his mind, and he treats Khaista Gul accordingly.

"Ya Allah! (Oh God!)," ... "I'm killed! The cruel ones have slayed me!" (Rahman, 2024a, p. 680, para. 3) is a self-oriented statement said by the participant Khaista Gul because he is wailing from pain and calling God (Allah) as everyone does when they get hurt. This statement has negative affect on the villagers because no one in the whole village came to help Khaista when he was calling them to help him.

"Let's kill the rascal," ... "Kill!" (Rahman, 2024a, p. 680, para. 5) is said by Javed about Khaista Gul. It is a self-oriented statement because he is killing Khaista Gul just for interrupting their plan, and he is not thinking about the sin that he has committed. The statement has a positive affect on the other participants in Javed's group because, after that, they made up their minds to kill Khaista Gul. The affect is permanent because Javed and his friends murder Khaista Gul, as they said.

"Ya Allah! Ya Allah!" (Rahman, 2024a, p. 680, para. 6) ... "O you Muslims come out! Come out I am dying!" (Rahman, 2024a, p. 680, para. 7) are self-oriented statements said by the participant Khaista Gul when he was in pain and calling villagers for help but no one came to rescue him. It has emotional charges on Mr

Sarmad because his heart felt soft, and he ran towards the door when he heard the painful voice of Khaista Gul. The statement had a temporary but positive affect on the participant, Sarmad Shah, because, for a time, he realized that he should help Khaista Gul.

"For God's sake," (Rahman, 2024a, p. 681, para. 2) is said by Sarmad Shah's wife because she was not letting Sarmad go outside and help Khaista Gul. This statement is self-oriented because she used emotional words to convince her husband to think about his own family, as helping the wounded participant Khaista Gul can cause huge trouble for their family. It had a positive affect on Sarmad Shah because he listened to his wife and did not help Khaista Gul, while a negative affect on the participant Khaista Gul because he needed help, but no one came to rescue him. It had a permanent affect on the participant, Sarmad Shah, because he did not move forward to go outside.

"Please Abboo so you want to kill mother? She already has heart disease" (Rahman, 2024a, p. 681, para. 2) is a self-oriented statement given by the daughter of Sarmad Shah because she was thinking about her mother who had heart disease. This statement has a positive affect on Sarmad Shah because his daughter reminded him of the heart disease of her mother, and in response, he took one step back from his decision. It also had a permanent affect on Sarmad Shah because, after that, he did not go out home to help him.

"I'll faint if you move one step ahead," (Rahman, 2024a, p. 681, para. 3) is said by Mrs Sarmad because she did not want Sarmad again involved in trouble. This statement is self-oriented because Mrs Sarmad was thinking about her family and her husband but did not have a soft corner for Khaista Gul. It also has emotional charges against Sarmad Shah because he realized that his wife had heart disease, and if something happened to her, then he would be responsible, which is why he did not go out of the house. This statement had a permanent affect on Sarmad Shah because he took his decision back when his wife warned him. The affect of the statement is

positive because, after that, Sarmad Shah did not even talk about helping Khaista Gul and stayed at home.

"I am dying, bleeding, Muslims! Oh, you people of the dark walls speak..." (Rahman, 2024a, p. 681, para. 4) said Khaista Gul while he was in pain and was going to die. In this statement, both self-oriented and other-oriented affects are present. It has an other-oriented affect on Sarmad Shah because he wanted to help Khaista Gul and a self-oriented affect on Sarmad Shah's wife and daughter. After all, they thought that it would create a problem for their family as the police would interrogate them too. According to Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), the affect in the mentioned statement is emotional charges. Emotional charges mean that the words used by the participants evoke the feelings and emotions of the other participants. The participant, Khaista Gul, pleas the people particularly by calling them "Muslims" as he is full of blood and dying soon. Such a situation evokes the emotions and feelings of other participants as it is observed that Sarmad Shah decided to go outside the home and help him, but unfortunately, his daughter and wife did not allow him. It had a positive affect on the participant Sarmad Shah because he was going to help Khaista Gul but did not because of his family, while it had a negative affect on Sarmad Shah's wife and daughter. This statement also had a temporary affect on Sarmad Shah because, for a moment, he felt emotional and wanted to go outside to help Khaista Gul in this critical situation.

"O Muslims" (Rahman, 2024a, p. 681, para. 5) is said by the participant Khaista Gul when it was his last breath. In this statement, there is a self-oriented affect on the people that everyone ignores him and lets him die because they prioritize themselves. On the other side, there is a negative affect on the participants because no one came to help Khaista Gul.

# **Findings**

Affect is the influence of participants on one another in the text through the language they use. The affect is of three categories: self and otheroriented affects, positive and negative affects, and permanent and temporary affects. In the selected short story, the participant Javed is twice self-oriented while Javed and the other participants, Sarmad Shah and the old guard, are once other-oriented throughout the short story. The affect of the participant Sarmad Shah is five times positive, while Khaista Gul is twice negative. It has a permanent affect four times on Sarmad Shah and a temporary affect once on the participants Khaista Gul and Sarmad Shah. There is the affect of emotional charges once on Sarmad Shah.

### **Conclusion**

Affect is a part of a tenor that shows the influence of one participant's statement on the other participants. After applying affect, it was found that the statement delivered by the participant "old guard" to Khaista Gul was an other-oriented affect because the old guard was trying to guide Khaista Gul, and it also had a negative and temporary affect on Khaista Gul as he listened to the guard, but did not follow him.

Besides, the second statement was self-oriented because Javed used the word bloody nuisance for Khaista Gul as he knew that Khaista Gul interferes in everyone's matters. It had positive and permanent affects on Shahid and his friends because they thought that Khaista Gul would create a problem for them. The third statement was other-oriented, as Javed knows that everyone on the street did not like it when Khaista Gul interfered with their issues. It had positive and permanent affects on Shahid because he started disliking Khaista Gul and treated accordingly.

Moreover, the fourth statement was self-oriented because the participant, Khaista Gul, was shouting due to severe pain. It had a negative affect on the villagers as no one in the whole village came to help him but let him die. The fifth statement was self-oriented because Javed fired

on Khaista Gul for not letting them take a girl with them. It had positive and permanent affects as the other boys decided to kill Khaista Gul and did not think about the sin they were going to commit.

The sixth statement is self-oriented because Khaista Gul was calling people to help him, so it had emotional charges on the participant Sarmad Shah. The statement had positive and temporary affects on Sarmad Shah as he moved towards the door to help Khaista Gul but did not because of his wife, who warned him. The seventh statement was self-oriented because Sarmad Shah's wife was not letting Mr Sarmad help Khaista Gul, so it had both positive and negative affects on Sarmad Shah as Khaista Gul needed help and Sarmad Shah could not help him due to his wife so it was also a permanent affect on him. The eighth statement was self-oriented because the daughter of Sarmad was talking in her mother's favour, and it had positive and permanent affects on Sarmad Shah as he refused to help the participant, Khaista Gul.

Additionally, the ninth statement was selforiented because Mrs Sarmad was only thinking about her family, not Khaista Gul, so it had positive and permanent affects on Sarmad Shah as, after that, he did not even talk about helping Khaista Gul. The tenth statement produced an other-oriented affect on Sarmad Shah, whereas a self-oriented affect on his wife and daughter. This statement had emotional charges and a positive affect on Sarmad Shah, but it had a temporary and negative affects on Sarmad Shah's wife, daughter, and the rest of the village. The last statement has a self-oriented affect on the villagers, and it has a negative and permanent affects on Khaista Gul because no one came to help him.

#### Recommendation

It is suggested to investigate the short story from literary aspects, including feminism and marxism.

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