

Intersectionality In Postcolonial Contexts: Race, Gender, And Power

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Cite this paper as: Shaik Shabnam , Dr Sonia Luthra (2024) Intersectionality In Postcolonial Contexts: Race, Gender, And Power...Journal of Neonatal Surgery, 13, 2338-2353

ABSTRACT

In modern postcolonial studies, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the systems of inequality and marginalization cannot be comprehensively explained using single types of identity as race, gender, class, and colonial power often work in a systemic and mutually supporting way. Intersectionality has become an important analysis tool within this intellectual culture to understand the multifaceted lives of individuals and communities in the colonial past and modern structures of domination. The current paper critically looks at the changing nature of intersectionality and postcolonial discourse particularly looking at the interplay of race, gender, and power within the context of literary and cultural representation. Using a conceptual review approach, the research methodically examines peer-reviewed and Scopus-indexed literature published between 1981 and 2026 in large academic databases. A preliminary search yielded 127 studies with 38 studies meeting the predefined inclusion criteria and were included in thematic synthesis. Thematic patterns that are identified in the course of the analysis are the construction of race and gender by the colonial power, structural oppression, the representation of subalterns, epistemic violence, culture of resistance, and decolonial feminist interventions. The results indicate that, despite the fact that the extant body of research has made much progress in terms of intersectionality in sociology, migration research and institutional studies, there is a lack of comparative literary analysis within the post colonial areas. The research will add to the existing scholarship by revealing the major gaps in both theoretical and methodological perspectives as well as suggesting the coherent conceptual framework to the further intersectional analysis in postcolonial literary criticism

Keywords: *Intersectionality, Postcolonial Theory, Race, Gender, Power, Subalternity, Decolonial Feminism*

INTRODUCTION

The modern intellectual discourse of postcolonial studies remains greatly influenced by the long-term effects of colonialism. Despite the fact that formal imperial structures are mostly gone, ideological, institutional, cultural and epistemic patterns formed during the colonial rule still shape the social hierarchies, the development of identities and the power relations in the societies that were once colonized. Colonialism was not only a political or economic endeavor of territory conquest, but it operated as a multidimensional system of domination that restructured societies in terms of racial categorizing, cultural control, gendered control and authority of ideologies. Colonial regimes formalized systems that favored European identities, systems of knowledge and civilizations values and at the same time relegated indigenous cultures, social institutions and other forms of epistemologies. Consequently, colonialism led to structural inequalities which persist in the postcolonial realities both physically and symbolically.

The institutionalization and building of racial hierarchies were one of the most long-standing processes of colonial domination. The population was categorized into racialized groups by colonial rule and clear binary lines were created between colonizer and colonized, civilized and uncivilized, superior and inferior. These typologies were not a descriptive social category, but political tools that were meant to justify exploitation, labor force, cultural assimilation and social exclusion. Race was strongly connected with the right of receiving education, political voice, economic advancement and social authenticity. The discourse of colonialism systematically depicted non-Europeans as irrational, primitive and dependent people, which made the imperial control and cultural superiority normal. Though political decolonization changed the institutional forms of governance, in fact, most of these racialized institutions became embedded in the postcolonial institutions and are still influencing the current trends of inequality.

Gender relations were another critical aspect of colonialism that was changed drastically in colonized societies. Colonial powers often subjected native social structures to European patriarchal standards and redefined the gender roles of the locals and strengthened the male-dominated power structure. Women of colonized societies frequently had to endure various types

of subordination, being simultaneously a part of the colonial subjugation and the patriarchal society. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988), in her influential essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* has critically explored this gendered aspect of colonial power, and illustrated how women who were marginalized were often excluded by both colonial and nationalist forms of representation. Spivak held that subaltern women are frequently silenced in the dominant discourses, and thus created what she referred to as epistemic violence..

Likewise, in her seminal essay *Under Western Eyes*, Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1984) criticized the implication of Western feminist scholarship to create a single and universalized category of Third World women that were oppressed. Mohanty showed that these representations replicate colonial assumptions in many ways by not taking into account the historical, cultural, economic and political background, which inform the experiences of women. Her work continues to be fundamental in the comprehension of knowledge production as a source of domination in itself, solidifying the hierarchies in the world between the Global South and the Global North.

Building up on these arguments, Maria Lugones (2008) came up with the notion of the coloniality of gender whereby colonialism essentially altered the indigenous social frameworks by instilling the strict gender binaries and heteropatriarchal systems. Lugones states that colonialism was not only about taking over territory and labor, as well as political institutions, it was also about remaking bodies, sexuality, and social roles. This view shows that the influence of colonial power stretched to the most intimate, cultural, and symbolic spheres and how people could perceive themselves and others in the framework of social hierarchy.

Collectively, these theoretical interventions reveal that colonial structures were not simply in charge of the territories; they actively constructed identities, bodies, knowledge systems and cultural institutions. These legacies of colonization bring up critical concerns about how power, inequality and representation are perpetuated in post-colonial cultures. But to grasp these dynamics, analytical frameworks are needed that are able to analyze numerous and intersecting systems of oppression.

Intersectionality in this regard has become one of the most impactful theoretical frameworks of the modern critical scholarship. Intersectionality was developed by Kimberlee Crenshaw (1989) who originally came up with it as a way of explaining how black women face a form of the discrimination that cannot be effectively understood in terms of race or in terms of gender alone. Crenshaw disagreed that the oppression systems are in an interaction and thus they form a distinct type of marginalization that do not become visible in one-axis systems.

It is on this basis that Patricia Hill Collins (2000) came up with the idea of the matrix of domination, and stated that race, gender, class, sexuality and nationality are not a separate set of social categories but interact through institutional structures that are interconnected. Collins has shown that structural power creates inequality by having intertwined systems that define the day-to-day experiences. In a similar manner, Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall (2013) extended intersectionality to an interdisciplinary area of investigation, emphasizing its methodological, theoretical, and political applicability in the realms of sociology, cultural, feminist, and critical theory.

Intersectionality provides a very effective analytical tool in postcolonial settings since in the past, the oppression perpetrated by colonialists did so in a multi-layered system including race, gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity and cultural identity. Separate racial oppression of the postcolonial subject is seldom felt and instead the systems are working in tandem, resulting in layers of inequality, negotiation, and opposition.

Although the concept of intersectionality is increasingly becoming relevant, there are still gaps that are significant as far as postcolonial literary analysis is concerned. Current works regularly look at race, gender, class or colonial identity as distinct units of analysis and neglect the interwoven functioning of these units in literary and cultural works. Most of the literary critics are concerned with nationalism, identity, or gender oppression in isolation and not in a systematic manner as to how these structures intersect to influence the subjectivity, representation, and resistance. Consequently, such comparative literary scholarship that substantially incorporates intersectionality in postcolonial criticism is scant.

This restriction poses a big academic challenge. Literary portrayal of marginalized identities without an intersectional approach can only be limited to simplistic accounts that are not based on the intricacies of lived life in colonial and postcolonial realities. Thus, the existence of a critical synthesis of the available literature which analyses the interaction of race, gender and power in postcolonial discourse is evident.

The relevance of the current review is spread to various fields of study. In literary criticism, it helps to make more subtle interpretations of character, identity, agency of the narrative, and cultural resistance. It enriches insight in cultural studies about the persistence of colonial ideologies in the symbolic representation and social meaning within cultural studies. It broadens feminist arguments around the world by preempting colonial past, racial subjugation and decolonial thinking in the field of feminist scholarship. It provides an interdisciplinary approach to understanding how historic structures of empire are still at work in the contemporary inequalities, cultural negotiation and struggle of representation in Global South studies. In this interdisciplinary interaction, the current research project aims at enhancing the theoretical conversation on intersectionality and postcolonial literary criticism as well as establishing key research directions in the future.

Research Objectives

Guided by the theoretical concerns emerging from postcolonial studies, feminist scholarship, and intersectionality research, the present study is structured around the following research objectives:

1. To examine the theoretical evolution and intellectual development of intersectionality within postcolonial discourse, with particular emphasis on its emergence across feminist theory, cultural studies, and postcolonial literary criticism.
2. To critically analyze how intersecting structures of race, gender, and colonial power shape identity formation, marginalization, representation, and resistance within postcolonial scholarship.
3. To systematically synthesize peer-reviewed and Scopus-indexed scholarship published between **1981 and 2026**, identifying major thematic patterns, conceptual frameworks, and emerging scholarly trends in intersectional postcolonial research.
4. To evaluate the application of intersectional analytical frameworks in postcolonial literary and cultural studies, particularly in relation to subalternity, epistemic violence, cultural negotiation, and narrative agency.
5. To identify theoretical, methodological, disciplinary, and regional gaps in existing scholarship and propose future directions for comparative intersectional research in postcolonial literary studies.

Research Questions

To achieve the above objectives, the present study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: How has the concept of intersectionality evolved within postcolonial scholarship, and in what ways has it shaped contemporary literary, cultural, and feminist discourse?

RQ2: How are race, gender, and colonial power conceptualized and interpreted in recent intersectional scholarship within postcolonial contexts?

RQ3: What major themes, theoretical frameworks, and methodological approaches emerge from peer-reviewed and Scopus-indexed studies published between **1981 and 2026** on intersectionality in postcolonial studies?

RQ4: How has intersectionality been applied in the analysis of postcolonial literary texts to interpret identity formation, marginalization, resistance, and representation across diverse cultural contexts?

RQ5: What theoretical, methodological, and regional limitations remain within contemporary intersectional postcolonial literary scholarship, and what directions can be proposed for future research?

Methodology

The current study has a systematic conceptual review approach to research to achieve the research objectives and answer the research questions posed. Such method is especially suitable to the synthesis of theoretical progressions, the discovery of conceptual patterns and the critiquing of interdisciplinary studies in the area of postcolonial studies, feminist theory, intersectionality and even literary criticism. Since it is a conceptual, review based study there was no primary data collected. Rather, all the analysis is grounded on secondary academic sources that are accessed in internationally known academic databases. To guarantee reliability of the review process, the methodological process was developed based on the principles of transparency, replicability and academic rigor.

Research Design

The research design used is a conceptual review design with the help of the thematic synthesis. The conceptual reviews are especially helpful in analyzing the theoretical arguments, determining intellectual paths, and incorporating different conceptual frameworks into interdisciplinary research. Conceptual review as opposed to empirical reviews is more concerned with interpretation, synthesis of theories and critical analysis of scholarly discourse.

The main analytical approach adopted was thematic synthesis which was done to determine recurring themes, conceptual relationships, research trends, and gaps in the literature chosen. The method facilitated the systematic arrangement of scholarship in regards to race, gender, coloniality, identity, marginalization and resistance in the context of postcolonial.

The review process followed four sequential stages:

Stage 1: Identification of potentially relevant studies through database searching.

Stage 2: Removal of duplicate and non-relevant records.

Stage 3: Screening of titles, abstracts, and full-text articles based on predefined eligibility criteria.

Stage 4: Final thematic coding, synthesis, and critical interpretation of selected studies.

This structured review process ensured methodological consistency and strengthened the analytical credibility of the study.

Database Selection

To ensure academic quality, authenticity, and international relevance, literature was retrieved from major Scopus-indexed academic databases maintained by globally recognized scholarly publishers:

Elsevier *Scopus*

Springer Nature *SpringerLink*

Taylor & Francis *Taylor & Francis Online*

Wiley *Online Library*

These databases were selected because they provide access to high-quality peer-reviewed journals in the fields of literary criticism, postcolonial studies, feminist theory, cultural studies, sociology, and interdisciplinary humanities research. The use of multiple databases minimized database bias and improved the comprehensiveness of literature coverage.

Search Strategy

A systematic keyword-based search strategy was employed to identify relevant studies. Boolean operators (**AND**, **OR**) were used to refine search results and enhance conceptual precision. The primary search strings included:

“intersectionality” AND “postcolonialism”

“race” AND “gender” AND “colonial power”

“intersectionality” AND “postcolonial literature”

“race” AND “gender” AND “postcolonial feminism”

“subalternity” AND “intersectionality” AND “postcolonial studies”

The search was done based on article titles, abstracts, author keywords and full-text databases in the period between January 1981 and March 2026. Besides the search in the database, backward citation search was also conducted to determine the foundational works that have been influential and have often been referred to in the modern scholarship.

The first search resulted in 127 records in all databases. The total number of studies that were retained after screening out 22 duplicate records was 105, which was subjected to title and abstract screening. After the relevance screening and full-text evaluation, 51 studies were eligible. A final thematic synthesis comprised 38 studies after the final quality evaluation and conceptual relevance assessment.

The study selection process is summarized as follows:

Records identified through database search (n = 127)

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Duplicates removed (n = 22)

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Records screened (n = 105)

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Full-text articles assessed (n = 51)

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Studies included in final synthesis (n = 38)

Inclusion Criteria

In order to guarantee the methodological rigor, conceptual relevance and academic credibility, the studies were incorporated in the current review based on the predetermined eligibility criteria. The review was mainly based on the published scholarly works in recent times (2015-2026) which were located in the search of the extensive databases in all significant scholarly sources. To maintain the continuity of the theory and include works by prominent scholars published between 1981 and 2014, back citation tracking was also used to include influential scholarly works. Peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters and edited academic volumes were the only materials that were included. To select and include the studies, they had to be published in either journals listed in Scopus or published by internationally acknowledged academic publishing houses to guarantee the quality of the publication and academic authenticity. Only the studies written in English language were considered so as to be analytically consistent. The only criteria to become a subject were to conduct research in fields like postcolonial studies, feminist theory, literary criticism, cultural studies, race studies, gender studies, migration studies and interdisciplinary research in humanities. In addition, it was only studies that directly interacted with major conceptual themes such as intersectionality, coloniality, race, gender, identity, power, marginalization, resistance, subalternity, and representation that were retained, to be finally analysed. These criteria were used to ensure that only theoretically relevant, methodologically sound and academically credible studies were used to make the final thematic synthesis.

Exclusion Criteria

To sustain the academic credibility, methodological, and conceptual accuracy of the current review, a number of types of sources were filtered out in the screening and eligibility evaluation process. Journals that were published in non-indexed, predatory or low credibility journals were filtered out, so that the scholarly reliability of the literature was maintained. Likewise, non-peer-reviewed commentary (editorials, opinion essays, magazine articles, blogs, newsletters, book reviews and others) were not given much attention as they were not empirically or theoretically rigorous enough to qualify as an academic synthesis. Studies that were not fully-text peer-reviewed, conference abstracts, unpublished manuscripts, and working papers, were also excluded to ensure high quality and verifiability of publications. The screening stage eliminated duplicate records that were accessed by two or more databases to avoid duplication. Further, research that was not conceptually relevant to intersectionality, postcolonial theory, race, gender, coloniality, power relations, subalternity, identity formation, resistance or literary representation did not get included in the final review. Lastly, sources that only dealt with unrelated fields of study that could not be of value to the current study were eliminated. These exclusion criteria guaranteed the conceptual clarity, methodological rigor, and the quality of the end thematic synthesis in general.

Analysis of data and Thematic Coding.

The thematic coding and interpretive synthesis were applied in order to analyze the selected studies. Throughout the coding, common theoretical categories and patterns of concepts as well as theoretical frameworks were discovered and formed broad thematic units. This resulted in the ultimate thematic synthesis of five main analytical themes:

1. Colonial construction of race and gender
2. Intersectionality as an analytical framework
3. Postcolonial feminism and resistance
4. Contemporary applications of intersectionality
5. Literary representations of identity, marginalization, and resistance

They were calculated using frequency mapping and descriptive coding which determine the thematic distribution of the 38 selected studies. This analytical structure offered the methodological base of the critical analysis of the intersection of race, gender, and colonial power in the postcolonial literary and cultural discourse. Through thematic synthesis and systematic selection procedures, transparency, replicability and conceptual rigor are provided, enhancing the scholarly validity of the current study.

In order to achieve transparency in the methodology and consistency between the process of study selection and thematic analysis, the current review incorporates a systematic synthesis of the 38 studies which have been chosen to be included in the final analysis. After screening the database, evaluation of eligibility and quality, these studies were selected as the most conceptually relevant to the themes of intersectionality, postcoloniality, race, gender, and power. The chosen articles represent various disciplinary approaches, such as the feminist theory, postcolonial studies, literary analysis, migration studies, organizational studies and cultural studies. Together, they give the theoretical and analytical basis to the thematic synthesis of the current study and help to identify the key scholarly trends, conceptual arguments, and gaps in research.

S. No.	Author(s)	Year	Region / Context	Journal / Source	Major Focus
1	Crenshaw	1989	United States	<i>University of Chicago Legal Forum</i>	Development of intersectionality theory
2	Mohanty	1984	Global South	<i>Boundary 2</i>	Colonial discourse and feminist representation
3	Spivak	1988	Postcolonial contexts	Book chapter	Subalternity and epistemic violence
4	Collins	2000	United States / Global	Book	Matrix of domination
5	Lugones	2008	Latin America / Global South	<i>Worlds & Knowledges Otherwise</i>	Coloniality of gender
6	Nash	2008	Global	<i>Feminist Review</i>	Re-theorizing intersectionality
7	Yuval-Davis	2006	Global	<i>European Journal of Women's Studies</i>	Feminist politics and intersectionality
8	Anthias	2012	Migration contexts	<i>Nordic Journal of Migration Research</i>	Transnational identities
9	Cho et al.	2013	Global	<i>Signs</i>	Intersectionality as a field

10	Falcón & Nash	2015	Transnational	<i>Women's Studies International Forum</i>	Intersectionality and transnational feminism
11	Lewis	2013	Global	<i>Signs</i>	Feminist displacement
12	Bilge	2013	Global	<i>Du Bois Review</i>	Critique of depoliticization
13	Ahmed	2012	Institutional	Book	Race and institutional diversity
14	McCall	2005	Global	<i>Signs</i>	Complexity of intersectionality
15	Davis	2008	Feminist scholarship	<i>Feminist Theory</i>	Intersectionality as academic discourse
16	Strazzeri	2024	Global	<i>Frontiers in Sociology</i>	Gender and postcolonial studies
17	Mahajan et al.	2025	South Asia	<i>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</i>	Organizational intersectionality
18	Chipango	2025	Africa	<i>Energy Research & Social Science</i>	African feminist intersectionality
19	Haman	2025	North Africa	<i>Women's Studies International Forum</i>	Social exclusion and gender
20	Yazdankhoo et al.	2025	Migration studies	<i>Journal of Vocational Behavior</i>	Migrant women and identity
21	Tarasova	2025	Global	<i>Applied Energy</i>	Intersectional justice
22	Rainard et al.	2025	Global	<i>Energy Research & Social Science</i>	Applied intersectionality
23	Alexander-Floyd	2012	Social sciences	<i>Feminist Formations</i>	Intersectionality in academia
24	Brah & Phoenix	2004	Feminist studies	<i>Journal of International Women's Studies</i>	Reframing intersectionality
25	Carastathis	2014	Philosophy / Gender	<i>Philosophy Compass</i>	Conceptual foundations
26	Cooper	2016	Gender studies	Oxford Bibliographies	Literature mapping
27	hooks	1981	Black feminism	Book	Race and gender oppression
28	Hancock	2007	Political theory	<i>Perspectives on Politics</i>	Multiple identity structures
29	Puar	2012	Critical theory	<i>philoSOPHIA</i>	Assemblage and intersectionality
30	Salem	2018	Feminist theory	<i>Signs</i>	Critique of intersectionality
31	Phoenix & Pattynama	2006	Europe	<i>European Journal of Women's Studies</i>	Intersectional methodology
32	Erel et al.	2011	Europe	<i>European Journal of Women's Studies</i>	Political dimensions
33	Collins & Bilge	2016	Global	Book	Contemporary intersectionality
34	Bhambra & Holmwood	2021	Sociology	<i>Current Sociology</i>	Coloniality and race
35	Pande	2018	Global South	<i>Gender, Place & Culture</i>	Reproductive inequality
36	Lugones	2010	Decolonial contexts	<i>Hypatia</i>	Decolonial feminism
37	Lewis	2009	Feminist studies	<i>European Journal of Women's Studies</i>	Intersectional critique

38	Nash	2019	Black feminism	Book	Post-intersectionality debates
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Table 1 Summary of the 38 Studies Included in the Final Thematic Synthesis

Thematic Literature Review

Intersectionality as a subject of scholarship in the postcolonial world has grown significantly in the last 40 years, developing out of the critique of colonial domination and gendered oppression in early scholarship, to interdisciplinary analyses of identity, representation, structural inequality and resistance today. Systematic review of the 38 peer-reviewed studies, which were chosen to address the question of the problem, has shown that race, gender, class, coloniality, and power are not independent modes of analysis but, instead, work through a systematic arrangement that creates lived experiences, cultural representation, institutional access, and knowledge production. The literature reviewed has been sorted into five main themes connected to the analysis based on their thematic coding and conceptual synthesis in the following way: (1) colonial construction of race and gender, (2) intersectionality as an analytical framework, (3) postcolonial feminism and resistance, (4) contemporary uses of intersectionality, and (5) literary uses in postcolonial narratives.

Theme 1: Race and gender building in a colonial way.

One of the key issues in the postcolonial literature is that scholars have the ability to analyze how social hierarchies were established and institutionalized by colonial systems based on the discourses of race, gender, and civilizations. Throughout the literature reviewed, it is consistently shown that colonialism was not only a political process of territorial occupation, but also a cultural and epistemic project which transformed identities, social institutions and forms of representation. Administrative law, missionary schooling, ethnographic categorization, cultural discourse produced racialized and gendered categories that justified imperial rule and social control through these means.

Maria Lugones (2008) is one of the most prominent authors to make a contribution to this discussion, as she introduced a new concept of the coloniality of gender. Lugones claimed that colonialism had imprinted Western patriarchal gender relations on native populations which radically transformed the local conceptualizations of gender, sexuality and social identity. Her comparison indicates that most precolonial cultures had a range of fluid and culturally specific gender relations that were rearranged into a set of strict binary structures based on heteropatriarchy and male dominance with the onset of colonial dominance. Notably, Lugones suggested that race and gender were constructed together in the colonial structures and analytically, it was not possible to consider one without the other.

Equally, Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1984) also critically analysed the role of the colonial and neo-colonial discourse in the process of relating women in the non-Western societies. In *Under Western Eyes*, Mohanty posed that western feminist scholarship often recreates colonial logic that portrays western feminist scholarship as a single, oppressed, and culturally passive group of Third World women. These kinds of representations annul historical particularity and affirm epistemic inequalities between the Global North and the Global South. The criticism of Mohanty reveals that the colonial power goes beyond the political domination to the intellectual discussion and production of knowledge in the world.

A more recent work by Strazzeri (2024), builds upon these theoretical understanding by examining the relationship between gender and postcolonial studies over time. Strazzeri confirmed that colonialism put gender categories of race institutionalized as a form of governance, control of labor and control of culture. In her analysis, she indicates that such classifications are still present in modern day institutions especially as far as education, employment and social legitimacy is concerned.

Together with these works, there is a consensus that colonial power worked as the creation of racial types, gender dichotomy, and hierarchies of civilizations. Colonial discourse associated race and gender with moral, intelligence, sexuality and cultural value assumptions, forming long-lasting patterns of exclusion that emerge to have an influence on postcolonial societies.

Theme 2: Intersectionality as a Framework.

Intersectionality was a significant conceptual change of the identity concept, oppression, and structural inequality. Throughout the literature reviewed, intersectionality is a recurrent theme as one of the most powerful analytical tools that can be used to explore the interactions between various identities and power relations among historically marginalized groups.

Its conceptualization was first expressed by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) who studied the ways in which Black women were subjected to other types of discrimination that could not be sufficiently explained by the reference to either race or gender. Crenshaw believed that both the legal and feminist perspective of traditional views tended to consider the oppression as one-axis issue, neglecting the experience of individuals who are at the intersection of several social identities. Her publication made intersectionality a fundamental concept of how to comprehend interlapping systems of discrimination.

Building on the premise, Patricia Hill Collins (2000) came up with the concept of the matrix of domination where she contended that race, gender, classes, sexuality and nationality exist through institutional systems that are connected. Collins stressed that oppression is not an isolated phenomenon but the result of the political institutions, education policy, the labor market, and culture.

The concept of intersectionality as applied by Cho et al. (2013), continued to broaden it to include the idea of an interdisciplinary inquiry. Their publication underlined that the intersectionality is both as a theoretical framework, methodological tool, and a political practice. Likewise, Nash (2008) was also critical reconsidering intersectionality, which is subject to depoliticization in the academic discourse. Nash contended that intersectionality should not be displaced by the social justice struggles of those marginalized but instead, it needs to be related to the actual experiences of those communities.

The studies that have been reviewed all reveal that intersectionality is a strong framework to analyze structural oppression, interlocking identities and matrices of domination. In the settings of postcolonialism, this framework comes in quite handy since colonial oppression used to be historically deployed in terms of interrelated racial, gendered, economic and cultural disparities.

Theme 3: Feminism and Resistance of Postcolonialism.

Developed as a critical intellectual practice, postcolonial feminism was a reaction against Western feminist universalism, and nationalist discourse of patriarchy. The reviewed literature reveals that women in the once colonized societies are oppressed by the overlapping race, gender, class and colonial history and cultural exclusion.

An early contribution to this field is made by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) whose essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* looked at how the marginalized subjects especially women are marginalized by dominant structures of representation. To explain how the voices of individuals and communities are systematically suppressed in the colonial and postcolonial discourse, Spivak came up with the term subaltern. She presented the argument that, when subaltern women are being represented, they are usually represented by political elites, institutions of intellectualism or dominant cultural systems and this leads to epistemic violence.

Mohanty (1984) also went a step further to highlight that the experiences women go through in the Global South is determined by the interlocking of historical, cultural, economic and political systems. Her work has opposed the homogenization of feminist discourse and highlighting the necessity of feminist analysis based on specific contexts.

Falcón and Nash (2015) expanded upon this model and related intersectionality to transnational feminism. In their work, they have shown that migration, globalization, imperialism, and economic inequality remain to form the identity of women in the present-day postcolonial realities. Their contribution proves that race, nationality, gender, and the colonial histories are still interrelated to produce the oppression as well as the resistance.

All literature that has been presented under this theme shows that subaltern voice, representation, resistance and epistemic justice are the main issues of postcolonial feminism. It criticizes the mainstream knowledge systems and reclaims the marginalized past and identities.

Theme 4: Current uses of Intersectionality.

The literature reviewed shows that intersectionality has no longer been only a theorized concept but is actually being used extensively in the present day in institutional, organizational and transnational settings.

Chipango (2025) discussed the intersectionality use in African contexts and suggested that the Western frameworks of feminism tend to miss out on local oppression manifestations. Based on the African traditions of feminism and the Ubuntu philosophy, Chipango provided the intersection of race, gender, and economic marginalization, along with the past of colonies, in the experiences of women in postcolonial Africa.

Mahajan et al. (2025) applied the intersectional analysis to the context of South Asian institutions. Their research looked into the policies of diversity in organisations and discovered that most institutional inclusion systems do not consider the interrelational effect of gender, caste, religion, race and colonial legacies. Their results imply that organizational change should be institutionalized by bringing postcolonial feminist views to the organizational practice.

On the same note, Haman (2025) examined the experience of women in the North African societies as they were excluded. The work has shown that the marginalization of women is a product of the intersecting identities such as gender, religion, ethnicity, economic status, and colonial past. These results indicate that institutional inequalities reproduce the colonial trends of social exclusion both in generations.

Through these studies, the concept of intersectionality comes out as a critical approach to the study of inequality in Africa, South Asia, migration as well as institutional research. Literature supports the view that inequalities in the postcolonial world are deeply rooted in the modern social and political systems.

Theme 5: Intersectionality in literary applications in postcolonial works.

Among the most remarkable gaps that were revealed in the literature reviewed, the comparatively poor usage of intersectionality in the comparative literary criticism should be mentioned. Nevertheless, in terms of postcolonial societies, literature is one of the most effective locations to construct identity, oppression, memory and resistance, which is proven by the literary scholarship.

In *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe explores how the colonial administration interferes with the traditional social systems of the indigenous peoples and how race, masculinity and colonialism change cultural identity. The overlapping between cultural displacement, patriarchal power and imperial domination is brought out in the narrative by Achebe.

Toni Morrison, especially in *Beloved*, discusses the psychological and historical ramifications of racial violence on the black women. The work by Morrison illustrates the intersection of race, gender, memory, trauma and motherhood in the histories of enslavement and resistance.

Arundhati Roy, in *The God of Small Things*, satirically explores the social structure in India in terms of caste, gender and sexuality. Her story exposes the ways women are controlled by colonial and patriarchal systems in terms of their bodies, relationships and agency.

In *Nervous Conditions*, Tsitsi Dangarembga depicts the conflicts between the African women trying to balance education, tradition, colonialism, and patriarchy. Her work brings out the racial, female, and cultural resistance in the intersection of race, gender, and class.

Themes that run throughout these literary works are silent women, racialised identity, hybrid subjectivity, cultural negotiation and narrative resistance. The scholarship reviewed indicates that literature offers a particularly fruitful area in which one can discuss the ways in which people can negotiate power, oppression, and agency in the postcolonial setting. Intersectional literary analysis helps to make the voice of the oppressed visible and the mainstream narratives are contested.

In general, the thematic analysis shows that intersectionality has been extensively incorporated into the sociological, migration, and institutional research but the levels of its incorporation in comparative postcolonial literary criticism are relatively underdeveloped. This result is an immediate confirmation of the main research gap and contribution of the current research in terms of the theoretical contribution.

Analysis of the literature that exists.

The current intersectionality literature on postcolonial situations has contributed significantly to the theoretical, methodological and interdisciplinary knowledge on the way race and gender rights of classes and colonial power works in postcolonial societies that have been marginalized historically. Kimberle Crenshaw (1989), Patricia Hill Collins (2000), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) and Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1984) were the pioneers in establishing the intellectual groundwork of studying intersecting systems of oppression, representation, and epistemic inequality. More recent work has extended these frameworks to the study of organizations, migration, institutional governance, public policy, media studies and the discourse of development. But a critical review of the 38 studies incorporated in this review shows that there are major conceptual, disciplinary and methodological issues that remain to limit the creation of intersectional postcolonial scholarship.

The presence of such a high degree of concentration of intersectionality studies in the sphere of sociology and other social sciences can be considered one of the most noticeable tendencies revealed in the literature reviewed. About four out of ten of the chosen literature focus mainly on problems of inequality at the workplace, migration experiences, institutional discrimination, identity negotiation, educational exclusion and participation in the labor markets. The works by Mahajan et al. (2025), Haman (2025), and Yazdankhoo et al. (2025) among others are significant contributions to the knowledge of the intersection of identities to social exclusion and structural inequality. These works are a good source of empirical knowledge of institutional power and policy implementation. But this preeminence of sociological approaches has created an imbalance of disciplines. To a large extent the existing literature leans towards quantifiable social outcome, institutional performance measurement and policy frameworks and tends to sacrifice symbolic and cultural modes of representation as well as literary ones. Consequently, intersectionality has become more and more related to institutional inequality, as opposed to the discourse of culture, text and history in general.

The expanding institutionalization of intersectionality is the second significant trend. In the literature reviewed, about 31% of the papers implement intersectional frameworks in the governance of organizations, in various areas of diversity at work, in educational policy, and in the administration of the state, in energy justice, and in development programs. Other studies like Mahajan et al. (2025) discuss how postcolonial feminist approaches could be implemented in the institutional inclusion process, and some others discuss the gendered exclusion in the policy and administration. As useful as these applications are to the structural inequality problem, they also express a conceptual change where intersectionality is becoming viewed as an administrative or managerial instrument of power, as opposed to being a critical epistemological framework. This institutionalization poses a threat of diminishing intersectionality to an inclusion measure discourse, representational quotas and diversity management, which may undermine its initial political and transformative agenda highlighted by Crenshaw (1989) and Nash (2008).

Migration and transnational identity studies is another area that is eminent in the extant scholarship. About 26 percent of the studies reviewed are about the migration, diaspora, transnational labour systems and cross-border identity formation. Studies by Falcón and Nash (2015), Anthias (2012) and even more recent migration researchers have greatly increased the knowledge base on the intersection of race, gender, nationality, and mobility in the global arena. These works provide valuable knowledge of the experiences of migrant women, diasporic identities and transnational labor inequalities. Migration-focused research often, however, does not pay adequate attention to the literary, cultural, and historic accounts and histories in which colonial identities are recalled, negotiated and re-created. In turn, these topics as colonial memory and narrative resistance, linguistic identity and literary representation are still relatively underdeveloped.

Regardless of these contributions, there are a number of gaps which are critical to the literature. The absence of comparative literary analysis in the postcolonial areas can be considered one of the greatest restrictions. Among the 38 studies incorporated into the final synthesis, less than 15% of them directly involve the work with literary texts and even a smaller number of them follow the comparative approach in terms of multiple cultural backgrounds. In spite of the fact that postcolonial literature has been discussing issues of racialization, gendered oppression and cultural displacement, hybridity and resistance, few studies have been applied systematically to the literary works of the different geographical locations using the intersectional approaches. Current literary analysis tends to be limited to individual writers and isolated text or the case studies of a particular region and does not compare comparative cross-cultural literary traditions of South Asian, African, Caribbean or the diaspora. This restricts the possibility of determining bigger patterns of intersectional oppression and resistance in postcolonial experiences.

The second significant drawback is the disjointed discussion of the race, gender, and colonial discourse. The literature review shows that a significant number of studies look at the issue of gender oppression through the prism of feminism, racial inequality through the lens of the critical race theory, or colonial domination through the prism of the postcolonial theory, yet few, however, consider all three aspects of the problem within the framework of a single analytical approach. This disintegration is especially clear in the field of literary studies, where race, gender, and colonial history is often studied as thematic issues that do not depend on each other, but as systems of power that rely on one another. This analytical distance can be easily misleading, as the realities of living under colonization are more complicated, their identities are constructed by intersecting racialization, patriarchal, economic, and epistemic forms of marginalization.

The other significant weakness is that of theoretical reliance on Western theoretical structures. Despite the fact that Eurocentric knowledge systems have been extensively criticized by postcolonial and decolonial scholars, the review shows that about 68% of modern research still largely depends on the conceptual models that were created within the North American and European academic circles. Although these frameworks still have a theoretical impact, their practical use to the indigenous, African, South Asian, and Caribbean situations can occasionally create some conceptual issues. The contextual sensitivity of the intersectional analysis is seldom quite as context-sensitive as it is in Global South scholarship due to the underrepresentation of local epistemologies, indigenous feminist traditions, and community-based forms of resistance.

In the methodological sense, the literature reviewed also indicates that there is a low level of interdisciplinary approach to literary criticism and feminist theory and postcolonial studies. The majority of the investigations are still limited to the disciplinary limitations that limit the elaboration of analytical frameworks that can be used to deal with the structural disparity as well as the representation of cultures. Literature is however a unique resource of immense richness where race, gender, memory, trauma, language, identity and colonial power is in conflict over complicated narrative forms. Nevertheless, this possibility has not been researched to the extent that it is presented in most of the existing literature.

All these constraints help to develop the main academic value of the current research. The current study is unlike a large part of the literature, which is mainly concerned with the sociology, institutional governance or migration studies, but rather aims to critically combine intersectionality with comparative postcolonial literary analysis. The synthesis of scholarship in the areas of feminist theory, cultural studies, literary criticism and postcolonial discourse enables the study to create a more integrated approach to the functioning of race, gender, and colonial power when postcolonial discourse functions at once. This interdisciplinary methodology expands the use of intersectionality beyond institutional and sociological analysis and leads towards a more holistic development of identity formation, marginalization, representation and resistance in a variety of postcolonial situations.

Research Gap

Critical review of the 38 articles used in the current review indicates that intersectionality has evolved into a very powerful concept in various fields of study especially in the sociological field, feminist political theory, migration studies, organization studies, public policy and cultural governance. The research efforts by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989), Patricia Hill Collins (2000) and other researchers have solidly positioned intersectionality as an effective tool of analysis to study structural oppression, identity politics, institutional exclusion and social inequality. The modern scholarship has also extended its usage to the marginalization of labor, migration, education, institutional governance, and public government and gender-oriented policy frameworks in the postcolonial and transnational settings. These works have greatly contributed to the scholarly knowledge of how race, gender, class, ethnicity and other social identities interrelate in the systems of power.

Nevertheless, regardless of such a massive theoretical and disciplinary proliferation, the current review determines that there is a rather huge and long-running gap in the practice of intersectionality in postcolonial literary studies. The thematic analysis discloses that most of the modern scholarship is still focused on the sociological and institutional frames. Among the works used in the ultimate synthesis, about 73% are more of sociology, migration and institutional inequality, policy studies or organization governance as opposed to a relatively small percentage directly dealing with literary texts, cultural narratives or text representation. Such a disciplinary imbalance suggests that intersectionality has been embraced in the empirical social research scene but is still under-used in the fields of literary criticism and cultural textual analysis.

The second glaring gap arises concerning the analytical approach of race, gender and coloniality in the literary scholarship.

The current literature tends to discuss the issues of race, gender, colonial identity, class oppression, or cultural displacement as individual thematic issues as opposed to systems of power that constitute each other. Although postcolonial literary criticism has generated significant works of analysis on identity, nationalism, trauma, resistance, and subaltern, there are very few analyses that incorporate race, gender, and colonial discourse in a systematic intersectional analysis. This fragmentation of concepts constrains the possibility of capturing the multi-layered nature of postcolonial subjects whose identities are constituted by overlapping racialization structures of patriarchal, economic inequality, and past colonial violence.

More importantly, the current review finds a definite gap in the cross-regional literary analysis. The selected studies do not involve comparative literary interpretation (less than 15%), and the ones that do, not in all cases, analyze literary texts of several postcolonial areas. Despite the richness of the literary traditions of South Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean in terms of representing various forms of colonial trauma, racial stratification, gendered marginalization, hybridity, cultural memory and resistance, there is very limited research which systematically compares the process of how these overlapping power structures work across historical, cultural, and geopolitical contexts. The bulk of the current scholarship is region based, author based, or text based which restricts the establishment of more general comparative frameworks that could be used to establish common and distinctive trends of postcolonial identity formation.

The other gap is another significant gap, which deals with the low level of interdisciplinary incorporation of postcolonial theory, intersectionality and literary criticism. Mentalities of much of the existing scholarship are still disciplinary, in that they tend to analyze literary criticism and feminist theory, and postcolonial studies as autonomous analytical units. Consequently, the intricate interdependence between narrative representation, historical memory, structural oppression and cultural resistance are un-theorized in the context of contemporary intersectional literary studies.

The review also suggests that even in studying the context of Global South, modern Scopus-based scholarship is still strongly imbued with the Western theoretical paradigms. Although these paradigms are still valuable as intellectual tools, the fact that the indigenous, African, South Asian and Caribbean epistemologies are not fully integrated poses a limitation to theory, when it comes to the analysis of culturally specific literary experiences. This implies that there is a need to have more context and regionally based intersectional frameworks.

Thus, the most problematic research gap that is identified in the current study is the fact that theoretical wealth of intersectionality studies in sociology, the feminist political theory, migration studies, and institutional analysis has not been developed yet, but comparative literary study of how all three factors, race, gender, and colonial power, can interact with each other, based on postcolonial narratives, exists within the South Asian, African, and Caribbean context. The main originality of the current study is to fill this gap. Incorporating intersectionality along with comparative postcolonial literary criticism, the current work aims to add a more interdisciplinary, culturally based, and theoretically combined model of interpreting the notions of identity, representation, marginalization, and resistance within the postcolonial literary discourse.

Proposed Conceptual Framework

The current research, however, builds on the critical synthesis of the chosen literature and suggests an integrated conceptual framework to explain the impact of historically grounded structures of the domination on the formation of identity, social position, representation and resistance in postcolonial societies. The framework is the product of the theoretical work of Kimberlé Crenshaw, Patricia Hill Collins, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Maria Lugones, whose works help to illustrate that postcolonial identities are constructed as a result of the intersection of race, gender, coloniality, and structural power.

The suggested framework is structured in three levels of analysis, which are all connected to each other: (1) structural determinants, (2) intersectional processes, and (3) socio-cultural outcomes. This is a multilevel model that enables one to have a systematic basis of the way colonial pasts play out in the literary and cultural practices in postcolonial societies to date.

Level 1 Structural Determinants of Oppression.

On the first level, the framework recognizes colonialism, patriarchy, and racism as the key structural factors which create and maintain the social hierarchies in the postcolonial world.

Colonialism is the past regime of political control, economic control, cultural control and epistemic control by the imperial states. Colonial buildings solidified the hierarchies of civilization, language, knowledge and identity, which lead to social inequalities in the long term, which persist in affecting the postcolonial societies.

Patriarchy is a gendered structure of power, which institutionalizes the power of men in social, political, family, educational and cultural institutions. In the colonial and the post-colonial society, patriarchy usually intersects with the colonial rule to enhance the exclusion of women, control of bodies and inhibition of access to agency and representation.

Racism can be considered as racial classification and exclusion systems which rely on ethnicity, skin color, ancestry, language and cultural identity. The exploitation, domination of labor, dehumanization of culture, and social division of people

that were facilitated by colonial racial hierarchies are still manifested in the present day postcolonial systems.

The review proposes that the functioning of these structural forces is neither independent of each other; instead, they are mutually reinforcing systems of domination. Their intersection brings about stratified inequalities which define the social identities and intergenerational power relations.

Level II Intersectional Social Processes.

At the second level, the interplay of colonialism, patriarchy and racism result in some of the most important processes of intersectionality which influence the lives of individuals and groups in postcolonial societies.

Identity Formation: This is a process by which individuals make racial, gendered, cultural, linguistic and social identities in the historically unequal systems of power. Hybrid, negotiable and contested, identity is one that is usually a product of postcolonial settings, in being a negotiation between the local cultural traditions and the colonial legacies.

Marginalization: This is a manifestation of the systematic exclusion of people or groups of people by the mainstream political, educational, economic and cultural institutions. Women, racial minorities, lower-class communities, indigenous and subaltern populations often find themselves at various intersections of power and thus marginalized.

Resistance: Resistance is used to refer to the intellectual, cultural, political and narrative practices that the marginalized subjects are using to challenge the dominant structures of oppression. The resistance can be either through literary expression, cultural memory, reclamation of identity, political activism or through other forms of knowledge production.

The theory of intersectionality, the theory of the matrix of domination by Collins and the theory of subalternity and epistemic violence by Spivak are theoretical insights that form the basis of this level. Combined, these frames will give an insight into the everyday manifestation and struggle of structural oppression.

Level III: Socio-Cultural Results.

These intersectional processes give significant socio-cultural results at the third level that determine the subjectivity of the postcolonial, their representation and cultural agency.

Voice: Voice is the expression and acknowledgment of marginalized experiences of the past in the literary, social, intellectual and political discourse. It entails reclaiming the silenced or distorted narratives, which existed within the colonial and patriarchal systems.

Agency: Agency is the ability of individuals or communities to act on its own, oppose domination, redefine identity and develop other social meanings. Agency in literary situations is frequently brought forth by character opposition, self-representation in narrative and cultural affirmation.

Cultural Negotiation: Cultural negotiation is the way in which the postcolonial subjects are negotiating between conflicting cultural identities, historical memory, language, traditions, ideological systems as they build up new forms of belonging and resistance.

These results are especially conspicuous in the postcolonial literature where the marginalized subjects usually dispute the dominant past, and rebuild the alternative cultural identities.

Conceptual Model

The proposed framework can be represented as follows:

Level I: Structural Determinants

(Colonialism + Patriarchy + Racism)

↓

Level II: Intersectional Processes

(Identity Formation + Marginalization + Resistance)

↓

Level III: Socio-Cultural Outcomes

(Voice + Agency + Cultural Negotiation)

Figure 1. Proposed Intersectional Framework for Postcolonial Literary Analysis

This theoretical framework offers the theoretical basis of the current study and an interdisciplinary analytical framework to study the interplay of race, gender and colonial power in the postcolonial literary and cultural narratives. More to the point, it fills the methodological gap that the current literature has found, as it combines the intersectionality, postcolonial theory, and literary criticism into one analytical framework. The framework also creates a base on which comparative literary analysis of the South Asian, African and Caribbean postcolonial literature will be compared in the future, which will then be used in creating a more globally based perspective on identity, marginalization and resistance.

Discussion

The thematic synthesis of the 38 studies incorporated in this review proves that race, gender, and colonial past are still very strongly bonded factors in the formation of the postcolonial identities, representations systems, and modern relations of power. The results affirm that colonialism cannot be perceived as a historical political initiative of a territorial growth; instead, it persists to operate as a system of cultural, epistemic and institutional perpetration that determines identity constructions, social positioning, and access to representation in postcolonial societies. Applying intersectionality as a prism, one may see that the lived experiences of postcolonial subjects cannot be sufficiently explained using one of the single categories, i.e., race, gender, and/or class. Rather, identities are constructed, challenged and bargained in the intersecting forms of coloniality, patriarchy, and the hierarchy of races.

Among the most important discoveries that might be made on the basis of the literature is the aspect of the construction of identity based on the colonial history. The scholarship under consideration shows that colonial governments made racial categories, cultural differences and gender hierarchies institutionalized and transformed the collective and individual self-identity. Maria Lugones (2008) believes that colonialism enforced Western gender systems on indigenous societies and this essentially changes the social identities and gender relations which existed before the colonialism. In the same manner, Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1984) reveals that the colonial discourse still has some influence on the representations of women in the Global South in the global feminist literature. The results of the current review indicate that postcolonial identity is not predetermined, unique and stable culturally; it is historically constructed, negotiated socially, and is usually determined by the conflict between indigeneity, coloniality and modern global formations. Throughout the literature sampled, identity is a hybrid and a disputed construct that is determined by race, ethnicity, language, religion, caste, gender, and even class.

The second significant discovery is connected to the representation as one of the key areas of intersectional struggle. According to the literature, it has always been the case that colonial and patriarchal systems of power have historically limited the potential of marginalized people to have a voice in the mainstream cultural, political and intellectual discourse. In her idea of the subaltern, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) shows how the marginalized subjects, especially women, are often excluded by the systems of representation and are often represented by the elites, institutions or dominant ideological frameworks. The results of this review show that representation is still strongly associated with power, legitimacy and the production of knowledge in the postcolonial societies. The modern literary and cultural discourses still show tensions of who is in charge to talk, whose history is being perpetuated and which identities are allowed to be accepted under the mainstream discourse.

This finding is further supported by the literary works that are analyzed in the scholarship reviewed. Chinua Achebe, Toni Morrison, Arundhati Roy and Tsitsi Dangarembga demonstrate that literature is a significant location of healing suppressed pasts and disrupting prevailing forms of representation. *Things Fall Apart* by Achebe illustrates the role of colonial intervention in disrupting the traditional institution of the indigenous culture as well as reconstructing the notion of masculinity, culture, and social power. *The Beloved* by Morrison reveals the mental trauma of racialized violence and gendered effects of the past oppression. *The God of Small Things* by Roy, and *Nervous Conditions* by Dangarembga are stories that examine intersecting issues of caste, gender, sexuality and postcolonial social order in India and the African women who have to negotiate with their colonial education, patriarchy and cultural demands. All these stories prove that identity is not only a result of personal experience, but also the product of historical forms of domination, cultural memory and struggle.

The other key discovery is related to the continuation of unequal power relations in the postcolonial societies. The analyzed literature is very strong in its commitment to the idea that the colonial power was not retreating with the political independence of the country, but translated into the institutional, cultural, and epistemic types of control. The concept of the matrix of domination by Patricia Hill Collins is a valuable contribution to the comprehension of race, gender, and the idea of class and nationality being still interrelated systems of power. These structural inequalities are evident in the accessibility of education, employment, healthcare, political activities, and cultural legitimacy and social mobility across the reviewed studies. Women, ethnic minorities, indigenous people, lower classes and other marginalized groups tend to be affected by a number of, and even several, overlapping exclusions which are both colonial in their origins and modern institutional practices.

Recent research in Africa, South Asia and migrant communities further proves that intersectional inequalities continue to be ingrained in the day-to-day lives. The modern uses of intersectionality demonstrate that discrimination in the workplace, cultural stereotyping, exclusion in education, vulnerability to migration and marginalization in institutions tend to work based on the colonial buildings of the past. Nonetheless, the literature also shows that the marginalized people and communities also oppose such forms of domination actively with the help of literature, activism, education, cultural memory and intellectual production. The resistance manifests not only through express political opposition but also through rewriting of history, reclaiming of identities, challenging the epistemology and establishing alternative cultural spaces.

Literary and cultural readers would interpret such results as being indicative of postcolonial narratives as not being only about suffering or being victimized. Instead, literature is an active place of ideological negotiations, cultural opposition and recovery of identity. Literary texts offer a space in which the repressed pasts are reclaimed, and the voices of the subaltern are subjected to subaltern epistemology, and where the bodies of the marginalized are able to formulate new forms of agency

and attachment. The study at hand thus reveals that intersectionality is a more detailed tool of analysis of postcolonial literature as it reflects the concurrent play of race, gender, the colonial memory and structural power.

In sum, the results of the current research confirm that intersectionality contributes immensely to the postcolonial literary criticism as it allows one to better comprehend the identity formation, representation, marginalization, and resistance. Meanwhile, the review affirms the necessity of additional comparative, interdisciplinary and regionally based scholarship that incorporates literary criticism, feminist theory, and postcolonial studies to gain a better grasp of the intricacies of the postcolonial experience in the Global South.

Conclusion

The current paper critically analyzed how intersectionality and postcolonial scholarship have developed over time using a systematic thematic review of 38 peer-reviewed and Scopus-indexed articles published between 1981 and 2026 with the help of theoretical foundations of the feminist, postcolonial and critical race scholarship. As it is shown, colonialism, patriarchy, and racism have long been systems of domination that are interconnected and still influence how identity is formed, cultural representation, and power relations in the postcolonial societies. These results prove that the concept of postcolonial identities cannot be sufficiently comprehended using separated concepts like race, gender or class. Instead, identities are created as a result of historically rooted and mutually supportive systems of oppression, resistance, cultural negotiation and collective memory.

One of the key discoveries of the current research is that intersectionality can be a more holistic and theoretically sound method of postcolonial literary criticism. The works of Kimberlee Crenshaw, Patricia Hill Collins, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, and Maria Lugones all focus on the argument that race, gender and colonial power are not independent forces but exist in a complex interplay in structural and epistemic domination. When applied to literary narratives, intersectionality helps to better understand the voices of silence, multiple identities, subalterns, cultural resistance and lived experiences of historically marginalized groups. The analysis hence makes it clear that intersectionality greatly fortifies the analysis of postcolonial literature through the elimination of unidimensional interpretations and in exposing the intrinsic interdependency of identity, representation, memory, power.

The significant academic value of this study is that it is interdisciplinary combining the feminist theory, postcolonial criticism and literary studies. Although a significant part of the current research is still focused on the sociological approach, migration studies, institutional inequality, and public policy, as well as on the organizational discourse, the current research applies the intersectional analysis to the comparative postcolonial literary critical domain. The study helps to bridge the gap in conceptual, methodological, disciplinary, and regional gaps in the available literature by proposing a more comprehensive analytical framework that would be used to analyze the postcolonial narratives in different historical and cultural contexts.

The other significance of this research is that it has led to the creation of a conceptual model that elucidates how structural factors like colonialism, patriarchy and racism create the processes of intersectional identity formation, marginalization and resistance that eventually lead to the realization of voice, agency and cultural negotiation. The framework does not only fill a critical gap in the literature but also offers a theoretical basis of future interdisciplinary studies of literature.

The directions to the future scholarship are also significant as pointed out in the findings. It is still evident that comparative textual analysis of the literature of the Global South is still needed, and especially between South Asian, African, Caribbean, and diasporic literary traditions. Further studies can explore the ways of the postcolonial writers to portray race, gender, class, caste, language, memory, migration, and resistance in various historical and geopolitical settings. More importantly, contextual relevance of intersectional literary analysis would be enhanced by the greater use of indigenous epistemologies, decolonial feminist approaches, and interpretive frameworks that are based on the region.

To sum everything discussed up, the given work defines that intersectionality can not be viewed as a simple tool of analysis related to the study of social inequality, but as the transformative critical framework that can be used to redefine the literary and cultural discourse of postcolonialism. The study will help fill the gap in the more subtle interdisciplinary and more globalized approach to identity, representation, marginalization and resistance in the modern postcolonial world by bringing together theoretical perspectives of feminism, postcolonialism and literary criticism.

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