

Unfiltered Truths The Poetics of Authenticity and Digital Womanhood in Faliha Hassan's Modern Verse

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حقائق غير منقحة: شعرية الأصالة والأنوثة الرقمية في الشعر الحديث لفليحة حسن

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Abstract

The current study is intended to examine the idea of authentic female voice in Faliha Hassan's poems. It also explores the relationship of such idea to the digital womanhood, identity and self-representation of female perspective. This study aims at showing how Hassan delivers the inner emotions of woman and identity struggles in addition of using emotional language. It hypothesizes that her poetry in general deals with divers of themes such as memory, belonging, restriction, and self-expression. It also hypothesizes that identities of women are shaped and constructed by personal experiences and social pressures. Based on the digital culture studies and feminist literary theory, this study suggests that the poetic voice of Hassan is related to modern digital forms of self-expression. In online spaces, women build up their identities by means of visibility and performance though facing expectations from society and audiences. The study comes out with several conclusions that Hassan's poetry presents women's characters as to struggle between expressing their self-truth and dealing with cultural limitations. It also concludes that Hassan's poetry can be used as an advantageous example showing self-expression and resisting silence and limitation. It also presents poetry and digital as platforms and are both spaces where women can negotiate their identity and balancing authenticity with cultural and social expectations.

Keywords: Faleeha Hassan, Identity, Female Voice, Self-representation, Digital Womanhood, Feminist Poetry

Introduction

In current digital world, social media play a crucial role concerning changing the way people, women in specific, think and present their identities. Social platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram are excellent area that give women opportunities to share their opinions, make their voices heard or even express themselves in general. However, such digital spaces make pressure on women as a female concept in masculine society concerning present ideal images of beauty, happiness or success. Because of these, women in general experience conflict occurring between showing their realities of themselves and trying to address the norms created by society and digital culture. The result is that authenticity turn out to be a crucial issue in terms of feminist concept and literary studies. It is so in relation to the way women express identity and truth in online spaces (Gill, ٢٠٠٧).

Recently, feminism is more visible in prevalent culture such as North America and Europe. The idea of feminist can be seen now in different kind of social platforms and mass media. Such visibility has been often called as popular feminism. Thus, feminism encourages women to feel strong and confident. This gives women an opportunity to reveal their rights and to challenge unfair treatment (Banet-Weiser, 2018).

Along with the rise of popular feminism, the increasing of the concept 'popular misogyny'. Misogyny indicates to hatred or unfair treatment toward women. During digital era, this notion spreads rapidly by means of social

media and platforms in general. Misogyny appears in different forms like body shaming, gender stereotypes, harassment etc. misogynic responses become stronger as a result of visibility of feminist ideas and, in turn, it sets up an online battle line of feminist voices versus anti-feminist responses. Social media has grown into a site of both empowerment and hostility simultaneously (Banet-Weiser, 2018). Feminism and misogyny struggle in a malicious conflict that complicates digital spaces for women. Women, on one hand, are expected to live, breathe and eat all things comprised of confidence and empowerment. Conversely, they are controlled, judged, and coerced to conform to unrealistic expectations. This makes it challenging for women to be authentic in the digital space. They appear confident, perfect at all times and masked amidst fear, weakness, emotional truth. Gockel Over the past few decades these tensions between real identity and performed identity have become a central theme of feminist critique and literary critique (Gill, 2007). Literature, modern poetry in particular, offers an inquiry into tensions. It captures the writing of personal history, an emotional truth, a counter to societal coercion. Using poetics, women writers can subvert problematic representation and put forward re-imagined identities that sound more accurate. In short, poetry itself writes forward into an even more contemporary scene where media images complemented books in distorting social imagination, sometimes comfortably aligned with the digital. It enables women to express pain, strength, resistance, and truth in ways that subvert the dual forces exercised by patriarchy and digital culture (Gilbert & Gubar, 1979). Feminist literary studies have illuminated the extent to which women writers, a category that includes gender non-conforming and trans people too, often resist the structures designed to enclose someone's thoughts and identities. Such systems are strengthened by means of social media. This is where women are often evaluated on the bases of beauty, trendiness and community demand in digital culture. Through poetry, women have a place to escape these pressures and write lives that exist outside the realm of digital performance. Women have used poetry to show identity as emotional, complicated, and real rather than artificial or socially controlled (Showalter 1977). It is here in the context of women's identity, voice and emotional truth that the poetry of Faliha Hassan becomes significant. Her contemporary poems are like insight into the thoughts, challenges, and realities of modern-day women. Her poetry depicts the emotional suffering of women subjected to social repression and similar unattainable ideal images vivified through her works. Hassan resists social norms and the faux digital desires created by images of femininity through poetry rooted in authentic feelings. In Hassan's poetry, an important voice comes through when the way women are expressed becomes a beautiful image but not just as an image; you hear about something experienced and yet more than being something to evoke, it evokes because they feel, realize and desire. These are just some of the poems laden with weight from that inner knowing versus outer persona made manifest, manifested within women so desperately trying to save themselves from their actual selves due to the fact that in a world where image is worth its exponential weight in gold, beauty reigns supreme over anything resembling dirt. In utilizing simplistic but eloquent poetic language to clarify women inner turmoil in order to challenge obstructive forces of feminine figures who want female identity to reside within regimented frameworks (Al-Saadi, 2023)

This study elaborates on the representation of digital womanhood and authenticity exhibited by Faliha Hassan in her current poems. The creative thesis explores the ways her poetry makes visible women's voices, serves as a foil to pressure to emulate digital identity and deploys an instrumental language with which to articulate emotional truth. The goal is to show how Hassan's poetry illuminates authenticity both as a metric of literary form and as an act of feminist defiance against the digitally defined identities for women.

Theoretical Framework

This research study draws on three main strands of feminist literary criticism to inform its theory, then explores the poetry that encapsulates and is grounded in authentic female identity through a contemporary poetic lens. The premise has been operated to investigate the contemporary poem that a Bangladeshi diasporic poet. Faliha Hassan deploys in order to conceptualize women voices as well as emotional truth against and resistive. The coerce of such contracts instituted by digital cultural structures that work against her poets. Popular feminism is a key element of the study, which refers to how women's identities are made and un-made. It is borrowed from Sarah Banet-Weiser's work of the same name. Banet-Weiser says that women's self-expression has gained more visibility with the rise of digital media but also spaces where judges are, feel pressured, attacked. These ideas inform the challenge of reconciling authentic and performed identity in women's digital lives. Secondly, this study draws on Rosalind Gill's ideas of post-feminism and the self-representational practices in digital culture. Gill contends that while women are increasingly directed to appear powerful and self-sufficient, they nevertheless remain beholden to societal pressures regarding beauty, confidence, and public persona. It also allows for an analysis of how poetic form is able to resist these pressures, and expose the emotional realities of women.

The authenticity of Faliha Hassan expressive poetry as resistance is the topic under investigation in this study. An exploration of her contemporary poetry which counters idealized visions of women in digital spaces and speaks to the lived experience of women. This study will demonstrate the reclamation of women identity and emotion in Hassan's poetry founded on feminist literary criticism in conjunction with digital feminist theory.

Literature Review

The poet selected in this case study is Modern Verse by Faliha Hassan. These are research studies conducted on this poet and her poetry addressing various perspectives and topics. Women take issue: Aspects of women's subordination by CCCS is one such study. These problems, described in (1978), reveal men and women are socially unequal, a construction through society rather than natural. This means the media plays an essential role in creating ideas about women who are often depicted as weak, in the home or subordinated to men. According to the CCCS, media is not neutral but in favor of dominant modes ideation and provides ample evidence for this. However, what is another pivotal idea in this work is that cultural research should take women experiences seriously. Angela McRobbie (1978) Jackie: *An Ideology of Adolescent Femininity*, how girls' magazines configure young women as a certain kind of subject in the way that they think about identity and femininity. This time she centres her argument on the magazine Jackie, showing how it trains teenage girls into what being a "good" girl means in culture. According to McRobbie, the magazine dictates how girls should be, look and feel. Prompts them towards romance, beauty & relationships and away from independence and critical thought. This helps the magazine to develop an unbalanced perception of womanhood, perpetuating patriarchy. She further argues that media, such as girls' magazines, not only reflect but create reality.

Judith Williamson (1978) *Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and Meaning in Advertising Studies* the way meaning is constructed through ads and how this shapes people's minds. She describes how advertisements do not only essentially sell products, but also ideas, values and lifestyles. In terms of how Williamson illustrates this, she says that ads encode meaning and that they use images, symbols and language to convey messages. These messages are responsible for how people conceptualize success, beauty as well as gender and happiness. Most ads relate products with emotional feelings so that a person would think purchasing something creates an improvement to their identity or life. Advertising is also claimed to provide sustenance to ideologies in society, she states. Gill (2007) explains modern mediated culture displays a form of post-feminism in Postfeminist media culture: Elements of a sensibility. In this concept, women are told they are empowered and liberated, however social dictates around beauty and confidence still dictate how they must present. Gill also said that digital media has exacerbated pressure on women to consistently curate and perfect their public persona. That is why if today you want to show a real and genuine self, it becomes more than difficult.

This current study explores the ideas of authenticity and digital womanhood presented by the poetry of Faliha Hassan from the modern lifestyle. The study focuses on how the poems of hers capture female feelings, self and those depict real women experiences in a post- social media world. It also examines the way her poetry evidences women's struggles to project polished images onto the internet even as it lays bare their underlying emotional realities.

Section one: Authentic Female Voice

However, earlier centuries women writers faced self-doubt and societal pressure while trying to write. The female authors, many of whom were taught that meekness, submission, and weakness equated to femininity so they saw writing as "done" or innately "unfeminine." Consequently, women would be afraid of being ridiculous if they wished to express themselves in literature (Showalter, 1979), as it was regarded as "mad," "inferior" or intellectually weak. Showalter indicates Writers such as Anne Finch, Anne Bradstreet, and Anne Killigrew often expressed anxiety about their role as writers. They sometimes felt their creativity was weak or "sick," because society taught them that women were naturally less capable of artistic achievement. Even when these women wrote poetry, they were often forced to be modest and self-deprecating, presenting their work as small or unimportant. This shows how women's writing was shaped by social expectations that limited their confidence and voice (1979). These women still resisted silence by writing at all. Even when they apologized for writing, they were still expressing their identity and emotions through poetry. In this way, their work shows the beginning of a female literary voice, where women slowly begin to speak about their experiences, feelings, and inner struggles despite social restrictions. The idea that women's writing is a form of identity formation and self-expression, even when it is shaped by doubt and limitation (Showalter, 1979).

Women writers historically faced social restrictions that shaped their literary identity and voice. Women who wrote openly and refused modesty were often labeled as "mad," "unfeminine," or morally improper, which shows

how patriarchal culture controlled female expression (Showalter, 1979). Because of these pressures, women writers were forced into limited choices: silence, modest domestic writing, or public rejection.

Writers such as Aphra Behn, Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, Emily Dickinson, and Louisa May Alcott had to present their writing as modest or secondary in order to gain acceptance. This generated tension between the high-mindedness of artistic aspiration and the social norms of ideal femininity (Showalter 1979). She further argues that women are battered by what Virginia Woolf calls a "double bind" in which they must choose between being "merely a woman" or shoulder the burden of gaining equality with men (Showalter 1979).

In other words, female writing carries both motifs of containment and fear as well as limitation throughout the novel and illustrates how cultural discourses half-informed women writers in engaging these elements through literature. Yet, women writers discovered ways to express identity and voice in their writing despite the two-fold tension of resistance and restriction (Showalter, 1979).

Showalter, for instance, argues that in the patriarchal culture women were compelled to inhabit a profound psychological conflict because creativity was defined in terms of masculinity which leads women writers into the feeling that writing is unnatural or "masculine" (Showalter 1979). Even women like Aphra Behn vocalized this unrest through what has been described as a "masculine part" within them, pointing out how writers were negotiating with gender identity and artistic identity (Showalter, 1979). Nineteenth-century women writers were under even more duress, so much so that they often resorted to male impersonation or "male mimicry" in order to achieve legitimacy in literature, but this process frequently caused psychological dissonance and artistic conflict (Showalter, 1979). Showalter illustrates this struggle with examples such as Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Charlotte Brontë. In Barrett Browning's image of George Sand, the struggle for a literary identity as "woman" must wrestle with being "man"; meanwhile Brontë resorts to male narration in order to approximate access to male literary authority (Showalter 1979). Yet these same strategies frequently produced what Showalter calls "technical falseness," wherein employing male forms could misrepresent female experience whilst generating a conflict of authenticity versus imitation (Showalter 1979).

Showalter describes women writers as having been placed in a "double bind", where they were forced to remain modest and contained within domestic genres or put themselves forward into masculine literary traditions only to be excluded, or place themselves outside of their own definitions (1979). The consequence was that numerous women found other ways, by inscribing covert messages in their work or relaying female experience through a proxy framework of recognized literature. Such strategies were enabling but also confining, localized identity and voice could be asserted while carefully negotiating socially liminal cultural conditions.

Showalter draws conclusions indicating women literary history be formed both restrictive and productive where feminine authors slowly but surely started to establish their own independence in relation of patriarchal limits (Showalter, 1979). Furthermore, Gilbert and Gubar state that women writers in the nineteenth century had difficulty finding their identity and literary voice from within a male dominated tradition. She argued that literature was created within a patriarchy dominated culture, in which male authors were responsible for defining creativity and authority and artistic value whereas women had nearly had to subordinate themselves (Gilbert & Gubar 2000). For women writers, a tussle of personal voice with social concept. Due to society pressuring women into being still, meek, and submissive female authors learned to stifle their creativity or use covert means of expression (Gilbert & Gubar 2000). This led many women writers to employ hidden meanings in their writings, in the form of symbolism or double voices, through which they express their genuine thoughts and feelings. Women were, Barbara Fuchs writes, "hermetically sealed in an identity formed by men's literary images" (p.451). Phillips and others have described this as a kind of "split identity." And so, it made us anxious, uncertain of ourselves, terrified that it would be failed artistically. But the traditional restrictions allowed women to build a very strong literary voice in response to these limits by subverting the male narratives and writing them with female perspective (Gilbert & Gubar, 2000). Faliha Hassan's poetry is true female voice because it depicts the brutal and barefaced emotions, identity of women Ah sometimes their existing experiences in prose. Her modern poetic manner is a break from the historical restrictions of feminist critics that allows for a potential female expression to be not only independent, but self-determined. This reflects the evolution of women's writing from silence and suffering to wider visibility, self-determination. It is Faleeha Hassan, who is an Iraqi poet, educator, editor, writer and playwright born in Najaf in 1967 now living in the US. America is, Alaa Hikmet- recognized as the *FIRST IRAQI WOMAN WRITER WITH POETRY FOR CHILDREN*. Hassan has a Master of Arts in Arabic Literature, and wrote roughly twenty books. Her works include widely translated poetry, essays and fiction (English, French, German, Italian, Kurdish, Korean and more). For her writing in poetry and short fiction, she has

won numerous literary prizes through Iraq and the Middle East. Her poems have also published in some of the American literary magazines like: Philadelphia Poets, Harbinger Asylum, The Brooklyn Rail (Jabbar, 2019).

Faliha Hassan's own poetry is one expression of this continuing struggle: her female identity is held in tension by not being entirely suffocated, but rather vocally expressed through modern poetic language and period personal emotion. The evolution of her work mirrors the larger shift in contemporary literature from a tension over "the anxiety of authorship" to a freer and more self-defined female voice.

Her poetry has a blunt cadence and an aversion to euphemism that gives expression to the gut knowledge of women even in an epoch where silence or modesty, as earlier feminist literary theory characterized their linguistic confinement, so frequently reigned supreme. Female identity, for Hassan, means a straightforward reflexive reclamation of self. In Faleeha Hassan, the poem *Black Iraqi Woman* shows us possible identities; especially collective identity and individual self. In the first part of the poem, she emphasizes communal identity by recalling her father's last words to her. He hands her an object and says, you will not leave this behind; keep this because it reminds you of family legacy. But when it arrives, she unpacks a stone fraught with unintelligible symbols and strange pictograms.

This is an image that describes identity based on common factors such as land, language, tradition and civilization. This is how these similar features are something that serves a group of people together can feel the sense of belonging and the poem showcases this. However, Hassan is also claiming that the absence or loss of this inherited meaning is what leads her to casually write the poem across how personal loss and cultural disconnection congeal into poetic expression (Jabbar, 2019).

Black Iraqi Woman shows a poet steeped in identity; the root of that identity turned by place, memory, and inherited experience. Not only physically but spiritually and emotionally, she tells herself "I am from Najaf, Iraq", when she says: "I am a native of alNajaf, Iraq spiritually, mournfully and poetically! Hassan however puts it succinctly when he says, My father said (2016, pp.23–24). This indicates that one becomes who he or she is due to outside influences family, history, surroundings etc. It begs a continuum question if the person everyone tries to force me into is more aware of these forces, than they are. Can the poet withstand this self which some have tried to create? This characterizes identity as collective, not merely individual, Hassan shows this through imagery of cities, history and inherited memory, walls have a personality too. Her identity is not whole, but a reflection of her relationship with her father, his anxieties and the surrounding culture. The poetry also expresses loss and disintegration where being torn from your roots from family can separate you as well which brings the inner turmoil when it comes to feeling happy (Jabbar, 2019). By the end of the poem, she wonders where her heart and soul is, saying: Has my Lord forbidden me to be happy?" and continues, "Am I forbidden to preserve What I have left And sit some warm evening Averting my ear from a voice that doesn't interest me? (Hassan, 2016, pp. 23–24).

This sounds tired and like an entreaty for silence; they clash the tiring internal battle of self against social demand.

Similarly, in *I Whisper in My Room*, Hassan reflects on her previous embody of Iraq with the new distance she feels towards a distinct culture. Has ever wondered why her father put a leash on her as a child, saying: "Why, Daddy Would you argue the streets were too tight For my new bike whenever I complained? (Hassan, 2018, p. 26). This is a question that illustrates the extent to which not only your movement, but also your independence has been passing through coverings like tents over the years.

The poem shows that such literal borders are a figurative border that hold not just women's bodily autonomy, but even their identity, hostage. Hassan highlights how gender roles in society and interaction with girls is an important aspect of identity, acknowledging self-exploration within these socially constructed norms.

Following the earlier poetic references to these works, here it is again employed as a referent yet in order to insinuate disarray and ruptured identity. Her father asks her if he thinks that her "roots have been torn asunder" (Hassan, 2016, pp. 23–24), which also symbolizes how she is separate from who she now was and used to be. Which raises an even larger question: Is breaking away from one's roots losing a kind of inner moral order or identity? She also considers happiness, belonging and emotional wholeness, bringing ideas relating to the construction fragmentation of self (Jabbar, 2019).

Such meditations come through achingly evident at the end of this poem in its emotional appeal:

I need you. I ask you: Has my Lord forbidden me to be happy? Am I forbidden to preserve What I have left And sit some warm evening Averting my ear from a voice that doesn't interest me? Answer me, Father! Or change the face of our garden So it changes...to what they believe (Hassan, 2016, pp. 23–24).

The lines convey emotional pain, longing for liberation as well as lightness and hope and a wish for change to overcome the obstacles of cultural norms or family expectations which stand between her and their happiness.

That is in *I Whisper in My Room*, where the poet compares her current life with that of her homeland. the poet remembers her life back in her home country, and contrast it with one from a cultural setting that is alien to her background. It displays significant cultural contrast and illustrates how this distinction impacts her identity. Her refusal to accept the rationale from her parents reveal an "inner self" deeply bound by personal experience and memory. This concealed identity is also important in the commentary on her "visible self," and how feeling internal indicators can coincide with external reality.

She asks her father, "How come my father, every time I asked you to buy a bicycle for me, You said the streets are too small? " (Hassan, 2018, p. 26). This query is rhetorical, as it is an indirect acknowledgment to the struggles of women's freedom in her own society. This also indicates her awareness of the restrictions on gender and control with culture. he goes on to dream about another life for women, stating,

Look at the women from my window! They are riding horses, piloting airplanes, skating, Dancing on water, sailing boats, and ... They are laughing. Laughing and laughing. But, whenever I try to smile, I get slapped by a war! (Hassan, 2018, p. 26). These lines create an antithesis between freedom and constriction, with other women depicted as free while she finds herself limited or at odds. And last, she speaks to her mother and starts asking with the tenor of social atmospheres forged by kin and precedent. This indicates that the poet is well aware of restrictions imposed upon women by cultural norms and their identity is affected (Jabbar, 2019).

Section Two: Digital Womanhood

Girls and young women make their identities through digital media. techniques such as social networking, posting self-portraits of women online, sexting and video. These endeavors and impressions stir blush, yet they also serve as vital mechanisms of expression for younger females in the electronic age.

Women can also have more exposure and public voice thanks to social media. Girls are using online platforms to present themselves and be heard, even how they want others to perceive them. This allows more control over their identity and opening up space for possibilities of empowerment. Online spaces facilitate expression of confidence, individuality and independence in women, which is not as easily possible offline.

At the same time, Dobson says visibility works both ways. Women are made to fake it till they sort it always on social platforms when they flaunt feminine looks, guts and riches. Young women may have felt obliged to be glamorous, confident, and popular to keep up with their friends on apps that span the course of seconds online. Therefore, social networking platforms are not completely liberating for self-presentation; when agency is impeded by cultural ideals and roles dictating how women should appear or behave (Dobson, 2015).

Another strategy identified by Dobson is a postfeminist idealized femininity that portrays women as empowered and independent but damsel-like adherence to hegemonic beauty norms when online. This gives rise to a paradoxical reality where women are liberated but need to follow a narrow rule set. Social media thus can support and undermine parts of the femininity. Another key idea is that young women not just consume media.

And Dobson shows how we are in persistent self-making mode, stitching together our digital tracks. They decide what to reveal, how to represent themselves and how to reply. However, these decisions are made in the systems of power which determine what kind of self-representation is accepted or even worth anything. In the piece, Dobson demonstrates that these myths originate from a particular space for women in digital culture. It creates a space for representation, expression and empowerment, while simultaneously enforcing the notion that women must conform to performativity. Consequently, digital self-representation can be considered both an arena for freedom and a modern battlefield on which the female psyche must grapple with what that means (Dobson, 2015).

As noted by Wickens and Haughton (2023), 'Women often create their Instagram identities around what people will think of them. However, here the researchers confirm that social media femininity is mostly a performance art. In terms of how they ought to behave online, women think very carefully about their standards.

For women only, looking over the pictures before they go online entails looking at her own photo to verify that it conforms with some collective myth of femininity. Online identity is molded by the pressure of audience expectation (women want to fit in and be positively viewed). Their online self-presentation goes on record in public, and is both voluntary and prescriptive of social custom. Women will also paint an "ideal" image of herself online. They may downplay certain aspects of their real life and only highlight those that conform to accepted ideas of feminine nature. This resulted in what the study describes as a "put-together self" whereby online identity is performed to come across as palatable and fit within social norms (Wickens & Haughton, 2023).

Social media is another tool used by women to manage how they are seen. They manage their online personas by performing a few types of behaviors and concealing others. This demonstrates that femininity on social media is shaped by cultural ideals of beauty, conduct, and gender roles. Audience Expectations Strongly Affect

Women's Online Identities Thus, femininity on social media is an identity performed under conditions of social pressure and the desire for approval (Wickens & Haughton, 2023).

The image of the Arab woman in fiction is dominated by traditional and cultural stereotypes, making her identity a form of social constraint rather than true personal freedom. Numerous literary works portray Arab women as docile, mute, and confined by familial or religious conventions. These depictions are usually of a suffering feminine under patriarchy reducing the female to passive victim not an independent individual (Al-Ali, 1994).

Meanwhile, literary critics explain that this image is shifting with the rise of women's writing in the Arab world today. Women writers came out to depict female characters as more conscious of oppression and more eager to fight it. These writers do not depict women solely as hapless victims, but rather writing them in search of identity, dignity and freedom. Such a shift is crucial in the fight towards a more nuanced, multi-faceted representation of Arab women (Mikhail, 1994). Also, as one more point to criticize, the Arab women are under pressure by local patriarchal traditions and western stereotype. At times, Arab women become only variations of oppressed Muslim woman figures that Western feminist perspectives inform us need saving. This creates a simplistic portrait that erases the nuances of Arab women life experiences. Thus, literature serves as a tool of rebellion for Arab women writers against both local and Western oppression, with their own voices defining them (Al-Ali 1994).

Consequently, the representation of the Arab female in literature is both restrictive and hope-filled. On this note regarding the saturation of foreign texts through antiquated or historic contexts that place women in passive roles, new-age literature focuses on integrating Arab Women with better developed characters within active expressionist positions fighting to hold onto their identity. This copiousness of women writing is important in many aspects as it re-shapes the perception from silence to self-voicedness, allowing literature to be an instrument for empowerment and a tool for Arab womanhood identity construction (Mikhail, 1994).

Hassan's very being authentic to the phenomenon of women dichotomy in the cyberspace, taut between authenticity and social acceptance. Reflection on the Changes Required, Female quotes: The poem *I Whisper in My Room* compares video games with a woman who cannot accept what being free looks like around her and begins to be deeply embedded in virtual feminine identity and internet self-representation.

In the poem, the speaker says, Look at the women from my window! They are riding horses, piloting airplanes... They are laughing. Laughing and laughing. But, whenever I try to smile, I get slapped by a war" (Hassan, 2018, p. 26).

These lines turn the gap between a public ideology of female freedom and personal constraint into something visible. It is a contrast like the Women in their lives versus the perfect Instagram women, not mention that behind the safety of a digital curtain one can be liberated, bold and joyous while many are chained to archaic cultures fighting debilitating expectations and emotional blackmail.

Within Postfeminist Digital Cultures, women are mediated attention and opportunity to be vocal via digital channels but nonetheless this visibility is heavily policed by romantic discourse demanding sufficient feminine behaviors are channeled. Hassan's speaker-witnesses enjoy the freedom of women, but they cannot access that freedom fully; this is media identity unmasked, as something visible but not freely attainable, an idol to be admired like those flashily portrayed online. The words "I get slapped by a war" signify the elements that cut off female expression conflict, trauma, social control. These constraints can thus be interpreted as the combined burdens of public scrutiny, gender stereotypes and audience expectations in terms of the manner women present themselves in digital space (Dobson, 2015). This shows that Hassan's poem experiences both the isolation of a digital self-representation because he wishes to show himself but is at having to deal with what society wants him to be. Indeed, her poems suggest that female identity on the page or in social media posts arrives at a type of paradox wherein boundaries created through both expression and inhibition become most transparent, which makes her writing particularly pertinent to conversations about digital visibility female self-representation.

Self-Expression, Restriction, Identity, and Visibility in Faleeha Hassan's Poetry

Faleeha Hassan gives us a female voice in *I Whisper in My Room* that yearns to be free but is trapped by limitation. When she says, look at the women from my window The speaker juxtaposes her life with the liberty of other women. They are horsemen, pilots of planes, skaters, dancing on water, sailing boats" (Hassan 2018: 26). These are images of movement and freedom, they are interesting also because they seem happy. The females are active and direct. They are able to be active and live life. But this freedom is something that the speaker seems to be distanced from. She looks from afar, not able to partake.

The experience crystallises when the speaker proclaims: "They are laughing, laughing and laughing. But every time I smile, war slaps me in the face" (Hassan, 2018: 26). The fact that "laughing" has been repeated reflects a picture of happiness and openness, but the abruptness of "I get slapped by a war" evokes violence and pain, deception. The contrast demonstrates that the speaker's life is ruled by the forces of power which deprive him of

happiness. Where war literally means the act of violence in some places, the experience of it can also be one of social oppression and fear an end to cultural expression. But the conditions of being a woman in society reveals that sometimes, even what women want most is denied to them.

This concept holds significance in connection with the veneration of uninhibited female self-expression. I want to smile and laugh and enjoy life, but this is stopping me. So, this speaks to the way that women are constrained by circumstances. According to Dobson, 2015, 'Women seek visibility and voice but their identities are constructivist constructs based on the available social practices around them in part from public pressure; who can speak? In Hassan's poem, the speaker knows what freedom is but cannot really live it. It sets up a conflict between wanting and not being able to get it all. The poem provides a sanctuary for the speaker to express feelings that reality does not allow her to vocally articulate.

The poem shows how restrictions start in daily life. KING GESAR: "Why, my father Every time I asked you to buy me a bicycle You said the streets are too small?" (Hassan, 2018, p. 26). This question reveals how even trivial wishes do not go unobjected from family and society. Bicycles are synonyms of freedom, movement, and independence. Yet the father's response reveals how they are robbed of even basic freedoms. The narrow streets represent the constricted opportunities afforded to women. This implies that in everyday life, women are constrained childhood ambitions are even suppressed.

This is closely tied to the notion of digital femininity. Social media seems to give women the liberty of expressing themselves and exhibiting their identities however this liberty is to a great extent etched by social scrutiny. Yet despite this augmentation that digital spaces afford women, Dobson (2015) argues that they impose expectations on women to put out acceptable versions of themselves. The poet Hassan shows the speaker in his poem Matroodist who can see freedom but cannot attain it. On one hand, women are free online, on the other they may have invisible barriers in how she is socially restricted.

The emotional disorder that lies behind this fight for expression is unveiled in Hassan's poem. Where *I Whisper in My Room* is about boundaries, *Black Iraqi Woman* is about identity and home. In this poem, Hassan connects identity to familial memory and cultural legacies. And the narrator recounts what her father used to tell her: "Keep this close to you daughter; it is proof that our bloodline connects us" (pp.23-24, Hassan, 2016). What that sentence shows is that inheritance and memory are bound up in identity. The Stone, Symbol of Roots, History, And Belonging. The father gave London this "stone", it is a way to connect leave some of its roots behind. It is an identity sign passed on from one generation to another.

But defining it, or being in a position of safety among it isn't easy. No one to care for me! Like prisoners crouching, circle round in place You are the center of your world (Hassan, 2016: 24). But this identity can also be a prison when looking at this image. Metaphor for prison walls well founded in the boundaries of social and cultural identity. In this regard heritage provides meaning but also puts you in limitation. That identity she inherits, it locks her away.

The conflict is emphasized by the speaker querying, "Father do you believe it that roots have come undone?" (Hassan, 2016, p. 24). Root represents the link, relationship tied to family, motherland and identity. In this case, the relationships need to be "torn asunder," which means they must end. That line suggests the sense of a loss, but also fracturing. And that she experiences her culture and the past as a long-departed community that, apparently at least temporarily no longer owns. Hassan describes identity as something that can easily be shattered and destroyed from war, displacement, or external pressures over time.

This questioning in an emotional way continues from the speaker: "Has my Lord made it haram for me to be happy? Am I not allowed to keep save What is left?" (Hassan, 2016, p. 24). These lines show a strong killer of emotions. It begs the question are happiness and self-preservation even permitted? This resonates with the plight of women who feel this is a war to protect their identity. You learned that the female identity requires defense, an assertion against loss and silence and restriction.

This concept relates to digital visibility. Women writers today inhabit various online spaces to render their identities visible in words, images and self-representation. But this visibility is so frequently exposed to scrutiny and coercion. According to Dobson (2015), digital visibility can position women in relative empowerment but also the opposite by putting them under public scrutiny. *Black Iraqi Woman* then uses the poetic urge to overcome a politic of invisibility, making identity visible when it is otherwise obscured. She uses her voice as a tool of memory and erasure. Women take to digital spaces in a similar way; visibility helps women announce not only identity, but also resist invisibility.

Indisputably both poems demonstrate that voice is a substantial piece of identity. The speaker poses questions that show restriction: In *I Whisper in My Room*, with lines like "Why, my father ...? (Hassan, 2018, p. 26). In *Black Iraqi Woman* the poet employs questions to articulate a sense of loss: "Has my Lord deprived me of happiness? (Hassan, 2016, p. 24). These questions reveal how much of an emotional struggle you can be in trying to figure out the way forward. They prove that female voice is an act of defiance against silence. Even when the speaker cannot change her circumstances, speaking is an exercise in self-assertion.

This is to affirm feminist observations that self-representation is an empowerment. As put forward in *The Madwoman in the Attic*, women writers utilize literature to refute silence and to make room for femininity (Gilbert & Gubar, 2000). Hassan's poems do exactly this. They carve out space for women to explore pain, memory, desire and identity. Her poetry transforms personal anguish into public articulation.

Hence, Hassan poetry can be seen as a testament to the similar problems which women battling in current digital world. Women want to express themselves and showcase their identities, but they do so in the face of social pressure. In *I Whisper in My Room*, the protagonist's central conflict is whether to be free or trapped. *Black Iraqi Woman* pits identity against loss. By combining these poems, they showcase the delicate balance of personal yearning and external hindrance when understanding women's voices.

Hassan on the other hand showcases that female self-representation is essential but also cumbersome. They can say it only until simply to preserve identity, but the measure in which war, culture or social barriers suppress their expression is what limits them. In poetry and in digital life, too. Digital spaces are sites of self-expression (Dobson, 2015), but also space to perform. They derived from this understanding that behind every visible identity, there is sometimes an invisible struggle; hence Hassan's poetry.

This is how the poetry of Hassan relate with this idea of digital womanhood. Women speaking exists as poetic, and also in digital realms, but friction from both modern forces activates those spaces. Women want to feel seen, heard and believed when the truth is they are forced into silence, confinement and glorified visibility. The sincerity and emotional nuance that Hassan brings to this struggle is largely rooted in her voice, so much so that her work is essential reading for anyone who cares about the representation of women in literature, mediatic or digitally mediated culture.

Conclusion

The research examines the use of modern verse by Faliha Hassan to represent genuine female identity and to depict the realities of Internet womanhood. Stated simply, her poetry is both impossibly raw and beautifully constructed in its depiction of the struggles that women face physically, emotionally and socially. Hassan's poetry is of great value for the critical lens through which her body defines the senses for digital womanhood and modern femoral self-designations.

It has been examined the aspects behind authentic female voice and self-representation through understanding a modern concept of digital womanhood in Faleeha Hassan's poetry. The diagnosis of *I Whisper in My Room* and *Black Iraqi Woman* emphasize Hassan's poetics channels the emotions, identity challenges and lived experiences of women with direct and expressive language. The female speaker is feeling confined and distressed from social and cultural boundaries in *I Whisper in My Room*; on the other hand, *Black Iraqi Woman* forms identity via memory and nostalgia through a powerful connection to their home. Therefore, collectively, these poems show that women are not generalized; their identity is ever-changing due to external factors such as family pressures, society demands, the impacts of war and culture.

It also argues that Hassan can be connected to modern digital culture today women speaking for themselves in social media. Postfeminist digital cultures put women in the impossible position of expressing themselves both to be seen and to become visible, whilst also being expected to perform their identity by predicting audience reaction or articulating a personal belief but, when combined with social pressure or perceived popularity, are left playing at authenticity (Dobson 2015). Similarly, the poetry that Hassan wrote reflects a clash between the outspoken and the confined; being seen and writing to erase. While her female speakers try to be true to the realities of their minds, they can only deliver stories that bring towards societal and contextual constraints on their mouths.

Thus, Hassan's poetry serves as a primitive textualization of the exact same struggles for contemporary digital womanhood. The conclusion considers both textual contexts of female self-representation as negotiations between the tension of authentic origin and constricting forced identities. Hassan grants space for poetic emotional honesty and identity formation, but she also grapples with the personal history of multiple access to power that women still must overcome in order to be truly heard and understood. Lastly, the study argues that girl voice in poetry or cyberspace is an authentic yet fraught site of social power that resists analysis outside the fluid conditions of contemporary life.

The collection of poems emotional pain is given some absence of 'perspective': she knows freedom but can not be liberated from such joy through what is suggested by other women in contrast; Hell a reality the narrator exclaims to feel living in like "whenever I try to smile, I get slapped by a war" (Hassan. 2018:26).

By contrast, women in digital environments often face something very similar: images on social media where they are given aspirational representations of freedom and prosperity despite their subjection to fully tangible socio-cultural or psychological strictures offline. Nevertheless, as in *Black Iraqi Woman*, identity is both a personal experience (as feminist literature must confirm) but also produced in dialogue with family memory and history as this lines demonstrates: It belongs there for you not to lose your it authenticates our daughter (Hassan 2016: pp23-24) Again mirroring the process of digital identity formation, through which female identities as for many other socially salient characteristics (Archer & Yamashita 2003), are constructed through intergenerational transmission of narratives and expectations.

This model reflects Hassan's poetry immediate influence in which self-representation is governed by visible and audience pressures within the same online identity formation theory. According to Post-feminist Digital Cultures, digital femininity is a social construction suggesting that women adapt how they perform based on what they want others to imagine them like (Dobson, 2015). This concept can give meaning to the relationship between Hassan's Lyric Textual Voice and digital identity. Women are not merely expressing identity in either case; rather, they are negotiating spaces of authenticity and desire amidst social control. This marks a prophetic vision, if we like: Hassan's poetry as anticipation of the perimeter passages of digital womanhood. Her female voice feed on agency, validation and emotional authenticity only to be stifled and shamed by the same powers that hold her there through born identities. Likewise, women who work online create identities that may appear transparent and polyphonic but remain shaped by cultural practice and audience expectations.

Bringing this together, Hassan shows us through her poetry and social media posts that female self representation (artistically or otherwise) is endlessly a negotiation with truth within herself and what is included in or excluded from the meanings of her poetry rests firmly in the same territory that defines digital female identity now.

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