

The Theme of Powerlessness, Meaninglessness and Normlessness as Reflected in Dinaw Mengestu's Trilogy

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Abstract

This study focuses on the themes of alienation in the three fictional works of Dinaw Mengestu; "The Beautiful Things that Heaven Bears" (2007), "How to Read the Air" (2010), and "All Our Names" (2014). This research aims to investigate specifically the causes of powerlessness, meaninglessness, and normlessness forms of alienation that enumerates by extracting the fundamental concern that human being faces in the course of immigration. This study deals with the major concerns and matters of the immigrants' causes and reactions of alienation regardless of the reasons of their exodus. The main reason for focusing on the concept of alienation in the selected novels is that this area of literary theme has not been given enough attention to be studied comprehensively in the context of African (Ethiopians) immigrants' life. Besides, no other Ethiopian literary work has portrayed these themes of meaninglessness, normlessness, and powerlessness of better than the selected three novels which have dealt with the pain and sufferings of alienation in the lives of the. This study tried to explore the immigrants' sense of alienation in the hosting country and in the process of immigration where life as an immigrant was unbearable, forcing them to try towards the process of economic. An attempt is made to explore the multiple dimensions of alienation and the alienating factors based on Melvin Seeman's aspects of alienation: powerlessness, normlessness and meaninglessness. The selected three literary immigrant novels reveal the feelings of alienation as a central thematic preoccupation. The researcher has used textual analysis to explore the selected literary works and captured the portrayal of alienation of the African immigrants which allows us the understanding, processing, and witnessing of human suffering.

Keywords: Alienation, Dinaw, Seeman, powerlessness, and meaninglessness, Normlessness

1. Introduction

In a sociological view, it can be said that the human being lives in a group for various socio-economic advantages as a universal due to its basic behavioural characteristic of nature. A person isn't created to live alone; he or she's designed to live in fellowship. First fellowship with God; then fellowship with other men. That's what the Bible tells us. This suggests that human beings cannot possibly live alone effectively to win a meaningful essence of life because they have a potential of

getting better advantage to their lives in communion. According to the Open Bible (1985), human beings first fellowship with God, then fellowship with another man which advocates social and collective shares. The basic intention of such a sociological concept is a continuous and interdependent relationship among the individuals in a certain group of society. By its nature, taking man as a social animal is to mean human beings can never exclusively live themselves from society. In their attempt to live without interdependence of one another, they possibly show either a wild behaviour or they should have a divinity power.

Similarly, the undeniable truth about the impact of creating a better personality through the attitudes, beliefs, morals, ideas and the overall conduct can be shaped by the influence of the community where s/he lives. All these are established through communication and interpersonal relationships with others. For some reasons, it can be difficult to function properly for some people when the social norms will not allow them to practice all those mentioned interactions because the natural or artificial forces influence them to live accompanying different from their inclined association. Hence, they may develop and experience various forms of alienation in such absence of natural interactions within the society or in their state of denial to access the natural and fundamental desires of fulfilling the primary human necessities. In such a situation, social restrictions and specific inadequacies have pushed modern human beings into a despairing personal world that is not connected to those of others around them, and the result of such despondences may create different problems. In line with it, the social, political, and economic circumstances of a particular society have insightful effects on the literary preoccupation of writers who want to associate themselves with the reality of their communities.

The study deals with the themes of alienation in the three novels of Dinaw Mengestu: “The Beautiful Things that Heaven Bears” (2007), “How to Read the Air” (2010), and “All Our Names” (2014). The reason why alienation becomes a major preoccupation of human conditions in the selected novels is because it is portrayed as one of the greatest problems of the meaning and purpose of life on the earth. Alienation is widespread and can be seen in different forms portrayed in various genres of literature. One of the areas of literary genres that deal with this concept in the novel in general and the immigrant novel in particular. As it is explained in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* published (Aug30, 2018), alienation can be viewed as an aspect of theory, concept, philosophy, pragmatic reality, or may be considered as a fictional state of mind in which it is to be taken a multidisciplinary concept. It can be argued that alienation is one of the profound and central issues of immigrant literary works with specific references to contemporary novels though it needs an intensive study to identify its form of existence. In his interview with DW (15/9/2014), Dinaw, as a second-generation African immigrant, has produced the three novels with the intention of informing his experience of immigration as equal as the first-generation immigrant communities feel it.

2. Significance of the Study

various researchers who are interested to conduct their studies on the issue of alienation may find it helpful to access the concept of alienation for their study and see further gaps of researchable areas. This study also helps to contribute its role in a brief way to a better understanding of alienation through the lives of the immigrant people of the selected novels. Thus, this productive effort of the study could help to the understanding of the precise sources of alienation among different groups of

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society which would also allow us to plan a better social policy so as to tackle the foundation of the problems. This research also creates significant awareness on the causes and consequences of immigration in reference to the lives of the immigrant characters of the selected novels. It could further utilize in creating consciousness about the potential distraction of dislocation and relocation of human beings since the issue of migration becomes a global burden in which the international communities take as a common concern. Further to that, this study also significantly offers data to the stakeholders of the immigrant institutions while attempting to publicize the African immigrants' current conditions and to come up with a possible solution to the migration problems. Last but not least, this study could inspire various fields of social and humanity researches to integrate literature in their fields of study.

3. Review of Related Studies

In his M.A thesis, Theodoros (2005) "Some Aspects of Alienation Reflected in V.S. Naipaul's *Half a Life*". This study deals with the concept of alienation as it is reflected in the context of Caribbean immigrant characters. As Theodoros states in his statement of the problem, the study focused on the question of identity in the colonial era based on the Marxist point of view which focuses mainly on political and economic perspectives of alienation. Esmaeel and Hojjat (2012) are other researchers who have also conducted collaborative research on the themes of alienation with the title of "A Survey of Man's Alienation in Modern World". These researchers aim at recalling different modes of alienation in the modern world, and they look closely at contemporary alienations of the characters in Sam Shepard's *Buried Child* and *True West*. They also try their best to analyze the mentioned novels by applying Paul Sartre's ethical alienation and Heidegger's ontological alienation to these works.

Abdul (2013) who has studied a "Theme of Alienation in Modern Literature". He has selected modern European and American literary novels for his analysis of alienation. Accordingly, the alienated characters of the novels that he has selected are recurrent figures in much of the post-modern American and European fictions. Another related work by Ahmed Abuzeid (1987) entitled as "The Theme of Alienation in the Major Novels of Thomas Hardy" which is one of the prominent researches on the subject of alienation. It mainly focuses on the theme of alienation in general and the causes of human isolation in particular, and it is analyzed in the selected novels of the wide trajectory of Victorian literature. The next two MA academic papers are also very pertinent to this study because these works of research have taken the trilogy for their research. One of them is Sylvia's (2015) thesis *Re/Creating History through the Persistence of Memory in How to Read the Air*, and she tries to explore the combination and relationship between the real experiences of the immigrant communities and the experiences of the present fictional characters. Sylvia's preliminary point of discussion is recreating narratives of the past and narratives of identity about time and space regarding *How to Read the Air* and other immigrant novels.

4. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to explore the themes of alienation of the immigrants in the selected literary texts.

- Identify the portraits of meaninglessness in the selected trilogy.

- Identify the various of powerlessness and normlessness in the selected trilogy
- Show the major causes and effects of meaninglessness, powerlessness, and normlessness of the immigrants in the selected novels.

5. Theoretical Framework of the Study

Concerning the theoretical frame of this study, the researcher takes Seeman's (1959) sociological dimensions of alienation: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation, and self-estrangement. Different scholars have tried to rephrase and interpret Seeman's theory of alienation in the contexts and fields of various disciplines since a lot of things have changed since the production of Seeman's work. The present researcher has taken this framework considering its visibility for the purpose of the selected novels. Melvin Seeman published his theory, *On the Meaning of Alienation* (1959), in the journal *American Sociological Review* as an attempt to identify the meaning of the concept of alienation. This theory is cherished by various areas of studies because it has comprehensively redefined the publication of Marx's manuscripts. In his piece, Seeman explains the duty as being to produce a specific and unique social aspect rather than a global indicator of the individual's feelings of pleasure or hopelessness, discomfort or dissatisfaction, uselessness or hopefulness.

6. Analysis and Discussions

Kalekin Fishman (1996:97) states powerlessness as: "the gap existing between what a person wants to do and what that person feels capable of doing". This point implies that the inability, vulnerability, and dependency of a person to determine his fate in the challenges of the daily life. When the individual's decision-making apparatus in the overall activities of social structure is disabled or excluded, that person can be labeled as powerless to impact his or her destiny. Such instance of powerlessness is portrayed in Mariam's profound feeling of disillusionment. The researcher marks Mariam's disillusionment as a state of powerlessness because of unanticipated conditions she faces in the new home land and the breach of her boundless hope. The introspective immigrant characters, Mariam and Angela, are aware of their shortcomings; however, they know and understand little about their husbands, and they could not make efforts to acquire goal-relevant information to change the situations because they could not control the external environment such as Jonas' work places and Yosef's journey.

Seeman also (1959:361) describes such aspect of powerlessness, "those who are low in expectancy for control are not interested in and do not absorb control-relevant learning". An individual having a generalized expectancy to control his or her love relationship may develop a feeling of powerlessness. The two female characters develop no interests to know their husbands' realities because they could not relevantly control every bit of information regarding their family; thus, the way they react is an indication of their powerlessness. In such situation, Yosef and Mariam reach the level of superficial relationship as they continue to mistreat and miscommunicate in their daily activities. Since they hope a better life, no one could imagine the viability of coercive confrontation between them. However, Mariam terribly feels helplessness to shield herself from her husband's coercive attack. No one is around or nowhere to go to stop him from biting her until a scar is left on her face. Jonas narrates the severe pain of his mother: "The last fight they had had before that morning left my mother with a deep black and purple bruise on her right arm, just below her shoulder" (HRA:9). As a consequence of such physical abuses by her husband, she loses basic

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human rights and hope. In the contemporary world, life has become so complex; the relationship between husband and wife becomes obscured.

Jonas sticks in dilemma after realizing his inability to integrate the memory of his parent's distressing experience. He states the state of internal suffering: "...I'm going in order to submit to the confusion of time and memory carried in by the breeze. Within a single breath I can jump across decades" (HRA: 116). This is why the researcher strongly argues that (HRA) deals with the power of imagination revealing the relationship between his true and false identities as a helpless African immigrant. Additionally, the immigrants' feeling of despair are foregrounded by contemporary literary works, and HRA particularly exemplifies Jonas as a typical character who becomes so helpless to control and manipulate his mental freedom. Thus, Jonas is in a critical state of limbo with his identity because he frequently finds himself in a terrible state of identity confusion as a result of his parent's disconcerted lives and his destitute relationship with his wife.

Similarly, The Ethiopian Isaac in "All Our Names" (AON) was an immigrant who came across various experiences of disdain, feelings of isolation, despair, anguish and gradually retreated from social realities through the influence of depressing situations and social constructions of the hosting country. The researcher has identified that psychological and social alienation aggravated the facets of dehumanization and further destroyed the immigrants' conscience with eventual cynicism. In the final section of (AON) part one, the author also tries to demonstrate the frustration (meaninglessness) of the people in a multicultural Uganda illustrated through social divisions. This situation and the inter-clan killing which rock Uganda during the revolutionary war marginalize some of the individuals. As an immigrant writing, AON acts as a voice of the anguish of the civilians who live far from their original land and become victims of the reality because of identity differences. The life of Isaac in Uganda and US was very complex to put plainly, full of mess in the context of his main purpose of dislocation.

The other form of alienation which is proposed by Seaman (1959: 786) "Meaninglessness is characterized by a low expectancy that satisfactory predictions outcomes of behavior can be made". Contemporary immigrant literary novels usually employ fragmentation of stories to show the meaninglessness of the modern human lives. The whole narrations of the stories in the three novels are presented with fragmented spatial and chronological techniques, shifting forward and backward between present and past experiences of the immigrants to display the meaninglessness of their new lives. Sometimes it goes back to times in Africa; at other times the fragments capture the first years of the characters in America. For example, in the beginning part of the novel in (BT), the series of stories take place in May after the departure of Judith and Naomi from Logan Circle. The next chapter takes us eight months back to September to show the previous year around the time Judith moves into Logan Circle. This moving back and forth deliberately shows the disjointed and meaninglessness nature of life. Such fragmentation underlines the futility of the immigrants' search for a meaningful life and the predicaments of modern times.

In a different scenario of example in the (BT), The departure of the characters Judith and Naomi from Logan Circle in a very critical condition is a very painful loss of hope to the narrator, Stephanos. The accidental separation of Stephanos from his dreaming family makes him trigger again the traumatic loss of his father and home land seventeen years ago during the 'Red Terror' in

Ethiopia. The failure of making a cherished relationship with Judith and his failed attempt of forgetting the miserable past become the reasons for him to develop certain frustrating consciousness about life in US. To display the condition, Stephanos said, “There are already too many hours in the day; to worry about any one in particular is pointless” (BT: 35). His inclination to pursue an essential value in life seems unachievable; tackling any problem for purposeful life apparently becomes useless. In his narration about Christmas, Stephanos expresses his frustration after he realizes his dream of making a family with Judith becomes unattainable. Next to that excruciating night, he joins with his two immigrant friends laughing sarcastically at their isolation, mocking one another until, “the night faded into a blurry, indistinguishable memory” (BT: 180). This also illustrates the three friends’ freedom of movements are restricted after realizing their hope of success in American society fails. As it is said earlier, various aspects of alienation can overlap in a single series, and the above abstract may describe a feeling of estrangement beside to the feeling of meaninglessness because of the interdependence of various modes of alienation. Consequently, African immigrants are victims of various difficulties that result in the ultimate state of meaninglessness

Furthermore, Jonas in (HRA) narrates his parents’ ungrateful condition of life through Mariam’s unconscious use of terms ‘fall’ and ‘agony’ in her effort to justify the immigration life so as to protect her decaying marriage. As a result, at some point of her life, Mariam gives up the persistent strive of improving her family: “Fall was the repose that made both possible and bearable, and now here she was with her husband next to her, heading headlong into an early-fall afternoon with only the vaguest ideas of who they were becoming and what came next” (HRA: 13). Yosef does not make an effort equally to protect their marriage from falling apart because his traumatic life in US makes him hopeless to understand his wife and the decadence of his family. Their relationship is bounded with emotion of uncertainty and lack of open and meaningful discussion as long as they don’t understand the events in which they take part. Both of them frequently express a discomfiting blame of each another which eventually create the ultimate result of downhearted and abandoned forms of feelings.

Related to the above, Jonas reflects his hopelessness of the three years serious relationship he had built with his wife; however, they do not show respect each other as husband and wife. Let’s see what Jonas tells his wife regarding their relationship: “We had been married for three years, but we had spent much of the past six months hardly talking except to exchange pointed attacks at each other” (HRA:15). Such poor and undesirable communication is a desperate manifestation of life without long term principle. This state of despondency about their future is an implication of their disregarded value of their lives. Even they could not make any attempt to discuss and avoid their problems as husband and wife. They live together without caring for one another because they lost hope to reconstruct their relationship. As it is depicted in (HRA), the turning point for Jonas is when he understands his relationship with Angela flattens to the lowest after he lost his job at the immigration center. To save their failing marriage, Angela gets him a part-time job for teaching at a school. However, he knows it is unlikely to be fruitful in spite of her efforts. Jonas hopelessly reacts of the crumbling relationship: “Even had I wanted to, I couldn’t have said to Angela. While she claimed to have forgiven me for lying to her, the damage remained. Her trust in me, and our relationship, was far from repaired” (HRA: 53). Had Jonas surmounted and handled the circumstance as equal as Angela, their relationship would not have ended. Rather, he accelerates the end despite

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Angela's positive mentality and persistent. He is frustrated by his unwelcoming personal experience which produces an absence of meaning in his relationship with Angela. Human beings by nature are social creatures striving to fulfill a meaningful social co-ordination and relationship. As social creatures, we seek pleasure from our lives as long as we share emotion, passion and love.

More spectacularly, there has a similitude of commitment to the portrait of the psychological makeup of the immigrants while facing challenges to reach to their final destination. Jonas retrospectively recounts his father's state of traumatic memory: "My father, Yosef Getachew Woldemariam, dreamed of boxes until the last days of his life (P: 42). This portrait of psychological trauma to the first-generation immigrant disturbs the rest of his family and till the day of his life. The presentation of Yosef's life with the power of reviewing the past suggests that a significant number of immigrants' journey affect the second and third immigrant generations in their attempt to integrate with the hosting people. Thus, the novel dedicates vast coverage to the immigrants' trauma and psychological disturbances, symbolizing their terrible journey by 'box'. Such traumatic experience haunts Yosef until his death; it also affects the whole of his family. Seeman (1959: 789) has argued about meaninglessness when "the individual is unclear as to what he ought to believe...". In the post-modern literary works, characters are denoted when their daily experiences create some difficulties to them to predict the outcomes of their actions. As a contemporary literary piece, the target novel vividly presents such a confusion as outcome of the difficult situation through Angela's life experience and the way she loses her job as a lawyer. She describes the moment: "when a judge handed down the second defeat two months later, Angela was fully convinced that she was going to be fired" (HRA:79). Angela's financial source stalls, and this economic crisis deteriorates her relationship with Jonas, fueling their uncertainty of rapprochement. This complicated environment suggests that a meaningless relationship is built by materialism; the decline of financial provision also ruins the constructed relationship. Both Jonas and Angela are unfortunate for facing the same destiny of losing their jobs. And this incident is to be labeled as a meaninglessness aspect of alienation because Jonas and Angela are intensely suffered from loss, futility and emptiness.

In spite of his unprecedented optimism of his parents and country, Isaac is frustrated after realizing that his father could not allow him to go to school and his country is in civil war. He frequently articulates his desperation and the vainness of life. This aura of alienation exacerbates his desperation since he could not attain the meaning of life. A metaphorical simile is used to emphasize the deep sense of futility of the immigrants, depicting Isaac as a person detained behind a cell. Isaac states it: "I felt as if I had been into a prison" (AON.178). Isaac convinces himself that living in such circumstance is like being confined in prison with no basic human rights. This is one of the complementary reasons why Isaac decides to go far from his home where there might be any fortune to bring him to new life. Bill Ashcroft and et al. (2000:9) have raised a point that strengthens this point, "A valid and active sense of self may have been eroded by dislocation resulting from migration". Life is not as easy as many have expected in the metropolitan cities as long as that person continues confronting the experience of the immigration. African immigrants may not have freedom as others due to the existence of unbalanced attitudes of the hosting countries towards the African culture. Isaac and other immigrants set goals and dream big to make a better future, but they realize their dream is meaningless. Meaninglessness aspect of alienation is fundamentally an existential issue that reflects the life of the immigrants.

The third dimension of alienation is normlessness which has specifically defined by Seeman (1959: 788) as, “high expectancy that socially unapproved behaviors are required to achieve given goals”. A typical portrait of this state of feeling in (BT) is Stephanos’s failure of his serious relationship with Judith is another form of a disconcerting experience of feeling which shadows more than one dimension of alienation. After his hope to own Judith unsuccessfully ends, he frustratingly violates the norm that governs our social aspects. As the expense of his frequent failure, he brings a prostitute to his home simply to gratify his internal drive after understanding his attempt to get Judith is impossible. He describes the situation, “...I wanted to see myself fully and honestly, naked in my bed with a woman whose real name I would never know. I took pleasure in feeling another body under me and on top of me” (BT: 163). Stephanos realizes that Judith and Naomi are unlikely to be part of his dreaming family; he feels that his future becomes gloomy and directionless, and this explicitly forces him to respond by normless action. The way he reacted her because of his frustration to get Judith shows the crises of his moral values. As Seeman (1959) has elucidated, the concept of normlessness and meaninglessness are ambiguous as to what the individual ought to rely on or the individual's minimal standards for clarity in decision making are not met. Stephanos, as a victim of the new life, challenges an enormous state of dissatisfaction in the form of meaninglessness and normlessness.

The second target novel, “How to Read the Air” (HRA) plainly displays certain distresses of anomie when the represented immigrants showed lack of social norms. Jonas in this novel tries to deceive Andrew, the man who provides him with a supportive recommendation to get a job at the American high school. Angela reveals his lie: “I’m promoted. I’m going to be teaching some of the more senior level English classes...” (HRA: 227). In fact, he is not promoted. Jonas again denies when the dean of the school asks him for the conformation of the information coming out, “I never spoke to anyone about teaching here.... I didn’t say anything else about the school. You can ask my wife. She was there.” (HRA: 248). Following the resentful behavior, he admits that the school decides to fire him from his job. The deception behavior Jonas frequently displays may be attributed to his upbringing in what is said to be “not an exemplary family”. The personality he exhibits can be labeled as an unaccepted behavior of reaching the desire goal; sociologists call such kind of reflection a state of normlessness. His personality is the reason for the demise and end of his marriage besides not safeguarding his job. By any means, his actions can be assumed as an inappropriate social norm, which is not any longer effective to secure his work and to rescue his relationship with Angela. Such absurd personality can also be seen in terms of what one should not be acting in various situations of relationships. Neal and Collas (2002:122) define normlessness as “sudden and abrupt changes occur in life conditions, and the norms that usually operate may no longer seem adequate as guidelines for conduct.” In their winter vacation, Angela confesses to Jonas that she is unfaithful to their conjugal relationship because she sleeps with Andrew before they legally end their marriage. Her confession is, “I began sleeping with someone else...I hardly even cared about, just because I thought it might make me feel better. Less alone” (HRA: 254). In any social norm, infidelity is prohibited and should not be tolerated as a choice to solve what so ever personal problem anyone has faced. In fact, her misconduct comes after their relationship deteriorates, to avoid isolations though it accelerates the falling of their relationship. Breaking the existing norms, to Angela, is a means of avoiding personal estrangement; she thinks going out with other person gives her a feeling of association. But this is unethical to the conservative society; it even makes her prone to the exposition of social alienation.

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Such anomie may prevail as a result of personal syndrome; it may also create self-estrangement, meaninglessness and social isolation in the context of various social reactions whereby there is discrepancy between the social structure and the individual's personality.

The same state of feeling in a different condition, Mariam's strong wish for the death of her husband, just to claim her freedom, is an instance of moral corruption, and the social relationships of human beings is basically violated simply for temporary satisfaction. Such act of self-indulgence may create further alienation of the individual's social participation. Mariam violates the social norm as a means accommodating her freedom. Such violation of accepted morality contributes to the rapid deterioration of social ethical values. In her final sentimental sense of relief, she describes the death of her husband as, "A great weight had been lifted off my shoulders" (HRA: 280). To speak frankly, this excerpt shows the dark side and the harsh reality of unplanned immigration lives. By the time they stay together, Mariam's physical body is never far away from her husband though she is psychologically far away from him. Since she has found no real meaning in her marriage, she is entirely withdrawn and isolated, in which no one could understand her problem; she even has no real friendship with anyone in her neighborhood in the new home. Ultimately, she internally demands the unconditional death of her husband realizing it as the only option of liberating her from the coercive action of her husband. However, she is emotional to imagine the wrong way of attempting to resolve her psychological disturbance. After the death of her husband, she continues with the bad memories of harassment by her husband and the yearning of the good days of her home country which affects her not to begin a better life entirely out of her expectation.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

The mishandlings and misunderstandings of African immigrants in their hosting societies are demonstrated in the three novels of Dinaw Mengestu. African culture is wrongly perceived as devastatingly uncivilized and irrelevant, a further confirmation of the prejudice treatment of the immigrants. As a result, the African immigrants are exposed to various psychological challenges of isolation, to the extent of blaming themselves for misconceptions by the hosting country. Thus, their alienation results and prevails into various forms of racial discrimination, social rejection, and reinforces a generally anti-immigrant- attitude, which in turn obstructs the immigrants from feeling at home in USA. While alienation of the immigrants in the US has been a longstanding problem, the over emphasis on African immigrants by African-born American authors like Dinaw predominantly makes international researchers pay attention to the concept of alienation in the 21st century. The harsh criticism of the American traditions of mocking at others indicates an entire reconsideration and a shift in global attitudes upon the actual treatments of the African immigrants by the hosting societies.

Furthermore, the study has comprehensively showed the failures of the immigrants to visualize their dreams; failure, obstruction, unrest, isolation, and meaninglessness are some of the challenges the characters of the selected contemporary immigrant novels. The researcher has taken the selected trilogy for this study since African immigrants in US were not extensively explored. There are a significant numbers of immigrant fictions which depict the concerning issues of global immigrants; however, they are not easily available in the third world to research. In the three novels, human lives are portrayed as everlasting fight for the good of humanity which ends only in suffering and death of

the immigrant protagonists. No good avails to fight for survival where the immigrants are reduced to a pitiful figure by internal and external socio-psychological forces. The eventual failure of the immigrant characters relies on the way they challenge the environment of the hosting community. In a world of pain and failure, immigrants have their own defense to assert their existence. To speak frankly, the individual has the freedom of will to create his own values and ideals of reality. In order to overcome such confrontation, he has to carry on a consistent battle against the social and the environmental barriers of this world by which this study has tried to investigate.

Speaking broadly, quantifying the feelings of alienation is very complex though it is possible to feel their prevalence because part of the subject's characteristics emerges from defining them based on attitudinal perspectives since the concept is multidisciplinary. In the three novels, the multiple identity of the immigrant characters, the one they left in their original home and the new culture they accommodate in their new home are dealt with implicit and explicit attempts. In such dilemma of identity and in their effort of taking part in every aspect social activity, the immigrants face various challenges of alienation. Therefore, the study has concluded that the efforts of the target novels to present the reality and to trace the intersection of displacement and the African solidarity are very successful.

Lastly but not least, the study strongly recommends to senior researchers to see and investigate that alienation can increase creativity if the immigrants are rejected enough, and could be a powerful force in the positive results of deep introspection and intellectual independence.

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