

Abstract

This paper discusses how colonial ideology has had a lasting influence on the theoretical framework of Frantz Fanon, in particular, his ideas of the desire of lactification, internalized inferiority, and epidermalization, the research investigates the ways in which colonial structures of power are still perceived to influence perceptions of race, selfhood and aesthetic value. With the concept of a double consciousness, the research also undertakes the analysis of the fragmented identity that the protagonist, Ifemelu, in her journey between Nigeria and the United States. This study examines how the concept of is explored in the novel through a critical analysis of the novel. Eurocentric beauty ideals, to the extent that they are used as instruments of cultural dominance, strengthening the marginalization of Black identity and the privileging of whiteness as the normative ideal. It further examines the psychological and social outcomes of internalized racism, especially with regard to hair politics, self-perception, and body image. The work also brings to the fore processes of resistance and identity reconstruction, to illustrate how Ifemelu eventually challenges imposed norms and retrieves her own sense of identity. This paper by placing Americanah in the larger context of postcolonialism adds to the current debates on race, identity formation, and the politics of representation. It states that the colonial gaze still works in unconscious but effective forms and shapes the ways of modern perceptions of beauty and belonging, and at the same time accentuating the prospect of resistance and self-definition in postcolonial spaces.

Keywords:

Colonial Gaze, Politics of Beauty, Identity Formation, Double Consciousness, Othering, Epidermalization, Lactification, Internalized Inferiority, Split Self, Diasporic Identity, Postcolonial Identity, Race and Representation, Eurocentric Beauty Standards, Cultural Identity and Resistance.