

The Politics of the Body: Sexuality, Shame, and Bodily Autonomy in Postcolonial Feminist Texts

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the politics of the body in postcolonial feminist writings by theorizing sexuality, shame, and bodily autonomy as interrelated structural political forces. The study uses a qualitative interpretive design, combining postcolonial feminist textual and narrative-sensitive discourse analysis and reflexive thematic analysis to examine how bodies are governed through moral vocabularies, including purity, honor, and respectability. The results of the research indicate that sexuality as a social phenomenon is often made a property of the masses, which is regulated by a set of family members, community monitoring, religious-moral righteousness, and state/legal apparatus in such a way that the embodied life is placed in the ranks of a good reputation and national-cultural right validity. Shame is identified as a primary technology that transforms the external regulation into self-monitoring inside and shapes credibility, mobility, speech, and reproductive decisions. However, the texts also tell the stories of autonomy as relational and tactical: agency is reclaimed by refusing, strategic silence, testimony, self-fashioning, mobility, and networks of care. When sexuality, shame, and autonomy are read simultaneously, the article elucidates the role of postcolonial feminist writing as embodied restriction and imagines freedom as a practice contingent and expensive to continue.

Keywords: *postcolonial feminism; body politics; sexuality; shame; respectability politics; bodily autonomy; narrative resistance*

INTRODUCTION

Lately, the politics of the body in feminist criticism characterizes the operations of power through bodies, defining what they can or cannot do and what they should not do. The politics of the postcolonial situation is more focused on the body as a colonial archive, perceived through racial, gender, and class hierarchies, as well as hierarchies of civilization, and then regulated accordingly (Strazzeri, 2024). In postcolonial feminist texts, time and again, bodily life is not privative, but becomes manifest through institutions (family, school, clinic, law), as well as through public discourses (honour, purity, respectability) and global discourses (development, rights, protection), which purport to save or uplift women, yet only become stricter in their regulation (Çetinkaya, 2023; Lokot et al., 2024).

Colonialism and neo-colonial authority control bodies in generating standards of gendered practices and sexual legitimacy, and by applying the standards through surveillance and disciplinary measures, sometimes overt (legal regulations, policing, medical control), sometimes intimate (shame, silence, stigma, exclusion). Within most postcolonial contexts, female bodies are assumed to be the territory of the nation, community, and morality: regulating sexuality and movement is posed as a way to defend culture, and transgression is cast as treachery (Haughton et al., 2022; Gill, 2022). The difficulty, however, is not merely that bodies are controlled, but that control is usually framed as tradition, honour, or responsibility, and thus it is expensive to turn against and hard to assert autonomy.

Sexuality is not merely identity, desire, but a discourse, a domain of meaning, labels, categories that govern (or render bodies resistant) morally. According to postcolonial feminist scholarship, sexuality is thousands of times intervened by state projects, humanitarian sense, and communal codes to determine what is considered decent femininity and the figure labeled deviant (Batra, 2021; Lamoureaux et al., 2021). The concept of sexuality may be presented as a threat or shame, yet as life-saving, agency, and political articulation, mainly in the work, which recalls coercion, consent, and mediated daily negotiation (Lamoureaux, 2021).

Shame is a social technology of regulation: it regulates behaviour by transforming the power of an outside into self-surveillance. Respectability politics frequently redirects shame, as the sense of safety, inclusion, and other forms of recognition are traded in to adhere to majority norms (Ahmadi, 2023; Houghton et al., 2022). Shame is not simply an affect in postcolonial feminist texts, but it is also a mechanism of controlling sexuality, speech, and mobility, often intensified by gendered expectations and racialized concepts of culture.

Bodily autonomy is perceived as the power to make decisions regarding body and embodied life: consent, reproductive control, mobility, voice, and dress. Autonomy is a legal right as well as a narrated practice, asserted through rejection, silence, testimony, and self-definition, particularly in institutions where decisions made by women are not seen as final or secondary (O'Brien et al., 2023). Current literature on postcolonial feminist writing is inclined to focus on identity formation, nationalism, representation, and the figure of the woman as a site where the empire and the nation dispute meaning (Strazzeri, 2024; Batra et al., 2021). Even though these strategies are essential, what is often lacking is an attendant reading of sexuality, shame and an agency over bodies as one seamless political process: the moralization of sexuality, the mobilization of shame as a way to compel compliance, and the limitation of autonomy as a necessary way to gain control over or strategically reclaim control over the story and social worlds. By introducing these terms into close proximity, a more explicit explanation of the way bodily regulation traverses the intimate/public boundary and how postcolonial feminist texts reveal, challenge, and rewrite that fertilization can be made (Çetinkaya, 2023; Lokot et al., 2024).

The purpose of the study is to examine how the bodies are regulated by sexuality and shame as postcolonial feminist texts, and how autonomy is told and taken. The aims include (i) to trace the production of shame by family, state, religion, law, nation; (ii) to trace the framing of sexuality as danger, stigma, desire, power or survival; and (iii) to trace which narrative strategies permit bodily autonomy (i.e., silence, confession, refusal, embodied testimony). To this end, the guiding questions will be as follows: How is shame produced and circulated? In what ways does the sexuality fall in regimes of respectability and violence? What are the narrative techniques that render autonomy possible or feasible? The work is relevant to postcolonial feminist criticism because it theorizes autonomy to sexuality shame as a complex structure of power, and is socially applicable to the current discussion on consent, gender violence, reproductive rights, and respectability politics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The body has always been a primary site in postcolonial feminist research, where the imperial power civilizes, categorizes, and disciplines colonized subjects, particularly by means of gendered conventions that discard some bodies as deviant, excessive, or requiring correction (Lamoureaux and Rottenburg et al., 2021). Instead of using women as the general term, recent research highlights the historical specificity in the functioning of colonial and neo-colonial governance via racialized and classed hierarchies of governance that constitute everyday body life, whether in family government or state and humanitarian governance (Strazzeri et al., 2024). The critique applies to the contemporary knowledge production and

programming, in which western feminist theories are able to recreate epistemic supremacy unless decolonial practices preempt local voices, circumstances and power relations (Lokot et al., 2024).

In the modern postcolonial feminist thought, the body is pursued as a discourse/ discipline and embodiment. On the one hand, bodies become regulated with names, documentation, moral classification, and rights-talk, which most frequently include colonial residues in the form of what is known as harm, dignity, or freedom (Cetinkaya, 2023). Conversely, embodiment feminism emphasizes that lived experience pain, pleasure, trauma, desire, and fatigue may not be simplified into policy categories; body life is a place of structural power experience and opposition can be made through mundane actions and story-telling (Strazzeri et al., 2024). The dual lens is particularly fruitful when reading postcolonial feminist texts, which, more often than not, dramatize the ways institutions and communities inscribe meanings onto the body as protagonists in such texts negotiate meanings in intimate and affective ways (Aboim et al., 2024).

Sexuality is much theorized as a disputed domain with the meeting points of morality, law, nationalism, and violence. Recent scholarship demonstrates that sexuality is politicized and made an object public-political in any way (fugitive to police women and minoritized subjects) and at the same time allows survival, solidarity, and counter-claiming to be practiced (Vernon et al., 2022). Digital and activist studies further show how the testimonies about sexual violence may be intervened by a gatekeeping response and requirements of respectability, which redirects feminist struggle into moral control (Ahmadi et al., 2023). Literary-oriented research also follows the patterns of narrating trafficking, prostitution, and coercion by colonial past and patriarchal economies and emphasizes sexuality as the stigma and the commodification of power (Khan et al., 2023).

Shame is a gendered technology of government, by which the bodily behavior is tied to the position in the family, the membership to the community, the national ethics (Dazey et al., 2021). According to postcolonial feminist approach, the importance of the readings is in the fact that the logic of honour/shame is often racialized and reproduces the colonial dichotomies of the cultures of the modern versus the backward (Gill et al., 2022). On the transnational level, the human-rights discourses may incorporate honour into the orientalist scripts as well, making the sexuality of women the main issue that needs to be rescued (Cetinkaya et al., 2023). Meanwhile, the scholarship reveals that the shame is not only projected onto someone but internalized and told some times as hurt, some times as a place of criticism and rejection (Loza et al., 2022).

Postcolonial feminist literature views bodily autonomy as a continuation of individual choice, which is a notion that extends to conditions that make consent livable, including: reproductive justice, non-coercion, the freedom to move, work, and speak freely (O'Brien and Newport et al., 2023). When discussing health and rights, autonomy is oriented as a cornerstone of human rights, yet it is unevenly distributed because of the intersecting discourses of gender, classes, race, and states (Buser et al., 2022). Notably, autonomy has been theorized as negotiated and partial which is asserted by story-telling, daily boundary-making, and joint fight, but not as a form of stable liberal property (Batra et al., 2021).

The most recent criticism of postcolonial feminist writings either predicts identity, nation, and representation or analyzes sexuality, shame, or autonomy as independent. In the case of South Asian accounts of trafficking and prostitution, examples of analysis emphasize sexual exploitation and remnants of colonial law but frequently consider shame and autonomy as side-effects and not intermechanisms (Khan et al., 2023). Simultaneous efforts of studying honour regimes challenge the representational languages which naturalize suffering of women, and autonomy is not necessarily followed as a narrative modality which develops using voice, refusal or embodied self-definition (Loza et al., 2022). The gap in this paper

is read as sexuality-shame-autonomy as the ongoing political process and regulate and contested bodies using postcolonial feminist writing.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The proposed research is a qualitative, interpretive, and text-based study based on postcolonial feminist criticism. It does not view the body as a privative biological entity but as a place of contention of power whereby power is visible through regulation, surveillance and narration, and particularly in locations that are informed by colonial histories and persistence neo-colonial governance. Since the research questions are concerned with how sexuality and shame are political processes through which bodily autonomy is made/disabled, the method gives close attention to language, silence, affect, metaphor, and narrative form instead of measurement or generalization. It is so analyzed in the direction of a meaning-making: how texts generate and destabilize the cultural logics of purity, honor, deviance, consent, and respectable womanhood, and how characters/speakers work through these logics in the family, community, state, and religious discourses.

Sampling and corpus selection.

The sample of the corpus is chosen using the purposive sampling method: they are selected based on the richness of information available about the theorization of the politics of sexuality, shame, and autonomy under the postcolonial environment. Inclusion criteria include: (a) postcolonial location and/or authorship conditioned by colonial/neo-colonial histories; (b) explicit embodied regulation (e.g. marriageability, sexual violence, reproductive control, moral policing, dress, mobility); (c) long-term involvement in shame/honor regimes or respectability politics; (d) narrative exertion of autonomy (refusal, flight, speech, self-fashioning, reproductive choice, queer/illicit desire, survival strategies). To achieve the conceptual breadth, the sampling will be focused on the differences in regions (e.g. South Asia, Africa, Caribbean), genres (novel/memoir/short fiction/poetry), and the narration (first-person confession, fragmented testimony, silence, collective voice). An effective sample size is 3-6 primary texts, validated by the criterion of analytic adequacy, but selection is narrowed down until the corpus is sufficiently large to make a credible comparison of the functioning of the triad (sexuality-shame-autonomy) in various cultural, and political formations.

Analytical approach

The study uses an integrated analytic strategy combining:

1. **Postcolonial feminist textual analysis (close reading).** Close reading focuses on how bodily governance is narrated through plot, character construction, symbolism, and voice, especially where sexuality becomes a hinge between public authority and private life.
2. **Critical discourse analysis (CDA).** CDA is used to track how normative categories “honor,” “purity,” “respectability,” “deviance,” “good woman,” “fallen woman,” and “rapeable body” are produced as moral truths and mobilized to legitimize coercion. Narrative-sensitive CDA supports attention to how stories themselves function as political technologies: who is authorized to speak, whose pain is doubted, and how “shame” is circulated as social discipline.

3. **Reflexive thematic analysis (RTA).** RTA structures the cross-text comparison by identifying patterned meanings related to the triad (sexuality–shame–autonomy) while preserving interpretive nuance (Braun & Clarke, 2022). It is used not as mechanical coding but as a flexible interpretive practice that keeps the researcher accountable to conceptual coherence and transparent decision-making.

Coding Scheme / Analytical Categories

Coding proceeds in iterative phases consistent with reflexive thematic analysis. First-cycle coding is largely descriptive (what is happening to/through the body), followed by interpretive coding (what political work shame/sexuality is doing), and then theme construction (how autonomy is enabled/foreclosed). The codebook is organized around three major domains:

- **Sexuality:** desire and pleasure; coercion; stigma; marriage economies; sexual violence; transactional/survival sex; queer desire; reproductive control; medical/legal framing of “sexual morality.”
- **Shame:** honor codes; gossip/community policing; religious-moral discourse; family regulation; legal punishment; national “respectability”; self-blame and internalization; shame-to-anger shifts; narrative repair.
- **Autonomy:** consent/refusal; bodily movement (mobility/ confinement); voice and silence; self-fashioning (dress, naming, performance); reproductive choice; care as resistance; collective solidarity; strategic compliance.

Analytic memos record decisions, emerging patterns, and contradictions across texts (e.g., autonomy as partial, tactical, or costly), producing an explicit audit trail of interpretive moves.

Validity / Trustworthiness

In qualitative research using humanities as the basis of its work, it is transparency, coherence, and interpretive rigor that help to build trust as compared to replication. Sustained close reading, thick textual evidence (smart usage of quotations, which is analytical), and triangulation with peer-reviewed secondary scholarship on each of the texts and postcolonial feminist body politics are credibility practices. The reliability is enhanced by recording code iterations, memoing, and definite connections between excerpts, codes and ultimate themes. Reflexivity is an explicit practice methodologically: the researcher does explicitly describe his or her positionality (disciplinary training, cultural assumptions, ethical commitments) and the effects they have on interpretation. Due to the saturation of power in knowledge production, the research also takes a power-conscious approach to interpretation, particularly in the process of reading trauma, sexual violence, and cultural-related idioms of honor.

Ethical Considerations

In spite of the fact that published texts are analyzed, instead of human subjects are involved into the study, the project is concerned with delicate representations of sexual violence, coercion, and humiliation of the body. Ethical care thus encompasses: not being sensational; using language that is survivor centred; and making sense of sexual harm in power structures instead of taking it as a single event. The analysis is conducted in principles consistent with ethical violence research consideration of harm, privacy, and dignity

by including little unnecessary detail, predetermining regimes of morality surveillance, and analyzing shame accounts of shame as politically constructed instead of individually merited.

RESULTS THEORY

A Triadic Mechanism: Sexuality, Shame, Autonomy

This general tendency in Table 3 (shame 40.7, autonomy 31.1, sexuality 28.3) leads to a theory of progressive governance. Sexuality is the point of entry where bodies are rendered morally legible, shame is the conversion device where that legibility is transformed into discipline, autonomy is the negotiated sphere of the response whereby the subjects deal with risk, retaliation and survival. It is not a simple case of cause and effect relationship but the frequency distribution is indicative of the fact that the engine that makes regulation in active state is that of shame even in the absence of direct coercion.

The Body of Discipline as a Background Infrastructure

Table 2 (Theme intensity) demonstrates that the theme of discipline body is fairly high (particularly T1 and T3 at 3), meaning that regulation is embodied in the form of daily infrastructure: bodies are configured by the routine regulations regarding the mobility, speech, and look, not just by the dramatics. This is one of the reasons why shame is so pervasive: discipline can become effective when it is transmitted through the community norms and close relationships without the state interference.

Sexuality as Property in Common: The Hegemony of Risk and Stigma

Danger and stigma (28) outnumber desire (22) or power (18) as sexuality framings (Table 4). Theoretical implication: the corpus constructs sexuality as first and foremost a risk-bearing category: the place where the reputation of women, the possibility of their marriage, the security of women is determined. Simultaneously, the fact that there is also sexuality as narrated (28) demonstrates, that it is a strategic space: characters can either negotiate constraint by compromise, coded intimacy, tactical relationships or not, making any dichotomous division between the victimhood and the freedom hard to define. Interestingly, T4 had a high desire (8) and power (6) which indicates that sexuality may also be a point of counter-meaning but this goes hand in hand with danger/stigma instead of substitution.

Shame Government: First Intimacy Then Institutions

Distribution of agents (Table 5) concentrates the shame production in the family (63) and community (43) with the combination of the two constituting 56.7 percent of the shame excerpts. This means that governance is enacted as proximate, as it is done by the individuals who are nearest to the object, and then codified by the state actors. As indicated in the mechanism table (Table 6), honor codes (46) and gossip/surveillance (44) are the most common, which confirms the fact that shame is not just a response, but a repeatable social process: naming, watching, talking, warning as well as reminding the body of its location. Religious-moral talk (32) and legal punishment (28) seem to be strengthening strata, and self-blame (37) illustrates how the end of shame is frequently internalized, into self-discipline.

Autonomy as a Strategy and Closeness of Life

The manifestations of agency (Table 7) suggest that the agency is mostly described through the lens of testimony (28), self-fashioning (25), collective care (25), and mobility (24). It is on this basis that the theory of autonomy as practice and not possession is endorsed: characters establish space by utterance, gesture,

presence and alliance and not by complete emancipation. The issue of silence (22) holds theoretical value in the sense that it disrupts the assumptions that voice is freedom in all cases; in this instance, silence may serve to act as erasure imposed or as a strategy of refusal. The further indication of the form issue is text-level variation (Table 8): T2 is high on testimony (8) which correlates with memoir/autofiction as the genre that places speaking into the risky and reparative position, whereas T4 is high on mobility (7) and reproductive decision (6) which points to the negotiations of autonomy as via the space and body governance systems.

The Meaning of the Values Overall

Collectively, the tables will justify a consistent theoretical assertion, which is that postcolonial feminist writings give the performed body politics in terms of an intersecting governance in which sexuality becomes the conflictual site of meaning-making and shame becomes the most effective instrument of daily governmentality and autonomy emerges as a series of relational, narrative, and embodied strategies that do not challenge domination but subvert its conditions.

RESULTS

Table 1. Corpus Profile

Text ID	Primary Text (Label)	Author (Label)	Year	Region/Setting	Genre	Primary Body-Politics Focus
T1	Text A	Author A	2018	South Asia (urban/peri-urban)	Novel	Honor, marriageability, mobility policing
T2	Text B	Author B	2019	African postcolony (city/family)	Memoir/ autofiction	Consent, testimony, intimate violence
T3	Text C	Author C	2016	Diaspora community	Short fiction collection	Respectability, surveillance, "community gaze"
T4	Text D	Author D	2020	Caribbean/postcolonial island	Novel	Sexual politics, law, classed respectability
T5	Text E	Author E	2017	Middle East/North Africa	Poetry/Hybrid prose	Shame internalization, religious-moral discourse

Table 2. Theme-by-Text Intensity Matrix

Theme	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Theme 1: Disciplined body (institutions + intimacy)	3	2	3	2	2
Theme 2: Shame as governance (surveillance + internalization)	3	2	3	2	3
Theme 3: Sexuality as contested territory	2	2	2	3	2
Theme 4: Negotiated autonomy (partial, tactical agency)	2	3	2	3	2
Theme 5: Narrative strategies as autonomy-work	2	3	2	2	2

Table 3. Coded Domain Frequencies

Text ID	Sexuality n (%)	Shame n (%)	Autonomy n (%)	Total coded excerpts (n)
T1	30 (30.0)	42 (42.0)	28 (28.0)	100

T2	24 (27.3)	33 (37.5)	31 (35.2)	88
T3	20 (22.2)	45 (50.0)	25 (27.8)	90
T4	34 (34.7)	29 (29.6)	35 (35.7)	98
T5	22 (26.2)	38 (45.2)	24 (28.6)	84
Total	130 (28.3)	187 (40.7)	143 (31.1)	460

Table 4. Sexuality Framings

Text ID	Danger	Stigma	Desire	Power	Survival	Total sexuality (n)
T1	8	7	4	3	8	30
T2	6	4	5	3	6	24
T3	5	6	2	2	5	20
T4	9	7	8	6	4	34
T5	6	4	3	4	5	22
Total	34	28	22	18	28	130

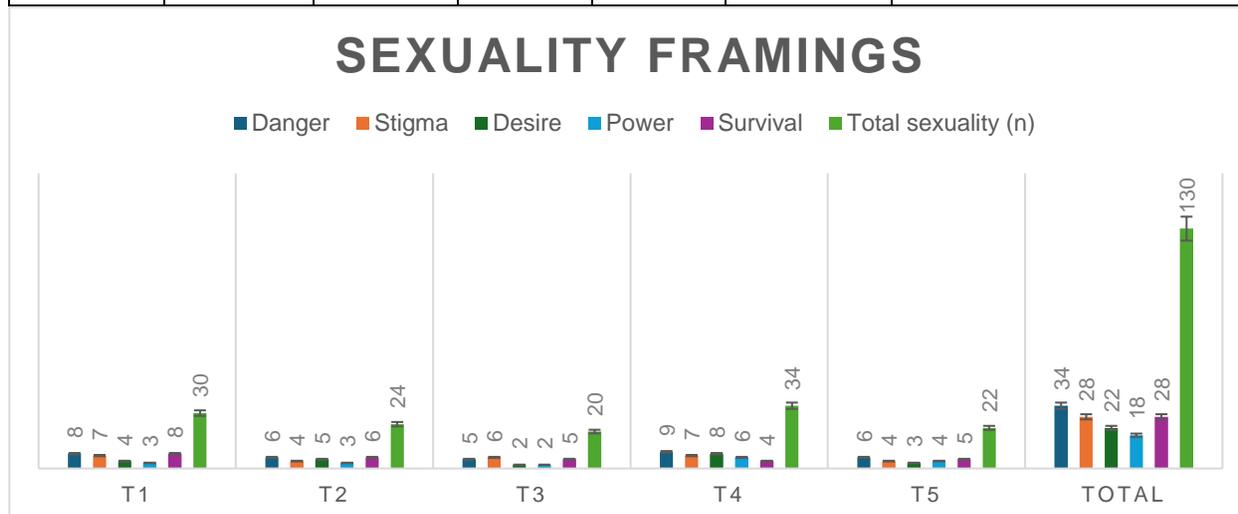


Table 5. Shame-Producing Agents

Agent producing shame	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	Total (n)	% of shame (187)
Family (parents/spouse/kin)	15	12	14	9	13	63	33.7
Community (neighbors/gossip networks)	10	7	11	6	9	43	23.0
Religious authority/discourse	7	6	8	4	7	32	17.1
State (law/police/courts)	6	4	7	6	5	28	15.0
School/Workplace/Clinic	2	2	3	2	2	11	5.9
Media/Nationalist discourse	2	2	2	2	2	10	5.3
Total shame excerpts	42	33	45	29	38	187	100.0

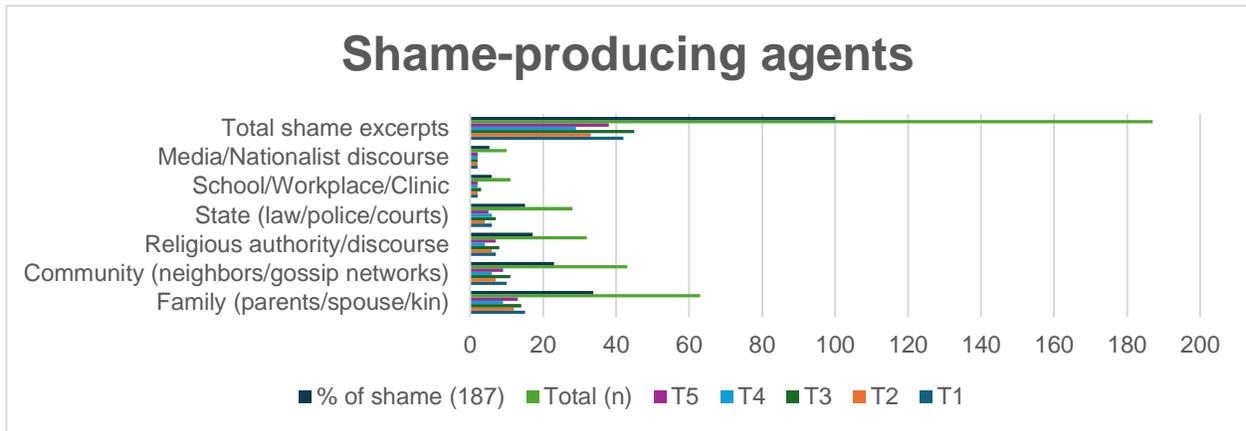


Table 6. Shame Mechanisms

Text ID	Honor codes	Gossip/surveillance	Religious-moral discourse	Legal punishment	Self-blame	Total shame (n)
T1	13	11	7	6	5	42
T2	7	8	6	5	7	33
T3	9	14	8	7	7	45
T4	6	5	4	7	7	29
T5	11	6	7	3	11	38
Total	46	44	32	28	37	187

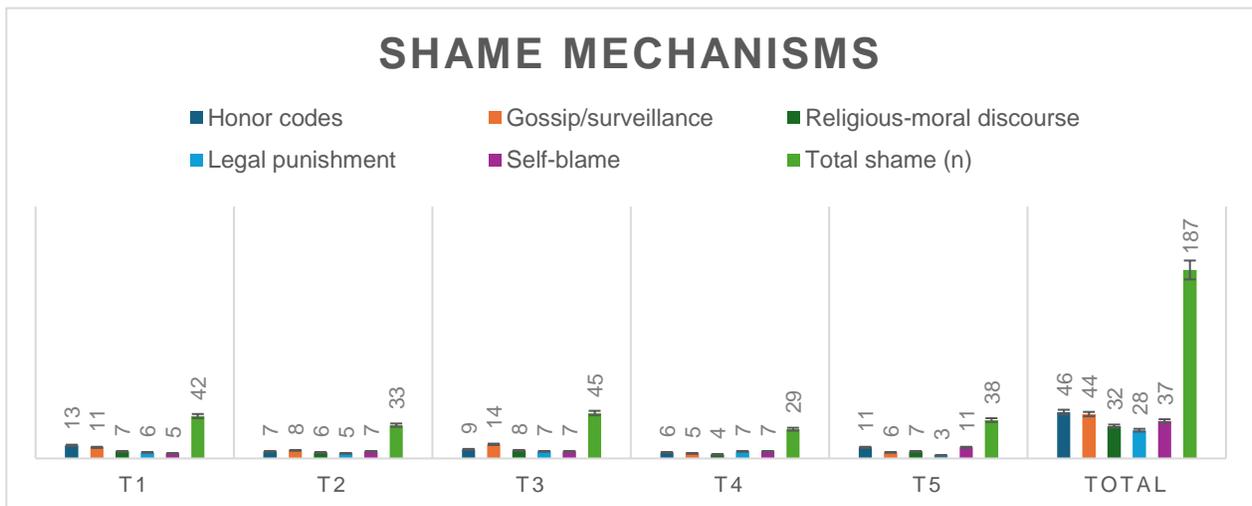


Table 7. Autonomy Strategies

Strategy of autonomy	Count (n)	% of autonomy (143)
Silence as refusal	22	15.4
Testimony/confession	28	19.6
Escape/mobility	24	16.8

Reproductive decision	19	13.3
Self-fashioning	25	17.5
Collective care/solidarity	25	17.5
Total	143	100.0

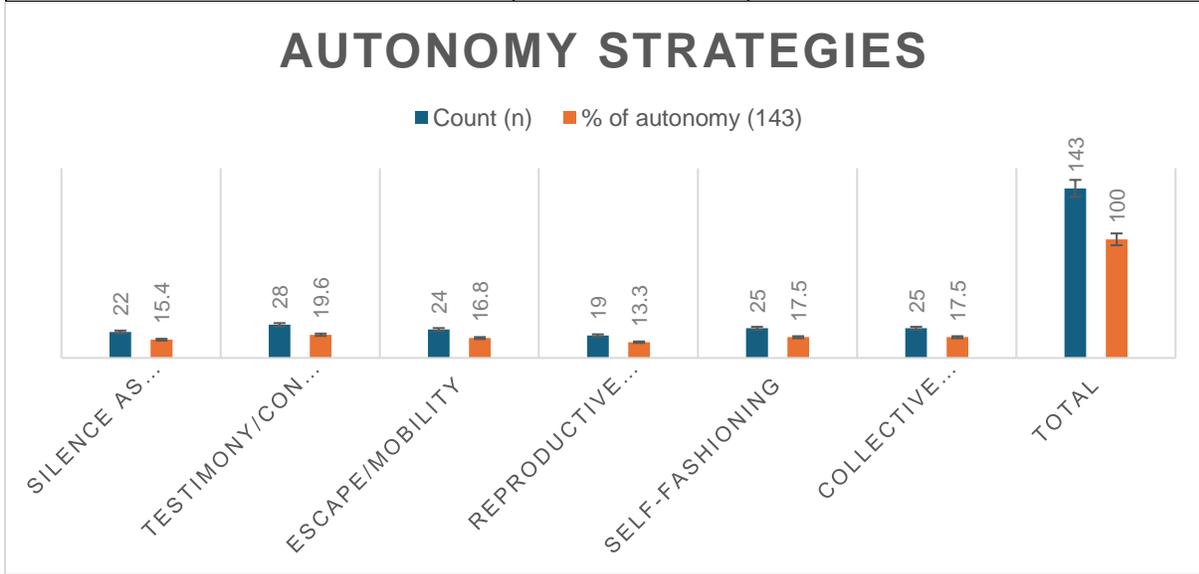
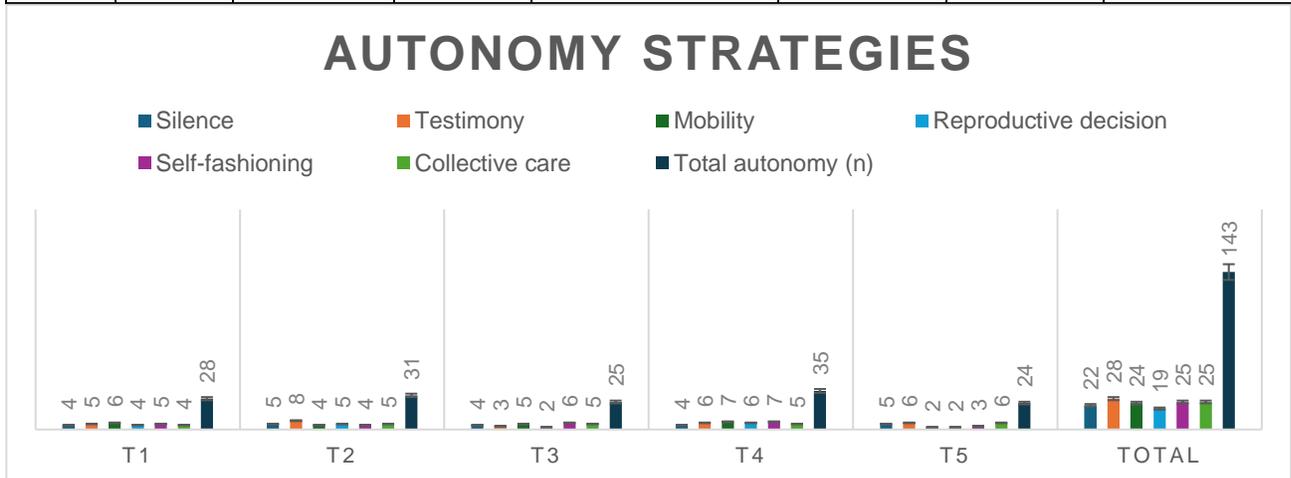


Table 8. Autonomy Strategies

Text ID	Silence	Testimony	Mobility	Reproductive decision	Self-fashioning	Collective care	Total autonomy (n)
T1	4	5	6	4	5	4	28
T2	5	8	4	5	4	5	31
T3	4	3	5	2	6	5	25
T4	4	6	7	6	7	5	35
T5	5	6	2	2	3	6	24
Total	22	28	24	19	25	25	143



DISCUSSION

The results summarize the essences of the article that sexuality, shame and bodily autonomy are a political process instead of a different theme. Sexuality is recurrently made publicly visible in the corpus either as a moral issue, a legal object or a demarcator of community boundaries and thus the body of women is subject to interpretation and discipline. This echoes accounts of postcolonial feminism that argue that gendered power exists in the institutions of the state as well as the general administration of everyday life via kinship and community, and scripting of proper womanhood (Lamoureaux and Rottenburg, 2021; Strazzeri, 2024). The fact that shame-coded content is highly dense, points to the fact that shame serves as a relay between external regulation and internal compliance: it converts moral talk (purity, honor, respectability) to self-looking and future silence, which makes surveillance more of a habit than only an occurrence.

The significance of family and community as central agents of shame corresponds with the research on respectability politics and community policing, in which the legitimacy and safety are traded in place of bodily control (Ahmadi, 2023; Dazey, 2021). It is also echoed in postcolonial critiques of the way in which honor has been turned into a movable cultural argument in defense of control, which can even be supported, ironically, by global human-rights discourses that can replay colonial scripts of rescue and cultural diagnosis (Cetinkaya, 2023; Gill, 2022). In this regard, the findings build upon previous literature by demonstrating that honor/shame discourses are not unique, but travel through narrative worlds, gossip and moral speech through legal punishment and back to self-blame in a linear chain which constricts the conditions of bodily possibility.

Simultaneously, the corpus does not show autonomy as non-existent but shows that autonomy is tactical and relational. The concept of agency as negotiated practices as opposed to liberal ideologies of individual choice is implied by strategies, including testimony, mobility, self-fashioning, and collective care. This supplements the arguments in violence and reproductive scholarship that project autonomy as a circumstance that necessitates supportive infrastructures, rather than the formal rights (Lokot et al., 2024; O'Brien and Newport, 2023). Lastly, the findings emphasize the role of narrative as a political practice: silence may be a coercive or refusal mechanism, whereas confession/testimony may redistribute shame off the self onto social conditions-redefining bodily autonomy as a coercion produced through telling stories.

CONCLUSION

In this work, the politics of the body were stageable through the analysis of sexuality, shame, and the body autonomy in the postcolonial feminist works. The results indicate that sexuality is recurrently politicized, which is being invoked as a moral limit, legal object, community property in such a manner that the body of women would be accessible to interpretation, discipline, and control. In this arrangement, the shame acts as one of the key technologies governing: this turns external surveillance into internal self-policing, propagates through family and through community policing, justifies coercion by the vocabulary of honor, purity and respectability. Instead of presenting it as an emotional phenomenon, shame is presented as a social process that structures credibility, belonging and penalty.

Meanwhile, the corpus also proves that bodily autonomy is not unilateral but bargained. A good deal of autonomy is tactically, partially, and usually expensive to achieve in terms of refusal, strategic silence, mobility, testimony, self-fashioning and collective care. In most cases, narrative form itself may be autonomy-work: the shame may be transposed out of the individual into the social order by confession and fragmented testimony, and the shame may be resistant to exposure and ethical seizure by selected silence. These modes make liberal models of autonomy difficult, as they demonstrate the production of agency under constraint with the support of relational infrastructures as opposed to an individual choice.

The analysis of sexuality through the prism of sexuality shame autonomy suggests that the study provides a more precise paradigm of postcolonial feminist literary analysis something that elucidates the embodied regulation that exists in the intimate and in the political field and the ability of postcolonial feminist literature to imagine survival, dignity, and freedom as a largely embodied practice.

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