# **Women Issues and Health Matters**

The book ‘*Cutting for Stone’* reveals how women are oppressed and discriminated against in countries like Ethiopia. From the experience patients like Sister Mary Joseph and others who visit missing hospital tend to have, it is clear that within the country’s health care system, there is no equality regarding accessing health care and social recognition. Many of these problems women face in Ethiopia are psychologically known to be fatal to human living and their later life with their offsprings. They are facilitated by the desire of women mostly for being known to be prone to issues and excessive seriousness for life. A large number of the problems identified in the book, which women face, ranging from physical to mental, affects their lives significantly. Failure for women to be empowered and regarded as superior beings as men are in either place of work, charity crusades and even in educational grounds (Wells, 2010).

In the novel ‘*Cutting for Stone,'* there are some incidents that women are seen to be discriminated against or mistreated, especially in the face of their male counterparts. For instance, there is an occasion where Dr. Stone asks the medicine that is administered through the ear and is quickly answered “*words of comfort*” by a woman (Verghese, 2010). This is an illustration that women in Ethiopia lack that ‘word of comfort’ and maybe that is why they are seen to suffer more.

Lack of love and support is the other issue women seem to be suffering in the country as described in the book. Rosina daughters, Genet, and Marion find that they are in love while playing a bluff blindfolding game and they perfect their first kiss. At this point, Marion realizes that she is different from Genet. Their love is betrayed when Genet realizes that Marion is not as spoiled as she is and goes on to seduce the gullible Shiva.

From the book, it is clear that, besides other numerous problems women face, they are also prone to diseases mostly in third world countries where the level of health and medical practices are lower than in the developed countries (Wells, 2010). Sister Mary Joseph’s condition is seen to deteriorate due to lack of sufficient and reliable health interventions. As a pregnant woman, Sister Mary should have been receiving proper care and regular checkups something she never had. As a result, this weakened her body resulting in some complications during delivery. Compared to the issues illustrated in the book and the time the book was written, I think there have been some improvements in relation to how women are being treated and how health care services are delivered. The nature of discrimination and oppression observed in the novel is no longer in the contemporary society. Maternal health care has been emphasized on, especially due to the global campaign of reducing the maternal fatality rates. Bearing this in mind, I believe if Sister Mary Joseph were living in my community in the recent days, she would have received better medical interventions and maybe her life would have been saved during her delivery of the twins.

As a conclusive remark, from the discussion, it is clear that most women in the book, ‘*Cutting for Stone’* seem to suffer a lot due to the heightened levels of gender inequality in the society. While trying to access health care, they are discriminated against something that even risks their lives. The levels of oppression are also seen in workplaces and within the communities. Taking the case of Sister Mary, she succumbs to her condition due to poor medical attention. However, as indicated in the discussion, maybe Sister would have been saved if she lived in our modern society where the levels of gender inequality have gone down.

## References

Verghese, A. (2010). *Cutting for stone: a novel*. Knopf.

Wells, J. C. (2010). Maternal capital and the metabolic ghetto: an evolutionary perspective on the transgenerational basis of health inequalities. *American Journal of Human Biology*, 22(1), 1-17.