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## **Enlightening Of The Challenges Females In The Black Society Have To Face In 'Nervous Conditions' By Tsitsi Dangarembga**

The book 'Nervous Conditions' focuses on the struggles which woman have to face in Rhodesia and how colonialism has affected their lives. Dangarembga brings to light the challenges women have to combat including their inferior status in society in comparison to men. The title of this book 'Nervous Conditions' refer to all the obstacles the protagonist and the females in the black society have to face.

The protagonist of the story is Tambudzai, also referred to as Tambu, who is a victim of racism in a colonised Rhodesia and exploring their struggles as they have to be submissive to the men in the African society. Tambu is a clever girl who was always in her brother's shadow. Due to her being female and coming from a poor family, her father chose to use the little money they had to send her brother, Nhamo, to school instead. Instead of sitting back and doing nothing about going to school, Tambu decided to rise against her father and earn her own money. She asks her parents for seeds and a piece of land to grow maize so she can pay for her own school fees. With the help of her teacher Mr Matimba, Tambu earns ten pounds by selling her maize in the town. She gives this money to her principal to pay for her school fees but her father wanted the money to be brought home, and started arguing with principal. She is given the opportunity to study at the mission after her brother Nhamo dies. Tambu is thrown in a dilemma when she has to decide whether to stay at home and live the traditional women's life or to take an opportunity of getting educated like her aunt Maiguru.

Tambu's uncle, Babamukuru, is the only one who went abroad to study with his wife and family going along with him. He is now the headmaster of the school and is treated like a hero due to him being the breadwinner of the house. Tambu also views him as a God when he decides to take her to live with him and his family and attend the mission school. When she is living with him, she sees things are not as perfect as she thought. Maiguru is the wife of Babamukuru, and is seeing by Thambu as someone who is pampered, although this is not true. Maiguru also faces challenges such as not being acknowledged for her being well educated, and has a Master's Degree in Psychology, and also not having access to her money she earns. Despite being an educated and working woman, Maiguru is still expected to fill in the traditional role of women in society, such as cooking and cleaning.

Tambu's Mother is living the typical role of a woman. She has gotten so used to the patriarchal rule; 'first her father, then her husband.' She is seeing as submissive and does not have a say once the men have spoken. Although we see an act of braveness when there is no money left for Nhamo's school fees. Ma Shangaya sold vegetables so she could scrape up some money for Nhamo's school fees. Ma Shangaya is a traditional woman who is uneducated and carries her burdens on her own. She has become so used to the men in her life controlling what decisions to make that when given the opportunity, she does not know what to say. She says her opinions do not matter. Mother goes into a depressive state once she hears about the death of her son Nhamo and once she hears about Tambu leaving to a convent school.

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'The victimization, I saw, was universal.'-Tambu, Chapter 6. After witnessing the incident with Babamukuru's horrific treatment when Nyasha comes back from the dance, Tambu realizes that all men will always treat women inferior to them. At the same time, it does not matter whether you are educated or not, women shall always suffer under the patriarchal rule.

Nyasha is the cousin of Tambu, and daughter of Babamukuru and Maiguru. Nyasha is struggling to find her place in the world ever since she moved back to Rhodesia from England, having to adjust to a new culture and change back to the old one. When she attended the school in England, she learned to embrace Western ideals such as gender equality and the value of individual expression, although these two values clash greatly with her Native upbringing. These values go against her father's way of thinking and wanting to raise a daughter in the traditional sense with traditional values. Due to Nyasha's knowledge of two different cultures, she is viewed as an outsider by her classmates. Nyasha channels her energy into her studying, and later on develops an eating disorder known as bulimia. Nyasha is someone who wants to think for herself and not be controlled by her father's traditional values.

Lucia is Tambu's aunt, mother's sister and is given the title as a witch due to her unrestrained nature. She stands up against injustice and speaks her mind when it comes to the patriarchal rules. Lucia does not want to be bound down into marriage although she does enjoy sexual pleasure, as she sees it as something that will make her suffer. She has had sexual affairs with Jeremiah and Takesure. This has resulted in her being pregnant. Lucia is given a choice to become the third wife of Takesure but she rejects the idea. She asks Babamukuru to help her find a job as she wants to be a free and independent woman. Babamukuru helps Lucia find a job cooking in a hostel. Lucia comes back when she discovers Mother is going into a depressive state, not eating and not taking care of herself, and also not worrying about her new born son.

In conclusion, all these women hold some sort of struggles and burdens to them, where factors from the culture and their surroundings play a role in how they react and handle the obstacles they face. Maiguru was seen as a pampered woman who lives the life of luxury until Tambu went to live with her and Babamukuru. It was only then she realized that men were superior everywhere. Maiguru finally had enough when she fought with Babamukuru and left the house for a couple of days, making Babamukuru realize that he needs her in his life. He shows new respect for her afterwards. Ma Shangaya battles with depression as she comes to terms with everything which has happened. Lucia has decided to find work and become independent. She does not want to settle down and have her life revolve around a man. She comes back to help Ma Shangaya out of her depressive state. Nyasha is suffering an identity crisis and trying to find her place in this world of colonialism and patriarchal rules. Her eating disorder shows the struggles she is going through and how alone she felt when Tambu left. Tambu decides to move on in life with her education as she finds it important to break the poverty cycle.