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**Hillary Clinton's *Living History* (2003) and Michelle Obama's *Becoming* (2018): Two First
Ladies in the Public and Private Spaces**

Presented by:

Lynda AIT OUFELLA

Sabrina ABDOU

Supervised by

Dr. Sabeha LARABI

Panel of Examiners:

Chair: Ms Hassiba BENSABI, MAA, Department of English, UMMTO

Supervisor: Dr. Sabeha LARABI, MCB, Department of English, UMMTO

Examiner: Ms. Dalila MATMER, MAA, Department of English, UMMTO

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To

My beloved parents father and mother, who with love and effort have accompanied me in this process, without hesitating at any moment of seeing my dreams come true, which are also their dreams,

My precious brothers and sisters, who encouraged me to get such success and honor,

My loved binominal Lynda with whom I completed this work.

Sabrina

To my mother Houria.

To my aunts and uncles Karim, Farid particularly Younes who helped me to be the woman I'm today.

To my best cousin Samia who accompanied me from my childhood.

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Abstract

This piece of research falls within comparative literature. It compares and contrasts the ‘private’ and ‘public’ spaces in the lives of two First Ladies’ autobiographies namely Hillary Clinton’s *Living History* (2003) and Michelle Obama’s *Becoming* (2018). Our study relies on the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas’ concepts of ‘private’ and ‘public’ spaces as he develops them in his: *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society* (1962). This dissertation focuses mainly on the representation of First Lady Hillary Clinton’s and Michelle Obama’s public and private spaces in their respective autobiographies. The purpose is to discuss in two chapters the extent to which the two First Ladies are similar or different from each other in their lives and contributions. One of the basic findings of this research is that while in the public space First Lady Clinton’s contributions are more considerable, in the private sphere however, First Lady Obama remains more accomplished and lived happier not through what she writes in her autobiography, but even in eyes of the public opinion. Clinton and Obama also had a significant impact on redefining the role of First Ladies from only wives and mothers to powerful women who can make a change and effectively impact the world.

Keywords: Autobiography, Hillary Clinton, Michelle Obama, Jürgen Habermas Private Sphere, Public Sphere.

I. Introduction

Throughout most of the United States history, men were classified at the first position, while women were in second position. The world has suffered from gender inequality and discrimination. Moreover, women had fewer legal rights and career opportunities than men even wives of Presidents. However, Presidents' wives were not considerable as they are today and they did not have a specific position which means First Ladies had no specific name, they were addressed as "Lady", "Mrs President" or "Mrs Presidentress". But since they began to travel with their husbands on official trips, their roles changed definitely and they became involved in political parties and in their husbands' campaigns. First Ladies also contributed to elevate the status of women everywhere in the world.

In the United States of America, over 50 wives of Presidents had held the name of the First Lady without profounding in social and political issues, but most famous First Ladies were Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama who played their roles in an extraordinary way. Moreover, in the eyes of the media, the coverage of both First Ladies showed divergences, while First Lady Clinton as a white woman was not questioned, First Lady Obama's image remained for a long time criticized by American media as concerning the ways she clothed in, and her manners as a black First Lady. Then, Michelle Obama have demonstrated that she was capable of overcoming the various challenges and obstacles that she faced, either in her public space as First Lady or in her private space as daughter, wife and mother. In addition, Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama took different approaches to their roles, and they became more visible through participation in their husbands' campaigns. They have also proved that they had enough intelligence and potential to make important political decisions and effectively affect their respective husbands both publicly and privately.

This piece of research is a comparative study that relies on Jürgen Habermas' concept 'public' and 'private' space' attempts to explore both First Lady Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama's implications in their public spaces, and their portrayals of their private spaces. Despite of some divergences as it will be discussed in our dissertation, both of Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama have demonstrated that they have made major contributions in reshaping the role of First Ladies and empowering women all around the world. They have shown that they changed some roles of women by supporting them in new democracies and economies, and helping them to be heard. Moreover, the two First Ladies became more visible by their success in different fields publicly and they proved that women could be equal in legal and politics activities to men. Moreover, in the two autobiographies Hillary Clinton's *Living History* (2003) and Michelle Obama's *Becoming* (2018), the First Ladies show their different challenges either in the private space as daughters, wives and mothers or in public space as First Ladies.

a. Review of the Literature

First Ladies Hillary Clinton's *Living History* (2003) and Michelle Obama's *Becoming* (2018) received different criticism from different prescriptive. To start with, the first critic is John Hamans in his article *Hill of Dreams* (2003) which is a political prescriptive. The critic argues that Clinton had an exceptional role in the White House and she had an important position there. He says: "Hillary Clinton is a most unusual public servant, in that she already occupied the White House and has more scores to settle than most" (Homans, 2003:01). However, according to Homans, Clinton's autobiography is motivated work since she talks about her family. He says:

Actually, *Living History* begins as surprising by three dimensional memoir about heartland upbringing, with a rock-ribbed Republican father, a closet Democrat mother, a cast of followed, beloved family and

making of the midwestern-ingenue persona (she and a friend “thought we had invented dipping the French fries into a ketchup) (Ibid:01).

Nevertheless the same critic believes that her decision to stand by her husband after his betrayal is mainly political calculation. He says:

It is true that she writes about Bill Clinton in her book with affection that one imagines would be hard through not possible to fail. (Ibid: 02).

Through these words, he states that the First Lady’s experience was painful and terrible but in her autobiography, she wrote about her husband with love because she not only focuses on the present, but also on the past. Moreover, Hamans argues that she never felt betrayed because of vote getting and for her position in the White House.

Another critic is Elaine Showalter in her article «*The Thrown behind the power (2003)*. She states that the main theme in Clinton’s autobiography is her status as a First Lady. She says:

If there was a tacit bargain in the Clinton’s White House marriage, that the division of real and symbolic power was it. And Hillary Clinton did well with in her travels. Speeches, and books” (Elaine, 2003:04).

Elaine Showalter believes that Clinton is a major support in the White House; she defends women and children’s rights in the United States and around the world.

However, the same critic argues that Clinton finds herself in a cruel situation as a victim of her husband’s betrayal. She says: “Instead, she faced what she calls the two hard decisions of her life: whether to stay in her marriage or whether to run for the US Senate” (Ibid). According to Elaine, Clinton’s decisions were criticized by people who were against that. Furthermore, the critic maintains that Clinton refused to give any details about her husband’s betrayal, while she explains about running for Public office in New York.

Just like First Lady Clinton, Michelle Obama’s autobiography *Becoming (2018)* has been also subject to criticism from different perspectives. To start with, Constance Grady in

her article entitled '*Michelle Obama's Becoming is a Master Class in Working the First Lady Tightrope*' (2018) says:

It must create a case for the First Lady as a compelling figure in her own right, someone who is worth reading a whole book about-but it must also reckon with her marriage and her presidential husband, because after all, that is generally the reason the First Lady is a famous enough for you to be reading a book about in the first place. (Grady, 2018:01)

Grady asserts that Obama's marriage is an inspiration to get such ability to wield her status as a political wife to be more discussed than her presidential husband. In addition, she argues that Michelle Obama's belief in her own worth, her abilities and her husband's aspirations, is part of what makes her the woman who she is today. The critic argues that the final third of her book is to celebrate the uses of soft power even if the First Lady has no official power, but she has a platform and Barack Obama prepared to make her as a political woman. The same critic says:

The famous White House vegetable garden became Obama's first solution to the question of how to handle the First Lady's tricky position, of how to use her soft power to get things done without making anyone feel threatened.(Ibid:04).

Moreover, Grady argues that the garden is an innocent and political step while she planned to use it to talk about nutrition and fight childhood obesity. She says: "It is, at the end of the day, a political memoir, which means that its first and most important goal is to keep Michelle Obama likable(hold that approval rating steady at 66 percent!)" (Ibid: 04). Grady believes the *Becoming* is an interesting book that qualifies Obama as a successful First Lady memoir.

Another critic is Dipti Tamang who in her article entitled '*Review-Becoming (2019)*' examined First Lady Michelle Obama's *Becoming (2018)* from a feminist perspective. She claims that the book demonstrates the position of black women in US American politics experiencing gender and race from Michelle Robinson to the First Lady. She explains: "In the

first segment of the book, Obama provides an account of the personal struggles as an ambitious girl from black community growing up in the Southside of Chicago.”(Tamang, 2019:01).Nevertheless, the critic believes that Obama in her autobiography breaks the gender barriers as the First Lady. She says:

In the latter half of her journey into the public space as the First Lady of the US, the memoir provides crucial reflections into the functioning of class, gender and race in US politics.”(Ibid: 01).

Tamang argues that *Becoming* indicates the sacrifices she made for her family, her husband and her country, reflecting gender roles. She says: “Feminism has therefore gradually emerged as strong discipline within the field of International Relation, questioning and interrogating key concepts from gendered standpoint” (Ibid: 01). According to Tamang these interrogations led women’ issues to be discussed and practised by International Relations. Tamang asserts that “Body shaming is another powerful tactic that has been actively propagated to bring down women by depicting them as misfits”. (Ibid: 02). She points out that “Michelle Obama was brutally body shamed and criticized for her physique by Keith Ablow (a prominent member of the Fox News’ Medical A-team) during her campaign for healthy food habits to reduce obesity among children”.(Ibid:02). Tamang argues that this tactic made Michelle feel like misfit.

From the previous reviews on Hillary Clinton *Living History (2003)* and Michelle Obama’s *Becoming (2018)* it is clear both autobiographies have been criticized from different views. The first review is a political perspective that studies Michelle Obama’s and Hillary Clinton’s political positions. However, the second review deals with Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama contributions in women’s rights.

b. Issue and working hypothesis

From the previous reviews on the two First Ladies and their autobiographies Hillary Clinton's *Living History* (2003) and Michelle Obama's *Becoming* (2018), we have evidence that these two First Ladies have never been compared before in their private and public spaces. Despite the fact that the two First Ladies belong to two different cultures and their times at the White House were different, both of them had the same roles and same goals either in their private spaces as daughters, wives and mothers, or in their public spheres as First Ladies. Therefore, in our work we propose a comparative study of these two famous First Ladies by focusing on their private sphere as daughters, wives, mothers, and public sphere as First Ladies by using Jürgen Habermas' theory public sphere as he explained it in his work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (1962).

The basic assumption in our work or questions we raised in this piece of research. First, to what extent can a black First Lady be similar or different from a white First Lady in their private and public spaces?

Second, how able is a wife of President as a First Lady to distinguish and assume a double role in private and public spaces?

Third, how can two First Ladies from different cultures and times have the same determination to make a change and positively affect the world?

C. Methodology Outline

Our dissertation is composed of five sections. The first section is devoted to the general introduction where we mention the situation of women in the past and the roles of the two First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama. The review of literature reads some critics

who treated the two autobiographies *Living History* (2003) and *Becoming* (2018) from different perspectives. The issue and working hypothesis states the aim we intend to fulfil. The second section is the methods and materials, where we explain Jürgen Habermas' theory *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society* (1962). It also includes biographies of the two First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama, and the summaries of their two autobiographies. The third section consists the results. The fourth section is the Discussion and analysis of the two autobiographies. This section is divided into two chapters; the first chapter deals with the two First Ladies as daughters, wives and mothers in the private sphere. The second chapter focuses on the public sphere of the two First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama. The fifth and last section is a general conclusion of our dissertation and a summary of the whole work.

II. Methods and Materials

A/ Methods

As we have mentioned it in the introduction to our research work, we intend to ground our study of American First Ladies Michelle Obama and Hillary Clinton's on the private and public spaces on the theoretical auspices of Jürgen Habermas theory on the public spaces as he explained it in his book entitled *The Structural Transformation of The Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*(1962).

Jürgen Habermas's theory was translated into English in 1989 by Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence. In his book he focuses on 'The Public Sphere' 'of which the origins go back to the Greek and Roman times (17th-18thC). In that period as he explains, they made a distinction between 'Polis' means Public Sphere which portrays the relationship between free citizens (authorities and the bourgeois) while talking about political concerns, whereas, 'Oikos' refers to the private sphere where free individuals talk about domestic issues. In other words, The private sphere 'Oikos' is specified for women at home since they did not have access to political issues. He says:

The public (*das Publikum, le public*), was "the public authority" (*Öffentliche Gewalt*) in contrast to everything "private" (*Privatwesen*). The servants of the state were (*öffentliche Personen*), public persons, or *personnes publiques*; they were incumbent in some official position, the official business was 'public' (*öffentliches Amt, service public*), and government buildings and institutions were called 'public'. On the other hand, there were private individuals, private offices, private business, and private homes; Gotthelf speaks of the *Privatmann* (the Private person). (Habermas, 1989:11)

Habermas tries to explain the growth of the public sphere by relating political, social, cultural and philosophical developments to each other in different approaches. Before, as he explains feudal societies made no distinction between 'Public' and 'private'. He claims:

Sociologically, that is to say by reference to institutional criteria, a public sphere in the sense of a separate realm distinguished from the private sphere cannot be shown to have existed in the feudal society of the high middle ages.(Ibid:07)

From the title *The Structural Transformation of The Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (1962), Jürgen Habermas deconstructs which means rebuilds or redefines the meaning of the private and public spaces or spheres of bourgeois societies as he called them. So, as to give them a new interpretation different from that which the Roman and old public opinion had, Habermas believes that after 18th C the case was changed and he focuses on the interaction between the two spaces. He describes them as the transformation of a new social space situated between the private and public spheres, which means in modern world the relationship between these two spheres changes like women occupy even the public sphere. In his book, Habermas says that the private ‘Oikos’ sphere is made of private individuals concerned politic societies, business group, and interact in society, so they form a public space which is a new ‘Polis’.

In the case of our dissertation, both First Ladies used these two important spheres in order to discuss their lives through their autobiographies *Living History*(2003) and *Becoming*(2018). So, the case of Clinton and Obama are studied in their Private spaces as daughters, wives and mothers as concern the domestic issues. As concerns the other sphere, because these First Ladies interfere in public, social, and political issues of their country, so they are discussed in the public space.

From the above explanation of Habermas’ theory, we are going to take two main concepts Public and Private spheres to support our research work in discussing the status of the two American First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama in both ‘public’ and ‘private’ spaces.

B/ Materials

B.1. Biography of Hillary Clinton

Hillary Clinton, in full Hillary Rodham Clinton, was born Hillary Diane Rodham (October 26th, 1947, Chicago, Illinois, U.S). Her mother is Dorothy Rodham and her father is Hugh Rodham. She is an American lawyer and politician who served as a U.S senator (2001-2009) and Secretary of State (2009-2013) in the administration of President Barak Obama. She served as First Lady (1993-2001) during the administration of her husband, Bill Clinton. She became the first woman to top the presidential ticket of major party in the United States. Clinton worked on various political campaigns and as a lawyer in Rose Law Firm where she was twice named one of “the 100 most influential lawyer’s in America”.

After Bill was elected governor of Arkansas in 1978, she continued to pursue her career and retained her maiden name until 1982. Throughout Bill’s tenure as governor, Hillary worked on programs that aided children and the disadvantaged. She also maintained a successful law practice. Hillary played a crucial role by greeting voters, giving speeches, and serving as one of her husband’s chief advisers. After her husband left office in 2000, later, in 2016 she announced that she was running for Presidency which she lost to Donald Trump. Despite the loss, she is still considered the woman to win the popular or vote in an American Presidential Election.

B.2. Biography of Michelle Obama

Michelle Lavaughn Robinson Obama known as Michelle Obama was born on January 17, 1964, in Chicago, Illinois. Her father is Fraser Robinson and her mother is Marian Shields. She is the wife of the 44th President Barack Obama. Michelle was the First Lady of the United State from 2009 to 2017. She was the first African –American woman to serve in

this position, and she is graduated from Princeton University and Harvard Law School. Then, she worked as the associate Dean of student services at the University of Chicago as well as the Vice President for Community and External Affairs of the University of Chicago Medical Center. Michelle met Barack Obama when she worked in Sidley Austin when they got married 1992 and now they have two daughters.

As First Lady, Michelle Obama focused her attention on social issues such as poverty, healthy living and education. She campaigned for her husband's presidential in 2007 and 2008, delivering a keynote address at the 2008 Democratic National Convention. Throughout her husband's campaign for U.S President, Michelle made a 'commitment to be away overnight only once week, to campaign only two days a week and be home the end of the second day'. She was as member of the Board of Directors of Treehouse foods. Then she served on the Board of Directors of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. In 2021, she continued to be member in the political campaign.

B.3. Summary of Clinton's Living History (2003)

Living History (2003) is an autobiographical work written by former First Lady Hillary Clinton. It is a revealing autobiography about the time she spent in the White House. It is also narrates her challenging when she was daughter and the adventure with her husband. The autobiography is divided into thirteen eight sections; tracing Hillary Clinton's life from childhood in Chicago until election as the junior senator from New York, going through her years in college; meeting Bill Clinton; her life as Arkansas' First Lady; her road to the White House and finally her election in New York.

Through the autobiography, the First Lady tries to clear many issues on which she has not been able to speak out such as the Monica Lewinsky scandal. Hillary Clinton was interested

in many fields; children's welfare, women status and social justice. She also her different roles either in her supports to her husband campaign or in her country as a First Lady. She is like many women of her generation, she grew up with choices and opportunities, and she became an emblem for some and a lighting door others. She crisscrossed the globe on behalf of women's rights. Through *Living History* (2003), the First Lady came to define herself and find her own voice as a woman and a great figure in American politics.

B.4. Summary of Michelle Obama's *Becoming* (2018)

Becoming (2018) is an autobiographical work written by Michelle Obama, published in 2018. In her book, Michelle Obama shares her experience, her sadness and her success from her early life as Ms. Robinson until becoming a First Lady. The book also portrays Michelle Obama's faith and self confidence that helped her to become the woman she is today. She talks about her life before marriage as well as how she found her voice and her time in the White House. Moreover, the book takes the readers through the journey of Michelle from her early life as Michelle Robinson where she was a lawyer and a graduate Princeton University and Harvard Law School.

Michelle Obama divided her autobiography into three sections and each section describes her life through different steps. The First section is entitled '*Becoming Me*', where she talks about herself as Michelle Robinson who grew up on the south side of Chicago with her parents. On the other hand, she writes about her education at Princeton University and Harvard Law School. Then she continues describing her experiences until she was a lawyer at the law firm Sidley Austin where she met Barack Obama.

In addition, in the second one '*Becoming us*' she talks about her relationship with Barack Obama before and after their marriage. Michelle Obama narrates her experiences as a political

woman in the Illinois State Senate, her career from cooperate law to non-profit realm. After that, the First Lady tells about Barack Obama's presidential election. The last section is *'Becoming More'*, which deals with Barack Obama's presidency and her support to him. Besides this, she concerned herself to correct the image of black American women in the public sphere and she mentioned her initiatives in health care and helping the military families. Then at the end she talked about her impact on women.

III. Results

This research paper compares and discusses two autobiographies of two American First Ladies Hillary Clinton's *Living History* (2003) and Michelle Obama's *Becoming* (2018). Our work has shown that both autobiographies are concerned with the public and the private spaces relying on Jürgen Habermas' theory of the public space as he explained it in his work .

The analysis has shown that the two First Ladies have convergences and divergences in both their private and public spaces. As concerns the convergences, the first chapter of our discussion section reached the first major finding, both First Ladies Clinton and Obama had support from their parents as daughters until their graduation as lawyers. In their autobiographies, they also both describe how supportive and loving they were to their husbands and children. Yet, one major divergence in their private spaces is that while Clinton remains evasive as concerns the betrayal of her husband with Monica Lewinsky, First Lady Obama openly shared with the Americans her fairy tale-like life with her husband Obama.

The second chapter of our discussion section deals with the following findings. The first finding concerns First Ladies' involvement in politics, while First Lady Clinton was interested in politics from her early age, Michelle Obama was not really involved in that, and her major contribution was on social issues by helping women to get their rights and reducing children's obesity.

The second finding is about First Ladies' contributions in health care. While First Lady Clinton focused on Americans' health care as a whole, First Lady Obama concerned her efforts on the health of children through fighting children's obesity and planted the White

House Kitchen Garden in order to show to Americans the way they should take care of their children' health.

The third and last finding is concerning their contributions on women's rights. While First Lady Clinton's major contribution concerns women at a world –wide scale, First Lady Obama could not remain unaffected by problems concerning black women. In her autobiography *Becoming*, First Lady Obama is all the time reminded by her origins as a black Afro-American either implicitly or explicitly.

Furthermore, Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama both have proved that women can be equal to men in political positions, and they have helped women to change their status in society. They have performed duties on behalf of their husbands, and they have not failed to show that they are capable to occupy the position of a First Lady. Both First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama are similar in the reasons behind writing of their autobiographies which are how they have challenged such struggles and how they assumed their position as First Ladies, the highest and most visible position an American woman can occupy.

IV. Discussion

Our dissertation investigates possible affinities between two autobiographies. *Living History (2003)* by the American First Lady Hillary Clinton and *Becoming (2018)*, by the First Lady Michelle Obama. Our investigation will be conducted relying on the theoretical auspices “*the Structural Transformation of The Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society (1962)*”.

The first chapter is devoted the analysis of the private sphere of the two American First Ladies Hilary Clinton and Michelle Obama as daughters, wives and mothers. The second chapter explores the status of the two American First Ladies in the public sphere through their contributions in the fields of; health, women and Politics.

Chapter One: First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama in Private Sphere: Daughters, Wives and Mothers.

A. First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama as Daughters

Both First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama received lot of attention and supports from their families. Parents are responsible to provide education and knowledge to their children with a sense of stability. So, all those supports of their parents affected positively their emotional, personal sides in general, and education in particular.

In *Living History (2003)*, Hillary Clinton asserts that her relatives gave her power and self confidence to be what she is today. She says that she was closer to her grandfather, and that her father was strict with her brothers except Hillary, she says:

My mother and my grandfathers could never have lived my life; my father and my grandfathers could never imagine it. But they bestowed on

me that promise of America, which made my life and my choices possible’’ (Clinton, 2003:01)

Furthermore, the First Lady explains that though she belongs to a middle-class family, her mother Dorothy Howell Rodham was a homemaker and her father Hugh E. Rodham owned a small business, they fed her needs and offered her necessities of life. She maintains “The challenges of their lives made me appreciate the opportunities of my own life even more.” (Ibid: 02)

In other words, Clinton’s mother was a main support to Clinton and her brothers by pushing them to read books. As Habermas defines the private sphere as a realm of family and home and which “consists of hidden interactions between free individuals”. (Habermas, 1989:04), we understand that she had a very loving relationship with her family, and she was closer to her mother. In *Living History* (2003), Clinton says that during the school years, she helped her to do her homework, while her father occupied mathematics tasks. She asserts: “During school year, I could count on my mother’s help with my homework, except for math, which she left to my father.” (Ibid: 12)

Similarly, Michelle Obama was also attached to her family. In her autobiography she describes them as they were everything to her. She says: “My family was my world, the center of everything” (Obama, 2018:02). Michelle was born in a basic family where she shared a single room with her brother; however, this was never an obstacle to her family to offer her the demands of life. She claims: “My parents in the lone bathroom, while Graig and I shared bigger area that I assume was intended to be the living room” (Ibid: 03). Michelle’s family played an important role in her life, they were the only supporter mainly her mother during her childhood, she says: “she loved us consistently, but we were not over managed. Her goal was to push us into the world. “I’m not raising babies,” she’d tell us “I’m raising

adults. (Ibid: 28). Indeed, the two First Ladies considered their parents the source of life, they were the only support during their childhood.

Both First Ladies lived different experiences at school. Hillary witnessed some issues with children where she was afraid to face them but her mother always encouraged her to defeat her fears. Her mother always advised her to never give up, she mentions “Go back out there,” she ordered, and if Suzy hits you, you have my permission to hit her back. You have to stand up for yourself. There is no room in this house for cowards” (Clinton, 2003:15)

In the part entitled ‘*Becoming Me*’ the First Lady explains that racism takes different forms and can happen in multiple places, that is what Michelle faced during her childhood. She says: “The color of our skin made us vulnerable. It was a thing we had always had to navigate.”(Obama, 2018:14). On the other word, racism is more than a word; it prevents people from enjoying dignity and equality.

Both First Ladies have convergences and divergences, while Clinton was at high school she was happy, and she did not have any issues with teachers or her classmates, Michelle Obama had some difficulties in integration with her classmates because of her origins. Being comfortable at school is the most important for child because it reduces depression and stress.

In *Living History* (2003), Clinton claims that she was not interested to have new relationships at school. She believed that being with boys is like to give up a college or career and go to marry. She asserts that: “I simply could not imagine giving up a college education or career to get married, as some of my girlfriends were planning to do.” (Ibid: 24). In *Living History*, First Lady Clinton explains that as a child, she was a brilliant student among her teachers at school in Park Ridge. Later, she mentions that she wrote a letter to NASA asking to join them so as to become an astronaut, they rejected her because of gender inequality. Her parents advised her to believe in her abilities, and opportunities should not be limited by gender. She asserts:

I clearly expected to work for a living, and did not feel limited in my choices. I was lucky to have parents who never tried to mold me into any category or career. They simply encouraged me to excel and be happy. In fact, I do not remember friend's parents or teacher ever telling me or my friends that "girls can't do this" or "girls shouldn't do that. (Ibid: 23).

Furthermore, Clinton was the first senior class at Maine Township High School South, where she ran for student government President against boys, but she lost. In spite of her loss, the winner told her to be the Head of the organization committee and she agreed. She says: "As soon as the election was over, the winner asked me to head the organization committee, which as far as I could tell was expected to do most of the work. I agreed. " (Ibid: 28).

The case is different for Michelle Obama, in *Becoming*, the First Lady says that she was shy because she was the youngest girl at Whitney Young High School. She did not believe about her capacities to face fears and anxiety. She maintains:

My worries about High School, if they were to be cataloged, could mostly be filed under one general heading: Am I good enough? It was a question that dogged me through my first month, even as I began to settle in, even as I got used to the Predawn wake-ups and navigating between buildings for class." (Obama, 2018:33).

Unlike Hilary Clinton, Obama had different relationships with boys to boost her happiness but it did not distract her from studying hard which was absolutely essential, because High School is a period of adventures and hard work. She states: "My first round of grades at school turned out to be pretty good, and so did my second. " (Ibid: 35).

Obama states that she was always afraid of making errors and become stupid in front of her classmates. Consequently, she avoided to share her ideas and her opinions in class. Shyness is the most difficult feeling that a child may have. It provokes anxiety and stress. However, Michelle was in the Goldhouse where an assistant principle Mr. Smith was her neighbor, this made her comfortable and courageous. She mentions : " Seeing Mr. Smith at

school was a mild comfort a bridge between Whitney Young and my neighborhood, but it did little offset my anxiety.” (Ibid: 33).

Obama narrates that during her High School, she integrated with her classmates and most of them were black. She realized that having self-confidence is a fact of believing in one’s abilities and qualities. It encourages children to take risks and express their creativity in classroom. She says: “Meanwhile, at school I was quietly collecting bits of data, trying to sort out my place inside the teenage intelligentsia”. (Ibid: 35). In addition, the First Lady believes that being poor is not something to be shy with. She admits that she is not the only one who grew up in a poor neighborhood. She says:

This is my new world. It is not t say that everyone at the school was rich or overly sophisticated, because that wasn’t the case. There were plenty of kids, who came from neighborhoods just like mine, who struggled with far more than I ever would.”(Ibid: 35)

In *Becoming* (2003) Obama explains that she became one of the ten percent that took the advanced placement in her class, and she was a member of The National Honor Society. She points up “[...] I was on track to graduate in the top 10 percent of my class at Whitney Young, that I had been elected treasurer of the senior class, made the National Honor Society, and managed to vanquish pretty much every doubt I’d arrived with a nervous ninth grader.”(Ibid 40)

Both First Ladies entered University; however, Clinton struggled against some issues in her first months at Wellesley College, where she decided to give up on her dreams. But her mother advised her to fight for her career. During her first year, Clinton had been elected as President of their College’s Young Republican. Later, the First Lady talks about her reassignment in that party, because; her Political beliefs do not fit with what is practiced in the Republican Party, and she preferred to acquire everything about Vietnam war. She says: “all that, however, was far in the future when I officially left Wellesley College Young

Republicans and submerged myself in learning everything I could about Vietnam’’. (Clinton, 2003:36)

Moreover, First Lady Clinton mentions in *Living History* that she was against the Vietnam war and affected by the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr; Robert Kennedy. At this point, Hillary talks about her status as a Golden water Girl, supporter of the anti war presidential nomination Campaign of Democrat Eugene McCarthy. She asserts “By the time I was a college junior, I had gone from being a Gold water Girl to supporting the anti-war campaign of Eugene McCarthy’’. (Ibid: 37). Furthermore, Hillary writes about her mission for the Wellesley internship summer program in Washington. Mr. Alan Schelter selected her to interfere in the House Republican Conference in order to help her in her understanding Political views. After her internship, Clinton was chosen by Charles Godell to be in the Republican convention in Miami as a representative of the Governor Rockefeller’s late-entry campaign.

Eventually, in *Living History (2003)* the First Lady speaks about her senior thesis for Wellesley College about the views advocated by community organizer named Saul Alinsky. During her graduation, Hillary was elected to speak where she became the first speaker in the Wellesley College history. She mentions that she was afraid of being the first speaker, because she did not have any clue about the speech. She says:

My friend’s enthusiasm about my speaking worried me because I did not have a clue about what I could say that could fit our tumultuous four years at Wellesley and be a proper send-off into our unknown futures.(Ibid:45)

In Michelle Obama’s *‘Becoming’*, she reflects her experiences in college. She enrolled in Princeton University which is one of the most prestigious academic institutions in the world. In her book, she states that she arrived on campus earlier than most other students. In *Becoming* the First Lady explains how important was her period in college where she learnt a

lot of things about life. As Hillary Clinton says: “What you don’t learn from your mother, you learn from the world” (Clinton, 2003: 19). Michelle learnt ‘how to write efficiently, how to think critically’ (Michelle, 2018: 48)

However, Obama shares her painful experience about racism when she was one of the few minority undergraduates at Princeton. In her autobiography, she mentions that Ivy League campus looks like a scary place when she was a freshman. As a black student surrounded by whites made Michelle motivated not only to work hard but also to present her race. She says:

It takes energy to be the only black person in a lecture hall or one of few non white trying out for a play or joining intramural team. It requires effort, an extra level of confidence, to speak in those setting and own your presence in the room.’’(Ibid: 45)

Additionally, First Lady Obama narrates another experience that wounded her because of her black color skin, where she mentions that her roommate’s mother requested to change her daughter’s room.

Moreover, in her autobiography *Becoming* (2018) the First Lady tells about the join of the Third World Center at Princeton University to Support students color and to help herself financially. Due to the TWC she could integrate and make friends which helped her to feel better at Princeton. She believes: “The Third World Center- or TWC, as most of us called it__ quickly became a kind of home base for me.” (Ibid: 45). She adds “I was happy with the community of black and Latino students I’d found through the TWC”. (Ibid: 45) Later, she mentions that she was in the Organization for Black unity which aimed as the Third World Center. Moreover, Michelle Obama states that she obtained her Bachelor of Art degree majoring in society with good grades, her thesis analyses Princeton-Educated Blacks and the Black Community. Likewise, she mentions that she was graduated from Harvard Law School. She says: “Years later, it was really no different. Professors, relatives, random people I met, asked what was next for me, and when I mentioned I was bound for law school- Harvard School”(Ibid :56).

Another instance, from the autobiographies *Living History* (2003) and *Becoming* (2018) is when the two First Ladies majored from their college and they took several schools to doctorate degree. Hilary Clinton was accepted by Yale and Harvard at Ivy League, however Michelle Obama was accepted by Harvard.

In *Living History* (2003), Hillary Clinton Rodham then writes about how she entered Yale Law School in 1969, after she was refused by Harvard because they did not accept women anymore. In her autobiography the First Lady states that she was one of the 27 women out of 235 students to matriculate. Hillary believes that Yale School encouraged her and gave her the opportunities to learn more about the world. She says: “Yale also encourages its students to get out in the world and apply the theories they learned in classroom”. (Clinton, 2003:51)

Moreover, Clinton asserts that during her studies in Yale School Marine, the first black women admitted to the bar at Mississippi, offered her a job which is a research on the education and health of migrant children. She maintains: “Marine assigned me to do research on the education and health of migrant children.” (Ibid: 55) Furthermore, the First Lady writes that when she was in second year, she decided to focus on how the law affected children’s rights and needs. Thus, Hillary explains that she got courage from her two law school professors; Jay Katz and Joe Goldstein. They encouraged her to get deeper and learn more about child development, by attending courses at the Yale Child Study Center. Then, Hilary mentions that she was accepted and worked as their assistant for ‘Beyond the Best Interests of the Child’, she was also in the medical staff at Yale-New Haven Hospital to analyze problems of child abuse. She says:

Two of my law school professors, Jay Katz and Joe Goldenstein, encouraged my interest in this new area and suggested that I learn more about child development through a course of study at the Yale Study Center. They sent me to meet the center’s Director, Dr. Al Solnit, and its chief clinician, Dr. Sally Provence. I persuaded them to let me spend a year at the Center attending case discussion and observing clinical

sessions. Dr. Solnit and Professor Goldstein asked me to serve as their research assistant Beyond the best Interestsof the Child. (Ibid: 57)

She adds :” I also began consulting with the medical staff at Yale-New Haven Hospital about the newly acknowledged problem of child abuse and helping to draft the legal procedures for the hospital to use when dealing with suspected child abuse cases.” (Ibid: 57)

Additionally, Clinton claims that with her studies in law, she decided to make the unvoiced children voiced. As a result, she wrote her first article, “Children under the Law in 1974”. She explains that the article was about how reactions when parents ignore their children. She says: “My first scholar article, titled “Children Under the Law”, was published in 1974 in *Harvard Education Review*” (Ibid: 58). “Hillary Rodham Clinton has been an important voice for the cause of children” (Rosemary&Duncan, 1992:473). By these words, Clinton asserts that she engaged with children’s rights in order to remove children from adult Prisons, and gain access to life conditions such as health and education.

Furthermore, both First Ladies met their future partners in different places. Hillary Clinton met Bill Clinton in the library at Yale School; whereas, Michelle Obama met Barrack Obama when she started working in the Chicago offices of high-end law firm called Sildley Austin.

In *Living History (2003)*, Hillary claims that after her first encounter with Bill, they started to become friends, then she narrates that when she was in mission to California, Bill postponed his summer plans to follow her to California. She says: “why?” I asked “do you want to give up the opportunity to do something you love to follow me to California?” “For someone I love, that’s why” he said. (Clinton, 2003: 62). Then the First Lady narrates about the first time she introduced Bill to her parents during their holidays in Park Ridge.

Furthermore, Hillary mentions that she worked for Marian Wright Eldman, and her first mission was about the NIXON administration’s failure. Her mission was to establish whether

the Dothan School was discriminating a base examine race in education .In addition to, in her autobiography, the First Lady asserts that she joined Bill in Texas in 1972 to work during George McGovern’s failed presidential campaign as a head of the voter registration drive. She mentioned that she spent most of her time in working to enroll the newly enfranchised and other voters, she says:

I had a small cubicle that I rarely occupied because I spent most of my time in the field, trying to register the newly enfranchised eighteen-to twenty- one year- olds and driving around south Texas working to register black and Hispanic voters.(Ibid:66)

During Clinton’s graduation, she claims that she worked for Marine in Children’s Defense Fund (CDF) that focuses on child advocacy, and research in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She argues that she integrated in that job, she says: “I loved the work, which involved a lot of travel and exposure to problems affecting children and teenagers around the country. (Clinton, 2003:73). Moreover, she mentions her admiration to the offer, and how important was that period in American history. She says: “I was on my way to one of most intense and significant experiences of my life. (Ibid: 75). Furthermore, Clinton mentions that she helped Fred Altschuster to analyze the reporting structure of the White House staff, and she was the representative of the House Judiciary Committee. By then, Hillary Clinton is considered as a strong political woman through what she could realize.

In *Becoming* (2018), Michelle Obama narrates that she met her future husband at the law firm Sidley Austin. The First Lady asserts that during the summer associate, she was the mentor of Barrack at that firm, she says: “For me one thing, I was his mentor at the firm” (Obama, 2018: 61) Furthermore, Obama states that after being the mentor of Barack, they were friends, and they used to spend time and learn more about each others. In Barack Obama’s book ‘*A Promised Land*’, he says:“ She’d been assigned by the Firm to look out for

me, to make sure I knew where the office photographer was and that I generally felt welcome’’(Obama, 2020: 19)

After that, Michelle Obama begins to narrate her relationship with Barrack Obama and how they began dating each others. She states: “Still concerned about Propriety, I insisted we keep our blooming relationship out of sight of our colleagues, thought it hardly worked.” (Obama; 2018:68). In the second chapter *Becoming us*, Michelle Obama narrates when she introduced Barrack Obama to her family, she focused on her father’s reaction. She says: “My father appreciated Barrack instantly, but still didn’t like his odds’’ (Ibid: 69). Then she indicates that she was part of the Chicago Office’s recruiting team as the associate dean of the student Services. In other words, the First Lady mentions that her goal in that team was bringing in law students who were not just smart and hard drivers but also something more than male and white.

In her autobiography, Michelle Obama shows her loyalty to her profession which helped her for planning her career and looking for more opportunities in different fields. She always persuades herself that nothing is worthy than work. She writes:

I just did my job. I was a lawyer, and lawyers worked. We worked all the time. We were only as good as the hours we billed. There was no choice, I told myself. The work is important, I told myself’’. (Ibid: 78)

Moreover, the First Lady Michelle Obama narrates that after her father’s death she abandoned her job, but she got chance to work for the University of Chicago. Furthermore, the First Lady states that Susan who was member at the firm, proposed her to meet with Valerie Jarrett who was a deputy Chief of staff to the mayor of Chicago to make a job interview. However, although she is a successful woman but she once failed in an exam, she says:

I had never in my entire life failed a test, unless you want to count the moment in kindergarten when I stood up in class and couldn't read the word 'White' off the manila card held by my teacher. (Ibid: 99)

In the two autobiographies both First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama show that their parents offered them love, appreciation, encouragement and guidance. They were the major source in developing their personalities and motivations.

B. First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama as wives

Both First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama are wives and mothers. They did their best to balance their roles between being good wives and good mothers at the same time. As a wife, each of them wanted to be a supportive helper to her husband in his private life or in the public sphere.

In the sixth chapter entitled 'Arkansas Traveler' of *Living History (2003)*, Hillary Clinton talks about her marriage with President Bill Clinton, she says: "We were married in the living room on October 11, 1975, by the Reverend Vic Nixon." (Clinton, 2003:86). Moreover; the First Lady asserts that after their marriage and after Bill's ascent into Arkansas politics as Attorney general, they decided to move to Little Rock in Arkansas. However, during that time, the presidential election was between Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford and Bill managed Carter's campaign while Hillary helped them by making conferences. "As Indiana's field coordination, Hillary was required to get democratic votes in the heavily Republican State." (Dwayne, 2008:32).

Still in the period of Bill's position as governor of Arkansas, First Lady Clinton mentions that when her husband campaigned for Arkansas, she tried to make balance between the two roles as Politician's wife by trying to help him and as a working woman. "As her

husband campaigned for Arkansas governor, Hillary Rodham Clinton continued to manage the delicate balance between being a Politician's wife and a career woman.”(Ibid: 35).

In other words, in *Living History (2003)*, the First Lady admits that she did not change her name into Mrs Clinton because she did not want people think that she succeeded due to her husband's position. She says: “I kept my name after Bill was elected to state office partly because I thought it would help avoid the appearance of conflict of interest.”(Clinton, 2003: 107). Marguerite R .Waller says:

Like many women of her generation-my generation- Hillary Clinton did not assume her husband's name when she got married. Keeping her maiden name signified, within the semiotic system of the times, that her identity and her work were not derivative of her husband's identity and position.”(Waller, 1993: 152).

For instance, Clinton claims that when she kept her maiden name, she affected Bill's campaign where political advisers considered their relationship was just a professional arrangement than a real marriage. After that, she decided to change her name into Clinton as she says in her memoir: “So when Bill announced his run for another term on Chelsea's birthday, I began calling myself Hillary Rodham Clinton.”(Clinton, 2003: 108). She believes that she did not want her personal decision impact on her husband's political affairs. She says:

For the first time I came to realize how my personal choices could impact my husband's political future ... I learned the hard way that some voters in Arkansas were seriously offended by the fact that I kept my maiden name.(Dwayne,2008:40).

Unlike First Lady Clinton, Michelle Obama states that after they got married in 1992, she started working as Public Allies, while Barrack Obama decided to run for a State Senator Seat. However, she narrates that it was a wrong and mistrusted decision, because she wanted to spend more time together and live a normal life. She considered this decision as an obstacle for their relationship. She says: “I married you because you're cute and you're smart, but this is the dumbest thing you could have ever asked me to do.”(Carlin and Smith, 2016:686).

In addition, Michelle Obama believes that being involved in Politics might make him away from home; she argues that it was never a family affair. The State Senate would take a lot of his time, she states: “My friend Sanita Jackson had given me a sense that politicians were often required to be away from home. (Obama, 2018:118). Even though she was against the previous decision, she supported him in publishing his book **‘Dream from My Father’** in 1995. Once he published his book, Michelle was proud of him. According to her, it is such a literary peace. In other words, Michelle claims that Barrack made up her mind, and then she supported his decision in campaigning. However, at the same time she was doubtful and felt like he could not make it all the way and he was elected to the Illinois Senate in 1996. The First Lady writes that she believed in his capacities and had faith in what he could do.

Moreover, Michelle Obama claims that she supported her husband during his election as a Senator in State Senate Seat in 1996 and 1998. She realized that even if Barrack was a politician, but they could be happy. She says:

I began to see that there were ways I could be happier and that they didn’t necessarily need to come from Barrack’s quitting politics in order to take some nine-to-six foundation job. (Obama, 2018:133)

First Lady Obama believes that during Barrack’s running for the United State senate, she relied on her old friends by asking for help and support to her husband. “During this period, Barrack and Michelle developed many contacts and friends in Chicago who would assist Barrack in achieving his political ambitions” (Carlin& Smith, 2016: 687). Moreover, Michelle states that after Barrack’s winning, she began to make interviews and speeches in order to show that Barrack was not alone and to improve the opportunities of her husband’s commitment. Then Barrack was high ranking African American Senator in the country

Furthermore, in Hillary Clinton’s *Living History (2003)*, a chapter entitled **‘Campaign Odyssey’**, the First Lady believes that when Bill decided to run for presidency, she

encouraged him and she relied on her friends to help them especially Maggie Williams. She also explains that she was as the right hand to her husband; she was the principal surrogate on the campaign trail. Rhode says:

To help her husband with elections, Hillary Clinton was forced to adopt a more traditional image and approach, such as kinder, gentler hairdo, more mother-child photo ops, and power – profile appearances, often standing by her man but not opening her mouth.”(Rhode, 1997:89).

Besides, in her autobiography *Living History (2003)*, the First Lady explains that during the campaign, Bill began to have many opponents, the president Nixon one of them. He tried to denigrate Bill, and Premarket tabloids made rumours in which they linked Bill Clinton romantically with a woman named Jennifer Flowers. She says:

I was in Atlanta campaigning on January 23 when Bill called to warn me about an upcoming tabloid story in which a woman named Jennifer Flowers claimed she had a twelve-year affair with him.(Clinton,2003:123).

Additionally, in the same chapter, the First Lady maintains that she defended her husband in one of the most famous events of the campaign, where she made a conference with the journalist named Steve Kroft. She was with Bill Clinton on the U.S television shows which lasted one hour, and tried to defuse the infidelity story. “Political advisors were convinced that having Hillary by his side as his loving wife was the only way in which Bill could stop the public’s questioning and save the campaign.”(Muir, 2016:644). After that, Hillary Clinton shows that she supported her husband and stayed by his side, even during the famous 60min interview. She also wanted to show to American people how they were happy with each other, and showing her love, her honour, respect and she recognized what they have been together. Troy says:

There is not a person watching this who would feel comfortable sitting on this couch detailing everything that ever went on in their life or their marriage. And I think it’s real dangerous in this country if we don’t have some zone of privacy for everyday. (Troy, 2006: 39).

Therefore, In *Living History (2003)*, the First Lady claims that she was the strong supporter to her husband during his candidacy, and she believed that Bill would win the election. In the ninth chapter entitled ‘**Inauguration**’, Hillary Clinton shows her happiness about Bill’s success for presidency and was the new leader and the President of the United States.

Hillary Clinton had a key role in President Clinton’s administration. Their close cooperation was an outcome of their personal, professional and political relationship in which she never felt anything but an equal. (Clinton, 2017:160).

Contrary to Hillary Clinton, Michelle Obama writes that when Barak Obama began to think for running for Presidency, on the one hand; she was confused about his decision for Presidential election, and she was afraid about her family to disperse since Barack was busy when he was a Senator. She says:

One night when Barrack was in Washington, I lay alone in bed, feelings as if it were me against the world. I wanted Barrack for our family; everyone else seemed to want him for our country (Obama, 2018:145).

On the other hand, she claims that she agreed for his running, after she saw people supporting him especially the black community. She had faith on him, but sometimes she had some feelings that he would face some struggles because of his skin color. She says: “But I’d seen enough of the divisions to temper my own hopes. Barrack was a black man in America; after all, I didn’t really think he could win.” (Ibid: 145).

Then, in the autobiography *Becoming (2018)*, the First Lady narrates that after the announcement of Barrack to run for Presidency election in Springfield, she was completely focusing on the campaign and helping her husband because the pressures began and the opponents were serious. Therefore she claims that she helped him in humanizing, and make him look like a simple person because she knew that white people would be against electing black man to their country. Moreover, she states that the white voters express their emotions and feelings negatively and they have a negative attitude about black candidates. She says:

But then again, Barrack was a black man; the risk for him was nothing new. He could get shot just going to the gas station; I sometimes tried to remind people when they bought it up.” (Obama, 2018:154)

In addition, the First Lady claims that another reason which made confusion about Barrack’s winning was Hillary Clinton’s election because American people and leaders admired her husband, and she did not think that the voters could vote for Barrack Obama. Furthermore, she maintains that she continued to travel around the countries to convince people about Barrack’s campaign and she also supported that campaign’s position economically because the economic crisis was the main problem to them. “First as discussed above, the economic crisis was a major issue during the election”. (Makeschin, 2017:160). Whatever her decision about Politic affairs; she would help her husband for better and worse, whatever her hesitation about politics. A reporter for Time Magazine commented that her success in connecting with audiences was due to her informal “of-the-cuff-charm” and her “ability to relate people”. (Carlin & Smith, 2016:686).

In other words, she says that she was always doubtful and it was unthinkable that a black man candidate could win. It is not only the first time that America had a black President, but also it would be the first time they have a First Lady. During her efforts and support to the campaign, Michelle Obama received a lot of critics. Parks &Quinetta say:

Michelle Obama, wife of the Presidential candidate Senator Barrack Obama, contravenes conventional stereotype of Presidential candidates’ wives. First, she has been direct and plainspoken-described as “tough and even a little steely (Parks&Quinetta 2008:03)

In *Becoming* (2018), the First Lady Michelle Obama asserts that even she received many critics; she continued to create hope for each audience, and to make them believe in the abilities of Barack Obama to change their country. She mentions that she continued travelling to convince citizens that is the right time for American people to elect, and accept a new President who was a black man ‘Barrack Obama’. In 2007 she made a speech in South

California, where she said that there were no difference between white people and black people, if they wanted to change their country.

Besides, the First Lady claims that her presence in the campaign was necessary for Barack, because during her speeches, the First Lady always tried to show and convince American people about their simple identity, and she always introduced herself the wife of a wonderful man. She says:

I am the wife of this wonderful guy you know; I hope you remember this guy, Barrack Obama. I am a sister, a daughter, a friend, a working mother, but many of you know that my most important role is [...]. (White, 2011:07).

In *Becoming* (2018), Michele Obama shows her support and efforts that she did for Barrack during the campaign, and she was considered the major component of her husband. She mentions that her speeches and interviews were dedicated to her family particularly her husband “ Much Obama’s success was due to her exceptional public speaking skills with which she expertly engaged her audience [...].” (Ibid: 07).

After inauguration in Presidency election, in *Living History* (2003) Hillary Clinton also narrates about the other Bill’s opponents who tried to influence negatively on Bill’s reputation, and they said that they brought women for him when he was a governor. So, Hillary Clinton claims that she tried to deny that fake news by making a speech where she says:

I think my husband has proven that he’s a man who really cares about his country deeply and respects the presidency...and when it’s all said and done, that’s how most fair- minded Americans will judge my husband. And all the rest of this stuff will end up in the garbage can where it deserves to be. (Clinton, 2003: 243).

According to Habermas, ‘the private sphere’ or household, it is the sphere of labor, exchange and family; a sphere over which a citizen has authority and it is mainly occupied by

women. In *Living History (2003)*, we understand that First Lady Clinton is the partner who forgives and who makes sacrifices for the happiness of her family. Despite all her efforts and supports to her husband, in her autobiography, the First Lady narrates that she lived the hardest period in her life where she knew about Bill's relationship with a woman named Monica Lewinsky. Thus, asserting Habermas' definition of the private space as a sphere mainly occupied by women. This demonstrates that the First Lady Clinton is not a strong and resilient in her private space as she is in her public space, with reference to the chapter entitled '**Soldiering on**', Hillary Clinton shows how she was disappointed, heartbroken and described that period as a hurtful experience in her life where she wanted to divorce.

Hillary was devastated by the admission and seriously considered a divorce. Ultimately she turned again to spiritual advisers as she had done throughout her life. The problems in the relationship would be dealt with privately, but publicly she would help her husband keep his job. (Dwayne, 2008: 60).

Moreover, in *Living History (2003)*, the First Lady states that though she decided to leave her husband, she did not believe when Bill tried to deny his sexual relation with Monika Lewinsky. In other words, Hillary Clinton believes that she decided to help not just him but to help her country. She says: "I felt as I had the dual responsibility of defending my husband and my country." (Clinton; 2003: 521). She maintains that though she was devastated by Bill's scandal, she decided to help and support him to keep his status as president, because after that scandal in 1998, the House of Representatives decided to impeach President Clinton. Furthermore, Hillary Clinton states that she chose to make such conference to defend him and dismiss that relation. Dwayne Epstein says: "When asked about the accusations she said: The great story here...is the vast right-wing conspiracy that has been conspiring against my husband." (Dwayne; 2008:62).

In the two autobiographies *Living History (2003)* and *Becoming (2018)*, both of the First Ladies show how they practiced their role as wives, and how they supported their

husbands in such fields. The major divergence while Hillary remains very discrete and evasive as concerns her deception and betrayal by her husband, the black First Lady Obama openly shared with Americans her fairy-tale life with her husband Barack Obama.

C. First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama as Mothers

Both Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama made a balance between being mothers and First Ladies, they were major supportive in developing their children's skills. They wanted to protect their children from everything that could affect them especially after presidency of their husbands.

In *Living History (2003)*, we notice that Hillary Clinton was very closer to her daughter Chelsea Victorian Clinton, and she explains that Chelsea was the most important gift that she could have. She says:

When Chelsea Victorian Clinton lay in my arms for the first time, I was overwhelmed by the love and responsibility I felt for her. Despite all the books I had read, all the children I had studied and advocated for nothing had prepared me for the sheer miracle for her being.”(Clinton, 1996: 07).

The First Lady claims that during Bill's presidential election, they tried to protect their daughter from people and the press. Hillary asserts that she talked to her daughter in order to prepare her psychologically. Dwayne says: “And we were at dinner one night and I told her your daddy is going to run for governor again, and when people run for Office, other people say things about them.”(Dwayne, 2008: 37). Moreover, the First Lady admits that she protected Chelsea because she did not want to share her daughter's private life with media or others, and she would never be the subject to public sphere. She says: “On the other hand, I believed that being a mother was the most important job I had ever had.”(Clinton, 2003: 130).

In other words, Hillary Clinton mentions that keeping private life secret is one of the most important elements for any child to grow physically and psychologically. Both Bill and

Hillary Clinton decided to create a 'privacy zone' from media, and they really succeed to create that through their living in the White House. "Hillary was a devoted mother to Chelsea, working very hard to keep her out of the public eye and limiting media reports on her life, especially while the Clintons were living in the White House." (Muir, 2016: 640).

Similarly, in *Becoming* (2018) Michelle Obama describes herself as the householder of the family. She is considered the best example of motherhood for American people. She says: "Motherhood became my motivator" (Obama, 2018:124). Therefore, in her autobiography *Becoming* (2018), Michelle Obama asserts that she always presented herself to American people and even to the whole world as Sasha and Malia's mom. The First Lady asserts that during her time at the University of Chicago, she welcomed her two daughters, but at the end she changed her position to work fewer to spend more time with Sasha and Malia. "She started working out in the early morning and hired a housekeeper so she could concentrate at home on what she wanted to-being with the girls". (Smith & Carlin; 2016:687).

Moreover, the First Lady Obama explains that during Brack's running for Presidential election, she was against because she wanted to raise her daughters near their father, and share their important moments with him. In other words, the First Lady mentions that she wanted to offer her daughters a private life and have their own world far from media and Politics, then she adds that her daughters deserve to live the life they wanted to have, and not the one that people wanted them to live She says:

I loved any time I could glimpse my daughters in the context of their own world---- free from the White House, free from their parents, in the spaces and relationships they'd forged for themselves. (Obama, 2018:273)

Based on Habarmas' theory, he states that "the sphere of polis, which was common to the free citizen, was strictly separated from the sphere of oikos; in the sphere of the oikos each individual is in his own realm"(Hbermas,1989:03), with reference to *Living History*(2003) ,

we understand that Clinton wants her daughter to live the life she wants, far from public eyes. Furthermore, Hillary Clinton claims that Bill Clinton and she focused on Chelsea's school and she believed that if they would send her to private school, they could separate Chelsea from public eyes and from media especially when Bill became President. Then, the First Lady believes that the private school was a private property, where they could guarantee their daughter's life in which Chelsea could live her life as a normal teenage girl. She says: "Whatever our public demands, Bill and I tried never to lose sight of our obligations as Chelsea's parents."(Clinton, 2003: 198).

The First Lady Michelle Obama claims also that she encouraged many women to face such roles with her two essential roles which were mother and a political woman. "Since many women struggled with trying to work and raise a family, Hillary showed that it could be done, and done well-so long as she benefitted of course, from the support of many others around her."(Flinn;2005: 278).In addition, Hillary Clinton mentions that she was happy when her daughter was older, and she could take her wherever she went, and sometimes she shared her experiences and her works with her. After that, she believes that taking Chelsea with her during any trips was the best example to prove and send message about the importance of children. She says:

Mary Catherine argued that symbolic actions were legitimate and that "Symbolism can be efficacious." She believed for example, that merely by traveling to south Asia as First Lady with Chelsea would send a message about the importance of daughters. Visiting poor rural women would underscore their significance. I understood her point, and I soon became a covert to the view that I could advance the Clinton agenda through symbolic action. (Clinton, 2003: 310).

After that, the First Lady maintains that during the year 1995, she decided to name herself as "public wife and public mother", due to her two important roles that she played during her time in the White House. "As result of the activism and commitments, she was named

Arkansas woman of the year 1983, and Arkansas mother of the year 1985.”(Muir, 2016: 642). Travelling with her daughter to different countries and speaking with different groups of women outside the United States, were in order to share and to see the last adventures of the childhood of Chelsea. Moreover, in the autobiography *Living History (2003)*, Hillary Clinton narrates that she worked hard just to make some time to be with her daughter, to make her feel comfortable and happy because being the child of a First Lady is not easy.

Additionally, in *Becoming (2018)*, Michelle Obama states that she always supported her daughters to engage in Sport and to learn about different cultures as they travelled. The First Lady shows that caring for Sasha and Malia was a top priority, and making sure that they had a normal childhood as her brother and she grew up.

In the two autobiographies *Living History (2003)* and *Becoming (2018)*, Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama were very similar in being the major supportive to their children. Both of them protected their children from everything that could affect them especially when their husbands became presidents of the United States.

Chapter two: First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama in the Public Sphere.

A. First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama in Public Sphere: Their roles in Politics.

The Two First Ladies have different perceptions in Politics, while First Lady Clinton was involved in politics since her early age, Michelle Obama was not interested in; and of the political she concerned herself in social issues.

In *Living History* (2003), First Lady Clinton claims that she played an important role by taking an active part in her husband's campaign. "She forced the consideration of the role of First Lady and the roles of women, spouses and partners in general." (Heather, 2006:03). Moreover, she says that she was the first First Lady that entered the white House with great experiences in a political field, and with a successful career.

First Lady's entry to politics was met with difficulties and intense scrutiny as well, thus, affirming Habermas' theory, the public sphere is a domain of social life in which public opinion can be formed (Habermas, 1964:49). That is, being under the public eye comes with constant's criticism and speculations by the public. This explains the reason for First Lady Clinton's description of her the public sphere, and she asserts that she was criticized by her involvement in politics and following her own career. She was also criticized by President Nixon by saying:

If the wife comes through as being too strong and too intelligent, he remarked, "It takes the husband look like a wimp." He then went on to note that voters tended to agree with Cardinal de Richelieu's assessment: "Intellect in a woman is unbecoming. (Ibid: 122).

In addition, Hillary Clinton narrates that she struggled against different critics because they were against women who could represent political roles. Hillary Clinton adds that she forced

people to reevaluate the roles of women in politics. She also writes that she challenged all negative ideas with her role as the First Lady, and her level of power and influence. She says:

I had long supported the U.S Agency for International Development – USAID- and hoped to use the media spotlight that follows a First Lady to demonstrate the tangible impact of U.S – funded programs in the developing world.(Ibid: 315).

In contrast to Hillary Clinton, Michelle Obama was not really involved in Politics. In her autobiography *Becoming* (2018), First Lady mentions that her aim is to stay out of politics and work on her own initiatives. Moreover, through analyzing chapter 21, we deduce her position about politics when she says:

My goal, though, was to make this about more than government. I hoped to learn from what Hillary Clinton had shared with me about her own experiences, to leave the politics to Barack and focus my own efforts elsewhere. (Obama, 2018:280)

In other words, Obama concerned herself with children's health rather than focusing on the political world. According to her, being the wife of the US President does not mean only following his way; children's health care is more interesting than politics. She says: "I wasn't interested in following the tenets of the political world or appearing on Sunday morning news shows" (Ibid: 280).

The First Lady Michele Obama explains that though the White House gave her family the necessary security and everything was under control, she was still feeling weak because she used to rely on herself,. She says:

I had confidence in the apparatus that had been set up to support us in the White House, but Still I could feel vulnerable, knowing that everything from the safety of our daughters [...] I had been raised to handle my own business, but now seemed almost impossible. (Ibid: 283)

However, in *Living History* (2003) the First Lady Hillary Clinton maintains that living in Arkansas was very different from anything she experienced before, but she believed being a public advocate in Arkansas and working within the political system was an important thing that she did to enact the policy changes. "Hillary's other responsibility also moved her closer

toward policy change in the political arena instead of public advocacy.”(Dwayne, 2008: 31). In other words, she writes that she helped her husband in his campaign while continuing to work at Rose Law Firm, and she was the most important helper to her husband during his running for Presidential election. Barbara Burrell says:

She has twisted all the clear dividing lines between what Political philosophers have considered the private domain (that is wife, mother, and home marker) and the public realm of power and influence in the civic life.(Burrell, 2001:03).

In her autobiography, the First Lady asserts that it was as challenge and it was not easy to change that. She realized that having the role as First Lady and as political woman was hard and was more responsible, but for her, she worked hard and seriously for making change. Bill says:

Hillary would be the most professionally accomplished First Lady in history... of course, such activism would make her more contro-versial with those who thought First Ladies should stay above the fray, or what had disagreed with us politically, but that too, was part of what our generational change meant. (Bill, 2004:469).

We notice that the main evidence that the First Lady was a strong and the most powerful woman in politics is her supports, and efforts to her Husband. She says: “Bill loved his work, but I could see the Political war taking its toll, and I tried to protect him from whatever I could.”(Clinton, 2003:260).

In *Living History (2003)* a chapter untitled “Conversations with Eleanor”, the First Lady admits that she estimated Eleanor Roosevelt for her strong personality, and she described her imaginary conversations that she had with her. She says: “I often joked in my speeches that I had imaginary conversations with Mrs Roosevelt to solicit her advice on a range of subjects.”(Ibid: 302). She additionally believes that among all First Ladies, Eleanor Roosevelt was her favourite person. She believed that she had the same goals and capacities in Political Parties. Moreover, in the same chapter, Hillary Clinton claims that she brought the power

from different experiences of Eleanor Roosevelt, her strong power in politics helped Mrs Clinton to get through challenging times and have powerful leadership quality. “It is not surprising that one of Hillary Clinton’s role models was Eleanor Roosevelt, considered to be one of the most activist First Ladies in the White House. (Muir, 2016:636).

Still in politics as a public sphere, in her autobiography the First Lady Clinton asserts that she was one of the most women in the United States that represented major parties in her country. Then, she shows that she supported her country in major parties where she changed some situations to American people. She led the Arkansas education, tried to change educational system and reform the national health care in the country. In addition, she was in different missions to see children and women’s issues in different fields. She supported children to attend schools, and to advance progress for women and girls over the world. “She was being fully briefed on policy issues but discussed them at length with the president in private.”(Dwayne, 2008:56).

Furthermore, in *Becoming* (2018) First Lady Obama affirms that giving interest to her initiative ‘*Let’s Move*’ made her joyful; helping children was her passion and priority. According to her, being out of politics was such a fight and her initiative was considered as a ring. She says: “As much as I was generally happy to stay out of politics and policy making”. In other words, the First Lady states that the initiative ‘*Let’s Move*’ reflects her personality, and she feels delighted by working on such issue which is children’s obesity. This issue concerned Michelle Obama as a woman and as a mother in particular.

In *Becoming* (2018), Michelle Obama describes how she struggled with the aspects of her legacy as well. In her autobiography, she notes that she is deeply uncomfortable with politics. Though she was a political force, she took on issues that were important to her often related to her role as “mom in chief” by focusing on the needs of children, particularly girls.

She states that before the election of Barack Obama as President, she has already told that her function in the White House is continuing her role as a mother, and that the only difference is that the people were watching. She says: “I’d told a magazine interviewer that my primary focus in the White House is to continue my role as “mom in chief” in our family” (Obama, 2018:274)

In the political frame, the First Lady Hillary Clinton says: “Over the next weeks, there was no short age of opinions about whether the United States should send a delegation to the conference and whether I should be part of it.”(Clinton, 2003:351). With this citation, Hillary Clinton demonstrates that while Bill Clinton was the President, she was as an ambassador to the United Nations. In other words, she was a powerful voice for the United States on International Affairs and a global for good by traveling over the world aiming to make relationships with other countries, and with different alliances. “Other First Ladies such as Nancy Reagan, Rosalyn Carter, and Hillary Clinton were recognized as Policy advisers to the President.”(Karrin, 2002:108).

Moreover, in her autobiography in a chapter untitled ‘**Dare to compete**’; Hillary Clinton mentions that after her work as an ambassador, she decided to run for the State Senator from New York 2000. However, she explains that during her running, she received some advice and encouragement from her different friends as she received negative advice to not run. So, she narrates that she had some doubts and was anxious at the beginning, but after her attending an event in New York City Promoting an HBO (Home Box Office) special for women, she changed her view, and she decided to run for it. Shambaugh says:

Hillary’s inner beliefs, values and inner strengths began to take over her thoughts process, and she knew that running for the U.S Senate would be hard and challenging, but if it wasn’t hard, then everyone would do it-being hard was what made it important and great. (Shambaugh, 2010:32).

Mrs Clinton admits that she was the first First Lady that was Senate State Senator from New York. She was considered one of the most powerful women in the world as United States Secretary of State. With her rich experiences and her extraordinary stretches that she made on her own career, she could struggle and challenge that hard condition. “Hillary Clinton is one of the most fascinating women in politics today.”(Ibid: 52).

Unlike Hillary Clinton, in *Becoming* Michelle Obama states that she enjoyed each time she spent with her daughters free from the White House, witnessing them enjoying their lives, practicing desires on their own worlds. She writes: “ I loved any time I could glimpse my daughters in the context of their own world—free from the White House”(Ibid: 289)

Eventually, Michelle Obama asserts that she did not classified politics in among her priorities. She claims: ‘I’ve never been a fan of politics’, she writes: “[...] and my experience over the last 10 years has done little to change” (Michelle, 2018:332). In other words, she believes that the White House did not influence her personality. She adds “I do believe that at its best, politics can be a means for positive change, but this arena is just not for me” (Ibid: 332).

It is clear to notice from the above analysis of the two autobiographies that both Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama had different vision towards the political world. While Clinton was involved in politics from an early age, Obama was not a fan of that.

B. First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama in the Public Sphere : Health

As this piece of research has dealt with the roles of two First Ladies in political world, it also examines their contributions and involvement in health care and the change they made.

In *Living History (2003)*, Hillary Clinton claims that during their campaign, they committed to establish Universal Health Care for Americans and get access. According to Habermas, the public sphere should be open to all citizens regardless of status and women can occupy the public sphere. With reference to *Living History (2003)*, Hillary Clinton states that when Bill was the Governor, he declared that Hillary Clinton would chair the rural health advisory committee. Bill said: “She is better at organizing people from a complex beginning to a certain end than anybody I’ve ever worked in my life.”(Milton, 2000:256). This demonstrates that the main aim of that was to deal with some issues and providing health care to most isolated rural areas.

The First Lady confesses that the main struggle that they faced was how to deal with the health care crisis in America. Additionally, she claims that there were some citizens who didn’t have insurance and didn’t have enough money to buy their medications. She says: “Growing numbers of citizens were being deprived of necessary health care because they were uninsured, and didn’t have the means to pay their own medical bills.”(Clinton, 2003:134). In other words, Mrs Clinton believes that they succeeded to provide some of the countries states with doctors, nurses. She says:

I had helped Bill tackle health care reform in his first term, successfully setting up a net-work of health clinics, recruiting more doctors, nurses and mind wives in rural areas- over the opposition of the state’s medical society.(Ibid:109).

Furthermore, in a chapter untitled ‘**inauguration**’, the First Lady mentions that few days after Bill’s inauguration, he declared that she would chair the health task force because he trusted her and her rich experiences in different fields. Bill Clinton says:

I decided Hillary should led the health care effort because she cared and knew a lot about the issue, Bill later wrote adding that she had both the time and the talent to be an honest broker for the American people.(Clinton,2004:482).

In other words, in the *Living History (2003)* Hillary Clinton believes that health care reform was about creating security, controlling costs, enhancing quality, and expanding access to

care. For this, she explains that most Americans believed that she had such competence to do that. Moreover, in her autobiography, the First Lady writes that many Americans didn't have enough health care coverage due to the expensive cost. It was about 37 million Americans were uninsured and unable to afford their medical bills as Garth and Van Natta say:

Many in Washington questioned this decision and her expertise on this issue - a shortcoming to which Hillary admitted; however, it was clear that health care in the U.S needed serious attention and that Hillary would work hard to help make the difficult policy decisions. (Gerth&Natta, 2007:118).

Then, the First Lady asserts that she set up staff in the second floor of the West Wing of the White House known as "Hillayland". She was the first First Lady who settled there, no First Lady had ever had work in the West Wing before.

In *Becoming* (2018), Michelle Obama sheds light on children's health, she launched an initiative in 2010 named *Let's Move!*. It strived to solve the problem of children's obesity in America by improving access to healthy affordable food in schools and increasing physical activities. She argues that such initiative has to work hard on the nutrition of children in public schools. She says: "I'd worked hard to help push a new child nutrition through Congress, expanding children's access to healthy, high-quality food in public schools [...]" (Obama, 2018:287)

Moreover, the First Lady Obama believed that children had diagnosed with a high blood pressure and diabetes. According to her, the main reason is farmers and markets. She writes: "If I were to try to declare war on sugary drinks marketed to kids" (Obama, 2018:275). Michelle Obama states that she worked doggedly and talked about the initiative endlessly with teachers, administrators across America trying to convince that their children are worth more than what they are getting.

Health care reform as Hillary Clinton's first public sphere, the role of the First Lady as the chair of the health task force on National health care was a significant role to improve health for all Americans. She believes that she applied her knowledge and her experience in that massive. She says:

Our goals were simple enough: We wanted a plan that dealt with all aspects of the health care system rather than one that tinkered on the margins. We wanted a process that considered a variety of ideas and all allowed for healthy discussion and debate.”(Clinton, 2003: 179).

Hillary Clinton believes that the stuff that she did with her committee was the most efficient and effective that she discussed by her political party. Jones Jennifer says:

This coincides with Clinton's role on the administration's health reform task force. As the leading voice for this reform, she was charged with communicating details of the policy and persuading industry and interest group leaders, lawmakers, and the public to support it. (Jones, 2016:09).

In the chapter entitled ‘**Health care**’, the First Lady asserts that they organized health care reform legislation and she testified it before Congress. Then, she was considered the first First lady in American history to support and testify that. Moreover, Hillary Clinton narrates that after their preparation to Health Care Reform Legislation, they decided to present it to congress by saying that the health care was a right to all Americans, especially for poor people. “The belief that health care is a right is deeply ingrained in the American consciousness, especially government's obligation to ensure health care for those who are too poor to pay for it.”(Yankelovich, 1995:12). Furthermore, Mrs Clinton admits that they presented that legislation to congress in 1993. She says:

Bill declared that his administration would present a health care reform plan to congress within one hundred days- a plan that would take strong action to control health care costs in America and to begin to provide for health care needs of all Americans. (Clinton, 2003:174).

In addition, in *Living History (2003)*, Hillary Clinton asserts that in spite of all her efforts in the plan, their legislation was criticized by both Democrats and Republicans.

However, she claims that their health care reform plan was generally considered to be unacceptable, and never made it to vote because it was high costs and was too long and complex. In other words, some opponents said that Hillary Clinton had no health experiences and she didn't give health coverage neither to Americans who needed it nor to those who were under insured. "Some confused her vigorous advocacy on behalf of certain point of view, especially on health care, with inflexibility." (Wood, 1994: 133). The First Lady says that many Americans blame her about the failure of the health care reform plan. She believes that they were dissatisfied with the outcome about that, and they considered the lack of health care and insurance were very serious problem. The First Lady explains that after the failure, she tried to soften her image to better fulfill her role as the chair of the health task force and as the First Lady. She said:

I think I was naive and dumb, because my view was result speak for them. I regret very much that the efforts on health care were badly, misunderstood, taken out of context and used politically against the administration. (Edwards, 2009:213).

Besides this, in *Becoming* (2018) Michelle Obama believes that creating gardens and making children active is the best way to reduce obesity and increase the healthy eating habits. In 2012, Michelle Obama made an interview with Matt Schoch, where she said that the best way to reduce children obesity is to pushing them to physical activities. In other words, gardening with children is a way to connect them to healthy habits because vegetables and fruits are a big part of healthy diet. She added in the same interview that when children grow their own vegetables and fruits, they taste really good; she gave evidence through her daughters' experience when they help her to work on it, they are more excited.

In *Becoming* (2018), the First Lady indicates that her efforts in creating the *Let's Move!* initiative motivated her husband Barack Obama to work on the health care. Michelle asserts that her husband signed on Affordable Health Care Act in 2010 to improve access to affordable health for everyone and protect consumers from abusive insurance markets. The

AHC act is considered as an encouragement to Michelle to make effective results on children's health and at the same time her initiative in health care complementing Barack's achievements. She says: "I saw my work as complementing Barack's success by establishing the 2010 Affordable Care Act, which greatly increased access to health insurance for all Americans" (Michelle, 2018:287)

Staying in the frame of health, Michelle wrote about the Joining Forces that was launched in 2011 by Michelle Obama and Jill Biden. The First Lady and Jill Biden came together to launch the Joining Forces that aimed in supporting the service members and their families. She believes that this initiative too, would be a reinforcement that would accomplish her husband's work. She says: "This work, too, would serve to support Barack's duties as commander chief". (Ibid: 278)

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In addition, in *Living History (2003)*, Hillary Clinton shows that despite the failure of the health plan, the Clinton administration and she decided to create the Health Insurance Program. As she helped to create the Children's Health Insurance Program, and many children had insurance. "During the Clinton Presidency, the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), were enacted." (Laxmaih, 2017:108).

It becomes clear from the above analysis that during her running for the United State Senator from New York in two thousand, the First Lady gave a great importance for improving health care reform, and she believed that her trying to reform health plan that was a failure in former presidencies it was still priority for her as a Senator. "All that we have

learned in the last decade confirms that our goal should continue to be what every other industrialized nation has achieved, she said, “health care that’s always there for every citizen.”(Susan, 2006:201).

Additionally, in *Becoming (2018)* the First Lady believes that helping military families is a worthy action; she asserts that Joining Forces concerns all the Americans to give back to the extraordinary military families who serve and sacrifice to live in freedom and security. She said in an interview in *The American Forces Press* in 2011 that it’s a grateful thing to help military men and women who sacrifice so much for the Americans.

In her autobiography, First Lady Michelle Obama mentions that she gathered a strong community in order to make Joining Forces remarkable. In other words, she states that not only teachers, professors and significant members of veterans and military spouses, but even boys and girls can do something good for them. According to Habermas, Public Space is a realm of politics where people engaged to exchange ideas and it’s open to everyone. This explains that public sphere is constituted in every conversation in which individuals come together to form a public to express their opinion for general interest. In 2015 Obama said in an interview that her staff believe that everyone can do something, even boys and girls, everyone, and everyone can ask themselves, ‘What can I do? How can I give back? She argues that children’s health is her first thing to do; she has to go deeper than broad.

In *Becoming (2018)*, Michelle Obama adds that she has full confidence on what she is planning for. In other words, she explains that by making children active, the team achieves goal. She says: “We felt certain we’d stand a better chance if we tried to help kids think differently about[...] and exercise from an early age”(Michelle, 2018:288). As a First Lady Obama looks forward to continuing her work on the issues close to her heart; supporting military families and helping children to lead healthier life.

In the public space, both of Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama contributed in health care. The major divergence is that Clinton emphasized on health in general, and to get access to all citizens, Obama focused particularly on children's obesity.

C. First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama in Public Sphere: Women's Rights

The United States of America is a determined voice in supporting women's rights all over the world. Thus, the two First Ladies Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama believed in their deep commitment to help oppressed people around the world particularly women and girls. They accomplished a great deal in their life and broke down barriers that were once considered impossible for women to break.

In *Living History (2003)*, Hillary Clinton explains that women were not treated equal in society. So, the First Lady asserts that when she wrote to NASA to join them, they rejected her because of gender inequality. From here, Hillary Clinton states that during her time in the White House, she decided to be the strong supporter of women's rights and helped them to change their status in society and leadership positions.

We still have a long way to go and the United States must remain an unambiguous and unequivocal voice in support of women's rights in every country, every region, on every continent.(Shambaugh,2010:13).

In her autobiography, the First Lady claims that she didn't select just one issue to support women, but she supported them in different fields by making different conferences, speeches and trips to many countries. She was considered a national personality in a way that no previous First lady had achieved. "She forced country to address the role of women in power in new days."(Black, 2001:18). Furthermore, First Lady Clinton decided to put barriers to the critics and supported women to take their real roles, and the country and society might give them their freedom. She says:

My message to young women is that, as though the political environment is, if you care about making a difference, you have to be willing to get out there and try...we've broken through all of these barriers so that individual women can make the choice that's right for them.(Whitney, 2001:210).

In *Becoming* (2018) Michelle Obama narrates that the election of Barack Obama as the first black President of the United States brought with it another first black First Lady of the USA. In *Becoming* (2018), Michelle Obama explains that she embodies the qualities of the kind of daughter, sister, wife and mother that one would want to have in their life. She was considered as quintessential ideal for African American women and girls. Despite her popularity, the First Lady was attacked for her body, her dress, and her hair. She says: "Sometimes during Barack's campaign, people had begun paying attention to my clothes." (Michelle, 2018:276). In other words, she believes that her clothes matters more than anything she has to say.

As a First Lady, Michelle Obama wanted from people to recognize her achievements as a Black First Lady, a professional woman and a mother of two kids instead of shedding lights on her hair style, clothes and shoes. She believes that people should give interest in how she could manage the American gaze. She says: "People seemed to want to dial into my clothes, my shoes and my hair styles, but they also had to see me in the context of where I was and why" (Michelle, 2018:302). In other words, she asserts that those things are worthless, compared to what she is achieving and working on.

As a black First Lady of the USA, she has been criticized by the double edge of media. In *Becoming* (2018), Michelle Obama gave us the example when she decided to bare her arms in her first official White House photo; there was a controversy because she broke the rules. Instead of glorifying her toned arms, the media criticized her decision. She says:

I wore sleeveless aubergine dress to Barack's address to joint session of Congress and sleeveless back sheath dress for my official White House photo, and suddenly my arms were making headlines. (Michelle, 2018:277)

However, in a chapter in *Living History* entitled ‘**Conversation with Eleanor**’, Hillary Clinton shows that she was as an ambassador and she made preparations to get out of Washington by traveling to five countries in South Asia. The First Lady believes that she did the sense of success as Jacqueline Kennedy did when she visited two countries in 1962. She says: “I also had been asked by the State Department to represent the United States on a trip to five countries in South Asia.”(Clinton, 2003: 310). Moreover, she shows that she was on mission to see women’s issues because they were considered more widespread than anywhere in the world.

In addition, the First Lady admits that her first trip was to Pakistan Islamabad, where she met with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, the first woman who took top post. She says:

Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka have all been governed by women elected as Presidents or Prime Ministers, she observed, in a region where women are so devalued that some new born girls may be killed or abandoned.(Clinton,2003:319).

The First Lady also narrates that she traveled to Lahore in Pakistan, the capital of Punjab, where she focused on women’s issues. In other words, she explains that when she visited families, she heard that girls had less opportunity in attending schools than boys. So, at Lahore University Management Sciences, the First Lady shows that she declared the world related to success of women and if women didn’t get their rights, the world also couldn’t develop. “At Lahore University Management Sciences, Hillary exhorted the audience, proclaiming that, “If women don’t thrive, the world won’t thrive.”(Jeff & Van, 2007:150).

During her trips to South Asia, from Pakistan to India, the First Lady admits that she traveled to New Delhi where she wanted to see their democracy and how they treated their women. However, she believes that woman was the first victim by the privileged ownership of the patriarchal authority. She narrates that men had more power than women and they were manipulators in order to hurt women. So, Hillary Clinton shows that she did all her efforts to change their situation and to give them freedom by making a speech at the Rajiv Gandhi

Foundation. “Beside this, many observe have also been these side visits as her respect for empowerment of women in India and South Asia.”(Muni, 2012:06). Then, after her speech, she ended with a poem and she says:

“Too many women
In too many countries
Speak the same language
Of silence...” (Clinton, 2003:325).

Similarly to Clinton, in *Becoming* (2018) the former First Lady Obama narrates her experience when visiting secondary school for girls in the Islington. She shed light on girls; according to her they will be criticized for their skin color since 90% of them are black and poor. She knew that they will face many obstacles in order to succeed and to be remarkable. Besides this, the First Lady considered this experience as a flashback to her own one. She says: “For me it was a strange, quiet revelation: They were me, as I’d one been” (Michelle, 2018:269). She tried to motivate them by telling her own experience; that she was from a working class family describing education as the movement from darkness to light and it is the mother of leadership. She says:

I had come from far away, carrying this strange title of First Lady of the United State; I was more like them than they knew. That I, too, was from a working class neighborhood, raised by a family of modest means and loving spirit, that I’d realized early on at school was where I could start defining myself – that an education was a thing worth working for[...] (Michelle, 2018:269)

In the same frame of women’s rights, in *Living History*, the former First Lady impacted on the girls by sharing with them her upbringing experience from Princeton University where she faced the issues of gender inequality.

In a chapter untitled ‘**Women’s rights are Human’s Right**’, the First Lady narrates that one of the most famous trip that she did was to the United Nations World Conference on women in Beijing, China where she made her conference. Bean says: “In 1995, Clinton led the U.S delegation to Beijing for the UN’s Fourth World Conference on women, where she

delivered her famous remark: “Women’s rights are Human’s rights.”(Bean; 2019:20). Moreover, Mrs Clinton explains that she gave her speech where she showed her support to women, Madeleine Albright says:

I didn’t think it possible to arouse an audience in Beijing, which was made up of people from every culture listening to translate mangle the First Lady’s grammar in a monotone. But Hillary Clinton’s speech was a stammer. It was beautifully written and forcefully delivered...As the First Lady spoke, the multilingual chatter in the hall quieted. (Albright, 2003:198).

In addition, in *Living History*, the First Lady explains that in her trips she had one main aim which was highlighting a campaign for women. So, she created with the secretary of State Madeleine Albright what was called the ‘ Vital Voices ’ which aimed to support women in new democracies and economies, and helped them to be heard. She says:

The vital voices initiative brought together representatives of our government, NGOs and international corporations to promote progress for women in three areas: building democracy, strengthening economies and working to achieve peace. (Clinton, 2003:487).

Additionally, she maintains that ‘Vital Voices’ advocated a number of international conferences in which the First Lady met women especially those who engaged in business and politics. According to Habermas, public sphere is a domain of social life in which public opinion can be formed and in which all citizens can participate. He says: “[...] so the polis provided an open field for honorable distinction: citizens indeed interacted as equals with equals (Habermas, 198:04). This explains that public sphere is open to everyone where equal participation and consideration are available to everyone which means that women are equals to men. She also writes that she met with wives of heads of States in America where she discussed the theme of women empowerment and gave them their freedom. “Muir agreed that Hillary success in appreciating other women who had made a difference in politics and in society. (Burrell, 2001:135).

Like Hillary Clinton, Michelle Obama looks glamorous to work on the issues close to her heart; supporting women’s rights and helping girls to get access to education. In other words,

she launched another initiative '*Let Girls Learn*' which aimed to support girls around the world to go to school and attain a quality education that empowers them to reach their full potential. In *Becoming* (2018), the First Lady Obama asserts that she made her best to improve girls' situation to encourage them all over the world. She says:

Instead, I'd been busy working on my forth initiative as First Lady, called Let Girls Learn, which Barack and I had launched together back in the spring. It was an ambitious, government-wide effort focused on helping adolescent girls around the world obtain better access to education. (Obama, 2018:320)

Furthermore, Obama mentions that she fought for achieving her goal which is girls can have access to education whatever their race and their social class. Obama and her husband called other countries to shed light on girls' rights. In addition, in her autobiography, the First Lady explains her feelings towards the 276 Nigerian schoolgirls were kidnapped by Boko Haram on April, 2014 in chibok, Negeria. She asserts that her husband and she directed the USA government to help Nigerians bring the girls back. Moreover, Michelle Obama asserts that she made a speech for the first time to speak about the Boko Haram terrorist organization because she considered those kidnapped girls as the responsibility of America. Consequently, she joined the WorldWide calls for the safe return of the Nigerian schoolgirls. She writes:

It was horrible when, about six months after Malala's visit, 276 Nigerian schoolgirls were kidnapped by the extremist group Boko Haram, seemingly intent on causing other Nigerian families to fair sending their daughters to school. (Ibid: 321)

Both of Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama were involved in different issues particularly in supporting women to raise their voice. The major divergence is that while Clinton was involved in women's rights at World Wide, Michelle Obama contributed on girls' situation especially the Nigerian girls that were kidnapped by the terrorist orgnasition.

V. Conclusion

Throughout our dissertation entitled Hillary Clinton's *Living History* (2003) and Michelle Obama's *Becoming* (2018): Two First Ladies in their Private and Public Spaces, we have attempted to analyse two First Ladies' autobiographies relying on Jürgen Habermas' theory as he explains it in his work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (1962). In this work, we have focused on two major concepts of the theory which are 'public' and 'private' spaces.

Our piece of research has revealed that during their time at the White House, Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama were major supporters to their husbands and American people in general. Both have made contributions by attracting people's votes during their husbands' campaigns, and they have been considered as campaigners and spokespersons. Moreover, they both have occupied highly powerful positions since their husbands became Presidents of the United States.

Throughout our dissertation, the first chapter has examined the two autobiographies *Living History* (2003) and *Becoming* (2018) and how the two First Ladies portray their private spaces. This chapter on both ladies' private spaces has shown that they are akin in their upbringing within their families. Yet, the chapter shows that while Obama lived loved by her husband, for Lady Clinton it was hard to overcome the sexual affair of her husband. They have presented themselves as educated daughters and both of them have graduated from Law universities. They have shown that they were good partners to their husbands and good mothers for their children. They have also narrated their efforts to keep their children away from the press and media during their times at the White House. Then, we have explained that both of them have played important significant roles in transforming the importance of womanhood and people, and they have projected their ideas about family and home.

Through our reading of the two autobiographies and the writing of the second chapter, we have concluded that as concerns their public space, Hillary Clinton was more engaged in politics than Michelle Obama. While Hillary Clinton was deeply involved in politics since her childhood, and she was the major supporter to her husband's campaign, Michelle Obama was against when her husband decided to run for presidential election. She thought that American people would not accept a black President, but after seeing his efforts, she accepted the idea for running and she decided to support his campaign. They both have served as major supporters to Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, and they have been presidents' most trusted confidants. Moreover, though Michelle Obama was less interested in politics, she was an active woman to end child obesity by initiating a program entitled "Let's Move!"

Through our comparative study of the two autobiographies of the two First Ladies Hillary Clinton's *Living History* (2003) and Michelle Obama's *Becoming*(2018)by using Jürgen Habermas' concepts of the private and public spaces, we have come across other interesting issues and topics that deserve to be studied. It remains our belief that other students can further research on both First Ladies and their autobiographies such as the image of the husband in both works' or the representation of the family in the two autobiographies.

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