

PREFACE

Gender discrimination, women subjugation, marginalization etc. are the ever lurking social constructions that are imposed upon women. On the basis of such social and political constructions, women are always subjected and looked down upon for they belong to the weaker sex in comparison to the male sex. Women have long been deprived of their deserving rights and equality. And such injustices have taken the form of tradition and culture which, both men and women follow blindly without realizing if that is doing them and social, familial or individual good. Lack of exposure, lack of education and lack of opportunities have made women suffer the most. Generalizing all the women folk as the 'same' will be wrong because though they are not getting the attention, some of them have strong potentials. And to bring those potentials and talent to the light, women need the touch of education.

Women have been subjected in every field like in her home, in the name of marriage, in her husband's home, in her motherhood and thus in her entire womanhood. The major requirement to break free the women folk from the clutches and grip of all the discrimination is her 'voice'. And to raise her voice, women need to have the realization, the understanding, and the awareness regarding their abilities and desires. Only then, women would be able to fight for their rights. The realization and the awareness would be possible only when the experiences of sufferings and struggles of women will be shared in the global platform. 'Literature', especially 'fiction' writing is a major contribution in this regard. Many women writers have taken into consideration to help the relegated section of the society and therefore, they have started to write such experiences so that they could reach everywoman in the nook and corner of the world.

This thesis would be a study on the aspects namely 'gender', 'motherhood', and 'slavery' concerning mainly the women folk. Here, in the thesis, these aspects will be studied in the famous novels of one of the leading African novelist, Buchi Emecheta. Emecheta's infamous works like "*In the Ditch*", "*Second-Class Citizen*", "*The Bride Price*", "*The Slave Girl*", "*The Joys of Motherhood*" and "*Head Above Water*". These texts will be read in the light of how the subjection of women, gender discrimination, marginalization etc. were practiced in the African patriarchal society. The African women's plights and predicaments in the fields of gender discrimination, the ironical joys of motherhood and how the slavery is practiced in every sphere of the women's lives in a modern yet traditional society etc. will be discussed.