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Colonial Impact: Women's Struggle in the Select Novels of Buchi Emecheta

Abstract

In congregating a wide spectrum of study on the African fiction, the role of women plays a chief aspect in the writings of African women writers. This paper is the one to look at how it is featured the challenges that women face in current Nigerian culture by Buchi Emecheta, a conspicuous female author. She was one of the primary African women writers to draw out the sufferings of women which flung them by purported social standards and values and to deny women to motivate an opportunity to create to their fullest potential. In her a large portion of books, she brings up that however the customary thoughts are being changed, the jobs and obligations of women are yet expected to accept that keep them from accomplishing their self. This paper endeavors to discover how Emecheta's female characters are created by their subjective nature of sex-orientated physical appearance for their motherhood identity and how they struggle to face people in the society to prove their ability as a women. In *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979), Emecheta depicts female characters' battle for their survival and states how they battle with the issues made by a resolved male-commanded society as, father, husband, brother, neighbour, boss and as the superior-hand all around women in the society. This examination endeavors to look at the manner by which Emecheta's Western women's activist belief system with the hints of the dangerous impact of

Western private enterprise and its related philosophies on the relative power and autonomy of Igbo women in the African culture.

Buchi Emecheta, a conspicuous women author of Nigerian culture, writes on the sufferings and the struggles faced by women to make some change in the patriarchal society. In *The Joys of Motherhood*, Emecheta expresses the wide mode of women identity against male closed-mindedness and male-centric society's fulfillment with an out of line and harsh framework towards women. Emecheta emphatically contradicts the detached job given to women because of male centric sexual susceptibility. *The Joys of Motherhood* bears the mechanical way of the life of women who is pervaded for the purpose of childbearing and the identity of parenthood through the maternal union that make women weak. This paper endeavors to locate the pioneer effect and endeavors to analyze the manner by which Emecheta's Western women's activist belief system with the hints of the ruinous impact of Western private enterprise and its related philosophies on the relative power and autonomy of Igbo women in African culture.

Emecheta has theorized women in her works. Her women characters can be best viewed and understood from subaltern perspective. Buchi Emecheta's novels are the tales of girls and women who are oppressed, entrapped and sometimes killed between their deep connections to tribal customs and their attraction to cultural modernity. (Vicki K. Janik)

Emecheta has given her women characters constrained achievement. They consult between the old and the new. Her women characters are horrendously mindful about the conventional and western lifestyle. Emecheta has expounded on burden of white and western qualities on indigenous individuals. Set in postcolonial Ibadan, Lagos and contemporary London her accounts show how young women and women are guided to acknowledge male benefit. Women characters referenced in her accounts are appeared to

test against their men's rights.

The study on the sexual bearings of the male and the female is differentiated as the female is oriented to the home life that is not included in any outer-reach position in the society, but the male is oriented to the European collaboration in the society, that keeps impact on frequenting women. Through the African women, the place of the women is instructed to be in an equal proportion, with the correct purpose if sexual intercourse in support on the basis of the government's rules to fuse open sexual approach that influences women. In male centric culture sex development uncovered, that maleness is socially regarded and femaleness is in subordination or in bondage. The distinction between a man and a woman is because of organic contrast.

The role of the women on society is restricted as she was imprisoned by the family bondage, with her position, care and love among her husband, children and her family, where she never have any second opinion to leave her duty as it is considered wholly as her responsibility as:

On her way back to their room, it occurred to Nnu Ego that she was a prisoner, imprisoned by her love for her children, imprisoned by her role as the senior wife. She was not even expected to demand more money for her family; that was considered below the standard expected of a woman in her position. It was not fair, she felt, the way men cleverly used a woman's sense of responsibility to actually enslave her. They knew that the traditional wife like herself would never dream of leaving her children. (137)

The major issue of man-centric marginalization of women is highlighted through the ideas of Gayatri Spivak's way, which deal with subaltern as it is in the perspective as a women's activist. She sees women as subaltern. Stephen Morton in his *Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak* published in 2003, writes as it is always a cutting-edge, always provocative, Spivak

champions the voices and texts of those marginalized by western culture and takes on many of the dominant ideas of the contemporary era.

Spivak's hypothesis can break down and comprehend Emecheta's women characters. Being a women Buchi Emecheta was less engaged by the commentators and peruses. She changed the focal point of her books. She distinctly peruses the life of women in Nigeria so her books are gynocentric. She is doubly underestimated. She has written down the grave encounters of women. In her works she has placed women as dislodged. The women characters of her books are dislodged socially, politically and socially and they have a place with subaltern gathering.

Buchi Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood* paves a narrow way, which exhibits the pleasures of maternity through the sexual discourse. Nnu-Ego needs to acknowledge the delights of parenthood as a demonstration of bondage for her life-partner. Emecheta depicts the womanhood inner feeling through Nnu-Ego who let her partner to utilize her body by allowing him to enter into her body and exhibit the ecstasy of showing manhood identity through his manliness characteristics.

The frustration, dissatisfaction and the displeasure is expressed through the character of Nnu Ego's present in Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood*. In a physical dilemma, it is her discomforts to face the same sufferings of Nnu Ego's mother Ona, who distinguishes the empathy of women's physical body power. The portrayal energizes a sensuality that challenges anpractical meaning of women' bodies exclusively as far as their conceptive capacities.

Ona's belief that Nnu Ego can be a woman, and at the same time _have a life of her own, a husband if she wants one', suggests the fluidity in definitions of womanhood that contradict any sense of a fixed and homogenous value system.(17)

This shows another forceful qualities to the detriment of women' conceivable outcomes. The customary universe of the novel seems regular and lucid on the grounds that it stifles elective points of view. Gender politics is the result of body. Once the soul leaves the body it gets freedom from gender difference. So as a spirit the slave woman becomes more powerful than man. It is believed that the slave girl is reborn as NnuEgo and as her *chi*. As written in *National Healths: Gender, Sexuality and Health in a Cross-Cultural Context*:

The psychological potential of this doubling goes beyond what Florence Stratton sees as a female schizophrenic response to male oppression (Michael Worton)

Michael Chukwuma, who has compiled a history of the Nigerian political order and religion, states that, "each Igbo in himself was seen as a religious phenomenon, because every Igbo was believed to have in him his personal deity which was called *chi*" (1985, 145). The slave young women as 'chi' is more dominant than men. By testing man centric framework she puts Nnu Ego in a circumstance in which Nnu Ego encounters women's dejection and segregation in labor and parenthood. Nnu Ego's first marriage was going to end since she couldn't offer kids to her better half. She was separated from everyone else and desolate, wanting for affection and backing. She faces embarrassment from her first spouse AmatoIwu. Nnu-Ego kicks the bucket alone and unobtrusively closes by a roadside with no youngster to hold her.

Nnu-Ego picked up nothing in her life. Nnu Ego additionally misconstrues the refusal. It is an insight that the changing universe of Lagos, not rustic Ibuza, would offer a prolific setting for reconsidering thoughts of parenthood. With its pilgrim control structure and urban setting, Lagos has turned into middle.

As another unique situation, Lagos foresees a few of the novel's own inquiries:

...how do the normative concepts of manhood, womanhood and motherhood change in situations where men have lost their power base? How do men and

women reconstitute identities and shape new language of legitimation? How do characters, particularly Nnu Ego, negotiate such contexts? (Michael Worton)

Nnu Ego struggles in the changing society of Lagos, which is identified and noted for its innovative new identity. In the discourse among a couple the woman is advised how to carry on before her better half. The pivotal point is that the parenthood has turned into a foundation for overwhelming society to decipher and establish its reality however language. Ceremonies, images and the very language of social intercourse are soaked with presumptions set forth as regularizing realities. Barrenness puts women in a region of deviation as she puts a man's masculinity into inquiry. A woman needs to create children so as they will convey her better half's name. It is her obligation, on the off chance that she neglects to offer beneficiaries to her better half; she neglects to deify her significant other's name.

Buchi Emecheta's identity analysis on society is expressed by Michael Worton, who states it as, "Because such meanings are always shaped by specific locations and histories." Her novels are set in transitional period of African colonial history. In her works the characters straddle the town of Iboza in Eastern Nigeria and the advancing city of provincial Lagos. They move among town and city and arrange new relations to standards of sexual orientation in evolving world.

In this novel Emecheta irately reprimands the purported conventions of manly culture as men are constantly special because of manly sexual orientation. Through the woman character, Nnu Ego, Emecheta expresses her expectation of giving a space for women to survive in the society without the gender support of man in the patriarchal world.

The Joys of Motherhood, for instance, appears to structure a world in which everyday life is dominated by dominant values of a patriarchal world in which

women are defined solely in terms of their functions as wives and mothers, yet the semiotic world of the novel is shot through with other languages that undermine such a perspective. (Michael Worton)

Through this paper, the colonial impact of the sufferings of the women writers is analyzed with a deep study and understanding of the male chauvinist and patriarchal society. Through the novel of Emecheta, the appreciation of womanhood with the acceptance of sufferings is categorized with the novel's movement towards the inner identity factor of fatherhood individuality, which is analyzed from a colonial point of view, where it states the identity of the struggling women that reshapes the dominant values of women's struggle in the changing world.

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