

## **I. Introduction**

### **1. Life and Works of Doris Lessing**

*The Fifth Child* (1988) is an important novel that tells the story of a woman who struggles in family as well as in society for the sake of her abnormal child, Ben including herself. Harriet Lovatt, the female protagonist of the novel lives with five children, husband and her mother. Her existence and struggle in the very society are the representation of women who are in the world. Perhaps Harriet's works in her life revolve around how women seem to others and how they play a vital role to exist and establish the identity in such society by dismantling the norms and values of patriarchal society.

When Lovatt's children become grown up, they are not able to give them a proper education, accommodation, and so on. Then they suddenly come to decide not to have any child. But unexpectedly the fifth pregnancy occurs which is not bearable but full of torture to her. Nobody tries to understand her, when she gives birth to Ben as fifth child that makes her existence in crisis because he is abnormal child. She is compelled to choose one either her child or the norms and values of society. But she chooses the child.

At first, she is happy with her married life and decides to have more children as David wishes. She can not get her position and identity. Rather she receives accusation and torture. Ultimately, she starts struggle for identity in patriarchal society. So, this present research is basically focused on gender and identity.

Doris Lessing was born in Persia (now Iran) on October 22, 1919 from Alfred Taylor and Emily Maude Mcveagh. Her father was crippled in First World War while mother was nurse. After the First World War the Taylors went out to Kermanshah, in Persia, where Alfred worked in the imperial bank as clerk. There Doris and her

brother were born. In 1925, her father was engaged in maize farming which did not give them proper environment to remain there any longer. Then they headed to the British colony in Southern Rhodesia where Doris spent her young life. Actually, her life was not good because she did not get proper caring as well as she did not see the good relationship between her parents. Her mother's life was tragic life. Though she was nurse, she had to work as toilet cleaner. Her life was totally miserable due to her naughty children and crippled husband.

Lessing has described her childhood as mixture of some pleasure and much pain. She calls herself a trouble child of luckless parents. Her mother was enforced to raise her children in rigid system of rules and hygiene in their residence. Though she was interested in studying, she could not continue her study as a convent 'girl high school' in Salisbury though she was interested but she could not continue her study because of Roman Catholic teachers who tried to convert her from the family protestant faith. At that time she said I was crippling nomesive. She was bounded to leave her formal education while she was only thirteen.

In 1937, Frank Wilson became her life partner when she was only nineteen years old. She gave birth to two children but their conjugal life could not sustain any longer due to her cruel husband who did not understand her and her value of her life. It was hard to live with such husband and to do progress. Then, she left her family and engaged in 'Left Book Club', a group of communists where she happened to be loved with Gottfried Lessing who was a central member of the group, then they married and had a son. Her second marriage also failed and she moved to England with her younger son in 1949.

As we have already come to know, Lessing had no formal education but she made herself into a self educated intellectual. She is ranked with different canonical

writers. In her early age she studied and read different famous writers and their works: Dickens, Scott, Stevenson, Kipling and others. Later she came to know and read about Lawrence, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Stendhal etc and these deeds helped her to be a good artist in the field of literature. As her mother told different types of stories to the children, she also kept on telling the same kind of stories to her younger brother.

When she has remembered her early ages with terrible condition of her father who came to become handicapped in First World War and she said "it is a kind of 'poison' because she spent her childhood in miserable condition and environment.

Lessing followed the leftist movement in Rhodesia as Marxist but she was not hard core communist. Although she left the party in 1956, she joined the communist party after three years. She did not leave her Marxist 'dream' unlike many disenchanted writers. She addresses contemporary women out of the wisdom of age seventy five. Gynecologically speaking she compares herself to the fable peasant woman who never had anything wrong with her.

Doris Lessing, a Nobel Prize winner and a reputed female novelist, has been spending her precious life reading and writing literature. She always has given her time in this field so that the human beings can know the value of their existence of life. Her contribution and works cover more than six decades exploring the relationship and realities of people. Most of her works talk about the situation of women in patriarchal societies as well as poor people and marginalized people in the eyes of so-called rich superior people. Lessing's texts are available in every corner of the World. Among her works, *The Grass is Singing* (1950), has some of the delicate sensuous life of early D.H. Lawrence. It was accepted at once and acclaimed as one of the outstanding novels by a post war English writer. Here, she has presented a character, Mary, who gets mental breakdown and death while she is divided between

two selves. She has to be within the society as well as to fight against the same social rules, male dominated social boundary that restrict her freedom. Only those factors are not there which take Mary's self but there are other more factors that are responsible to restrict her freedom and her 'self' is in crisis.

Likewise, Lessing's *The Marriages Between Zones Three, Four and Five* (1980) is a rich allegory of the alchemy of spiritual consciousness in representative individuals of both sexes and in the cosmos as a whole. The narrator, Lusik, 'represents' the events in both senses- as a storyteller and as an exemplar of the events themselves. Lessing clearly elaborates on the theme of marriage and male-female relationships. In marriage, first, there is some kind of uncomfortable but later it becomes very loving environments. She develops an anatomy of marriage through which two partners grow towards and through each other.

*The Children Violence* (1952-69) is the collection of texts which is extremely conventional novel. Lessing inherited from her realist predecessors, which are influenced by communism and rejection of a domestic family role that depicts exhaustively the theme of the 'free women'. These novels are taken an autobiographical in many ways, telling the story of mother's quest, a girl brought up in Africa who marries young though she does not like. *A Proper Marries* (1954), the second book in the series, depicts the unhappiness of marriage and mother's eventual rejection of it. *A Ripple From the Storm* (1958), another novel, is very much about the thoughts that explores Marxism and political awareness of mirth. After then, Lessing's novel advocates the feminist view.

*The Golden Notebook* (1962) is considered as Lessing's feminist manifesto. She was also involved in feminist movement. Lessing felt dissatisfied with her conventional narrative, so she changed its form. The novel relates to Anna Wulf, a

writer caught in a personal and artistic crisis, who sees her life in various perspectives like: writer, political activist, women lover, readers. When she suffers and suffers that help her to discover a new wholeness, her new identity which is similar to Mary in *The Grass is Singing*. Anna Wulf tries to live with the freedom of man that signify that many women are thinking, feeling, experiencing as men.

*The Memoirs of Survivor* (1974) is remarkable book and it is the memoir of a nameless woman who has survived "it", a nameless war that has left the cities of England empty shells. The protagonist's memoirs account that how they passed from the obstacles, and it is realized that after dark or destruction there will be day or construction or something new would be built. The narrator retells the story of how she lived through child period, how she crossed from a child. It turns at its end into a tale of woe, unrelieved by any humor or irony. This book is about mystical moment. Lessing's form deliberately blurs the distinctions between fiction, fact and truth.

Another well crafted novel of Lessing is *The Summer Before the Dark* (1973) tells it the story of Kate Brown, the female protagonist who is old mother of four children and husband. Unexpectedly, she leaves her family and lives in London alone for the first time. She finds her different roles in society and struggles through whole life to gain her goal. Actually, this novel is about the tension in family.

*The Good Terrorist*, is about a group of young people in a London 'Squat' whose animating figure is Alice, the 'Good' girl of the title. Reviewing it, Alison Lurie unfathomably called it the most interesting political novel. In fact it, unlike Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, as shapeless, to the extent of having no chapter breaks in its nearly 400 pages. It, awarded the W.H. Smith Literary Award (1985), has been written on political concerns.

During 70s and 80s, Lessing turned almost exclusively to writing fantasy and science fiction in *The Canapos in Argos* series. *Under My Skin* (1994), won the Jams Tait Black Memorial Prize and followed by second volume *Walking in the Side* depicted her childhood in Zimbabwe is first volume of Lessing's autobiography. *The Fifth Child and the Sweetest Dream* (2001), and *The Ben, in the World* (2000) one Lessing's the best fictions which follow the fortunes of a family set in London during 1960s and contemporary Africa. *The Grandmother* (2003) is her latest book, a collection of short novels centered on an unconventional extended family. Lessing always is in favour of inferior people: women, black, poor and their experiences have been advocated in literatures. *The Fourgated City* is her long novel about author's resistance to the ideas she was able to explore herself in this text.

We come to know by studying her most of works that her power of imagination is too rich, her dealing power with events is lively (vivid). She is strongly concerned with human condition and very much eager to find out new dimensions to redefine relationships. Some fictions are there which teach us how better to manage our world. The books of Lessing are not exceptions. Basically in her novels, fictions, essays, women's sufferings, pains, exploitation, dependency on male, as well as their struggle and search for their identity in male dominated society have been portrayed. Her most of fictions commonly tell about the values and identity of women in the society. who are dominated, exploited by the males members in rigid society.

## Critics on Doris Lessing

One might say that Doris Lessing has always been interested in space from the vastness of the African field to the bounded female spaces of rooms, houses and flats. She set her novels in Africa addressing the politics of gender and later was involved in the feminist criticism. Lessing was a writer about race relation in Africa or a woman writer writing for and about women. The 90 years old Mrs. Lessing who is perhaps still best known for her 1962 work *The Golden Notebook*, has in the last decade written many volumes of science fiction. When Lessing published her novels, she could lay claim to consideration as the foremost female writer of fiction then working in English. She is taken as second of Virginia Woolf. Her range of criticism has grown in the United States after she has published her novels in variety of genres.

After reading Lessing's work *The Golden Notebook*, a famous critic Susan Osborn focuses on women's role in male dominated society:

When I opened the covers of Lessing's titanic volume, I found Wulf, a writer with a block, a woman who was unable to shape her experience into a whole. Anna tries to see herself from various points of view, and by so doing, to find a way of bringing the disparate parts of her self together [...]. (282)

Rubenstein adopts a Jungian approach to the major novels up to 1979 of Lessing, interpreting them as exploration of consciousness and positioning Hegel, Marx and Jung respectively as Lessing's philosophical, political and psychological mentors. She believes in Lessing's multiplicity of ideas in her works. Her thesis is about the focus of a particular novel may appear to be political, social, psychological, feminist or mythic, the common denominator in Lessing's fiction world is the mind: the mind discovering, interpreting and ultimately shaping its own reality.

By reading about Lessing and her works, a famous critic R.H. Thrope focuses on humanity and places them in their social, political and historical contexts. He invites the reader to recognize the actuality and potentiality of Lessing's vision. He comments:

[...] her African writing is not limited by the word 'African', because she never yielded to the temptation to treat the 'color problem' simplistically, but kept instead a clear compassionate eye upon the humanity of all she portrayed, her work transcends the relatively brief episode of white settlement and places it in firm perspective as one of the seemingly tragic histories of universal distrust and hostility between races, creeds and classes. (427)

Mervyn Rothstein regarding its title *The Fifth Child*, says that it is sweating blood. That is an upsetting thing to write It goes very deep inside the writer. In the same way, Alfred A. Knopf says, "It's a horror story. It seems to me it's a classic horror story" (23).

Aforementioned criticisms obviously prove that Lessing basically deals the suffering and pain of women as well as terror of the text that is full of horrible situation. Commenting on the theme of Lessing's fiction Laura Hoffeld writes:

Lessing is regarded as one of the most genuine post war writers in English. Her novels, short stories and essays have focused on a wide range of twentieth century issues and concern from the politics of race to the politics of gender and sex. (11)

Doris Lessing is an enthusiastic to study and portray the society in front of the world about the suffering, pain, domination of people especially minor people through arts. Literature has become a tool to show her thinking.



Lessing's writings especially fictions are not only bounded within a limited field. She also has created science fiction. According to Carol Simpson Stern, Lessing is the writer of woman suffering, class conflict, color discrimination etc. He further comments on her works:

Doris Lessing's writings extend the boundaries of fiction experiment with different genres, explore the world of African, Britain and space and offer a socio-political and cultural commentary upon the post modern world. She is a descendent of the 19th century. Women writers who made poverty, class conflict, women's suffrage and slavery the subjects of their novels [...] Her novels range from social realism to science fiction with brief forays into speculative mysticism and fables of horror. (559)

*The Fifth Child*, Lessing's a remarkable short novels have drawn the attention of many critics since its publication in 1988 though it was set in the 1960s and 70s, when more fluid social mores create a firmer base for the novelist. The timing seems to be important, even though on one level the story is an old archetype of the normal parent and the monstrous child. When the book first appeared, the commentators studied it in the light of their own prejudices and preconceptions.

Doris Lessing has always chosen the several steps for her readers. Each and every time we have been thinking that we have figured out where she is heading next. She plays an important role to hide herself and emerges different places that is her romantic roles in her works. She engages in family, society as well as in arts and she presents the role of parents in front of children and their relationship between them with the 'good' women who maintains all sorts of works in daily life in society. She is

bounded to do work due to the force of patriarchal society. Lessing finds one of the most unexpected and disturbing expressions in this masterful novel.

The title of the novel is very important in the sense that the couple had desire to have more and more children but when they have four kids, they become fed up with them. So, they have no desire to have anymore but unexpectedly Harriet's Fifth pregnancy made them sad from the beginning. The more days passes the more torture Harriet gets. Many critics have given their own opinion of this novel. Regarding its title *The Fifth Child*, William H. Pritchard explains:

As I read this short novel, *The Fifth Child* becomes some times knowledgeable when a poor house working woman is suffering in different ways either economically or socially or physically or mentally. It has own importance, Ben becomes a precocious child who is unbearable for the society. (107)

In the same way, Roberto Rubinstein says:

Having framed these widening circles of suggestiveness, Lessing avoids a neat conclusion. Rather, at the end of the story the reader is left to contemplate Harriet's vision of the Ben who has vanished from the Lovatt's life, only to resurface as an adolescent in the background of a scene on network news, searching the face in the crowd for another to his own kind. (133)

While an another renowned critic Charmaine Wellington takes its title in negative way. He compares the title *The Fifth Child* with the Harriet's suffering before and after the birth of Ben, who is not only precious child but also monstrous one as Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein* and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eight Four*. As it plays out, *The Fifth Child* becomes a subtle social commentary on the treatment of the handicapped

by society. Whoever comes in contact with Ben- his doctor, teachers, family members and relatives - will admit that there is nothing wrong.

Some critics argue that this novel is about the choices. The choice of woman is to discover herself and tries to find out who she is viewing the novel as discovery of women St. Andrews writes about it saying that it is the short but remarkable novel *The Fifth Child* about the identity of woman in male dominated society whom the society takes a puppet of the lives. Actually it is about the theme of Lessing's common themes.

This novel is a conflict between the members within family as well as in the society. Harriet, the protagonist, as a woman in a patriarchal society, can not realize what she wants. She is forced to put her loving son in an institute but later, she ignores the social norms and values of society and takes Ben back in home by force which is the symbol of her existence in society. As a mother, she has given her motherly love and humanity to the poor child. She is existentially troubled character who desires for her autonomous existence. As she can not enjoy what she wants, she undergoes psychological frustration.

Sometimes, Harriet is portrayed as a neurotic character. When she becomes pregnant of fifth child she is extremely troubled physically as well as mentally. By supporting it, R. Delmer says:

A woman is able to give birth a child by keeping it in her womb in about nine months that is not bearable but she takes it normally. A man can't bear even a wound and takes help from the poor woman. She is transferred one hand to another hand and has to live under different shades. (75)

Analyzing, her behavior he further comments, "The behavior of Harriet in *The Fifth Child* can be described a courageous loving mother whom only less people can understand. She has taken a challenge against David" (XVI).

This novel was written after Second World War especially during civil war in America but was published only in 1988. Harriet is no longer needed in the society and family while she gives the time to her abnormal child, Ben. David and her relatives compel her to choose one of two abnormal child or society. First she does not think more and accepts David's wish and ready to keep the child in an institute. But after keeping him in an institute, she has a kind of repulsion and grows sympathy and love towards her child. Mother passion does not let her to live without Ben any longer though there is harmony in family when there is no Ben. It's theme is to see everything through the eyes of business.

Though the critics try to show the women's position in society, they are not able to unfold the issue of women existence and identity in patriarchal biased society. There are precious criticisms that pointed out the female problems in the fiction. In this very novel, the protagonist presents every were and every place, and acts as it is possible under the shadow of male dominated society for the sake of women and, their identity and existence. Her husband uses her when he needs and discards when he becomes fed up. Ben is her youngest son whom she sees her real existence that society rejects. This is the struggle of women for their existence to create the identity in male society. So the present study aims at different study aspects which have not been yet research. My stand in this research is to classify as the depiction of the search gender and identity of a woman. I will unfold the reality using theoretical modality from existential feminism in textual analysis.

In the following chapter, this research will mention about 'gender and identity' and women position in the society. Further, the focus will be on Lessing's depiction of identity of women and the reflection on numerous hindrance in the path of women's progress, prosperity, fame and dignity in the topic of existential feminism.

Similarly, the third chapter will focus on the analytical approach to the text. Beside this, the hypothetical statement will be elaborated with textual evidences in order to strengthen and enhance the thesis promulgation itself. In this way, the forth chapter will be conclusion. In fact, deducing chapter will have a glance at all previous chapters.

## II. Feminism: A Critical Introduction and Analysis

This chapter is a general survey of feminism, female identity, gender role in male society which will be applied in Doris Lessing's *The Fifth Child*. If we study the patriarchal ideology, certainly it undermines women to maintain male dominance over them. Feminist philosophy emerged in the US in the 1970s following only a decade behind the rise of the US women's movement in the 1960s. The movement seeks equal rights for women so that they (women) can live as equally as men do.

Feminism is a school of thought which tries to dismantle the patriarchal social norms and values that is against the natural laws of equality to liberate women. The movement is for the rights of political, social, educational, sex identity, freedom, in the society. This movement brought great revolution in thinking of society towards the women who were traditionally regarded as inferior to men physically and intellectually. Women could not possess property in their own names, engage in business. Even the males had authority to control their own children.

Women are oppressed by male economically, politically, socially and psychologically in patriarchal society. So, woman is objectified and marginalized as she is "Other". She is always defined only by her difference from male norms and values, defined by what she lacks and that man has. In western civilization is deeply rooted in patriarchal ideology. Even in western literature and folk tales women are oppressed which was created by males. The canon writers i.e. Shakespeare, Milton, and their literatures are also can not be far from such ideology that made them canons.

Feminism is a doctrine related to images and ideas advocating women's rights. It tries to redefine women's activities, works and goals from a female perspective. It

emphases on the centrality of women's position, and seeks to eliminate the subordination, oppression, inequalities and injustices women suffer because of their sex, and defend equal rights for women in a political, economic, social, psychological, personal and aesthetic ground. It is a massive complaint against patriarchal monopoly. It is a commitment to eradicate the ideology of domination to establish a healthy and equal society for both male and female. Feminism as "the movement for women's liberation is a part of the creation of a new society in which there are no any forms of discrimination. The society can not be separated from the process of its making" (257). It attempts to create a culture that is fully inclusive of women desires and purposes and it demands equal rights and opportunities for women in a political, social, psychological and individual senses. So, feminism is a struggle of women for the womanhood.

The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology defines feminism about the feminism as, "a doctrine suggesting that women are systematically advantaged in modern society and advocating equal opportunities for men and women" (132). It focuses on equality on both sexes. In the same way, M. H. Abram in his *Glossary of Literary Terms* brings same issues indicating what feminine is and what masculine is merely cultural construct not natural generated by patriarchal ideology. He blames in his book that western society is male centered and everything is seen through the eyes of males. He further explains, "From the Hebrew Bible and Greek philosophic writings to the present the female tends to define by negative reference to the male as human norm, hence as an other, as kind of non-male, by her lack of the identifying male organ, [...]" (290). In this lines talk about the females and their weakness who are judged by the things which they do not have.

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines the word 'feminism', as "The belief and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men, the struggle to achieve this aim" (466).

The term 'Feminism' was first used by the French dramatist Alexander Dumas in 1872 in a pamphlet "L" to designate the emerging movement for women's rights. It keenly studies the oppression, the suppression or domination of women in many fields, from different perspectives. Thus, Rosemarie Tong states:

feminism is not one, but many theories or perspectives and that each feminist theory or perspective attempts to describe women's oppression, to explain its causes and consequences, and to describe tragedies for women's liberation. The more skillful a feminist theory can combine description, explanation and perspective and better that theory is. (1)

Feminism is a study of problems as well as search of its solution and its impact. It is also called 'feminist science'. The first feminist document was Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792: P-47). It has pointed out the self-contradiction of illogic that permits us to understand its operations and decrease its influence. As Virginia Woolf resisted patriarchal ideology in 1929 when she wrote *A Room of One's Own*. Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* which was against the patriarchal ideology and their suppression on females and try to give the way of women's world.

Women are taught to live for males and sacrifice for them. They also learn to give but never receive. When women become equals with men then both will be able to develop truly human moral virtue, the perfect blend of pride and humility: namely, self-respect.



In the French revolution, women's republication clubs demanded that liberty equality and fraternity be applied, regardless of sex. Like American feminism, French feminism is diverse that believes in the importance of social and political activities in order to ensure equal opportunity and equal access to justice for women.

Aristotle says that the female is female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities while St. Thomas Aquinas's believes that woman is an imperfect man. In ancient time, there was no difference between man and woman that we can know from different folk tales and others articles. Even Aristophan's *Lysistrata* talks women are able to change the social status by with holding sexual favours from their men especially husbands (Ruthven 16).

Many feminist critics talked about women and their favours. Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* became a precious feminist literary criticism. Woolf argues that the male dominated ideas of the patriarchal society prevents women from realizing their creativity and true potential They have to hide their quality within themselves. The critic, bell hooks makes critical dimension to make clear these terms:

To me feminism is not simply a struggle to end male chauvinism as a moment to ensure that women will have equal rights with me, it is a commitment to eradicating the ideology of domination that permits western culture on various levels of sex, race and class to have a few and a commitment to recognizing U.S. society so that the self development of people can take precedence over imperialism, economic expansion and material desire. (194)

In the society of men, Beauvoir observes that men are considered essential subjects while women are taken contingent beings. Men can act upon the world, change it, gives it meaning, the meaning only in relation to men. Thus, women are defined in

comparison to men. Women are not born feminine but rather conditioned to be feminine by patriarchy. Beauvoir says, "One is not born a woman; one becomes one" (cited in Moi 92). Beauvoir believed that marriage trapped and stunted women's intellectual growth and freedom. She writes:

Women lack a concrete means for organizing themselves into a unit --- they have no past [ ... ] no religion of their own [ ... ] they live dispersed among the males, attached through residence housework, economic condition, and social standing to certain men – fathers or husbands more firmly than they are to other women. (11)

Colette Guillaumin advocates that men are defined primarily and referred to primarily in terms of what they do, according to their value in society as participants in the workforce. Women are defined primarily and referred to primarily in terms of their sex. They are not seen intellectually but physically. They are taken as objects. In some societies, women's hair and their milk are sold by male member of the family. If a woman is not passive, she is not really a woman of course, it follows that women are naturally submissive to men that they are natural leaders, and so forth. So, most of the women reject this masculine language, they have said that they need a new feminine language which undermines the patriarchal binary thinking.

In seventeenth century for the first time significant numbers of women protested against the received ideas about their sex in pamphlets and books mostly published anonymously because the contemporary society did not let women publish any sorts of articles. Mary Astee claims that men are not to educate the children. So, all educated women should refuse the domestic life, slavery life involved in marriage. They also advise women to avoid matrimony. *The Nineteenth Century* (1845) by Margaret Fuller is about the emancipation of women and their process of searching

identity has started from nineteenth century to on wards. The feminist writers say that women's knowledge and experience are crucial to understand that socially constructed world and only the women can truly and fully understand others.

In 1946, the UN commission established a place to secure equal political, economic, education rights. The National Organization for Women (NOW) formed in 1970, which also give opportunities as abortion rights, federally supported child care centers, equal payment equal political chance etc. Katering Tomaservski in *Woman and Human Rights* (1995) has demanded equal human right for women in different fields. She adds in modern time most of feminists are more alert of their existence. In the field of definition Kristeva says, 'the feminine can't be defined because there are as many definitions of the feminine as there are women'. She challenges the ridings of the symbolic order. Obviously without male or female there is no value of another sex but females are compelled to go against male cruel behaviour not males. Resemarie Tong supports Kristeva, and she says:

Applying Derrida's notion of difference of writing she constructed feminine writing (portraiture feminine) with masculine writing (literature). Understood psychoanalytically, masculine writing as rooted in a man's genital and liberal economy, which is emphasized by the phallus. (224)

Both Irigaray and Cixous are ready to accept the feminism sexuality and the female bodies are sources of feminine writing. Women are against domestication, gendered discrimination and the feminization of women to the creation of a more proper atmosphere for co-operation, mutuality and co-existence with the male partner in the society.

## **Existential Feminism**

Feminism tries to find out the root cause of women's oppression in society and its way out from the very oppression. Existential feminism is a sub-type of feminism which sees the oppression of women and seeks its resolution from existential point of view.

The biased mental attitude of patriarchal society does not give equal rights to the women though they also understand the fact that females exist in the human species. The females are in danger; as told, they are urged to be women, remain women, become women. The biological and social sciences no longer admit the existence of unchangably fixed entities that determine given characteristics of women, the Jews, the blacks. R. H. Thrope says: "I cannot be just to books which treat of woman [...] my idea is that all of us, men as well as women, should be regarded as human beings". (205)

A man never begins by presenting himself as an individual of certain sex, it goes without saying that he is a man. Actually the relation of the two sexes is not quite like that of two electrical poles, man represents both the positive and the central whereas women represents only the negative. It is also said that a man is the right while woman wrong one. A man thinks of his body as a direct and normal connection with the world, which he believes he apprehends objectively. Whereas he regards the body of woman as a hindrance, a prison, weighed down in our daily lives.

Thus, humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him. She is not regarded as an autonomous being. Jenifer writes, "The body of man makes sense in itself quite apart from that of woman [ . . . ] man can think of himself without women. She can not think of herself without man" (77).

Legislators, priests, philosophers, writers and scientists have tried to work hard to show the subordinate position of women. The religion invented by men reflects this wish for domination. Montaigne understands it clearly and he says, "women are not in the writing when they decline to accept the rules laid down for them, since the men make these rules without consulting them." Simone de Beauvoir says:

In the bosom of the family, woman seems in the eyes of childhood and youth to be clothed in the same social dignity as the adult males. Later on the young man desiring and loving experience the resistance, the independence of the woman desired and loved; in marriage, he respects woman as wife and mother [. . .] He can therefore feel that social subordination as between the sexes no longer exists and that on the whole, in spite of differences, women is an equal. (26)

Men say one thing and do another one because if there is any problem, they demand the help of women but reject the every women when they fulfill their desires. Sometimes they say women are the equals of men and sometimes they say women can never be the equals of man. Actually, woman is a free and autonomous being like all male partners. Beauvoir finds it unjust and immoral to use the sexual difference to exploit women. She says, "one is not born but becomes a women" (267). Supporting Beauvoir, Hegel advocates:

Each conscious being enters into a struggle for recognition with every other conscious being and each concludes that he/she is the essential subject (the 'self'), whilst all others are the inessential object (the 'other'). This is new we achieve a sense of identity. (321)

A woman lacks the phallus that confers subjectivity. This lack of the female self can also be detected in art and literature, where women frequently appear as object of men's desires or fears metaphorical virgins or whores but never complex autonomous individuals. Women are always associated with the passive body, and men with the active mind. Here Beauvoir accepts liberty rather than happiness because liberty is something more than maintaining one's existence peacefully and comfortably. To be free, a person must transcend the animal part of his/her life the temporary and unthinking happiness is just momentary.

Males and females are two types of individuals which are differenced within a species for the function of reproduction they can be defined only correlatively. Biology certainly demonstrates the existence of sexual differentiation. Even science also can not study separately. To be valid investigation there must be both sexes. Jennifer Hansen again says:

Human existence requires us to revise our ideas of necessity and contingency. Existence has no casual, fortuitous qualities, no content that does not contribute to the formation of its aspect; it does not admit the notion of sheer fact, for it is only through existence that the facts are manifested. (39)

In the vast majority of species male and female individuals co-operate in reproduction. Sperms and eggs illustrate the basic equivalence of the gametes. They develop from similar primordial germ cells in the two sexes. The chromosomes contain the factors of heredity (genes) and they are conveyed equally in egg and sperm. Numerically equal in the species and developed similarly from like beginnings, the fully formed male and female are basically equivalent. They appear to

stand in a symmetrical relation to each other. In this context, de Beauvoir connects with animals, birds and insects. So, here she writes:

Frequently, as in the mayflies, male and female die immediately after copulation and egg laying [...] male dies after fecundation; the female is able to eat and services long enough at least to develop and lay the eggs. In the matriarchal ants' nests and beehives the males are economically useless and are killed off at times [...]. (949)

Gestation is not a normal which casts her sacrifice for the fetus that is not possible in males. It is also said that women of certain age constitute 'a third sex', when they find themselves in past and presents.

For psychoanalysts also, females are inferiors to males. Their eyes are only at the body of women and their activities. They reject in the name of determinism and the 'collective unconscious' and it is this unconscious that is supposed to supply man with universal symbolism. Freud says that 'anatomy is destiny' while Merleau Ponty focuses that the body is generality bridging the gaps between individual existents, bonds between the ontological and the sexual. If a woman should succeed in establishing herself as subject she would invent equivalents of the phallus. A good society of good people has good virtues but not glory of penis. By criticizing the patriarchal ideology, R. Delmer says:

Man is a man human being, woman is a female human being, have been asymmetrically distorted; and it is among the psychoanalysts in particular that man is defined as a human being and women as a female whenever she behaves as a human being she is said to imitate the male. (83)

In our traditional society, woman is mostly limited in household activities and she is not allowed to go out and work alone because her strength, skill, ability are taken inferior than males. She is not believed by her own family members. Women should live at home and serve them. She should worship her husband and serve the family after marriage while she should live under the rule and regulation of father, brother before marriage. Again she has lived under her own son whom she had given life when she becomes old. In our Hindu culture, a married woman should not go outside without taking male care-taker when she is with father. She should wear red clothes, take “Sindur”, “Chura”, and “Pote” which are considered as 'Abibat ' e.i. symbol of living husband and has to take fasting for him but not for herself. In Christian myth also, women are kept in inferior bars with negative terms and In Muslim religion also women are kept within dark room and they are compelled to cover their whole body with black cloths which is the symbol of oppression They are also far from education. In every society, she is taken as child bear machine, entertainment for man. Of course, woman is taught from adolescence. She has to show her artificial face in front of society. There is no difference between public and private life for males but females should be presented in different places with different faces.

Marriage has always been a very different thing for man and woman. The two sexes are necessary to each other but this necessity has not presented in society. It is considered that a man is socially an independent and complete individual. He is regarded as producer whose existence is justified by the work he does but not for woman. Certainly the male needs her. Without her, his life becomes incomplete. He becomes unable to manage his existence, becomes a kind of outcast. A married woman becomes co-worker for her husband. Marriage is only her means of support and the sole justification of her existence.



When a woman gets married, she takes his name, his religion his class, his circle, joins his family she becomes his 'half', she breaks more or less decisively with her past, becoming attached to her husband's universe. She gives her whole life, her virginity and many things for him. She loses some of the rights legally belonging to the unmarried woman. It enslaves her while she remains as servant of her father, brothers, or uncles or brother-in-law before marriage. It also means greater sacrifice of her. Michael de Montaigne agrees with this point and he has presented:

We want them healthy, vigorous, plump, and chaste all at once-that is to say, both hot and cold. It is a matter of 'righteousness' to eliminate love from marriage; all amorous conversation is unseemly even between the engaged or the married, it is destructive of domestic respect, love of work and the performance of social duty. (456)

The husband in marriage is often chilled by the idea that he is doing a duty, and the wife is ashamed to find herself given to someone who is exercising a right over her in spite of many accusations from husband. She becomes so busy to make house, husband's cloths and in-laws' used things neat and clean. At that moment, she forgets her own existence. Some radical feminists somehow reject patriarchy society in favour of matriarchy society. Finally, women come to reject altogether the difference between masculine and feminine. Following Beauvoir's ideas Lois Tyson mentions his views in following lines:

Masculine and feminine, as two opposing and mutually defining positions, were artificial constructs supported by imposed heterosexuality. By subverting gender norms, and by refusing the characteristics socially assigned to a particular biological sex, binary

gender categories could be deconstructed, and a multitude of possible, gender 'position' would then become available. (338)

Woman is not allowed to do something positive in her work and to become a complete person. However respected she may be in the family, in the society or in the nation, she is subordinate, secondary, parasitic. In woman's destiny, the male does play no important role in her ups and downs of conjugal life. Rather he does play a role of 'wait and see'. D.H. Lawrence says:

"Sexual love is generally valid: the union of two human beings is doomed to frustration if it is an attempt at a mutual completion which supposes an original mutilation, marriage should be a combining of two whole, independent existences, not a retreat, an annexation, a flight a remedy" (497).

To justify as a complete individual person she has to be mother; the child is her happiness and her justification. Some women are haunted by the memory of the child which has not come into being yet.

In *War and Peace* Tolstoy depicts in the young lice one of these infantile women who sees child birth as a sentence of death. She gets another life when she gives the life to a child. But she loves the child more than herself. Childbirth is a martyrdom of mother because she is ready to sacrifice her life for the child and next generation. After giving birth to the child, she spends whole precious life with out any shame and disgust. The relation of mother to child becomes more complex and more intimate. In Tony Morrison's *Beloved*, Sethe, female protagonist, has killed her own daughter who may not spend miserable life as she has spent.

Social life does not have aspects more attractive than this tiresome performance of conventional duties. There are so many duties burdened on her daily life. She has to work household works. She has to take care of the children, has to

give time to husband as well as she has to go out for the work which is shameful for the males which does not give any advantage. She gains a sense of security that helps her to accept the life she has to live. The married woman should remain a faithful wife. When her husband dies, she has to mourn for years being alone; she has to wear the particular dress selected by the society at that time. When she becomes a wife, she has to have physical relationship with her husband because of her husband's need not for her.

The sex workers are not involved easily in the field of prostitution. They have own compulsion. In this field also males dominate them. Marie Therese complains - 'all men are more or less vicious'. She said that paid or not, she is equally called a whore but if paid an overcrowd one when she wants money, the man pretends that he does not think she is that kind of girl. The sex workers are exploited sexually and economically as well as doomed to infection and disease.

In her maturity old age, she has suffered her fate more or less passively. She tries passionately to create life once again. Each woman understands the happiness of the beloved in her own fashion; the wife wants to see in him a man through whom she will conquer society. Every mother's attitude towards her grown-up daughter is most ambivalent: in her son she looks for a god but in her daughter she does not find such thing.

A girl child has been taught to accept masculine authority. So she gives up criticizing, investigating, judging for herself, and leaves all this to the superior caste. Therefore the masculine world has become to her a transcendent, reality and absolute. Sterling Anne Fansto says:

Men make gods, women worship them. Men do not kneel before the idols they have made but when women encounter these mighty statues

along the roads, they think they are not made with hands, and obediently bow down. (205)

In the American war of secession the women fought for upholding slavery. In England during the Boer War and other wars of world women participated and brought the changes in the world. Even in Nepal the revolutions occurred many times women played a vital role to reach the revolution in the climax. But some women are accused of being servile. In our society, she is taught to bear everything from males. She has to be ready to kiss the hands of master that strike her hardly. She has no real pride, lacking the real pride. A man plays double roles by praising his faithful and chaste wife but condemns other's wife to commit adultery. But he does not care to the males who spend whole nights in dance bar or in brothel. Women singers in 'Dohori Sangh', or dancers of 'Dance Bar' are abused while males are admired, that is culture of our society.

If the women get equal status economically they can feel and set them as independent. They will get full freedom. Patriarchal society can't be reduced it's position without women's consciousness in every fields. Until and unless they feel they are strong to compete with males these kinds of exploitations remain as a social norm and rooted practices. Everything made by man can be changed if we need. If the Negroes are able to rule the U.S while they were slaves before 50 years, why do not women rule the world? It seems almost certain that sooner or later they will achieve complete economic and social status, which will change the inner and outer parts of the world.

Really, they have to struggle more and more to reach at the destination which shows women are no less powerful than men. But both sexes have to have co-operation so that they can gain the very goal easily. Without it, they have to lose the value. No sex can go ahead without getting help from other. So no existence is there in the absence of another one. Men and women are the two wheels of a cart or two parts of a coin.

### **III. The Real Identity and Dignified Existence of Female in *The Fifth Child***

Doris Lessing has dealt with story of a female character, Harriet who is struggling throughout the story before and after her marriage. Specially, after her marriage she is suffering physically and mentally. In comparison to last child, she got less torture and pain to give the birth and grow up to four children. But the extreme pain and suffering start when the unexpected and unwanted fifth pregnancy remains in her womb. Before giving the birth of the very fetus, she has enormous pain in her body as well as in mind. Anyway, she gives the new life to the child, is later called Ben who he is not normal boy. He creates the problems which struck in her usual life and the hindrance rises in her day to day life. Male arrogance and master mentality of patriarchal society are not ready to accept the child due to its precociousness and its abnormal appearance. And they wish to put him away from the family and the society that's in an institute. In fact, Harriet, the loving mother who is against of this notion. At first, she knees down in front of the society which makes her to send Ben in the institute. Now she sees her existence in Ben so she decides to struggle against the wish of the society that longs to put her life under the sword without any name. Ultimately she is able to do what she wanted in past and has created her real identity and dignified existence first in family and then the society after long struggle.

The story begins with the meeting of David Lovatt and Harriet in the party. At first sight they love each other and decide to marry. After getting married, both of them have an iron will to have a lot children so that they always can spend their happy life in big family. Unfortunately, their wish goes to opposite direction because they have no desire to give any child after fourth baby due to their poverty in the family. Though Harriet has strong longing to live with many children in the beginning but when she gives birth to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> child, she does not want giving birth any more. But

she has continued for the sake of David and her family so that happiness remains forever in her family

When David is unable to afford all of them and now he decides not to get any more children. Unexpected and undesired fifth pregnancy makes Harriet and David upset very much. She is ready to abort it because of extreme pain inside her stomach. But doctor does not understand her and her nuisance (trouble), rather he says, “well, perhaps I was out by a month-but if so, you have really been very careless, Harriet” (46) the doctor in stead of knowing her real problems he blames her as careless woman and irresponsible one.

The married women comparatively suffer more than the unmarried ones. Before marriage, they are under the control of father or brother or sometimes under brother-in-law whereas they have to depend on their husbands or fathers-in-law after marriage. They can't cross the boundary created by the males. The men become more strict and envious against the women especially after marriage. Thus, marriage becomes not a fulfillment of the self but a symbol of their confinement. If the women attempt to cross the circle marked by the males society, they are considered as liberated ones. So, most of them (women) don't dare to go opposite of male's desires and rules.

Harriet, the protagonist of the novel is exploited first by her husband whether knowingly or unknowingly since she has entered in to his house as a new bride. But she does not take it seriously and her endurance goes on digesting his suppression as if it is usual and common. He takes advantage from her patience. So, the tortures rise and rise. He never tries to acknowledge her. He kills her verbally: It's this room, I swear it's a baby maker!” (40). This line advocates that he is ridiculous at her. He has

no respect for her. He is completely indifferent to her desire and wants. Really he is rife husband.

The more time passes, the more pain and suffering grow in Harriet's body. Due to excess pain in her body she is unable to cope with actuality. The narrator tries to elaborate about her condition through these lines:" She was frantic, exhausted [. . .] She was peevish, she lost her temper, she burst into tears. David saw her sitting at the kitchen table, head in her hands, muttering that this new fetus was poisoning her" (41).

These lines evoke the terrible situation of Harriet and also germinates the fact that how irresponsible David is towards his own wife. Dorothy, Harriet's mother, fuels the burning fire of Harriet by expressing following lines. She says, "I'm your servant, I do the work of servant in this house you are selfish, both of you. You are irresponsible" (42).

Harriet, the pathetic character of this narrative, is unwilling to attend the different sorts of celebrations and enjoys in which other family members actively involve. Despite her miserable and sorrowful condition, nobody is eager to help her from such whirlpool. At that time, she feels as if she were rejected. She assumes that she is isolated in the crowd of guests and family members in her own house.

The surprising thing is that, in her previous pregnancies she did not feel such pains and experiences. Now she is getting different experience which is rarely found in other pregnant women. The speaker narrates:

This morning, lying in the dark before she woke she had felt a tapping in her belly demanding attention. Disbelieving she had help sat up, looking down at her still flat, if soft, stomach, and felt the imperative beat, like a small drum [---]. (45)



These lines unfold the actual situation abnormal state of pregnancy. Harriet knows that the fetus is not normal due to its abnormal activities within womb. She has neither felt nor heard from any women that kinds of activities of fetus and pains she is bearing now. Though her tolerance crosses the limitation, she gets no help from anybody. They all become heart of stone. To console herself she says: “take it easy yourself; you bad-tempered cow” (46).

Concerning the title of Novel, *The Fifth Child*, the environment of Harriet family is full ups and downs due to the birth of precocious child, Ben as a fifth baby. Before his arrival in Lovatt’s family, in comparison there was sound relationship among all family members as well as relatives. At that situation, people come and go without any obstacles thinking all were under same roof. There were regular meetings and parties in different occasions. Happiness and sorrow were shared with each other. But now it is only in imagination. All relatives have omitted to visit and call the family of Lovatt. They only have slander to Ben and his mother, Harriet nothing wrong but they are scared from Ben. Now a days, he has become a real obstacle of her family to all people. So, she has to bear the torture given by family members as well as relatives due to her son. Here, we can present some lines:

It was the worst year of Harriet’s life, and she was not able to care that people avoided them. Everyday was a long nightmare. She work in the morning unable to believe she would ever get through to the evening. [---] If he was locked enduring the day, he screamed and bellowed so that the whole house resounded with it, they were all afraid the police would arrive [---] one day, she ran a mile or more after him, seeing only that stubbasquat little figure going through traffic lights ignoring cars that noted and people who screamed warnings at him. She was

weeping, panting, half crazed, desperate to get to him before  
something terrible happened, but she was praying. (76-77)

As an abnormal child, Ben has made his mother half mad due to his terrible activities. Every time she should be guard for him otherwise he, does mistake. She should not leave him alone because of his naughtiness. He does mistake but accusation goes to mother. Only for him, she is now spending her time. When she is abscent for a while then one mistakes Ben has done. He does not do any care. Really he is precocious baby who has disturbed the normal life of his mother as well as the society around his residence. The people of this community have screamed at him but he is indifferent.

Before this events she is still remembering her fifth pregnancy of the very kid who has troubled her even when he is in womb. At this time, she goes to see the doctor frequently because she has no power to bear that torture which seems to be trying to tear its way out of her stomach. "[----] It was so bad that she would cry out in pain. At night, David heard her moan, or whimper but now he did not offer comfort, of it seemed that these days she did not find his arms around her any help" (49).

These aforementioned lines after the selfishness of men who are near to the women when they need help from the females. In contrast, they don't care to anybody when they fulfill their selfishness as David. David in the beginning loves Harriet too much because she was ripen food but now he does not see that in her. So, his arms are far from her inspite of her terrible situation. David, the male, enjoys watching her such miserable position. Now, he does nothing for the sake of his own wife.

Her desire and hope go wrong to worse. The relatives also have not come as they did in past. The speaker says: "now, the number of relatives at Christmas the house was half empty" (76). Even in an important festivals and days the people stop

coming to her house due to Ben. She requests all of the relatives to come to her house pretending that Ben is right now. She says: “Ben was much better these days” (80).

Those who come to their house, all of them have furious eyes towards mother and son that make her wound again.

On the other hand, Ben does not express even a single word. Only he staves, hisses and he works what he likes that is no good to anybody in the society. So, she is upset very much. Now, for the sake of Ben, she has done everything for Ben.

Wherever she goes and remains there is Ben with her. The writer has said:

Harriet was alone with Ben during the day. She tried to be with him as she had with the others. She sat on the floor with building blocks and toys you could push about. She showed him colourful pictures. She sang him little rhymes. But Ben did not seem to connect with the toys, or the blocks. (52)

She does her best for her abnormal child whom is really discarded by others. What she is doing that will help him. She does everything for him like: singing or reading or preparing toys shows different types of colours, pictures so that he can be easily lured to them. Harriet, the mother, who tries to bring him as a good human being for the society by doing different activities with him but he is totally careless to her.

When all family members, relatives decide to put Ben in an institute so that the sound environment can be created again there. But Harriet isn't agree with that decision because first of all, it was not bearable deeds, for a mother and another the most important factor is that she sees her life in Ben. So, she stands against them. Ultimately she is compelled to be convinced from different logics given by her relatives which somehow are good in her life and family. So, she is ready to send Ben for the sake of other children, husband and relatives. She says: “Very well. If some

place can be found that [----] and she began to cry” (89). She thinks it is good to send there where there are better place but no longer she says, she begins to cry. The narrator of the fiction tells:

Harriet was frantic: that haste of it, the-eye, ruthlessness! And the doctor who had authorized this? Or would? A doctor who had not even seen Ben? She said all this to David, and knew from his manner that a good deal had gone on behind her back [----]. (90)

The relatives, the family members have expected that she will not show any reaction against their decision they have done. She expresses her real love towards the baby and anger at them. Specially her anger goes at David who is mannerless, senseless, and cruel wretched man.

Harriet again is wounded when David says coldly; “No, he’s not well, he certainly is not mine” (90). It is unfair when a father says irresponsibly that Ben is not his son. Before David’s that saying, Harriet has tried to make peaceful environment in family by saying: “he is a little child. He’s our child” (90). From these two quotations we can assume that the real love of a mother and the selfish nature of father. They are not only characters of their novel but also the representations of human beings.

David tries to baffle Harriet in different ways and persuade her when there is something is going to be done according to his will. Here again the narrator points out:

He flung these in to the van. Then his face set hard, so that Harriet hardly knew him, he picked Ben up from where he sat on the floor in the living room, carried him to the van, and put him in. Then he came fast to Harriet, with the same hard set face, and put his arms around her turned her away from the sight of the van [---] he said, over and over

again, we have to do it, Harriet, we have to; she was weeping with the shock of it, and with relief, and with gratitude to him, who was taking all the responsibility. (92)

David attempts to centralize the attention of Harriet by pretending as if he loves her very much but it does not alter her mind. He consoles her by saying that it is his compulsion to send Ben away from the house. The mixed of frightened futile works of her family over Ben and pleasure of doing something by her husband make her bother as well as amuse. He puts Ben in to van deceiving Harriet because he knows it is mischievous deeds but he does.

The real intention and desire of males can be easily read from these aforementioned lines that the men, in every community are these who are happy when they are able to persuade the women according to their wish. David sings, dances as well as put his hands around her because he has won the game against Harriet.

Now, she feels aloofness living among the family members. She is lonely when she only thinks and imagines about Ben who is now far from her. She sees nothing there everywhere where is black cloud for her. But other family members are happy. They are feeling relief. Again, she comes to know the reality that David is one who is not going to take any responsibility. She, now, comes to realize the value of Ben due to his absence. Her all loving motherhood can't live alone without Ben and she says: "I'm going to see what they are doing to Ben" (94). But no family member remembers Ben except Harriet. Due to her insistence, at last, one of family members gives her the address of Ben's prison. In spite of humanism and innocence, she is treated as a criminal specially after giving birth of Ben. Here, it is said:

Again Harriet was wondering why she was always treated like a criminal. Ever since Ben was born it's been like this, she thought.

Now, it seemed to her the truth what everyone had silently condemned her. I have suffered a mistune, she told herself; I have not committed a crime. (94)

Women are blamed they do not commit. Without any crimes, they are called criminals. Whatever mistakes the children do, the responsibilities go to the mother but not father. They have no hesitation to accuse the women and the society supports the males as done for Harriet in this short fiction.

No one can resist her from going to see Ben in the North of England. When she reaches the institute she gets many hindrances because the staffs of the institute who do not let her see him. There also, by force, she enters and finds her loving son. He is in so poor condition that even she does not imagine. He is kept in dark, dirty, cold room with no food, no cloth. She nearly does faint when she sees him. Harriet determines to take Ben though they don't like to return him. She is alone, poor mother of the child but dares to face any challenges with them. When she touches the baby, she knows and finds, "He was deadly cold. He lay heavy in her arms, and she understood the words a dead weight" (102). She clearly knows that if she leaves him any longer, he will die soon. She takes him from that institute forcefully.

Her hope and desire get opposite result when she reaches at home with Ben because all family members show their disgust, loathe towards her and the very child. Rather they present big eyes and fire words. Overstate assumption is rendering in that place because David can do anything for both mother and child. The fear, the love and consolation of these people make Harriet nearly half mad. David has said in anger, "The police will be here" (105). At this time, he sits at the table with his head in his hand. The children are in front of television but their eyes are not watching it. All of them are fire at her and her works that she has returned Ben from the hell for the sake

of humanism. Surely she is all loving and inspiring mother but nobody understands her. The confession and blaming can be presented here:

All right, I am a criminal. But they were murdering him [. . .] I could not stand it – she said yes, but you didn't see it, you didn't see -! She cried out.

I was careful not to see, he said. What did you suppose was going to happen?

What they were going to turn him into same well adjusted members of society and then everything would be lovely? [. . .] All right, he was right and

I was wrong. But it is done. (105-106)

Here Harriet calls herself a criminal. In deep meaning, her intention is not so to be called so rather she wants to make them criminal because they are going to kill Ben that Harriet does not support and she's cried at David who was to enjoying at the house when Ben was absent.

Forgetting the right of a child and responsibility of a real father he encourages all the members as well as relatives to be against of Harriet. She knows very clearly that why the children are crying and why they don't come near to her. Even they don't look her at once and go to another room to sleep where there their mother does not care to them. She has completed her duty as a mother, as a wife as well. So, from her side the abnormal child is to be altered into gentle man in the society. So, she spends much time at home with Ben because she has seen her picture, her true identity and her effort in the mirror of Ben. She says "Ben, I, mean it! You shout and screen and I'll tie you up"(107). By following the line, we can know that she not only loves him and threatens him so that he can know that she not only loves him and threatens him so that he can do better and can be socially accepted. It is futile task to teach him because he is disinterested in learning skills.

Neither David nor Ben trusts each other. Here, the father is always far from his son. He likes no more Ben. In the same way, the sound relationship between two husband and wife is now spoilt bad to worse due Ben. Anyway, when she is on his arms at night Harriet does not feel as she felt in past. At that time, there is long dispute about their children that Harriet satirizes she wants more children like Ben which means she wants to be far from such cruel and selfish man and from where she can create new identity. But David says, "And what about Paul? For it was Paul who was the most damaged" (112). Undoubtedly his saying is controversial. He is not in consistence in his view and behaviour. But Harriet has only dream to make Ben good person.

Harriet does continue teaching him. The presenter unfolds some lines:

She talked quietly while ate. "And now listen to me, Ben you have to listen. You behave well and everything will be all right you must eat property. You must use the pot or got to the lavatory. And you must not scream and fight. She was not sure he heard her. She repeated it. She wants on repeating it. (108)

To the small and naughty child, Harriet has taught him to do which are good for his daily life and warns not to do which does not suit for the home and the society as well. Although he is small kid, he fights screams at others which behaviour encourages the backbiting people to be against of Harriet.

The baby gets birth due to husband and wife. They have equal responsibility to do that. But in our society women are taken alone and the husbands do not help them as if they (only mothers) alone make the baby in their wombs. The husband accuses his wife that she has not committed. She is called criminal which she does not know like Harriet in this fiction. That's why, Harriet has to do something different in her



community because of male's over torture and domination she determines to exist in separate world where she can support whom she likes and can make the real identity. She sees her 'self' within Ben whom is able to provide her true existence. Her very existence will be recurred when Ben will be considered, a good person.

In the circle of whirl of the society, she has to establish her own name and fame as the flowers blossom breaking the rock. She has to follow the rules and regulations of the society. If she does so she is okay for them otherwise, they take her as a taboo one. To accept all, that is impossible to her. That's why she chooses Ben to identify her situation and search new place to live as a human being.

Smoothly and gradually Ben grows up. In contrast of Harriet's wish, he becomes different. He starts spending his days with other people who are also not good for the society that hurts Harriet more. The writer tries to clear by presenting the following lines:

She knew he had become a pet or a mascot for this group of young men. They treated him roughly, it seemed Harriet, even unkindly, calling him Dopey, Dwarfed [---] 'He, Dopey, you are in my way. Go and fetch me a cigarette from Jack, Hobbit' but he was happy. (113-114)

The wounded Harriet gets again pinch from Ben when she gets involved with such naughty and ugly fellows. Neither they love him nor they teach, good lesson that makes her to be scared for Ben. But the irony is there he is very happy to be with them though they treat him very badly. She has not seen Ben so happy before as he is now, so she is in confusion about him to let him to be free being happy or put him in locked room with rage and deprivation. She is trouble. So, she has no sleep, no hunger no thirst. Ben's arrival and departure are not sure. Even living at home, his mother

does not know his presence and absence. For his deep love and sympathy she hugs, she pats him but there is no reaction, no warmth from him. He is cold the narrator tells, "but when she put her arms around him, there was no response, no warmth; it was as if he did not feel her touch" (116). At home, when he sits with mother really he is upset.

Harriet wants to send Ben to school so that he can learn different from the name and to make a moral man. Here, it is presented: "For the sake of family; Harriet, for the children's sake [---] for the sake of David's. Though he seems to come home later and later" (119). She is working hard for the family, her children as well as her husband but instead of getting something she gains nothing special. Rather she has more torture and suffering.

Paul is another disabled child who can not eat properly. She does her best to him too as for Ben. But Paul concerns to his mother. He always tries to be close to her. He is restless person. When Ben comes at home he fears and cries which adds fuel on fire of tension for Harriet.

Again Harriet receives condemn from the headmistress of school: "He does not seem to be remorseful in any way. You might even think he does not know he did it [---] he should know what he is doing" (121). It is said that a man who is poor, he gives pained and tortured more. In the same way, Harriet has been put in this place. Parents who are humbug they don't care about their children like David. He is totally unknown about the events which are happening at his home. Only he knows that Ben is hindrance of success and happiness. Thus, Harriet again is obliged to keep Ben at home and does some as she has done previously. She tries to teach applying different methods whether reminding the institute's cruelty or showing all mother's loving so that he can correct himself.

Once again Harriet puts Ben in caring of Dr. Gilly's nurse. He no longer can exist there too. She finds herself looted and ransom in every way. Her worries go up and up when the Dr. Gilly straightly says: "[---], Mrs Lovett, the problem is not with Ben, but with you. You don't like him very much" (124). Whom she loves very much and spends her life for him but nobody understands her. Even educated and gentle people take support male not her. At this moment, she explodes her anger:

I don't blame myself, said Harriet. Though I don't expect you to believe it. But it is a bad joke. I feel I've been blamed for been ever since he was born. I feel like a criminal I've always been made to feel like a criminal. I've always been made to feel like a criminal. During this complaint-shrill, but Harriet could not change her voice-years of bitterness come pouring out. (125)

When Dr. Gilly blames her that Blame is wrong due to Harriet, at that time, she has expressed her repulsion as it she is criminal because of the behaviour of Ben. She has been out caste in her place. She has been made a criminal who really does no wrong. That's why she satires: "Do you want me to give you letter to the zoo? Put this child in a cage? Or hand him over to science?" (127) the line is brusted through the month of Harriet due to Dr. Gilly's negligence and his accusation.

Ben is a real naughty child but Harriet has showed her mother's affection for him. When he finds the chance the absence of his mother, he immediately does any one wrong work whether by attacking his brothers or spoiling anything out of home then Harriet must rush to look for him expecting something wrong will happen from him. But Harriet does not talk about it with David because it encourages him to be more angry and callous to her and easy to blame to both of them (Ben and Harriet). She has not lost her hope to do better for her poor children. So, she puts Paul and Ben

at a place first and tells stories of fairy tales. Sometimes she makes them watch the film then she commends asking them to repeat the story. Ben copies the story that Paul tells it but within a few minutes he (Ben) forgets. She plays different games has presented here, "It seemed to her these efforts she made to humanize him drove away into himself, [---] remembered? Dreamed of? His own kind" (139). She has no any desire to be selfish or to loot any one. She is real all loving and all inspiring mother of her sons.

All males as well as females are against Harriet. Even Dorothy, her own mother who does not support Harriet very much. She needs rather she calls her daughter as a irresponsible and selfish. When a mother does not believe her daughter at that time a poor daughter finds her so miserable condition that she thinks that there is no any remedy for that wound. But Harriet is not such woman who is defeated by herself. She is brave, valour courageous, foresighted woman. She does not lose her hope who is the representation of whole women.

The irony is that Harriet, being a loving mother of Ben, is unable to talk coming near and address directly with him and his friends because of their abnormal behaviour. They make laugh at her. They don't care her. They tease her as though she is a small child. They do whatever they like. For an example some lines are here: " She stood by the table, looked at them bravely, ready to face them out, and said you aren't just sleep here, any time you feel like it. They kept their heads down and went on eating" (148).

The naughty children don't care about her presence and her saying. They dare to do any thing whatever they like without getting permission from her. I think she does nothing against their wish due to her love and sympathy for them. They also claim infront of her by saying:

It's a big house, said Billy the lout, the one she was most afraid of. He did not look her but crammed food into his mouth, and a noise eating.

It's not your house, said Harriet.

One day will take it away from you, said Elvis, laughing loudly.

'Oh, perhaps you will, yes.'

They all made revolutionary remarks like this, when they remembered.

(149)

Though these saying are airy-fairy, her affection does take easily. They all of them get her lightly as if she is small child. No respect no love from him only she has the heavy burden on her shoulder as a real mother. The naughty guys have disputed with Harriet and they are rude to her and they try to make a place where the existence of her will be crisis. These rough creatures avail of their maleness. They clamour for this place in different ways. It seems that she is deprived of her chance and luck. But they are different when David presents in front of them. For the suitable example, the lines can be put in this way from the text:

David came back from work late, these days, and sometimes did not come at all. He stayed with one of the people he worked with. It happened that he arrived early one night and found the gang, nine or ten of them, watching television, with beer cans cartons of take-away Chinese, papers that had held fish and chips, all over the floor. He said, clear that mess up. They slowly got to their feet and cleared it up. He was a man: the man of house. Ben cleared up with them. (149)

When they find the absence of David, they do what they like. But when he comes there, we can see a magic wand he has to control them. They hang their heads in shame and afraid and they do whatever David says. After completing his order they

go to their own house. Ben is happy to be with such naughty gang. Harriet is destined for family service and to be under them. She has been helping her father, husband, and now her son for her life. But the very child respects David who always wishes to put him far from the family or kill. It is really difficult to exist in a society where there is cold relationship with all family members as well as relatives. Harriet is extremely devoted to Ben because she clearly acknowledges that he is her existence and identity in the biased patriarchal society.

On the other hand, David agrees to sell the house to Molly in front of Harriet, he pretends not to sell it. But actually he says one thing and does another. The speaker says: "But privately David said something else. He would like the house sold" (143). He does in conspiracy that Harriet does not know. When she knows then he changes his outer intention but in fact his real intention remains constant. She does not emphasize that thing rather her importance goes to Ben and his activities who is the cause of her suffering. Here we can point out some lines: "She thought of ringing the headmaster, but then: what is the point? If I were in this place, I'd be relieved they took themselves off. The police? Ben in the hands of the police?" (147). Positive as well as negative thinking make her bind not to be far from Ben. She is clinged to Ben and other family members as well. When the telephone ring rings she is afraid of Ben because some complain can be from the institute where he is concerned. Physically as well as mentally torture restrict more and more to her. Ben and his colleges' suspense activities make her worry because they seem that they are not in right path. Every bad news engulfs her to be trapped.

Similarly, women don't dare to revolt against males and their norms and values. The male change their women partners as if they change dress. For them, women are sexual beings when they need physical relationship; they take women as

friends when they want help. But when they need no longer then they are ready to give up the females without thinking once. They don't try to understand the women and their wish. They never take as co-partner rather object of pleasure. The women are always restricted within boundary of males. If the women need to go out of house, they have to have male friends with them. They have no identity, no name no fame. But males give as they like. When a woman is unmarried, she is known from father, then in married life, she is identified from husband, and the people know her from her son when she becomes old. In this short fiction too, Harriet is treated in the same way. But she once more tries to take support from her husband so that there can be mutual cooperation and co-existence in her family. David always does works which directly harm Harriet. She tries to correct her fault if there is, but her husband creates another problem when she solves first one.

Obviously a married woman wants support and sympathy though she is capable to do something herself to show the mutual love and sound relationship like Harriet in this text. She does not see any sign of help from him and positive words from son. Now, she is again deceived by her own son whom she has dedicated her life, her youth and her dignity. We can cite some lines:

Did he feel her eyes on him, as a human world? He sometimes looked at her while she looked at him not often, but it did happen that his eyes met her. She would put in to her gaze these speculations, these queries her need, her passion to know more about him-whom, after all she had gives birth to, had carried for eight months, though it had nearly killed her-but he did not feel the questions she was asking. Indifferently, casually, he looked away again and his eyes went to the faces of his mates, his followers. (156-157)

Ben, whom Harriet gives her full attention living like out casted women who does not see her real existence alone, he is fully indifference to his mother. She knows the value of co-existence. For Ben, she is expelled from the mental of the society. The obstacles she has already passed due to Ben, she is remembering. Unfortunately he is happy being with other boys but not with mother. She leaves no stone unturned for the sake of Ben but he is totally deaf to her blind for her presence. That's why, Ben is another male who has betrayed Harried a women.

Time and again she presents her keen eyes fall to knees due to Ben's wrong deeds. In fact, she has no hunger, no thirst, no sleep because of his abnormal tasks he has been doing for long times with friends. Different rumours cut her heart. She says: [---] if I had let him die, then all of us, so many people, would have been happy, but I could not do it, [---] 157. I have already mentioned that if there is no Ben in her family, an family members as well as relatives will be happy. But Harriet chooses Ben's life rather than her happiness and all people as well killing innocent child. She does not like to live in hell covered with the roof of heaven.

Due to weakness of economy, social norms and values, habituated exploitation to females in family women don't like to revolt against their own father, husband and sons. But when the exploitation, domination torture go high out of boarder then the explosion bursts as a destruction. The males should understand these all things. Males make an innocent girl prostitute when she is young they are with her body. Ultimately she becomes helpless being and totally discarded from the society. They exploit women either in a family or office or school or any fields that they make frustrate in their life and suicide events are increasing day by day from females.

As Harriet has tried to alter her status, her identity, as women should establish their right position. In the name of husband or son, no body should hide their qualities



they have. Actually women are not allowed to show the real talent so that they always depend on the males but they have to have the artificial behaviour which can be changed according to the wish of males. In real world, it does work nothing. Yes Harriet is ready to forsake her husband and relatives due to their misbehaviour towards her. She has strong will to return Ben and make good person. She has a heart of gold that's why she is in favour of an abnormal child whom society discards. For her, he will be a complementary person for her in future. How he is now it is not a problem but he is happy in his own world. That credit goes to Harriet.

She knows that Ben's all colleagues are fair-weather friends. What they are doing is not the good sign of future. She imagines: [---] the gang would continue to support themselves by theft and sooner or later would be caught, Ben, too. In police hands he would fight, and roar [---] 158". Neither she can be far from Ben nor very close always Ben and his unaccepted deeds hunt in her mind. She is also sure that one day Ben will be caught by the police and he will struggle to escape from the hand of police. Her strength grows stronger more than before in front of the master mentality of patriarchal society. Her such constant boldness shows that she is going to make another new world where she will be free to establish her own identity.

The sound existence and real identity are very important for her where she sees consent between two opposite sexes. Still now, she is looking for David who can do something for Ben and other children but not Harriet herself nevertheless she is unable to get it. She, once again, is in perplexion about Ben and his companies, some cited lines make us feel the same:

Harriet sat there quietly, with the television sounds and their voices coming from next door. She sometimes looked at Ben quickly, and then away; and she wondered how soon they would all simply go off,

perhaps not knowing they would not return. She would sit there, beside the quiet soft shine of the pool that was the table, and wait for them to back, but they would not come back. (158-59)

Ben and his indigestible activities make Harriet forget herself. She can't put her eyes at Ben constantly but just glance. Their presence and absence are unnoticeable for her. When they are at home there is noise but when she finds none of them she feels aloof in the vicious circle that create more torture in her isolated life which directly or indirectly restricts her from her destination. And she has to choose another way to get there where she will be a perfect, complete, and independent women with big head and sound life.

Only the pain gives pleasure because without pain, there is no experience of happiness. Darkness gives the value of day. A mother gets pleasure when she gives birth to a child though she has still pain in her body. The flower which blossoms breaking the strong rock that only gives importance struggle for existence. Here also, Harriet has come to know the significance of her life and independency after struggling in patriarchal society where woman achieves pain, bad experiences physically as well as mentally. So, here Harriet has strong determination to make different world where she can enjoy herself being a real human beings not the object of male.

At last, she imagines that Ben is searching the some faces he has in the crowd means he is the only man who can lead and teach her about the importance of free will in the free world because she teaches him knowingly or unknowingly about the value of freedom within restricted society for his/ her real identity and dignified existence.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

*The Fifth Child* deals with the issue of females psychology as well as their existence and tremendously exposes the struggle of a woman in the society. This research attempts to visualize the very concept of female existence in the era of late 20th century. Harriet, the protagonist of novel struggles to make her own distinct position or stand in contemporary society though she is haunted by patriarchal domination, social boundary and the notion of disabled child. Her action brings the light of hope to the dominated women who are in is isolation, sorrow, pain, alienation and so on.

In order to create sound livelihood, she leaves no stone unturned but the society which represents the male authority adds more torture in her life. The novel is about Harriet who is able to do something against the patriarchal society in favour of women and disabled child for their identity and sound existence.

To accept Ben as a normal to whom society has labeled as abnormal one and expelled him from the authorized place, Harriet. She is conscious and rational which has assigned her to do something on the behalf of women and marginalized groups. From the very beginning of the novel performing the role of an innocent good wife and mother of five children,. Harriet is presented as a passive as well as emotional character regarding the issue of female existence at the initial part of the novel. After excluding Ben, her fifth child, from the society, she comes to acknowledge the fact that female identity is in handicapped status. Therefore, she takes many avenges against the conventional and strict society to establish the female dignity.

Harriet attempts and determines to place her own value by getting back Ben from the institute. Though the family, undoubtly, it is a part of society, tries to wipe out her existence by imposing its traditional authority, she rejects all the impositions

and starts her life own style. She has got success in her attempt and felt different from earlier. Generally, females are taken as meek, tenderhearted, passionate, emotional as well as possession of somebody, but in the case of Harriet, these assumptions do not work anyway.

Ultimately, Harriet is able to dismantle the authority of male by disobeying the norms and values of society because Ben who is expelled from the society has been brought in very society by her as well as she is able to establish her real identity and dignified existence. Harriet's action from the beginning to the end of the novel, directs towards the female identity which signifies the existence of female in the male rigid society. Now, she has become free, complete, valour, independent woman from the cultch of male dominated society due to her foresightedness and her strong determination that knees down the society though some obstacles and problems still are there on the way she is heading towards the destination where she can live happily and peacefully with her real name and fame.

### Works Cited

- Abram, M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. New Delhi: Harcourt, 2001.
- Beasley, Chris. *What is Feminism?* Sydney: Sage Publication. 1999.
- Blanchot, Maurice. "The Essential Solitude". *Critical Theory Since 1965*. Eds. Hazard Admas and Leroy Scarl. New York: Florida State University Press, 1983.
- De Beauvoir, Simon. "The Second Sex". *Critical Theory Since Plato 1965*. Ed. Hazard Adams. Forth Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanoich College, 1992: 993-1000.
- De Beauvoir, Simon. *The Second Sex*. New York: Vintage Books, 1974. 534.
- Delmer, R. *Feminist Literary Studies: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Fansto, Sterling Anne. *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality*. New York: Basic Books, 2000.
- Hansen, Jennifer. "One is Not Born a Woman." *The French Feminism Reader*. Ed. Kelly Oliver. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000. 1-6.
- Hegel, G.W.F. *Beauty and Truths: A Study of Hegel's Aesthetics*. Tr. Stephen Bungay. London: G. Bell and Son, 1984.
- Hoffeld, Laurel. *The Summer Before the Dark and the memories of a Survivor: Lessing's New Female Bondings*: Doris Lessing Newsletter 3.2, 1979: 11-12.
- Hook, Bell. *Ain't I A Woman: Black and Feminism*. Boston: South End Press, 1981.
- Lessing, Doris. *The Fifth Child*. London: Flamingo Press, 1988.
- Lessing, Paul Schluter. *The Novels of Doris*. Carbondole: Southern Illinois University, 1973.
- Moi, Toril. *Sexual/ Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory*. New York: Methuem, 1985.

Nicholas, Stephen Hill. *The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology*. London: Penguin, 2000.

Stern, Carol Simpson. *Transforming the World: The Arts of Doris Lessing's Science Fiction*. Westport: Connecticut Greenwood Press, 1983.

Thrope, R.H. *The Book All Hours*. New York: The New Yorker Digital Reader, 1968.

Tong, Rosemarie. *Feminist Thought*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1989.

Tyson, Lois. *Critical Theory Today*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1999.

Willstonecraft, Mary. "A Vindication of the Right of Women." *Critical Theory Since Plato 1965*. Ed. Hazard Adams. Forth Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1992. 394-399.