

EMOTIONAL STABILITY OF WOMEN IN BUCHI EMECHETA'S THE SLAVE GIRL**¹SIVA PRAKASH YELLUMAHANTI, ²S. PRASANTHI SRI**¹Research Scholar, Department of English, Adikavi Nannaya University, MSN Campus,
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ABSTRACT: In this paper, the slave girl by buchi emecheta uses the theme of slavery to analyze the women's emotional stability. Throughout history, women have often had less career opportunities and legal privileges than men. Wife and mother have traditionally been the most significant roles for women, and they have long been perceived as being very different to males. Patriarchal society maintains their rights and existence. Emecheta, the heroine of that novel, describes slavery in Ogbanje Ojebeta. Ojebeta began her life as a slave and carried on in different types of slavery. She was first sold into slavery by his own brother, who needed the money to fund his own selfish demands. She is now the victim of her brother's features. However, despite all the hard work and sometimes harsh treatment, her time as a slave was a time of significant personal growth. She is not permitted to choose what she wants since she is a woman. To avoid the prospect of an arranged marriage, Ojebeta shaves her head. She also asserts her own freedom in selecting her partner of marriage. She has turned into a scapegoat for African patriarchy's schemes. As she repeatedly assumes the roles of daughter, sister, and housemaid or, more accurately, niece, lover, and wife that strongly subordinate her to men, Ojebeta moves from one type of servitude to another.

KEYWORDS: Ogbanje Ojebeta, Buchi Emecheta, Slave Girl, freedom, emotional stability.

I. INTRODUCTION

The slave girl demonstrates Nigerian women's property position and limited opportunities. One of Emecheta's key topics about slavery is the case that all women in Nigerian society are enslaved to and by men [1]. The novel's heroine is named Ogbanje Ojebeta. With the portrayal of a lone female child's survival, the opening seems to be largely classic. Her parents feel more valuable and eagerly await her.

Although Ojebeta's parents celebrate her birth, it is extremely uncommon in Ibo society for a daughter to be born. The birth of a-- boy child, not a girl child, is celebrated in Ibo culture, but in this case,

events were completely different. "Girl children were not normally particularly prized creatures, but Ojebeta's father had lost so many that they now assumed a quality of preciousness". Ojebeta is shown a lot of love and affection by her devoted parents. They love her because of her father and to prevent the spirits from connecting her in the hereafter. To acquire ornaments and to protect her, he makes the long and dangerous journey to Ibo. Her mother decorated her face with various beautiful tattoo designs. Such sympathies were last long. At the age of seven, Ogbanje Ojebeta becomes an orphan due to the unexpected death of her parents.

Her brother sold Ogbanje Ojebeta into domestic slavery. One's home is their permanent residence. There were no one to care for her when her parents died. All of her rights were transferred to her brother after her parents passed away due to a major influenza epidemic [2]. When Ojebeta's brother Okolie, who is so anxious to acquire money for his coming-of-age dance, loses her original home after selling her sister for eight English pounds, a significant event in his community, makes the fatal decision. She did not mention her brother's malicious plan because she was a naive girl [3]. In the company of strangers, the treacherous brother and his sister leave the Otu Market shortly after the deadly interaction with Ma Palagada. Ojebeta feels nervous without her brother's presence, therefore she immediately looks for him after the departure of her only known family. She starts to miss going home from the market and her beloved brother. She is worn out and exhausted after the long journey, but her desire to get home is far stronger than those emotions. She is so consumed with the idea of returning home that she runs like a mad person to find her "little father":

Like an arrow in a hunter's bow that trembled impatiently while the hunter covered his quarry until the right time to production, Ogbanje Ojebeta also ran out of the Palagada cloth booth. Her small legs were like wings, and she ran, practically flying like an arrow, her heart beating rapidly with fear and anticipation as she thought about her brother, the only person she knew in this unfamiliar market, he was brought here by no one else [4]. Okolie sells Ojebeta to a distant relative, Ma Palagada, a

wealthy trader living in Onitsha, far from Ibuza.

Ma Palagada treats Ojebeta and the other slave females in her family with kindness. However, her husband, Pa Palagada, and her son Clifford mistreat the slave children, at times sexually assaulting them. Chiago takes everything because she never opens her mouth to inform people. When Ma Palagada dies, her slave girls are concerned about the future. Chiago, the oldest slave girl, marries Pa Palagada and becomes the head of the household, bearing him four sons. Despite her sufferings, Chicago accepts her fate cheerfully [5].

In the big market town of Onitsha, Ma Palagada is a wealthy clothing seller. She already has two adult children, Victoria and Elizabeth, a son, and two male slaves working on her farm. Four additional slave girls, Chiago, Amanna, Nwayinuzo, and Ijeoma, work at her market stall. Ojebeta is still a child when Okolie sells her into slavery. However, she is assigned adult-level tasks. Although Ojebeta's charm and face tattoos visually represent her individuality, other women in Eke market make fun of her because she looks strange [6]. She was chosen as a special person by her parents, Okwuekwu Oda and Umeadi. Ojebeta's parents show their beloved daughter a lot of love and care. To protect her from the evil spirits, her father travels to Idu, a long and dangerous journey, to buy charms. On her daughter's face, her mother has complex, beautiful tattoos. Ojebeta is not like the others.

Chiago is another character that appears in this novel. She is a big girl in the slave group and one of the slaves living with the Ma Palagadas. Because Ojebeta is a child without parents, Chiago is constantly worried about her. She is a supporting character who provides the heroine with two sources of information. The first is her observation of a slave girl being buried alive. Emecheta tells the tale of a slave girl and her deceased mistress being buried together. The second is when males abduct women and sell them as slaves to get money. Slaves were unable to leave their owners. Chicago states that "a slave who made an unsuccessful attempt to run away was better off dead" [7] because of the appalling treatment of the fugitive slaves. The struggle of all Igbo women who are constrained by conventions is symbolically expressed by the live funeral of the futilely defiant slave girl. The live burial of the slave woman and Ojebeta's image show the oppression and enslaved women are in Igbo society.

Similarly, Amanna, a slave girl, was born a twin in a family that had previously rejected twin babies. Because in Africa, twins are thought to bring ill luck. And, while her mother was able to feed her covertly for a while, the time came when it was no longer possible to keep her, so she decided to sell. Her mother just wants to give her a shot in life. As a result, slavery appears to have the potential to save lives and support families in surviving. When Ma Palagada dies, Amanna becomes a successful a company owner. She owns a large shop and a car.

Nwayinuzo, another character, signifies 'a female found by the road'. Her work comes from the back report, and she believes it is her responsibility to relay what Amanna was

telling Ojebeta. These behaviors included seeing Ma Palagada and enjoying herself. She also has concerns about Ojebeta. At the end of the novel, she marries another male slave, Jienuka [8].

II. Emotion stability of women in Buchi Emecheta's The Slave Girl

The scenario of female slaves during the colonial era is detailed by Buchi Emecheta in the novel The Slave Girl and the sexual harassment they endured at the hands of their male masters. Even the young girls suffered sexual abuse and harassed by the male overlords. An overview of the founding of the region where the story is set is provided in the prologue of the book. The prologue describes the major cultural institutions and assumptions in the region in addition to the historical context. Although she did not write the story herself, the protagonist stands in for her (slave) community. Emecheta expresses the status of women in the male-dominated culture by introducing Ojebeta. She uses the metaphor of slavery to demonstrate her restricted customers and the situation of women in Nigeria.

Ojebeta and her fellow slaves of the Palagada household are inspired by their shared mischievous happiness. Attending church each morning turns into a daily routine. Ma gives her girls instructions to build fashionable clothes so they can look beautiful. Ojebeta is so very happy to hear Ma's empathetic remarks about her "daughters" that she wants to dance around her current mother to show her appreciation for her compassionate demeanor. She considers lucky to have been bought by her. Ojebeta still longs to return home despite her

happiness, as though Ibuza has been absorbed in her. She continues to excitedly await the arrival of her village neighbors, whose facial marks will allow them to recognize her. She is grateful to Ma for providing her with adequate food and enabling her to attend Sunday school.

The ingratitude of her brother makes Ojebeta feel sad for him. No one from her brother has been to ask about her. She reflects on her brother's previous behavior while sitting under the lemon tree in the back of the house. At this specific moment, it is evident that the tree offers her some protection and minor shade. She is well aware that because she will be a close member of the Palagada family, she would receive extra attention. However, despite her ensuing happiness, her heart still bled for her own people, even after losing her parents and her beloved home. If only her mom hadn't passed away. Had her father been spared, he could now see his daughter. However, they had passed away, so no one was around to celebrate her meager achievements.

She is so consumed by the desire to return home that she searches for her people, the Ibuza people, everytime she visits the side of the river. She feels privilege to remember her childhood home and her loved ones, and she enjoys talking to her countrymen. She can easily remember how her parents showered her with love. While the other slave girls are unable to recall their origins, she is able to eagerly share her excessive thoughts about her parents. Ojebeta will no longer be treated like a slave girl after she marries Clifford, Ma Palagada's only son.

She will be able to create her identity as a result. The idea of her mistress traveling to her original homeland makes her very happy.

Relief and tranquility can be found in abundance at home. It is a treasure island, a coral island, and a paradise. After a sea of trouble, it is a recognizing spot. For this reason, her happiness has no limit when she interacts closely with her possible the other person. With a homely atmosphere, she is happy that she feels like she belongs to a higher race of people. However, for the first time in roughly nine years, Ojebeta felt that she was being treated like a human being, and she started acting more like one than like a resolute slave who would not have felt anything when her mistress died.

However, her ecstatic feeling does not stay long. Ma passes away quite quickly, leaving her slave girls feeling uneasy. Ojebeta, Nwayinuzo, and Amanna are all affected by the death of their protector and guardian. They have no idea what awaits their lot. It's possible that they will need to start over in life. They are therefore overburdened by the homelessness problem. Ojebeta is unsure about her decision to go back to Ibuza. She is worried that her family could give up her. She has known "home" for a long time, therefore if she is rejected by her own people, there won't be any other option till she returns. Now that she has lost her umbrella, she makes the decision to break free from the shackles and heavy chains of servitude. She feels forced to reveal her hidden self since Victoria wants to go with her home. She can see through Victoria's evil intention to keep her for life. Being a

lifelong servant is not what she wants. Her main desire is independence. She wants to be able to fly like a bird. After her mother surrogate leaves and she notices her future husband's lack of interest, she is anxious to get back to her beloved home. She feels that now is the right time for her to get free from the restricts of the cage, to relocate, and to search for a new place to call home. Her statement, "I want to go back to my people," is accurate. She makes a risky decision that she does not want to remain in the same location without Ma and boldly goes to Pa Palagada for approval. When asked by Pa Palagada if she is certain that she will be accepted in her hometown, she responds in the positive. Clifford's return from Aba is something she can't wait for anymore. She also had no intention of following Victoria: "I will not accompany you to Bonny," she shouted defiantly. "I am traveling to my people. I'm returning to my people. "I'm heading home!" Her heart was beating fast. She had round eyes that shone with the initial happiness of freedom. "I'm going home."

When Ojebeta returned to Ibuza, she was greeted cheerfully and affectionately by all of the residents. In a short amount of time, he realizes that she is further and further set in the old way of life. Having grown up in Onitsha has left her unprepared for the traditional way of life. The idea that "any man could cut a lock of hair from a girl's head and make her his wife forever" terrifies her. Since there was no way to object and this is an officially recognized tradition, she approves to shaving off all of her remaining hair. Ogbanje is aware that even if she breaks the bonds of slavery, she is not yet

free. To the traditions and customs, she was a silent slave. Ojebeta chooses to marry Jacob, but Uncle Eze, her father, disapproves. By cutting off a lock of Ojebeta's hair, he is secretly planning to marry her to his cousin. Jacob and Ojebeta are devoted to one another. In disobedience of the Ibuza tradition, they therefore intended to elope.

Possession is the term used to describe slaves who are not really free until the money paid to their masters is repaid, according to another story in traditional Ibuza culture. That's why Ogbanje had two children and then started experiencing miscarriages. She shocks Clifford, son of Ma Palagada, a former student of Ogbanje, when he comes to take her as a slave later on because, "Once a lively, intelligent girl, as now a nervous woman, with lustreless air... unsure of herself and her unbecoming outfit". The Myths of Tradition are accepted with a smile by Ojebeta, and her husband Jacob happily gives Clifford back the money that her brother originally sold her

Despite the advantages of living with the Palagada, Ojebeta never recognizes her slavery to them; yet, she conceals her fate when she happily chooses Jacob to be her own master. This is the great irony of her life. Similar to this, Chiago is happy and defies Pa Palagada, the cunning master, who weds her following Ma Palagada's passing; yet, Ojebeta has always desired independence, and she is discovered simply moving types of oppression and unable to release herself.

They discovered that to escape this enslavement after experiencing male oppression. They are, however, involved in the Ibuza tradition. By the book's final, Jacob had become Ojebeta's new master and had formally purchased her from Clifford. As a result, Ojebeta is moved from one type of slavery to another. Ojebeta's willingness to pick her master is the ultimate example of her bargaining with fate.

III. CONCLUSION

Buchi Emecheta does an effective task of presenting African womanhood from a women perspective. The novel's heroine is Ogbanje Ojebeta. She is now the victim of her brother's characteristics. However, despite the laborious work and sometimes cruel treatment, her time as a slave was a time of significant personal growth. She feels lucky to have been purchased by Ma Palagada's. She is appreciative to Ma for providing her with adequate food and allowing her to attend Sunday school. This leads to Ojebeta being transferred from one form of slavery to another. She is able to recognize Victoria's evil scheme to keep her as a slave for forever. Being a permanent servant is not what she wants. She just wants to be free. When Ojebeta returned to Ibuza, she was greeted cheerfully and affectionately by its residents. Even after she breaks the bonds of slavery, Ogbanje realizes that she is not yet free. She truly was a slave to the norms and traditions. As her husband, Jacob, happily pays Clifford for the price at which she was originally sold by her brother, Ojebeta cheerfully accepts the truth of the traditional stories. Ojebeta shifts from one type of slavery to another as a result. When she freely choose her master, Ojebeta bargains with her fate, which is the

ultimate satire of the story. Ojebeta transitions from one type of slavery to another as she alternates between the roles of daughter, sister, and housemaid, or rather niece, lover, and wife, all of which insist on her being subordinate to males.

VI. REFERENCES

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