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# **A Comparative Study of Patriarchal Subjugation in Eliot's and Edrisis's novels**

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## **Abstract**

This paper is going to through light on the representation of women's subjugation in patriarchal societies (East and West) through an analysis of the women characters in Eliot's (1871) *Middlemarch* and Alizadeh's (2008) "The House of The Edrisis".As a method, two novels from two different societies and through finding the elements of subjugation in patriarchal societies are chosen as a comparative case study analysis. The study mostly focuses on the analysis of the female subordination with educational, vocational and social extensions and their expectations of marriage in the time of the novels that is mostly Pre-Victorian era.

**Keywords:** Patriarchy, Subjugation, Male, *Middlemarch*, Edrisis.

# Un estudio comparativo de la subyugación patriarcal en las novelas de Eliot y Edrisis

## Resumen

Este artículo aborda la representación de la subyugación de las mujeres en las sociedades patriarcales (Este y Oeste) a través de un análisis de los personajes femeninos en Eliot (1871) *Middlemarch* y Alizadeh (2008) "The House of The Edrisis". Como método, dos novelas de dos sociedades diferentes y mediante la búsqueda de los elementos de subyugación en las sociedades patriarcales se eligen como un análisis comparativo de un estudio de caso. El estudio se centra principalmente en el análisis de la subordinación femenina con extensiones educativas, vocacionales y sociales y sus expectativas de matrimonio en la época de las novelas, que es principalmente de la era previctoria.

**Palabras clave:** Patriarcado, Subyugación, Masculino, *Middlemarch*, Edrisis.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

What do we mean by Patriarchy? Needless to say that "Patriarchy" (derived from the patriarch in Greek) is a term for societies in which male is the powerful, dominion and privilege favored gender. Male power in a patriarchy can be found at family, community, social facts and even universal issues. And also the dictionary meaning of subjugation is a state of being under control of men in a society. When and where a culture keeps women inferior to

men and does not let them advance, it can be the sign of the subjugation. Governmental and social laws that control the woman's reproductive system by male relatives or policymakers subjugate women by removing autonomy over their own bodies. It is said that Patriarchies are common facts in all over the world may it be north or south or west and east throughout history, and we mostly have heard them but now the question is this how much do we really know about them?

Have we ever wondered why it is a rite and tradition in many cultures for a wife to take her husband's last name rather than the other possible ways available around? Where did this come from? Within human societies, there is a tendency to divide power between the various ones. Someone is more powerful, while the other one is less powerful. This hierarchy of power indicates itself in countless visible and subconscious ways, like defining whose family name is carried on. Hence, a society that gives more social, political and economic power to men is called a patriarchy. Patriarchies come in various sizes and shapes, from those that are completely patriarchal to those that are minimally patriarchal, but it is so obvious that all have institutions that naturally privilege males over females. Patriarchy is a system of power that divides society along ideas about gender, so before one can go any further, one needs to define it. When it is talked about a person's sex, it is referring to their biology. Biologically, humans are divided into the sexes of man and woman. But Gender is different. Gender refers to the cultural rules assigned to each sex. There is nothing biological or universal about gender, and in fact, various societies have ranged in

believing that there are over a dozen genders to cultures that recognize one or even zero genders. So, when talking about delineations of power, we're talking about gender and the way that gender is understood. To better understanding of the fact, it would be worthwhile to have a closer look to the important characteristics of the Patriarchy. The very much clear and obvious aspect of a patriarchal society is the fact that the institutions of that society give much importance to men. It means that the social interactions between people are constructed in a way that constantly and ubiquitously upholds male sex superiority. From values, rituals, and traditions to laws and formal institutions like governments, power within a society is focused on uplifting men under a patriarchy.

## **2. METHOD AND THEORY**

Many societies, historically, for example established legal systems where women could not vote or own property and even educational systems did not allow the women to have higher education, but surprisingly just their husbands, fathers, or brothers had the right to do these things. Cultural examples of this fact can be many legends from cultures around the world focus exclusively on men as heroes and protagonists from Gilgamesh in Mesopotamia to Beowulf in Europe to China's mythological Five Emperors.

Patriarchy, as with all systems of power, cannot exist simply on the elevation of one group and it is equally defined by the subjugation

of others. In a patriarchal society, this most directly means women. Women in a patriarchal society are told from birth that they are inferior or controllable through infinite social and cultural issues and cues. Rodrigues (2017) in an article entitled "The Origins of Women's Subjugation: A Tentative Reconstruction" states that women in most settled societies of the world and virtually all class societies have experienced low status, exploitation, oppression, and loss of self-determination. For example, most settled and class societies transmit names and property through the male line. Given the importance of paternity in patrilineal societies, it is scarcely surprising that many settled and class societies insist on female premarital chastity. The inherent uncertainty of paternity has often produced bizarre and barbarous attempts to secure the fidelity of married women as well (csulb.edu). Here better to lead attention to the institution of marriage, which oppresses women as a patriarchal custom. Marriage, within the patriarchal culture, is postured as the final fate for women. The pursuit of education and having a career are encouraged as long as it does not impede with the prospect of marriage. Panchadhyayi (2013) in an article entitled "Marriage Is a Patriarchal Institution Designed for the Subjugation of Women!" states that in fact, if a woman does not marry within a specific age frame, concerned relatives and gossip mongering neighbors feel that it is their onus to remind the parents of the woman that they should get their daughter married! While critics may argue that women can exercise their autonomy and decide to adhere to singlehood but there is a stigma attached with single women. There is a propensity to delve into her personal traits and come to the conclusion that she must have shortcomings which has hindered her marriage. A

single woman is looked upon as a social anomaly as she is a challenge to the institution of marriage (youthkiawaaz.com).

Again, in the same article Panchadhyayi says:

Marriage is projected as a destination for women and everything else in her life is like the halt station. It is romanticized and fantasized to the extent that a woman starts believing that her life will not come to a fuller circle without marriage. It is a much internalized concept that a woman is someone else's property and the giving away of the bride by the father screams out loud that women are property transferred from one household to another. The marital symbols that a woman needs to don during the marriage rituals is a manifestation that now she is someone else's property. It is still expected that it is women who will acclimatize to a new family and becomes an examinee to the constant test she is put to. Within the urban space, many married couples live separately away from the husband's parents. However, that does not mean that a woman is discounted from misery. If she is a housewife, she has the responsibilities of accomplishing the household chores and devoting herself to the thankless job that does not find any recognition. It is taken for granted that a woman is 'naturally gifted' for the domestic sphere and hence she will take care of the home while her husband works outside! Even if there is a domestic worker and a cook, the onus rests with the women to supervise them. And if the woman has a job, 'double-day work' becomes her fate. A woman who chooses to escape from the glare of the trope of her wifely duties is implicitly or explicitly reminded by one and all that she is a failure, thus injecting guilt in her; a slow poison to bring her back to the track of her womanhood (2013: 19).

Therefore, this paper is going to through light on the representation of women subjugation in patriarchal societies (East and West) through an analysis of the women characters in Eliot's (1871)

“Middlemarch” and Alizadeh’s (2008) “The House of The Edrisis”, two novels from two different societies and through finding the elements of subjugation in patriarchal societies, the study would like to show the universality of the issue. And the study mostly focuses on the analysis of the female subordination with educational, vocational and social extensions and their expectations of marriage in the time of the novels that is mostly Pre-Victorian era. Eliot’s (1871) *Middlemarch* is precious to be studied from a feminist perspective to show the female characters role and position in the society. One further effect of having set her novel back in time is that the female characters who George Eliot (1871) depicts are even more restricted socially and economically than the women of her own age, so the frustration of vocational ambition which, in the prelude to the novel, is described ‘as the social lot of woman’, is brought into sharper focus. Referring to this point shows that Eliot (1871) in her novel wants to look back at the pre-Victorian times to show women’s condition in 19th century society. Though there are a lot of women characters in the novel, in this study, the researcher would like to focus on notable and famous women of the novel. In some pages of *Middlemarch*, the name of Saint Theresa is heard. Saint Theresa was an honest person who did not like aristocratic life and wanted to help others especially poor people. Eliot (1871) uses Theresa’s name to introduce Dorothea Brooke, who plays a fundamental role in *Middlemarch*. Needless to mention that Dorothea’s kindness and charity is resembled to Saint Theresa. She was grown up by her bachelor uncle Mr. Brooke; she has a sister, Celia, who is younger than her. Dorothea is very spiritual, and is always thinking about the state of her soul. She is educated but her education was not

systematic. Dorothea Had been educated on plans at once narrow and promiscuous, first in an English family afterward in a Swiss family at Lausanne (Eliot, 1871).Dorothea's education is not enough because education system is not programmed as well as possible for female ones in those days, but she eagerly would like to improve her knowledge and has nonstop thirsty for knowledge and being knowledgeable as it is mentioned in the novel: Her mind was theoretic, and yearned by its nature after some lofty conception of the world which might frankly include the parish of Tipton and her own rule of conduct there, she was enamored of intensity and greatness, and rash in embracing whatever seemed to her to have those aspect, likely to seek martyrdom, to make retractions, and then to incur martyrdom after all, in a quarter where she had not sought it.Dorothea has a kind heart and likes to help people, she has a lot of plans for helping others but by the lack of proper education, she is uncertain about her abilities. Her female education hinted her access to anything that she likes to do. "Women were expected to have weak opinions; but the great safeguard of society and of domestic life was, that opinions were not acted on". This point is about all the women of the society and this statement may be show the intolerance of men to see strong and educated women on that time. Eliot explains that:

Although she enjoys some kind of authority in her Uncle Mr. Brooke's estate, she wants to be more active and free to act. She has established an infant school in the village, she works on cottage plans for the local poor; deprived people of Tipton still, she looks forward to the day when she will be of age to command her own money and implement her own schemes (1871:54).

These features indicate that Dorothea is full of energy for doing good deeds, but because of inadequate education and experience, she cannot do much as she wishes. Also, it is hard for Dorothea to make independent decisions. As a woman, Dorothea is not allowed the direct access to the world possible for men. Despite this fact, what she wants most in life is to do some great good for the world, and although there is no adequate vehicle for this desire. It remains in Eliot's (1871) eyes unequivocally vocational. The impossibility of its satisfaction does not change its nature. In fact, Dorothea's womanhood, instead of being an anomaly, is simply the most extreme example of the variety of constraints and contingencies that frustrate the urge to alter the world. The intensity of her desire and the impossibility of her situation make Dorothea a kind of symbolic origin in relation to which the members of the crowded cast of Middlemarch locate themselves. Mintz (1978) as an idealist and sincerely religious woman, Dorothea, wants to make the world a better place, initially by planning houses for the poor in the district, and later by serving a great man by means of marriage. Her marriage to Casaubon is a disaster, but she is able to improve housing conditions for the poor and assist Lydgate financially in his medical work. Her early Evangelical religion ultimately fades into a vague mysticism; it is no accident that she is compared by the author, in both the Prologue and the Finale, to Saint Theresa of Avila. She ultimately marries Ladislaw after Casaubon's death despite the fact that it costs her the inheritance she had received from her first husband. Dorothea is a girl who is idealistic, but she cannot turn her dreams to real and it makes her feeling uncomfortable and incomplete. She can arrive to comfort just when she can be effective in some ways, and it means that

by seeking of adequate knowledge, she wants to help others and reveals her real abilities. Dorothea sees knowledge as offering the only way out of the labyrinth. But the radical implications of this vision are tempered since both Dorothea and her creator see this knowledge in terms of a union which would give her the freedom of voluntary submission to a guide who would take her along the grandest path. This union is not a transcendent linking of the mind with abstract principles systematically combining wisdom and morality, but is instead mediated by physical reality and institutionalized (Edwards, 2003).

Even it is clear from the novel that the marriage of Dorothea is not for receiving comfort and luxury. She wants a man for fulfillment of the occupational and educational limits in her life. It is very much surprising that Dorothea cannot make a difference between love and admiration for learning. So, these reasons make her believe her love to Edward Casaubon who is a fifth- year old clergyman. Dorothea's wrong decision of marrying to Casaubon is clear and it is culturally unacceptable matter by the society. Her most notable misreading of the intellectual potential of Edward Casaubon, leads her to devote her life to a man who proves himself from the beginning unworthy of her devotion. The unalterable fact that the great majority of women had to define their identities through their husbands, fathers, or brothers but that Dorothea chooses to subordinate herself to a man who clearly is her inferior, but views himself as her superior: in other words, to the wrong kind of man the unalterable fact that the great majority of women had to define their identities through their husbands, fathers,

and brothers, but that Dorothea chooses to subordinate herself to a man who clearly is her inferior but himself as her superior: in other words, to the wrong kind of man Moscovici (1995). The above statement makes it clear that Dorothea and Casaubon are different in the way of thinking about each other and it can be reason of Dorothea's mistake in her choice about Casaubon. Rosamond Vincy is another woman of the Victorian age in Middlemarch. She is the daughter of a manufacturer in Middlemarch and is a respectful lady in the town. Rosamond Vincy is blonde, beautiful, and perfectly groomed. Although intelligent, she is shallow and only thinks of herself. She acts as her own character and so when her husband is in trouble, he can never make genuine contact with her. She is not evil, but she is not good also. Rosamond's school is an epitome of what 19th century society seeks in its woman. She was admitted to be the flower of Mrs. Lemon's school, the chief school in the country, where the teaching included all that was demanded in the accomplished female- even to extras, such as the getting in and out of a carriage. Mrs. Lemon herself had always held up Miss Vincy as an example: no pupil, she said, exceeded that young lady for mental acquisition and propriety of speech, while her musical execution was exceptional. The lack of adequate education is seen in Rosamond too. It is not a systematic education for professional works. But, unfortunately, it is the only education that exists for women. She is beautiful and graceful by the townspeople because of her polite and elegant manner. Rosamond Vincy is content with life within the specific domain given to women in the society. She is the best type of women who, in the male-dominant society, sees leisure and comfort for women as a sign of status and wealth. Like most of the Victorian

women, she likes to find a well-off husband and live a luxurious life. Vincy likes to leave the provincial people and their ordinary, because she thought they are boring and they do not have any new thing for speaking or doing. Rosamond is a girl who accepts her role as a girl in the society and acts in accordance with those present rules and expectations. She likes newcomer Dr. Lydgate. She feels the love of Lydgate in herself because he is an outsider and has a good social status. Thus, a prospect of marrying a stranger with good connections is a sort of an escape for her from being always in touch with Middlemarch people. One more female character to discuss in Middlemarch is Mary Garth. Belonging to a lower-income family, Mary Garth is a girl of modest expectation from life. She educated at home by her mother who was a teacher. She is the oldest of several children of Garth. Mary Garth is intelligent, principled and independent like her parents, but more sharp-tongued. She gives all her earning to her family. She is not pretty. Mary is well aware of her limitations. "She neither tried to create illusions, nor indulged in them for her own behoof, and when she was in a good mood, she had humor enough in her to laugh at herself".

Her opportunities due to her strong reason to believe that things were not likely to be arranged for her peculiar satisfaction. In other words, she could see the difference between imagination and reality. Mary is not described as the Victorian idea of a beauty. It is frequently repeated in the novel that she does not have the proper feminine qualities; both in physical and personal aspects. "She is short, brown and she has curly dark hair, which is rough and stubborn". It is an

ironic touch made by the narrator, questioning the aspects of that fixed ideal woman image in the minds of the people and leading readers to think how that image should be. Her description is given as a striking contrast to that of Rosamond. She even calls herself “a brown patch by the side of Rosy”. She works as a nurse for an old man, Mr. Featherstone who is a wealthy landlord. After death of Mr. Featherstone, Mary looks for another job because she must help her family and eventually she could find a work as a teacher. Mary must choose teaching because there is nothing else to be done for a middle-class woman than being a teacher. In Mary's view, life is wretched for the fact she is forced to work as Philip Larkin sees himself, who was forced to a toad like a job. In marriage, Mary is honest with everyone about her wishes: she does not deny her love for Fred Vincy as a good human being, yet she is realistic enough not to create a world of make-believe about him. She perceives both the positive and negative qualities of the object of her love. Her marriage is not a failure because of her realistic views toward the people and life. While those characteristics saturated among Victorian women in the west, on the other part of the world, east, the same characteristics were among the Iranian women of the time. In *The House of The Edrisis* by Alizadeh (2008) women are supposed to have the same problems of the Victorian era. Alizadeh (2008) has a special attention to the status of women in the society. Women in *The House of The Edrisis* are the best examples of women patriarchy in those years. There are women from any social class in the novel; strong women who are trying to escape from their weakness in front of Patriarchal society and naivety women who submitted themselves to the male-dominated society. Women

were ruled by patriarchal society, whether from aristocratic families or lower-class families. Alizadeh (2008) in her novel shows disability of women in making decisions about their lives and their destiny. One of the women in the story who empowered by men and patriarchy is Rahila. Rahila, as a famous character of the novel, is not alive during the novel just because of her manner, she is alive in memory of the family and all over the novel we hear of Rahila and her works. Rahila was a girl of aristocratic family who was forced to marry to a man of her class. So, her marriage was like a trade for the family. She was beautiful and had good manners. Her speech and manners were factors that made Rahila perfect in others' views. She accepted her position in the society and was aware that she had no choice other than marriage and she was silent for her father's decision. She did not want to fight with her destiny and marriage with no love made her ill and at last she died. In the first pages of the novel Alizadeh (2008) explains Rahila and her husband. Rahila had an aunt who died in young ages because of a mysterious fever. After her death Mrs. Edrisi became old in one night. Daughter engaged by a red face, ox-eyed, and robust man; his name was Movayed. People rumored that he has a castle and stables full of horses. When Movayed comes to the house, Rahila sits on the bed without any move, looks by proud without any sensation and grins by humiliation. Rahila was self-contained, lightness, unwilling, and unhappy girl Alizadeh (2008). Roxana is another character in the novel and writer shows Roxana as same as Rahila. It is clear that in the novel Rahila and Roxana are like each other, both in appearance and manner. But Roxana does not accept father's patriarchy and leaves the home for finding new experiences. Roxana is seen as the social part of Rahila

and does not like to be in silence and not to accept cruelty and injustice. Roxana is like a person who wants to fulfill the wishes of Rahila. After leaving the house, she becomes an artist then when she feels that she cannot live alone in a patriarchal society, decides to marry to a well-known poet; and then she can achieve her goals by the presence of him. But, unfortunately, the lack of love is the result of the failure of their marriage also. Roxana is a social person; she has political and social goals and tries to achieve them. Roxana was unhappy about her decision and lamented why she had left the house and why the father was so dictator that made her to leave the house.

Roxana said:

I have a lot of mistakes. I went about finding my dreams, city to city. I was like a puppet in theater. Was it for art? No, I don't think, I did these works because I want people to love me. I could not identify myself on the mirror, because I drown in my rolls. There was not any safe place for me, all the people were fibster. She married to Marneko who was a well-known poet, but he was unhappy about this too (2008: 14).

Roxana said:

I was like a doll for Marneko. I know that I am more intelligent than him, but I faded under his patriarchy. He thought that nobody could compete with him. One day I decided to leave him, Marneko never thought anybody could leave him because he was a famous poet (2008:18).

Another woman in the novel is Legha. Legha is the oldest daughter of Edrisis' family. She is not beautiful and her ugliness was

the reason of beginning her problems. She knows in the patriarchal society beauty is very important. All the time she was upset because of her lacks and she was alone. "All the time Legha was alone, nobody loves her just a rural nurse had love to Legha when she was child." Legha sees loneliness as a punishment for herself. "Legha likes the life by hate". But she was a skilful pianist and by playing piano she was happy. Legha played piano at morning and night. She played music from Italy and Romances of Mendelssohn. She was a skilled pianist. Her rhythms were soulful and lively. Nobody thought Legha is a pianist. She revived lost wishes and vagary of adolescence by playing the piano. When she closed the door of piano, she became young for a while and smiled. But it was only for a moment, then she was the angry and impatient Legha. She lacks the opportunities that other girls had and all the time she thought nobody loves her. Legha remembered her music teacher who said to her: you have sweet face. Most of the time, she repeats the teacher's sentence, then stands in front of mirror, looks at her face from teacher's vision and says to herself it is a face which is respectful for men. Legha thought nobody loves her even her mother. She was upset about this and thought why she is alive, she must die as her life is aimless. In The House of The Edrisis when Braves tried to clean house, Legha climbed the ladder for dusting, but her mother and her nephew were worry about Legha and said to her to stop, but Legha said: "Come on Vahab, you always looked at me by humiliation. I know you always said to yourself why Rahila died, why Legha is alive. Mother was like you too. I knew all the things. But I was silent. Just my nurse loved me, after her, Yavar loved me. I sat near the window in afternoons and said to myself why I am alive. Farzi

(2011) in an article entitled “Psychoanalysis of Important Characters of The House of The Edrisis” states that Legha’s soul enjoys of music to decrease anxieties which were the result of inattentions. She played melodies that attract all people even Braves. In fact, by music, Legha tries to stand against inattentions and humiliations. She never married, and at last by the help of strangers, especially Shokat could find her confidence and understood that beauty could not be a hindrance for her life, and then she changed her mind and tried to help others. But what she can do? Teaching piano was the only work which she was able to do, because in patriarchal family and society, she had not enough time for learning other professions. So, Legha began to teach piano in an institute in the city. Legha comes down the stairs and gives the bucket: thank you Brave Shokat! By the help of you I could find myself.” One more fundamental character in the novel is Shokat. Her family was poor and she had to work. Alizadeh (2008) shows a woman who is full of energy and willing to future. Shokat is seeking for her identity in men dominated society. She does not like to empower by men, so, she tries being like men. She wants to hide her weakness in a society which men surrounded it. She shows herself as a rough and apathetic person who wants to fight with men and likes men to follow her. She was angry and even when a person, especially man wanted her to help them, Shokat tried to answer them mockingly as she answers Vahab: “Vahab said to Shokat, please help to my aunt. But Shokat shouted: don’t touch me silly man. You make dirty my clothes. I hate butterfingered people, especially when they want to flatter. I am Brave Shokat, I am not an ordinary wife. She is a self-defined person and

tries to show herself powerful and knowledgeable. She tries to achieve her goals and never wants to be the loser of the battlefield.

Bringing together the similarities of the women in two different societies would be very helpful to know about the sameness of the patriarchal features in the world. In the society of novels, women are supposed to be content with what they have been born to, and live and make decisions according to certain prescribed gender rules. Novels' women are dominated by men and deprived from social and vocational areas. Some of these women accepted their condition and tried to adjust with what society and family wanted for them, but on the other side, there were women in the novels who could not tolerate the situations and challenged to escape from it. Roxana and Rosamond had some similarities with each other and as Roxana was as like as Rahila, it can be said that Rahila was like Rosamond too. All of these women were beautiful and beauty was an important factor in the novels' society. Rosamond like Rahila was proud of herself, but both of them accepted their destiny and know their limitations in the life. But Roxana unlike Rosamond never became silent for father's patriarchy and left the home. Rosamond and Roxana knew that in patriarchal societies, they could not live alone, so, they chose men who could fulfill their desires in the life. At first attitudes they thought their marriage was full of love, but then they understood they had made big mistakes. Shokat and Mary were from lower class families both. They were forced to work because their families need to them financially. Mary was educated, but Shokat was an illiterate person. The fundamental difference between them relates to their attitudes toward

themselves. Mary accepted the condition about women's job and activity in the society and never wanted to protest or change it, but Shokat hated the condition and tried to fight against the patriarchal situation. Shokat tried to make equal and fair advantages for women as there were for men especially about job and education. Dorothea had similarities with Legha who could find her abilities. Both of the women liked to help others and wanted to do a work, but what they could do in a patriarchal society? Patriarchy and the lack of proper education system for women were barriers for them and they did not know how to help others. Legha knew that she could not do a lot and for this reason when an army told her to teach piano to children, she was happy because she liked to play piano and teaching was the best job for women at that time. But Dorothea wanted to do more than enough and make new cottages for her uncle's tenant; as she never was able to do it alone and this fact was the reason of Dorothea's unhappy moods. Dorothea like Shokat and Roxana could not tolerate women's patriarchy and liked to have equal merits as men have. She was upset as she knew that to do a big job there must be a man. Legha like Mary and Rosamond knew her limitation and never wanted to change it, on the contrary tried to adjust herself with the conditions and traditions of the time. Dorothea like Roxana had a mistake in marriage. She chose a person that thought loves him, but she made a mistake between love and fulfillment of her desires. She needed a person to improve her education because her education was not suitable for a patriarchal society and she could lose her opportunity to have a suitable job due to her educational shortcomings. It means, she needed a teacher rather

than a husband and that is why, Dorothea like Roxana, had an unhappy and unsuccessful marriage.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

To sum up, it can be said that women role to make the world by revealing their own abilities and capabilities in the society. When the women saw their limitation, they attempted to change their condition and make a new relation by men-dominated society. So, the first factor which makes women inferior to men is an education system. In *Middlemarch* and *The House of The Edrisis* women lack that kind of education given to men, respect to their social cast and their wants of life. All these women are victims of Patriarchal society. Society never let them to grow up their minds and was against women's intellectual and spiritual promotion. Women saw marriage as a means to fulfill their aspirations such as ensuring an economically comfortable life, maintaining their social status, or improve their educations. So, for a better life, they imagined, marriage was a potential way. However, after getting married, life did not become better for the women and they found it useless. Some of them preferred not to know they were living in subjugation and tried to adjust themselves with conditions, but some of the women tried to change the condition and show that women can change the society and family's destiny. Eliot's (1871) male characters make use of their background education, which in the high Victorian age meant that they were accustomed to be thought that they are superior in physical strength and intellect, in order to observe the others. They employed it to build corresponding images for their

female partners and analyze the result through their own filter. A female characters' search of knowledge does not involve only the issue of education, but also their need and capability to know more than how to sew, draw, paint or play the piano. As regards education, Eliot (1871) considered it paramount in the life of a woman living in the high Victorian age, even more important than the right to vote. Eliot (1871) female characters tend to perceive knowledge from an exterior perspective, unlike other Victorian female protagonists. Her male characters are concerned with knowledge; however, they are not interested in knowing the other even though they do not seem to have identity issues. In *The House of The Edrisis* women married in young ages before the time that they could earn experiences or become educated. Their marriage shows an image of women by low literacy and inexperienced in front of literate and experienced men and most of the times, this makes women without confidence. At last it can be said that both novelists write about the issues related to women and women's economic, social, and vocational anxieties and impossibilities. In novels, the authors present women from all social classes, for example, Dorothea, Legha and Rahila from upper or aristocratic families, Rosamond and Roxana are middle-class girls, and Shokat and Mary belongs to the working class. In both novels, there were submissive characters as well as realistic ones who tried to be happy with what they had. Some women had internalized the male view and act in accordance by manipulating those rules to adjust them like Rosamond and Roxana. Another group of women rejected the limitations imposed upon them and tried to improve the condition and enter the man's society like Shokat. Some women knew that they have

to tolerate the boundaries like Rahila and Mary. Some of them were inattentive to the society because they thought they are not of them like Legha. Social class was important for women too. As it was clear in the novels, there were the depictions of female characters from different social classes and their aspiration to move up the social ladders through marriage. Women desired to have their share in this new system of thoughts as it focused on individual natural rights independent of artificial religious, political and social impositions.

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