

---

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/jodem.v16i1.85680>

## **Ecofeminism in Patricia McCormick's *Sold*: Parallels between the Exploitation of Women and Nature\***

**<sup>1</sup>Hukum Thapa, PhD**

<sup>1</sup>Tribhuvan University, Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus, Kathmandu.  
email: [hukumthapa1@gmail.com](mailto:hukumthapa1@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*This research paper examines the exploitation of women and nature through the lens of ecofeminism in Patricia McCormick's *Sold*. It analyzes the conditions of the girl protagonist Lakshmi's village home and the roles of males, particularly her stepfather. The study further investigates her forced sale to an Indian brothel, focusing on the roles of its owner and clients. It seeks to answer how patriarchal and capitalist economic structures perceive women and nature, how both are regarded as inherently pure until exploited, and how Lakshmi and nature demonstrate resilience. To address these questions, this paper draws on the ideas of ecofeminist theorists such as Vandana Shiva, Carolyn Merchant, Val Plumwood, Greta Gaard, and Maria Mies. The study concludes that *Sold* illustrates the parallels between the exploitation of women and nature, showing that patriarchal and capitalist systems treat them as subjects to be colonized, while also highlighting their resistance and resilience. Finally, this research opens avenues for further investigation into girl trafficking and broader patterns of exploitation.*

**Keywords:** ecofeminism, exploitation of women and nature, patriarchal-capitalist economic structures, resilience

---

\* Article Received: 2025/03/03

Article Revised: 2025/07/05

Article Accepted: 2025/08/06

Published: 2025/11/07

---

*Department of English, Mahendra Multiple Campus, Dharan, Tribhuvan University, Nepal*

---

## Introduction

Historically, patriarchal and capitalist structures have viewed nature and women as resources to be manipulated, exploited, and devoured. Ecofeminism, a theoretical framework that explores the interconnected oppression of women and the environment, argues that the degradation of nature and the subjugation of women stem from the same structures of dominance. In many societies, women- especially those from marginalized backgrounds- are seen as expendable resources, much like the land and natural ecosystems that are stripped of their vitality for profit. Nowhere is this parallel more evident than in the realities of human trafficking, where women's bodies, like the earth, are brought, sold, and violated for economic gain.

Patricia McCormick's novel *Sold* (2006) vividly illustrates the ecofeminist connection through the harrowing journey of Lakshmi, a young girl from Nepal who is trafficked into sexual slavery. Throughout the novel, nature serves as both a source of comfort and a reflection of Lakshmi's suffering. Her homeland, rich with natural beauty, symbolizes innocence, freedom, and belonging, while the oppressive, polluted environment of the brothel mirrors her physical and emotional entrapment. The novel's recurring imagery of barren lands, environmental destruction, and cycles of decay underscores how the exploitation of women is deeply linked to the degradation of the natural world.

This study examines how McCormick criticizes the systemic oppression of women and nature in *Sold* from an ecofeminist lens. It examines how Lakshmi's forced commodification parallels the destruction of the environment and how resilience –both of women and the natural world- becomes a form of defiance against patriarchal control. Through this analysis, *Sold* emerges not only as a powerful narrative on human trafficking but also as an ecofeminist critique of the structures that enable the exploitation of both women and nature.

## Theoretical Frameworks

In order to investigate diverse frameworks of ecofeminism, this study uses a text-based analytical and interpretative method based on a qualitative research design. Ecofeminist Scholar Vandana Shiva (1988) argues that the patriarchal structures exploit nature and women in a parallel way. According to Shiva, patriarchal structures treat both as resources to be controlled and consumed. Vandana Shiva's *Staying Alive*:

*Women, Ecology, and Survival in India* (1988) would be useful for analyzing ecofeminism in *Sold* by McCormick, especially regarding the exploitation of women and nature. This book unfolds the perspectives of the intersection of women and environmental exploitation. Shiva argues that the oppression of women and the destruction of nature are interconnected, much like how *Sold* depicts Lakshmi's exploitation paralleling the degradation of her homeland. This book further unlocks the concept of colonial and capitalist exploitation. Shiva critiques how global economic structures harm both women and nature, which can be linked to how Lakshmi's suffering stems from poverty and systemic oppression. This book also unearths the viewpoint regarding women as agents of resistance. Shiva highlights how women resist oppression, similar to Lakshmi's resilience in the novel.

Shiva argues that development is a new project of Western patriarchy. She clarifies, "Development could not but entail destruction for women, nature and subjugated cultures, which is why, throughout the Third World, women, peasants and tribals are struggling for liberation from 'development' just as they earlier struggled for liberation from colonization" (2). She further validates, "Maldevelopment is the violation of the integrity of organic, interconnected and interdependent systems that sets in motion a process of exploitation, inequality, injustice and violence" (5). She means that maldevelopment occurs when the integrity of natural, interdependent, and interrelated systems is violated, which initiates a cycle of violence, injustice, inequality, and exploitation.

Extending her perspectives, Shiva projects the relationship between colonization and the evolution of masculinist forestry. She claims, "Women and nature are first displaced in water conservation as participants in the water cycle and are then displaced in its process of purification and treatment" (204). She simplifies that in the process of purifying and treating water, women and nature are first dislocated as participants in the water cycle.

Co-authoring with Maria Mies, Shiva published the book *Ecofeminism* in 1993. They present the critiques of patriarchal capitalism by showcasing how it exploits both nature and women. Mies and Shiva argue that capitalism relies on the unpaid or underpaid labor of women in *Ecofeminism*. They highlight how the global economic system treats both women and nature as passive resources to be extracted and

commodified. They claim, “Now, after the material resources of the colonies have been looted, their spiritual and cultural resources are being transformed into commodities for the world market” (141). They draw attention to the way the world economy views women and the environment as disposable resources that can be taken advantage of and turned into commodities. They assert that their spiritual and cultural resources are currently being turned into commodities for the global market, after the looting of the colonies' material resources.

They further project interconnected oppression. They explicate, “We aim to go beyond these narrow perspectives to express our diversity and, in different ways, address the inherent inequalities in world structures which permit the North to dominate the South, men to dominate the women, and the frenetic plunder of ever more unequally distributed economic gain to dominate nature” (14). Their goal is to transcend these limited viewpoints in order to demonstrate the diversity and, in various ways, confront the underlying injustices in global structures that allow the North to rule the South, men to rule women, and the frantic exploitation of increasingly unequally distributed financial gain to rule the natural world.

Exploring the interconnectedness of the oppression of women, animals and the environment in her seminal anthology *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature* (1993), Greta Gaard claims, “Eco feminists have described several connections between the oppressions of women and of nature that are significant to understanding why the environment is a feminist issue, and, conversely, why feminist issues can be addressed in terms of environmental concerns” (4). According to Gaard, ecofeminists have outlined several links between the oppressions of nature and women that are important to comprehending why environmental issues are feminist issues and, on the other hand, why environmental issues can be used to address feminist issues. She further contends, “Ecofeminism’s basic premise is that the ideology which authorizes oppressions such as those based on race, class, gender, sexuality, physical abilities, and species is the same ideology which sanctions the oppression of nature” (5). The fundamental tenet of ecofeminism is that the same ideology that condones the oppression of nature also condones the oppression of people based on physical attributes, sexual orientation, gender, race, class, and species.

Susan Griffin, in her work *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her*, argues that the connection between women and the natural world is not only one of shared

suffering but also of shared strength. Both can heal and restore balance, even after extreme exploitation. Griffin explicates, “What we have named nature is only a method of speaking of ourselves outside ourselves” (189). She challenges the idea that nature is something separate from human existence, suggesting that the way we describe and perceive nature is actually a projection of our own inner selves.

Employing the above theorists highlights that the trafficking of young girls in *Sold* is not merely a social issue but is deeply intertwined with economic systems that also exploit the environment. Just as land and nature are devalued for economic gain, so too are young girls like Lakshmi turned into commodities. Ecofeminist theory helps uncover these deep-rooted structural connections and critiques the systems of both environmental destruction and gender based violence.

### **Literature Reviews**

Since its release, *Sold* has been the subject of numerous critical analyses. “A Critical Analysis of Interdiscursivity in McCormick's *Sold*” by Deepak Raj Joshi reveals a number of aspects related to girl trafficking in *Sold*. Joshi explicates, “The major discourse of girl trafficking into sex slavery is sustained and supported by the useful and plausible discourses of poverty, traditional patriarchy, submissive womanhood, etc., which shape interdiscursivity”(19). He suggests that the novel *Sold* uses interdiscursivity by reinforcing the main discourse of girl trafficking into sex slavery, which is bolstered by discourses of poverty, traditional patriarchy, submissive womanhood, etc. Joshi further contends, “Applying Paul Gee's seven building tasks of language to Patricia McCormick's novel *Sold* reveals several levels of meaning. Notwithstanding the novel's discussion of the problem of girl trafficking, it has some romanticization of indigenous society, its poverty, and patriarchal discourse conventions that are misunderstood (24). Paul Gee's seven language-building exercises, he deduces, offer background for comprehending Patricia McCormick's novel *Sold*, which explores multiple layers of meaning. Although the novel tackles the issue of girl trafficking, it frequently misrepresents and romanticizes elements of native society, like its poverty and patriarchal speech patterns.

Leaving interdiscursivity behind, Sherynn Delaneira Wongkaren and Delvi Wahyuni support the existence of female agency in McCormick's *Sold*. Wongkarea

and Wahyuni claim, “Although women lag behind men in education, society continues to regard men as superior” (81). In other words, even though women in Nepal have fewer educational opportunities than men, men continue to be regarded as more educated and knowledgeable than women. The novel *Sold* therefore, illustrates women’s precarious position with regard to educational importance. They also assert, “The female characters in *Sold* exhibit agency. According to this interpretation, women’s survival in a patriarchal culture is referred to as agency. The way society constructs gender discrimination in the novel’s setting is also noted in this analysis” (88). The female characters in *Sold* are capable of taking action. From this angle, “agency” describes how women survive and prosper in a patriarchal society. Additionally, this study examines how the novel’s setting produces and reinforces gender inequity. It also demonstrates how gender discrimination is normalized within Nepali culture, where patriarchy is deeply embedded and accepted as part of everyday life.

Consistent with Wongkarea and Wahyuni, Samira Luitel’s *The Social World of Nepalese Women* likewise analyzes the book from a feminist perspective. Luitel asserts, “Nepalese women’s social circumstances are complicated and defy easy explanation by a single paradigm. The geographical area, economic status, cultural variances, and caste distinctions serve as boundaries for the differences” (101). Geographical, economic, cultural, and caste-based factors all influence women’s status, she acknowledges. She further adds, “The sociocultural environment in Nepal is not conducive to a girl child’s whole growth. Even before her birth, she unintentionally bears the label of inferiority” (107). She suggests that a girl child’s whole development is not supported by Nepal’s sociocultural setting. Unknowingly, she is branded as inferior even before she is born.

In line with the views of Wongkarea, Wahyuni, and Luitel, Samidha Pokhrel contributes further concepts of gender discrimination that is prevalent in Nepal in *Gender Discrimination: Women’s Perspectives*. As a society dominated by men, Pokhrel acknowledges, “Nepal is not unique in its discrimination against women. In Nepal, discrimination against women is ingrained in society and is associated with traditional culture, which creates a hierarchical connection between men and women” (82). She implies that discrimination against women is not unique in Nepal, a society where men predominate. In Nepal, the traditional culture and societal foundations of

discrimination against women create a hierarchical relationship between men and women. However, Shreedhar Gorathoki examines *Sold* from a postmodern metafictional perspective. Gorathoki scrutinizes it and claims that intertextuality, self-referentiality, boundary-blurring, parody, and irony are all crucial components of “Postmodern Metafiction: A Study of McCormick’s *Sold*.” As Gorathoki explains:

This potent work, which is written in brief but moving vignettes, depicts a world that is both unthinkable and real, as well as a girl who not only lives but thrives. The narrative concludes with Lakshmi writing to a good-hearted American who assures her that he would save her from the pit of hell. Mumtaz has already been apprehended by the police in the denouement, but it is unclear what will happen to Lakshmi. (2)

Following a girl who not only lives but also succeeds, the novel depicts a world that is both real and unthinkable. It is composed of short but dramatic passages. Lakshmi is writing for a kind American toward the end of the story, who promises to save her from the abyss. It is uncertain what will happen to Lakshmi in the climax, even if Mumtaz has already been captured by the authorities.

In addition to the context mentioned above, Gorathoki advocates, “McCormick’s *Sold* serves to dispel the voluntary suspension of disbelief by reflecting the facts and fictions surrounding the invention of the fiction. This indicates that, drawing from the author’s own research on Nepali girls trafficking in Indian brothels, the work examines its own status and nature as fiction” (13). He suggests that by presenting the facts and fictions surrounding the invention of the fiction, McCormick’s *Sold* helps to demolish the willing suspension of disbelief. This means that, by referencing the author’s own research into the trafficking of Nepali girls into Indian brothels, the work explores its own status and nature as fiction.

In contrast, Salih Mahadi Al-Mamoori and Rasha T. Awad Al-Zubaidi view the book from a stylistic standpoint. They make an effort to examine *Sold*’s lexical choices, grammar and syntax, textual organization, figurative language, modality, and evaluation. According to Al-Zubaidi and Al-Mamoori, “Patricia McCormick writes *Sold* to exploit the world for paying attention to the wrong things (2).” They suggest that people frequently pay attention to the wrong things. They further contend, “*Sold*



explores many layers of meaning. The story discusses the issue of girl trafficking, but it also distorts the local society's poverty and patriarchal discourse heritage. The cost of human life and how women are treated in Nepalese communities are still being investigated" (11). They downplay the fact that *Sold* explores several levels of interpretation. In addition to discussing girl trafficking, the book somewhat misrepresents the patriarchal speech history and poverty of the native community. The price of human life and the treatment of women in Nepalese communities are still being studied.

Departing from stylistic viewpoints, Karen Coats analyzes *Sold* from the perspective of sex slave trade victims in "Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books". Coats argues, "Lakshmi's fate cannot help but move readers; she gives a powerful and heartbreakingly lyrical voice to the hope, hopelessness, and most importantly, the humanity of the victims of the sex slave trade's suffering" (182). By giving the hope, misery, and most importantly, humanity of the victims of the sex slave trade a powerful and tragically poetic voice, she hopes that readers will always be affected by Lakshmi's tragedy.

Andrea Sachs adds further background by looking at the fascinating novel *Sold* through the prism of global artifacts. Her novel examines the expanding global problem of sexual slavery. In this manuscript, Sachs divulges, "McCormick's work includes a variety of scents, some pleasant and some harsh, much like the brothel Happiness House smells of spices, cooking oil, perfume, and cigarette smoke. In her novel, she is assuming a reduced physical agony after achieving success with prostitution and self-mutilation" (7). Sachs reveals that McCormick's book contains a range of fragrances, some pleasant and others unpleasant, much like the brothel Happiness House, which smells of spices, cooking oil, perfume, and cigarette smoke. After achieving fame through prostitution and self-mutilation, she is addressing a less tangible form of suffering in her book.

In agreement with Sachs, Alexa Sandmann sheds light on the well-known issue of child trafficking that exists in nations similar to Nepal. As Sandmann posits in *Sold*, "An author's note confirms what readers fear: each year, thousands of girls are sold into prostitution, just like Lakshmi in this story. Women in Nepal and India were interviewed as part of McCormick's research for this book, and her meticulous attention to detail gives the characters a realistic feel and makes their suffering evident"



(212). She argues that an author's note validates readers' anxieties by pointing out that thousands of girls, like Lakshmi in this story, are sold into prostitution annually. McCormick's research for this book included interviews with women in Nepal and India, and her attention to detail lends the characters a sense of realism and highlights their suffering.

To the best of my knowledge, no critic or academic has examined *Sold* from an ecofeminist standpoint, linking it to the exploitation of women and the environment in a thorough manner. Therefore, the interrogations of ecofeminism remain to be discovered.

### **Parallels between the Exploitation of Women and Nature in *Sold***

Ecofeminists argue that the patriarchal system views both women and nature as resources to be exploited. Vandana Shiva argues, "The global economic system treats women's bodies and nature as mere commodities, serving the interests of capitalism and male-dominated power structures" (4). In *Sold*, Lakshmi is trafficked and sold into prostitution, where she is reduced to an object of economic transaction. She is treated as an extractable resource, much like the land in her village, which is drained of its fertility due to overuse and unsustainable farming practices. Her stepfather argues, "If I can sell her now, we can have a tin roof" (25). He considers her as an object to make his life better. He dehumanizes Lakshmi and treats her as a saleable commodity. Not only has a stepfather, Lakshmi seen herself as a financial resource for her family. She claims, "If I go to the city, I can work as a maid and send wages home. I will be able to buy back my own earrings and red sweater for Tali" (27). This reflects Lakshmi's interest in being an economical facilitator and women as commodities.

Furthermore, in *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution*, Carolyn Merchant reasons that modern economic structures devalue nature, treating it as an inert entity meant for exploitation rather than a living force that requires balance and care. Merchant underlines, "The transition from an organic worldview to a mechanistic one led to the exploitation of nature as a machine, rather than as a living organism" (168). Similarly, Lakshmi's body, once full of hope and potential, is reduced to a tool for financial gain, paralleling how the natural world is reduced to a tool for financial gain and how the natural world is stripped of its vitality

for short-term profit. The trafficker bargains over Lakshmi's price. He claims, "She is worth more than that. Look at her. She is a virgin" (50). This commodification of both the female body and the environment underscores the brutalizing consequences of patriarchal control. Similarly, as Lakshmi moves from her village to the city, she notices the environmental destruction caused by urbanization and economic greed. She reports, "The road is a ribbon of dust. The trees are stunted and rivers are choked with garbage" (98). This replicates the degradation of nature and women. It mirrors how women like her are used and discarded.

Expanding the aspects of women's status as used and discarded ones, the novel depicts that economic structures of the world reduce both women and the environment to objects of control, as Merchant argues, "Under capitalism, nature became an inert resource to be managed, manipulated and owned" (170). She means that nature became an inanimate resource that could be controlled, exploited, and owned under capitalism. In *Sold*, Lakshmi's body, like nature, is treated as a commodity. She is bought, sold and used for profit. Even her stepfather compares her to a goat. He contends, "A girl is like a goat. Good as long as she gives you milk and butter. But not worth crying over when it's time to make a stew" (8). The non-humanization of Lakshmi mirrors the gamut of capitalism and the economic structures of the society. Further, Lakshmi takes the reference of her village's deforestation and its consequences; and states, "The men take the trees from the hillside, and then the rain takes the soil" (23). It directly supports the argument that capitalism treats nature as an expendable resource, leading to environmental degradation.

Enlarging the concept of destruction of nature and loss of innocence, McCormick portrays Lakshmi's loss of innocence alongside the destruction of nature, reinforcing the ecofeminist idea that both women and nature are seen as inherently pure until they are exploited. Val Plumwood discusses how Western patriarchal thought constructs a dualism between culture and nature, associating women with nature and men with culture in *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (1993). Plumwood posits, "The construction of women and nature as the other of reason is central to the logic of colonization" (41). She argues that women and nature are 'othered' and exploited under patriarchal and capitalist systems. In *Sold*, the brothel functions as a capitalist system that treats young girls as disposable resources, much like how industries exploit nature without regard for sustainability or well-being. The men in power, whether traffickers,

pimps, or clients, benefit from this system, reinforcing gendered oppression. The novel presents the brothel as a symbol of gendered oppression. The owner of the brothel enforces her control over Lakshmi. She retorts, "You belong to me" (112). The owner of the brothel considers Lakshmi as an object. Lakshmi's body is commoditized in the brothel just as nature is objectified in under capitalist exploitation.

Incorporating Lakshmi's transition from an innocent girl dreaming of a better future to a victim of sexual slavery, she begins to be like a businesswoman. She advocates, "This is what I know: you cannot trust the men who say you are pretty. The ones who call you beautiful. The ones who call you dear" (185). Here, her innocence is completely stripped away as she learns the brutal reality of her new existence. Along with transition, the novel describes the harsh environmental conditions of her rural Nepalese village, emphasizing how nature, like Lakshmi, begins as something untainted but ultimately suffers degradation. She claims, "There is no sun in this place, only the dim electric light" (115). This quote highlights her connection to nature and freedom. It echoes how capitalist exploitation removes people from their natural environments. Her family's resilience on the land for survival reflects a broader ecofeminist argument that nature and women are both vital sources of life. Lakshmi takes the reference from Ama's perseverance for the conservation of nature. She explains, "Her Ama pats the earth around the tiny shoots and coaxes them to stand tall" (23). This quote metaphorically represents Ama's nurturing nature and her determination to make the land provide for them.

Associating the relationship between women and nature, the control of women's bodies and nature by male-dominated power structures is a key theme in *Sold*. Shiva argues, "Patriarchy is responsible for both ecological destruction and gender oppression, as it enforces a system in which men control natural resources and women's labor" (30). Because patriarchy upholds a system in which males control natural resources and women's labor, it is accountable for both gender inequality and ecological degradation. Lakshmi's life is dictated by men-her stepfather, the trafficker, and the brothel owner- who profit from her suffering. In the brothel, Lakshmi sees another girl being taken by a customer and reveals, "A man comes and takes her away. I see the fear in her eyes, and then she is gone" (201). She also reflects on how women are treated in the brothel. She questions the attitude of the city towards women. She

underlines, “In the city, a woman is merely a thing to be used” (190). Similarly, in her village, men dictate how the land is used, prioritizing economic survival over environmental sustainability. She terms, “The men laugh and take their water from the well first. The women wait” (35). It highlights the patriarchal control over the resources.

Widening ecofeminist perspectives, Ecofeminist theorists highlight that both women and nature are subject to colonization by patriarchal forces. Maria Mies argues that women’s bodies and the environment are both sites of colonialist exploitation, where control is exerted over them to serve economic and patriarchal interests. Griffin also demonstrates the intricate connection between women and nature. She admits, “She is not a lady. She is not respectable. She has no dignity. She squirms, she groans, she gives birth, she dies” (3). Lakshmi’s forced servitude in the brothel can be likened to the way land is forcefully controlled and drained of its resources. In both cases, autonomy is stripped away, reinforcing the idea that patriarchal systems see women and nature as possessions rather than autonomous entities. In *Sold*, Lakshmi narrates how men claim ownership over both natural resources and women. She reveals, “The men take the cucumbers and the pumpkins and the squash. They take the money from the tea harvest. And now they have taken Ama’s gold earrings” (37).

Excavating another angle of ecofeminism, the novel unfolds the violence inflicted on Lakshmi in *Sold* that mirrors the destruction of nature under exploitative systems. Plumwood and Merchant argue that patriarchal societies justify violence against both women and nature by categorizing them as passive, weak, and subservient to male power. This is evident in the way Lakshmi’s suffering is nominalized within the brothel system, much like environmental destruction is normalized in impoverished communities. In the brothel, Lakshmi discloses her first experience of physical violence. She discloses, “He hits me with the back of his hand. I fall to the floor” (121). Here, Lakshmi’s first client at Happiness House physically assaults her when she resists. It exhibits the brutality she faces in the brothel.

Correlating ferocity, the novelist projects Lakshmi as a subject who encounters repeated acts of physical, emotional, and sexual violence, just as the land is subjected to excessive farming, drought, and degradation. The mechanization of oppression that McCormick portrays, where women’s bodies and natural resources are systematically exploited for profit, aligns with Merchant’s argument that capitalist-patriarchal systems

see both women and nature as tools for production rather than as entities deserving respect and protection. In *Sold*, Lakshmi encounters sexual violence and Coercion. She retorts, “Then she pulls me into her room and locks the door. She pushes me onto the bed and covers my face with a pillow to silence my screams” (129). Mumtaz forcibly holds Lakshmi down, allowing her first rape to occur, one of the most harrowing moments in the novel.

Despite their suffering, both Lakshmi and nature exhibit resilience. Ecofeminism emphasizes that women and nature, though exploited, hold the power of regeneration and resistance. Shiva argues that nature is not merely a passive victim but a force of renewal, just as women resist patriarchal oppression. Lakshmi, despite her suffering, retains hope, and eventually, she finds a path to freedom. Concurring with Shiva, Plumwood claims, “To break the master’s pattern, we must reject the deep logic of domination that denies agency to both women and nature” (196). This resilience is mirrored in nature itself. Though the environment in Lakshmi’s village is damaged by overuse, it still supports life. The novel suggests that, like nature, women can recover and reclaim their agency. At the end of the novel, she reaches for freedom with the help of an American. She reveals, “My name is Lakshmi. I am from Nepal. I am fourteen years old. I am a girl who has been stolen” (263). It symbolizes her ultimate act of resilience by breaking the silence and reclaiming her identity.

### **Conclusion**

Through the prism of ecofeminism, this paper validates how patriarchal oppression stands as a catalyst for the destruction of nature and the exploitation of women in McCormick’s *Sold*. In line with the theories of Vandana Shiva, Carolyn Merchant, Val Plumwood, Greta Gaard, and Maria Mies, McCormick illustrates Lakshmi’s suffering in addition to environmental damage. They all contend that systematic forms of brutality and control are applied to both women and nature. On the other hand, *Sold* also conveys a message of perseverance: nature has the capacity for regeneration, just as Lakshmi struggles for her independence. McCormick’s work exposes these intertwined battles, which is a scathing indictment of patriarchal systems and in line with ecofeminist demands for environmental and women’s rights.

Thus, this study demonstrates the parallels between the exploitation of women and nature in the context of girl trafficking from Nepal to India. It attempts to open the eyes of policy makers and concerned authorities on how women and nature are exploited and knock on the doors of these authorities to accelerate concrete steps to minimize the inhuman activity of girl trafficking. Finally, it expects to unfold the avenues of further research about girl trafficking.

### Works Cited

- Al-Zubaidi, Rasha Tareq Awad, and Salih Mahadi Adai Al-Mamoori. "Revealing the Significance of Critical Stylistics Analysis in Patricia McCormick's *Sold*." *Research Gate*, 1 Sept. 2024, [www.researchgate.net/publication/371978145](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/371978145).
- Coats, Karen. "Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books." *Bulletin of the Center For Children's Books*, vol.69, no.4, Dec.2006, pp. 181-82. *Project Muse*, <https://doi.org/10.1353/bcc.2006.0837>.
- Gaard, Greta (Editor). *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature*. Temple University Press, 1993.
- Gallo, Don. "Bold Books for Teenagers: Summer Reading 2007." *The English Journal*, 96.5,2007, pp. 112-115.
- Gorathoki, Shreedhar. "Postmodern Metafiction: A Study of McCormick's *Sold*." M. A. Thesis. Tribhuvan Central Library, 2012, [www. Elibrary.tucl.edu.np](http://www.Elibrary.tucl.edu.np).
- Griffin, Susan. *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her*. Sierra Club Books, 2000.
- Joshi, D. R. "Interdiscursivity in McCormick's *Sold*: A Critical Discourse Analysis." *Contemporary Research: An Interdisciplinary Academic Journal*, vol. 3, No.1, 2019, pp.19-24.
- Luitel, Samira. "The Social World of Nepalese Women." *Occasional Paper*, 2000, pp. 101-13. McCormick, Patricia. *Sold*. Hyperion, 2006.
- Merchant, Carolyn. *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution*. Harper & Row, 1980.
- Mies, Maria, & Shiva, Vandana. *Ecofeminism*. Zed Books, 1993.

- Plumwood, Val. *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*. Routledge, 1993.
- Pokharel, Samidha. "Gender Discrimination: Women Perspectives." *Nepalese Journal of Development and Rural Studies*, vol.5, no.2, 2008, pp.80-87.
- Rambe, A. A. Human Trafficking and Its Impact as Portrayed in The Novel Patricia McCormick's *Sold* and Tassaró GK'S Galaksi Kinanthi: A Comparative Literature. Repisitori.usu.ac.id.2017.
- Sachs, Andrea. *Time Magazine*, 10/30/2006, vol.168, issue 18, p.71.
- Sandmann, Alexa. *School Library Journal*. Sep., 2006, Vol. 52 Issue 9, pp.211-12.
- Shiva, Vandana. *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development*. Zed Books, 1989.
- Wongkaren, Sherynn Delaneira, & Delvi Wahyuni. Female Agency in *Sold*. *E-journal of English Language and Literature*, ISSN2302-3546, Vol.10, No.1, 2022, pp. 77-90. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24036/ell.v10i1.113872>.