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**Oppression Toward The Marginal Society In Patricia McCormick's Novel  
"Sold"**

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**Abstract :**

*The major intention of this research is to analyze the causes of oppression toward the marginal society and the main character's resistance of the oppression in Patricia McCormick's novel Sold. The data was analyzed by using Spivak's subaltern theory. The objectives of the research were to find out the causes of oppression and the main character's resistance toward it. The study designed is the descriptive qualitative method. The study results showed that the oppression was caused by four factors: (1) patriarchy (2) rural poverty (3) capitalism (4) age. Meanwhile, the main character's resistance toward the oppression were (1) act of obedience (2) enduring the suffering of fear (3) feeling dying, worthless, disgusted with herself (4) expecting the freedom (5) seeking for the comfort by pretending (6) expecting the law of stopping the human trafficking (7) learning English and Hindi language secretly (8) longing for affection.*

**Keywords:** *Marginal Society, Novel Sold, Spivak's Subaltern Theory*

**Introduction**

Individual definitely is the basic component of society. The interaction of an individual to each other creates a group. Moreover, the social groups interact to others and develop their relationships that come into a society. According to Hodkinson (2017), society has a large meaning that refers to the whole social world where people, as a relatively big group of community, institutions live, exist and move. It basically involves social relations that include the detail of daily interactions, communication and the operation of broader social groupings and social differentiation, such as gender, class, ethnicity, age etc.

Marginal society is relegated to a secondary position or expressly made that they are less important than those who hold more power or privilege in society. Individuals from marginalized society can be the target of negative behaviors, beliefs or judgments from others. They are marginalized on the basis of multiple

aspects of their identity, including: gender or gender identity, race, sexual orientation, ability, sexuality, age, and socioeconomic status (200 Walnut Place, Syracuse, New York). Marginal society does not have full and equal access to the cultural, economic, political and social institutions of society. They are powerless and frequently experience different kinds of oppression, at the same time such as they are silenced, ignored, separated, seen as abnormal and looked down. They are placed at the bottom of society and regarded as morally reprehensible by the groups having the higher social life.

Oppression is definitely a violence and an injustice which results persons systematically and unfairly marginalized, or restricted by any of several forces. It involves a social group refusing that another group has the same privilege as a unique human and also abuses their power to dominate members of another group, which is justified by the same arbitrary differences that encourage unequal, cruel treatment (Johnson, 2000). Marginal people are always oppressed by cruel tyrants with both bad intention and a well-intentioned purpose. Their freedom is strictly limited.

This research aims to reveal the form of oppression happened to Laksmi, the main character in the novel *Sold*, a novel written by Patricia McCormick. As a daughter of the pauper, she has to cut off her entire dreams of a beautiful childhood. Laksmi's fate was determined by her step father which was indirectly also supported by her mother. She was sold to the pimp by her father so this man could get the amount of money to gamble. Innocent, poor, tiny Laksmi had to bear the burden to pay off her father's debt by prostitute herself. Oppression by oppression happened to this little girl while at the brothel.

It is told in the novel that the patriarchal structure of Nepalese and Indian society limits possibilities for women to pursue a good living. Oppression toward women doubtlessly breaks their basic human rights. It is conceivable that groups or individuals in the society will prefer equal relationships between men and women, which is very contrary to patriarchal ideology. Walby (1990) states that patriarchy

is determined as a system of social structures and practices in which men monopolize, oppress, exploit and have control over women. Patriarchy is the big obstacle for the sake of women's advancement and development because patriarchy refers to the male domination both in public and private spheres. Patriarchal society gives absolute priority to men and to some extent limits women's human rights. It is the root of cause of women's subordination.

Through the Spivak's subaltern approach, the writers analyzed the position of Laksmi as the Eastern woman who got the unfair treatment from the men characters in the novel. Moreover, Laksmi's resistance act was also discussed to see the complexity of causes and effects of the oppression to the soul of this main character.

### **Theory**

The researchers use the subaltern theory as the tools for analyzing the novel. Subaltern theory takes the perspective of the "Other" as the one who has had no voice because of race, class, or gender. The concept of subaltern itself refers to the marginal people who have a complex condition of disadvantage which individuals and communities experience as a result of vulnerabilities arising from unfavorable environmental, cultural, political, and economic factors (Mehretu and Sommers, 1992, 1994).

Individuals and communities with no discernible disadvantage in society may in fact experience exclusion from a dominant hegemonic civil society. Social construction of stereotypes often uses both mutable and indelible markers like culture, ethnicity, social status, gender, and age to exclude and marginalize individuals and communities (McDowell and Sibley, 1995).

This theory is based on deconstruction as Derrida has proposed it. It emphasizes that norms are established by those in power and imposed on the "Other". Subaltern theory as reflected by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak focuses on

signifiers. This branch of theory emphasizes the way in which the colonialist discourse has socially constructed the signifiers from the colonial language, giving no real voice to the oppressed and colonized. Between patriarchy and imperialism, subject-constitution and object-formation, the figure of women disappears. Their figures have been put into the “third-world-women” caught between tradition and modernization. These considerations result the judgments that are valid for a history of sexuality in the West: “Such would be the property of repression, that which distinguishes it from the prohibitions maintained by the simple penal law: repression functions well as sentence to disappear, but also as an injunction to silence, affirmation of non-existence; and consequently states that of all this there is nothing to say, to see, to know”. The subaltern cannot speak, they will never have self-confidence to express what they feel, think and desire because they will never be heard and their voices are not regarded worthy (In William and Chrisman, 2015).

## **The Causes of Oppression toward the Marginal Society**

### **1). Patriarchy**

Lakshmi as a daughter is a victim of oppression done by her stepfather. Her stepfather takes advantage of his position as the head of the family to force her mother to obey his instruction and rule for the family’s survival while he is jobless and spends much time for only his pleasure and satisfaction. It can be seen from the dialogue of her mother to Laksmi below:

*Ama wipes her cheek with the hem of her shawl. “Your stepfather has said you must go to the city and earn your keep as a maid.” This news is like a tiny earthquake, shaking the very ground beneath my feet. And yet, for Ama, I stand firm. (p. 51).*

Lakshmi has powerlessness. She actually does not agree with her stepfather's behavior who treat her and her mother in negative ways as if they are not humans but she cannot speak up her thought because of her dominant stepfather who always has control over the family. She suffers daily to see her stepfather who does not care about the family's needs and pains. Beside that Lakshmi's mother's way of educating her daughter is strongly patriarchal. Her behavior makes Lakshmi inferior and worthless to pursue her rights in the family.

Commonly in feminism perspective, Lakshmi's mother must express her feeling, will and choice for the sake of family and also her daughter because as a child Lakshmi has the same right and opportunities to get her mother's defend and protection. She needs to use her leadership as a mother to take care of Lakshmi. Moreover she must use her authority as the first woman in the family in order to control her household.

## **2). Rural Poverty**

Lakshmi's position being a poor and rural girl is very vulnerable of being oppressed and marginalized because poor people usually are the groups to avoid. Lakshmi's hometown is very far away from the big cities, even she lives on the mountain in which the rural poor are often left behind and forgotten in economically distressed small town, in isolated rural area. Rural women do not have better access to education and employment opportunities and they are regarded inferior and subordinate compared with men in all aspects of life. Lakshmi and her mother must provide basic necessities of life as the bread winner while Lakshmi's stepfather who should be the bread winner just provides violent atmosphere for his family. Lakshmi and her mother must carry out the male works that take much power and energy. From the quotation below, the readers can see the domestic job that should be done by the subordinated women characters:

*"Ama and I must each make twenty trips down the mountain to the village spring, waiting for our turn for water to bring up to the rice paddy. Tonight Ama and I scrub the cooking vessels clean with a mixture of earth and ash" (pp.28-29).*

As a child she has no voice to break her stepfather's authority and she cannot speak about her will to him. Nevertheless she does not agree with his decision and choice. She lives in a financially poor household and at the same time she also suffers from domestic oppression.

In the perspective of Spivak's theory, patriarchal culture using power of supremacy to subordinate women both in family and society must be changed, especially in rural and poor areas. Lakshmi as a child in the family should not be responsible for involving in male works. She should have the same opportunities to grow as a child such as access of getting education, food supply, nutrition, happy childhood, parents' supports, and so on.

### **3). Capitalism**

Lakshmi's life must face the worst scenario after being sold to the pimp. The woman trafficking practice has success lead her heart and soul to the devastation. She refuses to sell her body to masher man, but she gets much more physical torture in turn.

*"Each morning and evening Mumtaz comes, beats me with a leather strap, and locks the door behind her. Tonight when Mumtaz comes to my room, she sees that her strap has left raw sores on my back and neck, my arms and legs. So she hits me on the soles of my feet. "Now will you agree to be with men?" I shake my head. And so she says that she will starve me until I submit. (pp. 87-89).*

Lakshmi is absolutely exploited by not only her stepfather but also the pimp, Mumtaz. She must work much harder at her young age, even she earns less and still considered marginal and inferior. She works hard as a prostitute but she does not get any money, her stepfather enjoys her wage of selling her into a brothel as a sexual slave, instead. Furthermore she must face much oppression daily in brothel that makes her more worthless and silent. She cannot rise up her voice to pursue her rights of being respected and acknowledged as a human and she does not have any access to live as other people have. She is blocked and silenced by a woman who has more financial power and authority.

Feminists believe that women are mostly victims. In capitalism system, Mumtaz as a rich woman takes advantage of Lakshmi's existence. She runs the sexual business in brothel as a system on profit-driven, privately owned means of production. Her main purpose of business is to maximize the profits for herself; she does not care about Lakshmi's rights that she considers as her property. She controls and benefits from her labor as a prostitute. She does not acknowledge her identity as a human that needs protection, honor, security, and freedom. Capitalism is hierarchical. In this case her business is immoral, and barbaric for employing a childlike Lakshmi as her laborer under force. She has robbed her potential and power due to her family's economic conditions.

#### **4). Age**

Lakshmi is a school student at the age of 13. She loves studying and always feels embarrassed because of having no money to buy some cheap stationery. She daily helps her mother to take care of much housework; even she must carry a heavy load of firewood. There are still lots of works that she has to do which should be carried out by men. Her identity is extremely lost and blocked by many aspects of oppression. She cannot speak up her voice to pursue the education as other children have. Her age that should be full of cheerful childhood is forced to take responsible for the family's survival. She is too young to do much housework every day. Her stepfather should understand and takes responsible for her daily needs such as food, clothes, school fee, nourishing, etc. It is shown in the dialogue below:

*"How old are you?" he says in my language. I tell him I am thirteen. (p.68).*

She should have the same rights and opportunities to get access into education, knowledge, and development. Feminists argue that family especially father as the head of household plays very significant role in raising children and educating them both in the home and outside. How harmful and hurtful patriarchal values and a sexist power dynamic are to a growing child. The parents should be the good roles and models supporting their children to have more opportunities and access to

improve their skills they wish. Children should be allowed to be whoever they are and feel free to do whatever activities they like or aim for any goal they desire and dream. Role models must include gentle and caring father as well as strong and powerful mother. Parents should give their children the options for many useful things, ideas and choices.

## **The Main Character's Resistance toward the Oppression**

### **1). Act of Obedience**

Lakshmi does not agree with the social belief that men are worth more than women. There is big disappointment and anger in Lakshmi's heart toward her stepfather. She actually doesn't accept him with all of her heart. She doesn't feel happy and proud of his existence in the family and becomes a part of it because she has pretty strong ideas about a good and worthy man should be like. It is clearly stated in the description below:

*"I act the part of the dutiful daughter. I bring him his tea in the morning and rub his feet at night. I pretend I do not hear him joining in the laughter when the men at the tea shop joke about the difference between fathering a son and marrying off a daughter. A son will always be a son, they say. But a girl is like a goat. Good as long as she gives you milk and butter. But not worth crying over when it is time to make a stew."* (p. 19).

Instead of voicing her opinion, she acts as if she is a good daughter for her stepfather by taking care of him every day. She is actually hurt to see him being with his friends joking about the gender inequality. She feels underestimated and unworthy if compared to boys. Clearly there are invisible anger and sadness in her deep inside which she tries to hide. She is very upset with him. Laksmi is disappointed with having a father like him. However, instead of telling him that she is mad at him, she tries to do the good things to him for the sake of her mother. She cannot speak to both her mother and stepfather about what she hopes and does not



hope because her position being a daughter of the family must obey and follow her parents' rules.

Children have their own right because they have body, soul and spirit. How children behave, talk and think is a representation of their parents. A child needs a parents' constant attention. The same is true with Lakshmi. It is natural for her as a child to pursue her stepfather to perform his fatherly manner and love. Lakshmi will not accept his role as a leader of the household and a father of the children unless she sees him taking the lead. Therefore, in a balanced way, he needs to assert his authority. Male as the head of the family should be the good roles for their children both boys and girls. Automatically their children will obey their father and mother without any force but with their pure love.

## **2). Enduring the Suffering with Fear**

Lakshmi has endured "unspeakable and unacceptable" sufferings in brothel. Gender inequality and making-money based on the patriarchal society wickedly humiliate and oppress her in psychological and physical ways. The way she communicates and expresses herself is potentially influenced by the physical, social, economic and political contexts. Therefore she sometimes does the things as her resistance toward the oppression that she should face in her daily life. She always struggle day by day as seen in the dialogues below:

*"Then put on your makeup," she says, "and get back to work." I stay upright until she is gone. Only then do I slump to the floor and touch the side of my head. My earrings come off in my hand, bloodied, but intact. And I know then that my earlobe has been torn clear through. I know something else as well. I know that I would endure a hundred punishments to be free of this place. (p. 197).*

Lakshmi cannot talk to Mumtaz because of her mean behavior that never cares about the girls like her. Actually Lakshmi wants to resist Mumtaz's instructions and ambitions. Unfortunately she has no power of access to get rid of her frightening punishments, if she breaks her rules. She just endures her pains in heart.

Spivak says that power the men have and also rich women have to oppress other inferior women is an access to take advantage suffering women. Under conditions of oppression, Lakshmi does not have an access of power to deal with their bad situations because the only way of dealing with the oppression is an access. Even though Mumtaz is female but because of her ability and money, she has a power to manipulate Lakshmi's condition. She refuses Lakshmi's right, denying her access of having her own body, emotional support, domestic labor and so forth. It is Lakshmi's challenge toward powerful male and rich women.

### **3). Feeling Dying, Worthless and Disgusted with Herself**

Lakshmi has her terrible feeling start from the first day in the brothel. She must follow Mumtaz's will to sell her body for getting money. This feeling then gets worsening while Lakshmi has her first sexual intercourse which is very hurting. She cannot yell or even gives her voice to refuse that oppression but only silent.

*"I hurt. I am torn and bleeding where the men have been. I pray to the gods to make the hurting go away. To make the burning and the aching and the bleeding stop. Music and laughter come from the room next door. Horns and shouting come from the street below. No one can hear me. Not even the gods."* (p. 100).

Because of being trapped in sexual exploitation that she must do repeatedly for his debts, Lakshmi feels anger, depression, deep sorrow, and hopelessness. She does not like to be forced or manipulated into taking part in a sexual act and wants to get out of the shameful place. Working as a prostitution is an embarrassing and shameful position. She wants to leave the work of prostitution but she finds difficulty getting the solution for her problems. She feels completely worthless, dirty, disgusting, inferior and shameful because she is forced to do the bad and immoral activities. Absolutely she is depressed, most often she thinks that she is worthless because she sees herself as deficient in those qualities of life such as intelligence, achievement, attractiveness and strength. Almost all her negative emotional reactions cause damage by contributing to feelings of low self-esteem. Her self-esteem is often zero. Unfortunately her voice even scream are in vain and

not heard. She cannot rise up her voice to speak about her dislike and disagreement to carry out the sexual activities in brothel.

Feminists argue that whenever a woman has sex with a man that she does not want for her own sake, but engages in it for some extrinsic reason, she is also raped. This case happens repeatedly to Lakshmi. She has a right to bodily integrity, accordingly she is the one who decides whether another may or may not touch her and engage her sexually. When another person does so without her consent, he oppresses her right to bodily integrity and thereby also her personal autonomy. It is a seriously wrong because it includes into the oppression of personhood. It is seen as a crime where both the perpetrator and the victim. Lakshmi's psychological and physical condition of health urgently needs to be recovered in order for her to rise up again and she can live normally as other girls.

#### **4). Expecting the Freedom**

Lakshmi has been pitifully trapped in a bad condition that makes her feel imprisoned. She misses many things that she has lost in her life. Every day she always waits for her relief. That is freedom. The various oppressions used to lock her into a prison. Lakshmi feels jealous of others' freedom.

*Here at Happiness House, there are dirty men, old men, rough men, fat men, drunken men, sick men. I will be with them all. Any man, every man. I will become Monica. I will do whatever it takes to get out of here. (p.174).*

Her wish and dream of releasing herself from Mumtaz's restrictions sometimes drive her mad, sad and angry. Secretly she always tries to find out the needed information of her freedom, because for a long time she is forced in silence. She will is not recognized. She is told to be quiet and have no opinions, no arguments, and no conflicts. Lakshmi is a disappearing silent woman.

The essentialist framing of the sex work harms in the radical feminist perspective is a reproduction of patriarchy and white supremacy, often silencing the voices and experiences of sex workers of color. Fundamentally, trafficking that

Lakshmi faces definitely violates the universal human right to life, liberty, and freedom from slavery in all its forms. Trafficking of children violates the inherent right of a child to grow up in a protective environment and the right to be free from all forms of abuse and exploitation.

### **5). Seeking for the Comfort by Pretending**

Lakshmi likes to do fantasy or imagination because fantasy is better than reality. She needs relief in the midst of many pressures and oppressions. Pretending lets her explore without the bounds of reality. Her real world is very miserable and like a nightmare. In minutes, even seconds she has instant access to other places or other people to interact with as if she lives in a world where it is possible for her to create virtual worlds to explore and play in.

*Sometimes, I pretend that what goes on at night when customers are here is not something that is happening to me. I pretend it is a TV show that I am watching from far, far away. I pretend I have a button I press to make everything go quiet. And another one that makes me disappear. (p. 122).*

It is her heart and mind expression that seeking for the comfort. Her position is inferior. Therefore she uses a mask to hide from her routine oppression. She cannot resist Mumtaz's oppression physically because of harmful punishments as consequence. She does not have bravery to talk freely about her feelings because of being stopped to promote her identity as a human. Lakshmi needs relief and recovery from her depression and suffering. As a human, she has right of having happiness in life.

Many trafficked women experience psychological and physical health problems such post-traumatic stress disorder, severe depression, damage to their reproductive systems, damage assault and beatings and sexually transmitted diseases. It is supposedly that the trafficked victim must need help for labor exploitation to secure remedies for harm suffered. There is widespread support for the trafficked victims like Lakshmi assisted in their physical, psychological and social recovery through the provision of essential services.

### **6). Expecting the Law of Stopping the Human Trafficking**

Lakshmi hope the law can stop procuress like Mumtaz because she has done the criminals. She consistently forces many girls to sell their bodies into sexual slavery. Lakshmi hates her more than she can say because she is rudely coerced into commercial sex acts unmercifully and oppressed repeatedly by her. Her integrity disappears and made subordinate. She cannot speak and not heard that result the severe pains. Frequently she suffers from malnutrition, beating, kicking, and other painful punishment that actually she cannot stand at her young age. She hopes Mumtaz gets punishment from the law.

*“Policemen are supposed to stop people like Mumtaz from selling girls,” she says. “But she gives this one money each week and he looks the other way.” I don’t understand this city. It is full of so many bad people. Even the people who are supposed to be good. (p.124).*

Every woman has right to take care her whole being and body. Anyone who tries to hurt her whole being surely must deal with the law. The sexual assault is wrong and punishable. Feminists argue how police problems with solving child prostitutions and the recruitment strategies of political groups portray the institution as a part of a satanic conspiracy and eventually block the way for a better change in law, the involvement of organized crime syndicates and the national and international efforts to combat the trafficking.

Feminists examine prostitution as the institutionalized and industrialized sexual exploitation of women. It is about the global oppression of women. They argue that the root such oppression lies in patriarchy’s sex or gender system that subordinates and dehumanizes women. Throughout history men have constructed and controlled women’s bodies and sexuality to serve their own needs and interests. Such social constructions have been accepted at both societal and individual levels as being part of normal male sexuality. Prostitution is the foundation for all other

forms of sexual exploitation of women because it reduces women to a market commodity.

### **7). Learning English and Hindi Language Secretly**

Lakshmi is very vulnerable of being oppressed because of her rural poverty. She does not have access to get higher education. Nevertheless she has the big motivation of educating herself by learning the new things: English, India and Math despite her bad situation. It can help her enjoy life more and improve her knowledge, thinking skills and ability to cope with stress.

*And now there are pages full of the Hindi and English words Harish has taught me. Beautiful words, like: candy, bread, cricket, pen, crayon, dress, bracelet, radio, chicken, cow, cartoon, and remote control. Shahanna comes in and sees me writing in my notebook. "Don't let Mumtaz or Shilpa see you with that," she says. "If they find out you can read and write, they will think you are planning to escape." I nod. (p.132).*

Lakshmi loves to study and learn the new things. Unfortunately her interest of studying and learning must be carried out in a secret place with the intention that Mumtaz will never know her skills of reading, calculating and writing. Lakshmi's development and educational need are silenced and blocked by Mumtaz. Mumtaz creates unhappiness and injustice for her to get access of information and knowledge.

Women should have some support to improve their qualifications as men have. Therefore culture and traditional norms in society that restrict women into improvement and prosperity must be revolutionized because those whom with little or no education suffer oppression much more than better-educated women.

People like Mumtaz must be eliminated because she blocks Lakshmi from studying and learning some foreign languages to improve her qualification. The restrictions that she gives to Lakshmi to stop her from getting education are very disadvantageous because education is a tool to release her from subordination, even an alternative or non-formal education can work to release her from foolishness. Education unlocks Laksmi potential, giving her power and is accompanied by

improvements in well-being and her family. Therefore it is very necessary for Lakshmi a quality education that helps her break the cycle of poverty to save her from many oppressions. Even though education may not be the only input into her empowerment, it is a central one.

#### **8). Longing for Affection**

Lakshmi absolutely needs for affection after being isolated for a long time in brothel from family and friend interactions. She needs people who care and love her as the way of showing her in life how important she is in the world. The need of affection is the most valuable and necessary for her while she is facing much oppression from Mumtaz.

*Today, Haris tells me, is the festival of brothers and sisters. He shows me the rag doll he is giving to Jeena. "I bought it with my own money," he says. Then he hands me a pencil. It is shiny yellow and it smells of lead and rubber. And possibility. "For you," he says. And I am glad, because something strange is happening. Something surprising and unstoppable. A tear is running down my cheek. It quivers a moment on the tip of my nose, then splashes onto my skirt, leaving a small, dark circle. I have been beaten here, locked away, violated a hundred times and a hundred times more. I have been starved and cheated, tricked and disgraced. How odd it is that I am undone by the simple kindness of a small boy with a yellow pencil. (p.141).*

The need for affection arises for Lakshmi because it makes her feel secure and wanted by another person even if the relationship is on the friendship level. She has a right to get appreciation and respect. Her parents must take the responsibility and learn to properly protect her by being careful not to place her in positions where she would be forced to have sex against her will just for a reason of the family's survival.

The world leaders and community leaders must tap young people and recognize them as important resources. It calls on governments to begin teaching children democratic values in early childhood by expanding their access to education, and participation in civil society and government.

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## **Discussion**

As mentioned earlier, the major intention of this research is to find out, analyze and describe the women's struggles to face the oppression toward the marginal society in Patricia McCormick's novel *Sold*. Lakshmi's desires seem simple. She needs love and care from her parents: mother and stepfather. Her mother's perspective about men regarded more valuable than women is very destructive and influential for her life. It makes a way for Lakshmi's step father to do anything for his pleasure and satisfaction.

Lakshmi as a child in the family is disappointed with her mother's ideas that follow the social belief about the gender inequality. She is also upset with her step father who does not care about the family. He does not take responsible for the survival of their family lives.

After arriving in a big city, India and living there, she is shocked with the fact that she is sold by her stepfather into a sexual slavery for his debts and also depressed with her procuress's bad manners, Mumtaz. Therefore, in Nepal she struggles to encounter oppressions by obeying her mother's rule to be a dutiful daughter in the family and when in India, in brothel she faces oppressions by keeping Mumtaz's rule that sometimes she likes to break for the terrible pain.

Lakshmi is only a daughter who cannot raise her voice to ask for injustice from family and society that have labeled her "inferior". She is only a child who cannot speak her pain to ask for freedom from Mumtaz that treats her like a "slave".

## **Conclusion**

After analyzing the issue in the novel, the researchers concludes that there are four causes of oppression toward the marginal society in Patricia McCormick's novel *Sold*, namely (1) patriarchy (2) the rural poverty (3) capitalism (4) age, and the main character's resistance toward the oppression, namely (1) the act of obedience (2) enduring the suffering (3) feeling dying, worthless and disgusted



with herself (4) expecting for the freedom (5) seeking for the comfort by pretending (6) expecting the law of stopping the human trafficking (7) learning the new things (8) longing for affection.

The researchers discover that women's oppression in the novel is complex continual events. There is a mutual interaction between patriarchy and capitalism. As the eastern woman who lives in poverty, Laksmi gets triple oppression from the people surrounded her. The first oppression comes from Mumtaz, the pimp in the brothel. As the 'owner' of Laksmi, she has a full authority to exploit Laksmi's body to benefit her as much as possible. Mumtaz becomes the representation of capitalism that has power to the labors. Secondly, the oppression is from her father who always thinks that a daughter is merely a commodity. Laksmi is being forced to serve him like a maid. The last but not least is the oppression from her mother. Although Laksmi's mother knows that she live in poverty and full of oppression, but she always tells and force her daughter that all of the family's burden must be taken by the women. They should be grateful because there is a man in their family who brings pride and security. To conclude, domination is always accompanied by oppression which can be physical, psychological, and moral or in the realm of ideas.

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