**ABSTRACT**

**Introduction**

Literature is a mirror of society in every part of the world. Authors reflect their societies directly or indirectly through it. Through reading, readers comprehend the world around with its similarities and differences. Thus, human life is enriched. Literature sheds light on events and attitudes of people. It is a reliable source for understanding of the society concerned. It is difficult to find a work of literature that excludes the attitudes, moral values of society in which it is born, since no writer has been brought up completely unexposed to the world around him. Literature not only reflects the customs and conventions of the society particular but simultaneously hints at a better life.

Drama is a form of literature. Its function is to instruct and entertain. Drama gives cumulative human experiences of living in the world. Through it one is enabled to understand the aspects of human life. It is worthy to say that drama is produced by life for life. Theatre, that reflects reality around is also a subject for many debates and clashes of ideas.

Twentieth century theatre faithfully reflected the changes that occurred due to the advancement of science and technology. Thus, the time spirit was suitable for the appearance of new ways of thinking and new views about life. The voices of many social groups such as dalit, tribal and women, as a consequence occupied the centre stage.

Woman, even in the most civilised social groups, has been assigned marginal positions. She is subordinate to the man’s position. Myths, legends and fairy tales, have built a repertoire that fixes norms, roles and instructions that women must follow to be good wives, mothers and daughters. Many societies in philosophy treat woman equal to man, but in practice she is treated as different and inferior. Every culture has its own way of constructing notions of
femininity and there are wide divergences in practices and ideas among people in various parts of the world. The forms of oppression and domination vary with time and from society to society.

Literature played an important role in constructing gender roles. In other words, a girl is taught to be passive, dependent on the male and look as the male want her to be, whereas a boy is encouraged to be strong and independent. Since childhood, her world is prepared and constructed. It can be noted that many popular stories and fairy tales tend to reflect stereotypes of masculine and feminine roles. Similarly, woman has always been represented as satisfied with her minor position in society and doesn't want to do anything to improve her life. The culture of the male has created the standards with which how a person should behave, act, look and conduct his/her life is decided.

In the light of this unequal interrelationship, the plays of the authors concentrated have been studied.

**Vijay Tendulkar** (1928-2008), the dramatist from Maharashtra, is one among the very few contemporary Indian playwrights who writes about social concerns. His plays particularly dramatise the issues related to woman. The dramatic content of his plays talk about woman's rights, liberty, equality and dignity. His plays focus on the problems like religious tension, sexuality and gender issues prevalent in the Indian milieu. The playwright highlights how woman is exploited, tortured and victimised and made to suffer throughout her life. The thesis attempts to inquire into the unfair treatment given to woman that compel her to tolerate all types of violence; physical, mental and emotional.

**Caryl Churchill** (1938) is one among the most significant British dramatists of the late twentieth century who deals with the gender issues. Her early works explore issues related to gender and sexuality. British playwrights of the 1920 and 1930s, through an investigation of gender and power relationships within the family, locate the private sphere as having great public significance. It dramatises woman in a transition stage and with a sense of self-honour. She is awakened to her rights. Churchill is no exception to it. Churchill is concerned with the varied suppression of woman including political participation and sexual morality. Another concern that makes her one of the most distinguished playwrights is her insistent experimentation with the dramatic form. This experimentation heightens the questioning of
gender roles and power relations and leads to the investigation of alternatives. All these mould the basis of her drama. In short the author raises challenge to the conventional perception and thought patterns.

Both the playwrights have written on different locale and cultural background but, take up the similar theme of woman’s marginality due to gender politics. Tendulkar like Churchill serves as feminist critics and examine the power relations with the purpose of breaking them down and showing the extent of patriarchy. They strongly assert that man and woman are not essentially different but they are socially constructed different. They revalue women’s experience.

Men are portrayed and delineated as embodiments of hypocrisy, selfishness and treachery. Woman, on the other hand is portrayed as helpless victim of the conspiracies hatched by man. The select plays of the either are the dramatic exposition of the latent violence, treachery, sexuality, and immorality, which characterise contemporary gender politics in Indian and British society. The select plays of the dramatists’ in question reflect seriously the actualities of life and try to reawaken woman about the realities of the societies particular. Both the dramatists hint at a new light and a new theory in which a cordial and healthy relationship between man and woman can be had.

The social structure is the basis of power privileges; that ultimately results in gender discrimination. It is a universal phenomenon. Gender politics and the politics for survival amidst the dominant male power for women is open-ended problem for study. Vijay Tendulkar and Caryl Churchill express the pain of human beings victimised by the colonial power who are not at all treated with dignity and respect. The study of women characters reinforce the concept that with all odds stacked against them, they have to struggle hard in the patriarchal society. These plays lead a kind of unity to the study though they belong to different countries.

Hypotheses

Woman irrespective of clime and culture has been discriminated in the name of her gender. Male everywhere is the real perpetrator of the crime. Negating the web of male made enslavement woman has to chart out her ways of liberation with a sound realization of her self-worth.

Aims and Objectives of the Study
The dissertation attempts to focus on the objectives mentioned below:

1. To study how woman has been victimised in the name of her gender irrespective of her location and language.
2. To study the mode and the manager of discrimination in the modern times.
3. To study how the victim (woman) respond to the gender politics.
4. To understand the assertion of the victim woman as a person.

**Scope and Limitations:**

The scope and limitation of the study has to be defined because of the wide range of plays that Caryl Churchill and Vijay Tendulkar have written as well as the issues they have discussed in their plays. This study is limited to four plays of either dramatists. The plays of Vijay Tendulkar taken for the study are Kanyaadan, Silence! The Court is in Session, Sakharam Binder and Kamala. The plays of Caryl Churchill chosen are Owner, Cloud Nine, Top Girls, and Vinegar Tom barring their all other literary manifestations.

**Research Methodology**

The plays in question of both the playwrights will be critically analysed in the light of perspective mentioned in the title.

**Research Design: The Chapterisation**

The dissertation has been divided into five chapters as mentioned below:

**Chapter -I: Introduction**

The first chapter in the dissertation attempts to present the historical background during which the two playwright lived and wrote. It is a survey of the history of Indian and British modern drama. In the light of this drama - temper the works selected have been analysed. The reflection of people's sufferings and discussing various issues were the traits of modern drama. The first chapter attempts to understand the works of the authors selected for the study in the light of woman's oppression at the two locales.
Chapter- II: The Politics of Gender in Vijay Tendulkar’s Plays

The second chapter of this dissertation is an attempt to show how gender politics has been affected the co - relationship of man and woman in the select plays of Vijay Tendulkar. How the place and patriarchy affect woman and simultaneously how she faces and reacts to it. The dramatic content of his plays talk about woman’s rights, liberty, equality and dignity. The playwright highlights how woman is exploited, tortured and victimised and made to suffer throughout her life. An attempt has also been made to analyse the response of the victim woman to her oppressions.

Chapter - III: The Politics of Gender in Caryl Churchill’s Plays

The third chapter of this dissertation focuses on the nature of gender politics dramatised in the select plays of Caryl Churchill. The dramatist portrays different cases of woman such as divorced, widowed, married and single in the light of the patriarchal set up of the British society. The chapter also attempts to show how the patriarchal social order resulted in a biased social milieu and the response of the woman to it. Such analysis will help to create a kind of consciousness and awareness in society. The dramatist attempts to reverse the conventional expectation of gender roles. This is the central point of the chapter.

Chapter- IV: A Comparative Study

The fourth chapter of the dissertation is a comparative analysis of the gender relations in the plays of the authors in question .It examines and elaborates gender politics in the writing of the playwrights in question .It examines and analyses the feminist point of view while dealing with male and female writers. This chapter tries to unravel the reality of women in general and Indian and British woman in particular. The playwrights don’t try to please the readers by contrived imaginary, and far-fetched images but they try to orient the readers with a glimpse of ground level reality. Their aim is to make social change by portraying subjugated and oppressed women. It ends on the note that woman’s voice is to be heard and understood humanly.

Chapter - V: Conclusion
The last chapter summarises the overall findings of the research. Along with certain concluding remarks, it explains how gender politics and women presentation are handled by the dramatists in all the select plays for the study. This study brings home the idea that man and woman are not essentially opposite to each other but complimentary.