INTRODUCTION
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Ecological feminism or ecofeminism is a term which acknowledges that there is a connection between the domination of women and the denigration of nature. Ecofeminism is not only a women’s movement but it is also a movement for ecological restoration. In 1974 French feminist, Francoise d’Eaubonne in her book Le Féminisme ou la Mort (Feminism or Death) coined the term ‘ecoféminisme’ (ecofeminism) and stated that patriarchy is the cause of the present ecological crisis.

Francoise d’Eaubonne (1974) stated that the ‘Feminist Front’ movement was originated in France in 1973. As different from the French Mouvement de Libération des Femmes¹ (MLF), the ‘Feminist Front’ movement was close to the ‘Belgian Unified Feminist Party’. Many women not only from the French MLF group and subgroup ‘Evolution’ (founded in 1970) but also from all movements formed the ‘Feminist Front’ group. Formed from the ‘Revolutionary Feminist’ group, another group called ‘The League of Women’s Rights’ also emerged. Both the ‘Feminist Front’ group and ‘The League of Women’s Rights’ adhered to the statutes of the 1901 law. Francoise d’Eaubonne stated that some members of the ‘Feminist Front’ group separated and founded an information center called the ‘Ecology-Feminism Center’ and thus a new movement named ‘ecofeminism’ came into existence and attempted to connect feminism and ecology.

Francoise d’Eaubonne (1974) stated that at present humanity is confronted with two threats — overpopulation and the destruction of nature due to patriarchy.

¹ This French movement referred to as (MLF) signifies women’s activity groups. This movement was named by the French Press in the 1970.
Men’s control of women’s bodies resulted in overpopulation and men’s control over nature resulted in the destruction of natural resources. Francoise d’Eaubonne maintains that patriarchy is the source of the exploitation of women and the destruction of nature. According to Francoise d’Eaubonne, the aim of this new movement pointed to the “need to remake the planet around a totally new model.”

In order to reinstate the planet in a new way, Francoise d’Eaubonne (1974) pointed to the need for a ‘mutation’ of the planet. Thus, Francoise d’Eaubonne stated that the aim of ‘Ecology-Feminism Centre’ is “to tear the planet away from the male today in order to restore it for humanity of tomorrow. That is the only alternative, for if the male society persists, there will be no tomorrow for humanity.”

We shall now begin with a brief introduction to ecofeminism.

Ecofeminists affirm that there is a relationship between the oppression of women and the domination of nature. Ecofeminists believe that human beings are not separate from nature but they are a part of the natural world. Ecofeminists consider that all life on earth are intertwined with each other. Ecofeminists believe that androcentrism or patriarchy is the cause of the domination of both women and nature. So, the goal of ecofeminism is to eradicate this patriarchal structure from the society and seeks to liberate women and to rescue nature from exploitation.

We will consider the following issues in this dissertation.

The first chapter that is on, “A Brief Discussion of Ecofeminism” surveys the viewpoints of ecofeminists. This survey helps to understand the connection between

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3 Ibid., p.193.
the domination of women and the domination of nature. Here, our aim is to give an introduction to the term ecofeminism.

The second chapter that is on, “The Relation Between Environmental Ethics and Ecofeminism” investigates the relation between environmental ethics and ecofeminism. This chapter contains Gaia Hypothesis and ecofeminism, Deep ecology and ecofeminism, Social ecology and ecofeminism and lastly, Sustainable development and ecofeminism. This investigation reveals that both human and non-human nature are interconnected. Any harm to nature is a danger for humans to survive.

In the third chapter that is on, “Understanding Ecofeminism from Indian perspective” we have focused on the three significant movements led by women of India. These are the ecological movement by the Bishnois, Chipko movement and Anti-arrack movement in Andhra Pradesh. We have also mentioned the views of Jainism and Buddhism on nature. Here, our aim is to highlight the participation and contribution of women not only for social change but also for the care and protection of nature. Women have a very deep relationship with nature. Since, they are deeply concerned about nature so, they take part in the ecological movements for the protection of nature. On the other hand, religious teachings also have a great contribution in the protection and restoration of nature.

The fourth chapter that is on, “Western Ecofeminism and Its Difference with Indian Ecofeminism” contrasts between the perspectives of Indian ecofeminism and Western ecofeminism. In this chapter we have given a brief description of the two standpoints of ecofeminism that is, an essentialist ecofeminism
and a constructionist ecofeminism. Then, in the ecofeminist movements in the West, we have focused on the two significant ecological movements led by Western women. These are Love Canal movement and Greenham Common movement. We have also discussed the views of Christian religion on nature. And lastly, we have tried to show the difference between Indian ecofeminism and Western ecofeminism.

In the fifth chapter that is on, “The Relation Between Humanism, Ecofeminism and Care Ethics” we have tried to connect humanism, ecofeminism and care ethics. This chapter contains the meaning and types of humanism, meaning and different views regarding care ethics and finally, linked ecofeminism with humanism and care ethics. Here, we seek to emphasize on the interrelatedness and interdependence among the human and non-human nature. Here, the main theme is that in order to pursue peace and happiness for all life on earth we must inculcate ethical values, must devote to ethical living with nature and must give due respect to women.