Conclusion

Toni Morrison has emerged as the most prominent in the group of contemporary writers of fiction. Her acclaim is international and her novels are translated into many languages. Morrison as a unique creative writer has won the deepest admiration and respect by both her fellow writers and a large number of readers. In addition, she has received much acclaim from the media, from the major national magazines and journals; and she has been the recipient of several honorary doctoral degrees, literary awards and domestic recognitions. Her place is like the polestar guiding her fellow writers in American literature.

Toni Morrison empathises the complex and critical conditions of black women in America. She has found her ways to raise her feminist voice for the black women which is no lesser than going against the strong wind. She has taken a critical stance against the double-jeopardized black women and sought to explain their real strength. She advocates that the black women ought to be accepted by the universe as equal and worthy as the whites and elities.

As a socio-political movement black feminism acts in the interest of black women and attempts to provide a space for them. The post-modern era has accepted black feminism as an equally important aspect of feminism in academic discipline. Morrison as a post-modern woman writer has realistically delineated the life conditions of black woman since slavery till today. She entails black feminism in her novels to introduce to the world how the black woman has been treated throughout the ages, and how she has strived to come out of the double-jeopardy. Morrison’s engagement with black feminism clarifies that the negative images probed on black women like whore, subhuman, breed mother, mammy etc. are just myths. Morrison demonstrates that the black women are no longer interested in carrying such false images; hence with their indomitable inner strength they
pushed them off and redefined themselves as an independent and self-consciousness black human beings.

There were days when the black women were not at all considered as human beings having their own and different feelings and pains. When it was commonly thought about feminism only the white women were taken into consideration and when the term ‘black’ was thought of only the black men were considered. Every one forgot to hear the cries of such a double bound creature that is both a woman and black. The black women have been calmer and more enduring by nature. They have exhibited more patience by restraining the eruption of their emotions. Though this quality of theirs is necessary to nurture the relationship within and outside the family, the elites’ (men and whites) ego often considered this as their weakness and taken them for granted. As in the select novels, Pauline and Pecola Breedlove in *The Bluest Eye*, Nel and Helene Wright in *Sula*, Sethe in *Beloved* and Violet in *Jazz* are such black women characters whose silence and patience have been checked either by their men or whites and in some cases by both. The elites take the advantage of their prolonged patience and exhibits more intense form of exploitation. The elites forget that their silence is to maintain the unity in family and community. The elites fail to understand their inner beauty. Thus these innocent black women in Morrison’s novels become the victims of treacheries.

The excessive domination of feelings and life force the black women to self-evaluate themselves. Morrison’s novels exhibit that awareness and education. This helps them for the safety of their self and construct their own defined image’ as independent woman like the ‘New Woman’ of post-modern era. For example, Mrs MacTeers, Claudia and Frieda in *The Bluest Eye*, Sula, Eva and Hannah Peace in *Sula*, Denver, Sethe and Baby Suggs in *Beloved*, Violet, Alice Manfred in *Jazz* are the embodiment of self-consciousness. These black women glorify their awareness
and strength. They generate their own definition to survive and prove their worth. They find totality in their expression. Though during the beginning phase of their lives they suffer under the double whammy, that suffering leads them to rethink about their existence. This awareness makes them to emancipate themselves. Morrison’s black women characters influence their surroundings to lead a respectful life. They try to instill courage and confidence in their fellow women. These characters are the mirrors of the image of ‘new woman’ who become the role models for every black woman.

Morrison’s characters are closely connected to each other. Her Black women characters have earth like patience; and they have pure and kind heart which loves each and every creature of their surroundings. Yet their life is very complex. The reason behind why Morrison always writes about the black woman is she herself is a black woman.

Toni Morrison in her novels has dealt with the unconscious psychological acceptance of blacks as colonized that has hindered their self and consciousness of being as human beings. In the case of black woman, it has the drastic effect upon her image and that sidelines her as the invisible thing. Morrison has demonstrated that black woman is forcefully imposed upon stereotypical images by the elites to maintain her false reputation as superior people.

The study has brought out Morrison’s novels as the saga of black women’s response against their humiliation and degradation. Morrison has shared that black women’s common experiences and their inner strength to challenge the capabilities of the elites who certify them as the marginalized. Among many black women writers, Morrison emerges as the most empathetic writer in the post-modern era. Her inclusion of nature symbols, use of colloquial language, her unique way of approach to the story, creation of the characters who seem our neighbors, her
division of structure of novels arouses curiosity for the reader to know their further stories.

Morrison’s novels are the symbols of her height of creativity and talent in African-American literature. She reconceptualizes American history from the black perspective. Morrison constructs history through the acts and consciousness of the African-American slaves rather than through the perspective of the dominant white social classes. For example, in *Beloved*, Sethe constructs a parallel between the historical slavery that she has suffered in Sweet Home plantation and the individual.

Morrison’s black women characters lived in such a world where they have recognised by their blackness and exploited physically and psychologically. Morrison’s novels are the world of blackness. In the world of elites the black is invisible, but in the fiction of Morrison she avoids the image of black women as invisible. Though she includes the whites in her novels, it is to justify the life of black women. This is for juxtaposition.

Historically, the characterization of black women has been depicted in terms of their maternal role, -- a defined role which has been imposed on women as their sole source of identity. While Morrison sees motherhood as an important experience for women, she does not limit women's roles in the society to motherhood, nor does she restrict motherhood to biological maternity. For Morrison, mothers are the first and foremost human beings with distinct identities who can have the potential --in favorable circumstances to realize that motherhood and individuality. Through this Morrison demystifies the myth of motherhood as the restricted role for black women. She celebrates the role of mother in the life of a child which is no lesser than God. Sethe in *Beloved* eventually begins to recognise the value of her own selfhood. She sacrifices her own motherhood for the sake of her children and with this she seeks her identity. Violet in *Jazz* achieves
a unique sense of peace and tranquility which indicates her self-confidence as an individual. Thus, to expose the inadequacy of the socially defined roles of mothers, Morrison populates her novels with typical mother figures that are searching to attain some sense of individuality and self-worth in a world which denies them these values. By rejecting the patriarchal stereotyping of women, Morrison’s characters make a strong statement against the social and economic oppression which has aimed to force to submit themselves since slavery and make serious attempts at recreating their own individualities and destinies.

Morrison’s inclusion of magic realism in her novels is an attraction. Inclusion of supernatural/magical element in the novels is to reveal the real experience which is hidden. Morrison uses the element of magic realism in *Beloved* as an essential technical factor. Reappearance of the Beloved’s ghost in the house of Sethe is to make the mother Sethe experience the regret, guilt as well as to reveal her anxiety by her act of infanticide. Through the story of Sethe, Morrison celebrates the courage and sacrifice of a black mother. Morrison’s novels are the saga of sacred and everlasting mother-daughter relationships. Morrison describes the role of every black mother by portraying the character of Sethe.

Morrison entails the effects of racism on the life of black women and that decides every step of their lives. The physical and psychological influences on them force to choose the way of life of their own. As the novel *The Bluest Eye* reveals the fact that unconscious wanting for the superior standards of life will certainly lead to the life of tragedy and negligence of the self and blindly following the ‘other’ leads to lose the self forever. Hence, Morrison gives the tragic end to the life of Pecola in order to give a message to other black girls that not to become weak like Pecola who was, hateful and preoccupied regarding the self. She advocates that only self-love and self-respect can make the life meaningful.
Morrison delineates that to be born male and female is not simply biological or God-given rather it is sociological. The sociological formation of sexes led the black woman to feel marginalized. As in the novel *The Bluest Eye* Cholly Breedlove himself takes freedom to molest his daughter Pecola Breedlove, to dominate and torture his wife Pauline Breedlove. It is the sociological norms that cannot punish Cholly for any of his evil acts. For example, Cholly’s daughter Pecola has been humiliated by all only because of her father. The reason is that she is a girl who is taken for granted as weak and ugly. Though Cholly is marginalized, each and every time Pecola is treated as doubly marginalized. Even in the novel *Jazz*, Joe Trace has taken himself for granted to cheat his Violet but when Dorcas cheated Joe in the same manner his male ego could not sustain it, so he killed Dorcas. The sociological upbringing of the two sexes – male and female -- is the main reason for gender discrimination. Morrison’s dealing with such discrimination is denoted in the feeling of abandonment and insecurity. Appreciably Morrison by giving them the strength and awareness, gives hopes for the lives of her black women to forget the slave history and its effects and to lead an independent life.

The black woman is purposely denied of her culture, history, language and self-identity. As language is the best expression of the personality, Morrison has used the apt language to express the black women’s personalities. Since Morrison aims at writing for the black women, she uses Afro-American native language to depict the blacks’ suffering. Morrison feels she could justify the blacks’ plight by expressing their life in archaic language. By that the black woman feels proud of her lost self and strives to overcome from her complex situations. Through her language when the black woman learns to express herself well that alone leads them to evaluate their personality which finally leads to her self-realization.
Man-woman relationship is the major cause and the result of black woman’s condition both within and outside the family. As a black woman writer Morrison’s dealings with marital, pre-marital and extra-marital relationship may sometimes seem indecent, yet they were prevalent in the happenings of the blacks. She discusses the sexual aspects because sexual exploitation is the open truth there. The study advocates that Morrison’s clear and direct projection of sex is necessary because that element has exposed the whites’ exploitation of the blacks. The black women are treated indecently. At the backdrop of this Morrison takes the same essence of the fact and puts it clearly. Every reader feels the empathy for the wives that have been sexually and emotionally ill-treated. Sexuality for men is used as the means of domination. As in The Bluest Eye Pauline Breedlove forgives her husband Cholly when he comes to bed and makes love with her. Morrison shows that men use sex as a weapon to control the women.

The black woman’s relationships are complex. As a marginalized woman, she is not just hated and rejected by the whites but also by her own men. Though being black, the black men hate the black woman for her color. The same has happened with Pauline Breedlove who is neglected and ill-treated by her husband. Morrison has depicted the negative side of the black men too. She has showed no black man could understand the innocence and pure love of his black woman. As in Sula, Jude fails to understand Nel’s love for him and in turn he betrays her. Likewise in Jazz Joe betrays his wife Violet by having an affair with Dorcas. The black women’s married life is not a bed of roses, amidst the thorn of racism, classism and sexism. In a way she is in trouble perpetually.

Morrison’s characters are dependent upon their slave history. Slavery acts as the villain in the lives of the two loving hearts. Slavery has made the blacks helpless and then it plays in their lives. The blacks could not handle their lives when each and everything of their lives is controlled by slavery. It has destroyed
the lives of black couples and mothers and children. The black women suffered on
double-edges. Along with slavery the patriarchal domination has still made their
life pathetic. Man dominates woman. Man takes himself for granted to do any sort
of injustice with his woman because he thinks he is her superior. Morrison
discusses different faces of black man who uses black woman for his selfish
motifs. Her economic dependency has victimized her.

Morrison discusses how the socialization of both the genders plays an
important role in man-woman relationship. Man as a boss commands over woman.
Woman is labeled as the second sex who is expected to be completely surrendered.
This variation of power has created much ego in man. The male ego denies
women’s resistance. As in *Jazz*, Joe Trace easily murders Dorcas because his male
ego could not sustain her betrayal, whereas he never felt shame upon himself for
his betrayal towards woman. In Morrison’s novels the black men use their black
women as their dancing dolls. Yet the black women rebel and show that they have
the capacity to free themselves.

Morrison has given a special space for the mother-daughter relationships.
Most of her novels have the element of mother-daughter relationship as a major
theme. A ‘superwoman’ black mother for a daughter is a boon. Morrison’s
characters are not stereotypical. The black women as mothers live for their
daughters. They are the backbone for them. They are the role models for them.
Mothers teach their daughters how to live up to the prejudices and define their real
self. They teach them the way of life.

The study traced out that there are two kinds of nurturing the daughters in
the black community. Both the kinds of nurturing are differently influenced by the
black mother’s journey. Mother, how she is brought up by her mother, is
influential. A close examination of black woman’s life reveals that her
relationships within and outside the family shapes her individual destiny. There are
the mothers who show the conventional way of nurturing wherein daughters are taught to abide by the rules and regulation of the community. As in *Sula* Nel’s mother Helen Wright brings her up in a conventional mode. She teaches her to be an ideal wife. Mothers like Eva and Hannah brings up Sula in an unconventional way of nurturing wherein Sula goes against the meaningless rules of the community in search of self. Even in *The Bluest Eye* there are two kinds of nurturing. Mrs Breedlove’s frustration of racist degradation has made her to hate her daughter Pecola, hence Mrs Breedlove’s nurturing make Pecola weak. She cannot get mother’s love at proper age. Mrs MacTeer’ way of nurturing her daughters is conscious. Morrison celebrates motherhood which rewrites and revises the patriarchal narration of motherhood and daughterhood. Mother-daughter relationship is mutually beneficial and it upholds their culture and spiritual wisdom. *Beloved*’s mother-daughter relationship of Sethe and Beloved has the power to sustain the ill treatments of slavery.

Morrison’s dealing with female bond of friendship as a means of support, source of strength and inspiration for self-assertion for another black woman is outstanding. The black women share other black women’s feelings and advise them. The black woman as friend comforts and heals others. As Claudia and Frieda for Pecola in *The Bluest Eye*, Sula and Nel for each in *Sula*, Amy Denver for Sethe in *Beloved* and Felice and Alice Manfred for Violet in *Jazz* are the reasons for the self-identification of their female friends.

The black woman is known for her double-conscious exploitation rather than as a human being. The colorism and sexism as the two-edged thorn pricks the black woman as ever before. The white beauty standards play a very crucial role in their life because the physical appearance is always God given. When the black woman starts hating her own appearance, she is only left a way to lose herself. Likewise her sex as a woman is though God’s creation, she is considered weak.
She becomes a workhorse under the hands of her men and white men and white women. Such evilness of society manifests itself in self-rejection, inter-racial and intra-racial hatred. Despite all this, her inner strength has the potential to destroy patriarchal and white imperial verdicts upon them as ghettoized, mules, whores, etc. The black woman has the power to spread awareness among the other black women. Morrison tosses the perfect vision of beauty for black women. She advocates that every emancipated self is the real beauty and every black woman is beautiful. In *The Bluest Eye* Claudia rejects white beauty standards. There are many strong women characters as Claudia in Morrison’s fiction.

Morrison posits the black woman as marginalized in the white culture as well as black culture and her exploitation and subjugation occur from the outside racist white culture and also within her own black community. Her novels are historically and culturally contextualised and hence that become inevitable for black women to suffer under all forms of racism, classism and sexism. All her woman protagonists’ oppression is made apparent from their awareness that they are black and women. For Morrison, understanding these black women’s lives, through her own experience as a black woman and by imaginative experience as a writer, has been a prerequisite to her commitment to her people. Morrison explores and exploits the natal wisdom of her characters, sprouting from the very roots of African culture.

Morrison feels it is as her moral and ethical responsibility to write about her people because they are neglected. She feels the condition and complexity of black woman’s life and puts that before the world to realize the existence of black woman as a human being.

No doubt, the federal system of America has promised equal rights for all irrespective of color and sex. But only such acts cannot bring justice and change the mindset and attitudes of people towards the black women. It is true that the
black women are still kept far away from the deserving socio-political, educational, cultural and political status. They are still treated under the shadows of the traditional myths and stereotypical images. The need of the highly sophisticated and modern life of today is to develop positive and healthy attitude towards one’s fellow beings. It is the responsibility of education, literature and media to spread awareness in the minds of people for an equal-treatment of sexes, classes and races. Any ill treatment and injustice against woman should be immediately brought to the knowledge of legislation and should be punished immediately. Then only the evil go. Another attempt towards the healthy society is possible by an awareness to create in the society that characterised by the equality of sex, race and class. Such awareness should be instilled in the mind of every human being on the earth. Writer like Morrison through their writings endeavor to instill such awareness. One should see another black woman as a human being rather than a racial or sexual thing. One should learn to live on the basis of humanity rather than on biases. More importantly every black woman should develop an awareness of herself as the first step towards her emancipation. This can be an ideal for other women too.

Toni Morrison’s novels have the power to instill consciousness in every black woman. Morrison as an inspirational black woman writer has directed the proper direction for black woman. She thinks that the woman of today need not sit as an angel of the house sustaining the dominance rather she can rebel for her identity. That can be the best fulfillment for her and her family.

The present thesis has three chapters. The first chapter has made a survey of black American fiction. It includes the black American feminism(s).

The second chapter has been about Toni Morrison the great author. She is the most representative Afro-American novelist.
The third chapter is a critical analysis of the feminist perceptions in Morrison’s novels especially, *The Bluest Eye, Beloved, Sula* and *Jazz*.

Thus various chapters of the thesis have examined Morrison as a black feminist writer. In this regard, the research findings are as follows,

1. Toni Morrison as a black American woman writer observes that the black woman is doubly oppressed in the society.

2. In her novels Morrison advocates that the black woman must emancipate and empower herself with education, employment and social participation.

3. The black woman must find out a place as an individual within the shared heritage. She can do it with the help of her will-power, disciple and commitment, freedom, equality and sisterhood and bonds such as mother-daughter and mother-in-law-daughter-in-law relations.

4. Morrison’s novels depict the black Americans’ struggle for identity and self-realization.

This is how the scholar thinks that Morrison’s fiction depicts the sufferings of the people across the world. The Nobel Prize citation, in fact, reads, “Morrison in her novels characterized by visionary force and poetic import gives life to an essential aspect of American reality.” (Nobel, 3)

**References:**

1. Nobel Prize Citation. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toni_Morrison,