

**THE FEMALE BILDUNGSROMAN: CONCEPTUALIZING WOMANHOOD IN
NURUDDIN FARAH'S FROM A CROOKED RIB AND CHIMAMANDA
NGOZI ADICHIE'S PURPLE HIBISCUS**

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ABSTRACT

The paper focuses on the depiction of the growth into womanhood in the coming-of-age narrative genre as a gender-specific experience that not only reconstructs identity of the protagonist but also reformulates the genre itself. With respect to Judith Butler's study of the performative and socio-cultural construction of gender identity, the article presents an analysis of the coming-of-age of the female protagonists in Nuruddin Farah's *From a Crooked Rib* and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* as a gender specific socio-culturally constructed experiences rather than simple biological or emotional growth and proposes to explore how the reconstruction of the Bildungsroman genre with respect to the gender specific experience in these two novels deconstructs the patriarchal social structure and enable the authors to assert the autonomy of self and identity for the protagonists.

KEYWORDS: Bildungsroman, Gender, Identity, Performativity, Adolescence & Womanhood