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## **Breaking the Stereotypes of Female Psyche: A Study of Sudha Murthy's *Mahashweta***

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### **Abstract:**

Sudha Murthy is renowned personality in Indian writing in English. The prime agenda of her all-literary works are to make woman stronger with confidence and educate them about own rights. *Mahashweta* is the best example to explore the theme of new woman, who is more powerful than any male. The main focus of the paper is to represent woman as the role model to other woman fraternity. The novel proves that woman is no longer the puppet of male domination but a creative individual. The main problem of womanhood that they are more concerned about the husband, but husband is not bother about own wife and ill-treat her in the family. This is the time when woman reject her husband and creates own identity. The novel 'Mahashweta' is biggest slap on the male dominated society. In the novel *Anupama* rejects her husband and accepts the new life which is her own as the result of her education. The conclusion of this research paper is that Sudha Murthy's 'Mahashweta' is the best example to break the stereotypes thinking of all women and prove them as the main part of society.

**Keywords: womanhood, male dominated, Mahashweta, new woman.**

Sudha Murthy is the most famous name in the feminist writing in India. She is the one who made her life as the best example for all the women in India. The basic quality she develops in her is the education, that makes her the first women engineer in Indian to open the new door for women in the novel field. In her life from the engineer to owner of the most famous Infosys company journey inspires each human being to contribute for the society. Infosys today also earns a lots profit and that profit is donated to the government for the wellbeing of the humanity. This good nature reflects in her writing, which makes her the best novelist in Indian writing in English. Ms. Murthy is famous to write in the regional writing, Kannada and later almost all her write up are translated into English language. The nature of

give back to the society make her the chairperson of the Infosys Foundation, which primary focus in the country on the issues of education and health. Murthy becomes the member of the Gates Foundation which is working for the public health care, under this foundation she has initiated many programme for the Indian people. The best teacher in her always guided to help the society and she started a computer facility in each school at Karnataka.

The knowledge of Indian culture has spread everywhere in the country and at lots of share goes to Ms. Murthy because her efforts to established a 'The Murthy Classical Library of India' at Harvard University. The *Doller Bahu* is most famous work written by Murthy and that is worldwide accepted by the readers. The novel *Mahashweta* give her name and fame in the feminist writing. The same novel is taken for the deliberation in the research paper to analyse form the feminist point of view. The researcher will find more new aspects of feminist issues like new women, radical feminism, space or identity in the work *Mahashweta*. There are many literary works are on the name of Ms. Murthy like, *The Mother I Never Knew*, *Three Thousand Stitches*, *the Man from the eggs*, *Magic of the Lost Temple*, *The Old Man and his God*, *Doller Bahu*, *Mahashweta*, *Wise and Otherwise*, *The Serpent Revenge*, *Gently Falls The Bakula*, *House Of Cards*, *Something Happened On The Way To Heavens*, *The Magic Drum and other favourite stories*, *The Bird With The Golden Wings*, *How The Sea Became Salty*, *The Upside Down King*, *The Daughter From A Wishing Tree*, *Grandma's Bag Of Stories*.

The life of Ms Murthy changes a lot when she meets JRD Tata, who guided her for the social work. Tata always said her that, give back to the society because we received a lot of love and care through the money. This same concept she applies in her life and becomes the best social worker. Today also what the Infosys earns the total profit goes to the government for the social welfare. The helping nature of the writer Sudha Murthy make her the best soul in the field of literature. *Mahashweta* is one the best example to prove the society that woman is the great fighter in the world to create their own identity. The thinking of the society is that men can manipulate the woman but that is very well broken in the novel *Mahashweta*. The protagonist breaks the psyche of society and create her own place and identity in the world. The husband never gives an identity but the hard work of women creates her own space in the world.

The protagonist does not live on the mercy of her husband but revolt against such thinking, make her own identity in the society. The nature of society makes the women marginalised and in that if she has any other physical issue then she becomes double

marginalise in the eye of male dominated society. This type of thinking ruins the life of many females. There are very few females who fights back against such odd thinking and tries to change the male thinking. The thought of new woman is emerged with the character Mahashweta, who fights against the thought of human dominance in the society and make her own identity. The novel *Mahashweta* mostly focuses on the issue of woman who suffer from the skin disease which changes the colour of her skin. The change in the colour of skin make her visit to skin doctors that changes her life and the happy of her break down and left her lonely in the world. The most trusted person her husband even refuses to help her in this situation as he himself is doctor. The trauma of her life makes her understand that no other human being is coming to help her so she decides to make her own fortune. The issue of the skin will definably not trouble her in the life but the doctor her husband refuses to accept her as she was his own choice. The beauty of Anupama attract her husband towards her and when the same beauty gets patches on her body so then, he is immediately ready to leave her, that the male psyche. The writer attacks on this behaviour of male who thinks they are the supreme in the society.

The writer presents a such a new woman in the society that who can't bend down and beg for the life but revolt against the male domination and creates her own identity. It is observed at the end of the fiction that Anupama's husband is ready to accept her but she denies that is the new women. At the beginning of the novel author writes the qualities of the Anupama who one of the beautiful girls in the city. She has the life dedicated for the social work in that the charitable trust are funded by her form the collection of the money from the theatre. She goes door to door to sell the ticket for shows so more and more money can be collected for trust fund. She is a beautiful girl at the same time a good singer and theatre actor also. Her meeting with Anand at Dr. Desai's house changes her life and she and Anand falls in love with each other. Dr. Anand has very rich family background so for him to get her ready for marriage was not the difficult task, at the same time for Anupama this was the best marriage proposal. Dr. Anand's family consist more two people in the house one his mother Radhakka and his sister Girija. The life Anupama was not the bed of flowers before the marriage as her stepmother and step sister were not that good with her. Before the marriage her two sisters were the competitors in her life for love and after marriage Girija plays the same role.

The economic situation of Dr. Anand makes both the parties happy that all expenses are shouldered by Anand. This happiness in same cases was limited for Anupama's father and Anupama because her stepmother was extremely unhappy to see this grand marriage. It is the

narration of Murthy that Anupama got the best husband to take care of her. In the narration of the author is that in Anupama's future, her husband is planning to go for higher studies abroad. After the marriage the time comes and Dr Anand goes England for the further studies and Anupama stays alone at home with her mother-in-law. At the home now these three women are not happy at all because one Girija so liberal in the nature, mother in law is so dominating and Anupama so obedient. The friendship of Girija with her male friend gives discomfort to Anupama, as Girija carries contraceptive with her. In the family Girija never like Anupama share the same with her mother, so she hates Anupama, get her scold for her mother. Radhakka never happy in the home to see Anupama as she is against her daughter. Girija created most trust in her mother's eye that her mother is not ready to listen Anupama and scolds her. What caught Anupama's attention was a packet of oral contraceptives hidden inside with a note that said, After 10 p.m (page no. 39). The nature of Girija was so annoying that Anupama found her most undisciplined child in the house. The lies are always in her talk with her mother when she convinced her for college field trip at Belur and Halebeedu. The truth was such trip was never organised by her college Anupama got to know. The plan of Girija was exposed by Anupama that cost her a lot that disrespect in the house. Anupama was a new woman and she never wants to expose or show off things to society but her mother-in-law was totally against her in her nature. Her only purpose was to be adorned and exhibited as an acquisition, reflection of their status in society. She never expected to live this kind of life. (Page no. 42). The life of Anupama changes on the day of first Diwali at the new house when she gets burns at her legs while bringing the hot coal to light the incense. Radhakka sent Anupama to get the hot coals to light the incense for the goddess. On her way back from the kitchen, a red-hot piece of coal fell on Anupama's foot, severely burning it. She quietly poured some cold water on her foot and went to the hall to continue with the puja (page no.45).

The domination of male is so powerful in the society that Anupama was not able to disclose the burn issue with his mother in law. This one best picture that a woman also wants to control another woman in the society. The visit of Anupama at dermatologist make her a victim of her mother-in-law's anger. Where she never collects the courage to talk freely about her injury which develops a leukoderma. This is one type of power structure of society which does not allow the victim to say a word thought she is right. The relation of the husband and wife are not reached at such level that she can feely talk about her problem. It makes clearer in the society that 'women are not born but are rather becomes' by the rules of society. The matter of white patch changes life of Anupama and she immediately becomes an untouchable in the

family. This is the observation in the novel that she was not allowed to enter the temple, at the same time worker in the house also ill-treat her as she has no respect in the house. The dream of a woman Anupama, to stay with her husband abroad is shattered and she was forced to leave the house of her husband. The situation has totally shaken her life and there was no single person who can help her in this situation, not even her husband Anand. The new era women are not born but they are made in this situation that they need to fight and prove the society that, one can make own future without the help of male. Anand as a husband should take the side of his wife in such critical situation but the same time, he left to reply her letters, at the same time denies to oppose his mother.

The rules of rich society are made in favour male dominated society where they are never a victim but a rule. So, in the delima of husband-and-wife partition Anand stays at back foot and doesn't show any interest to help her. The innocence of Anupama is treated as an ill fitted woman in the rich society and her mother in low starts finding another girl for her son Anand. The desolateness of Anupama make her think to end her life and she decides the kill herself. The thought of this trouble comes in her mind and Anupama was unable to think anything new in her life. When she thinks about the days of drama, in it, there was always a happy ending but her life was almost at the end. As a new woman after much thinking Anupama concludes that, her sister-in-law doing many affairs leads great life and finding a best rich person for marriage then why can't Anupama live? When she is morally good in her life. The thought of killing herself immediately turns into the brave woman and she decides to live a happy and respectable life at own cost. This the beginning of new woman. The writer Sudha Murthy is trying to give the same suggestion to all women that, do not end your life for some else but rise and fight. This new thought makes Anupama a torch bearer for new generation women. The authors main intention is to make women aware that they should acquire knowledge to defeat any problem in the life. Anupama left her life back in the village and goes to new city Bombay. The author deliberately selects the city Bombay because this is the city of dream and does not follow the traditional customs which are against women. Anupama begins her new life with her college friend Sumithra who stays with her husband. Sumithra's husband is not like Anand but he opens heartedly accepts Anupama in his house and gives her treatment like a sister. Anupama begins a new job new life in the city Bombay and realises that all other women do not bother about her white patch and her past. Some of the incidents make Anupama's life more valuable when she donates blood to Dolly after her accidents. Anupama's life at Bombay after few days later was not the same as she has to leave her friend Sumithra's

house as her husband's nature has changed towards her. Now she joins house of Sumi who is her good friend and becomes the lecturer in Sanskrit subject at local college.

In the development of the story Anupama meets an accident and was treated by the Dr Vasant. He finds more closeness with Anupama because his own father was a Sanskrit teacher. Anupama helps Dr Vasants friend Dr Satya in his bad phase of life and bring him back on the track. In the life of Anand somewhere he realises the lie of his mother and hypocrisy of his sister which makes him realises the love of his wife and he goes in search of his wife Anupama. Anand definitely realises the important of his wife but never get her back in his life. As the new women she rejects to back in the relationship with her husband. Anupama even leaves another man in her life Dr Vasant and continuous to run her play and guide students.

Anupama breaks the traditional thinking of all women and makes her own carrier and does not get bind to the old tradition to serve husband. In the real time this novel is the best inspiration to all women. The courage Anupama shows is the most realistic way of life women should choose instead of suffering. The reader can see that each sentence of Anupama is the hope in the life of women who is a victim of male dominated society. The vitiligo is not the stigma and it does not affect the life of person or nor does it create problem to others. Then also the society makes it a stigma and unnecessary creates problem to our own people. The vitiligo does not come in Anupama life before the marriage but her entire family suffered due to that. Anupama's father listened a lot form Radhakka due to that white patch. This is clear that the family is responsible for Anupama's vitiligo but no one is ready to accept the fact and tortures her in the life. The double marginalisation is also available in the novel where at first, she is a woman and then has vitiligo means as a woman already depressed in the house and now this vitiligo doubly suppressed her life. Anupama becomes the most rejected lady in the house as an untouchable in the family. The writer Murthy primly talk about the gender difference in the society. The great critic Wollstonecraft writes in her book *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) about the equality of male and female. The writer tries to make the society aware about the rights of women at the same time the new woman who does not bother to leave her husband when he is not a good person. The new society do not want to make the marriage as gamble but each woman gets the best man who takes care of her. The male should realise the equal status of women in the society and accept it at the same time to teach the next generation. Anupama's life at Bombay make women aware that there is always a hope in future for good life. The generation's rules are merely a custom to stop women but they need to be broken and achieve the success in the one's life. Bombay city does not bother about the

past of any woman but gives more support to grow, this the picture of new society which does not want to restrict the woman but allow her to fly. Each and every small friend of Anupama in the city Bombay expects that she should stay happy in the life. One of Anupama's friend gives her own house to live. The blow of new women is so powerful that when Anupama's husband meets her she immediately did not give any positive response to him which he gets at the time of marriage. Anupama even avoids him with sad face. In her life she gives much respect to her husband. Anand was the winner of her soul and body but he fails to retain it, when she requires the actual help, he leaves Anupama. Anupama expect the help of her husband in the matter when her mother-in-law want her to through her out to house. She says, "now that you are here, answer me." "You knew that I did not have this before our marriage. You could have told your mother...They wanted an excuse to get rid of me and your silence provided them with the perfect cover." (42). This is the picture of helpless woman in the male dominated society where her voice is totally crushed under the dominance of male. The another most important face is narrated trough this incident is that if the woman is poor then she again doubly stressed in the society. Anupama narrates the well definition of marriage "A marriage is a lifelong commitment; for better or worse, till death do us part." (45). As the new woman she totally denies the affection of husband, children and love in the life. The best answer she provides that the new woman has to stand and make your own opinion, in this case to accept or reject is the matter their own. This stand of Anupama make it clear that in the ancient period the status of women and later it is totally changed with time. The new woman denies the authority of male over them, like before marriage the father and brother have control over woman and after marriage husband is sole winner of wife. This mentality is totally challenged in the new woman's era. The most important answer as a reader of the novel or researcher found that the education is the only key of Anupama's success. In her life the education gives her that opportunity to raise her voice and fight against the male domination. The typical Indian scenario where the woman is the puppet of male's hand. She has no right to take decision in any matter of life. If we take a look in the past of Indian society, we can see that woman are merely treated secondary in the family and society. It is a picture that before marriage the woman needs to depend upon her father and brother and after marriage she is depend upon her husband. Due to less economic contribution in the family woman always neglected as a least human being in the family. The momentum was continued for many years for woman and now after many years they started getting education and learning many skills to earn. This is the only factor which is changing the life of woman and they become the decision maker in the

family. The situation is same for Anupama, where the education gives her wings and she flies high in the male dominated society.

Anupama breaks the psyche of female who thinks they are less superior to male and creates the new woman of millennium who is far away from the fear of male domination.

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