

Discrimination Against Indian Girl Child by Mahesh Dattani's Tara

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Abstract - The present paper is an attempt to highlight Indian dramatist Mahesh Duttani and his beautiful play 'Tara' with the concept of gender discrimination against the Indian Girl child. He is a great Indian English dramatist in the last decade of the twentieth century. In this play, he presented the reality and position of women in India. His plays open various aspects of gender discrimination. He also justifies the destiny of a girl in a male and orthodox family. He has tried to show the ugly, mean, and unhappy truth of our society. This research paper also explores a well comparative analysis between Shakespeare and Mahesh Dattani.

Index Terms - Gender, patriarchal society, males' chauvinist, myth, racial discrimination, comparative analysis etc.

INTRODUCTION

In the world of literature, Drama is defined to be the most impressive, powerful, and effective genre. Drama provides an excellent platform to express his view and ideas and those views correctly present in front of an audience on the stage. Drama receives the definition of "A prose or verse composition especially one telling a serious story that is intended for representation by actors impersonating the characters and performing the dialogue and action." [1]. Indian English drama was developed by western and British patrons of drama. Now Indian drama is the mirror of our Indian society. Indian drama has the longest and greatest with a rich glorious tradition of India and its journey begins with the *Natyasastra* in Sanskrit plays. Basically, it is entirely based on Indian myth, society, and culture. Though there is a variety of drama in literature here we are discussing the tragedy of drama based on social problems.

We know that Shakespeare was regarded as a great and famous writer in English literature, and he holds a preeminent position of dramatist in the world. His four major tragedies: *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and

Macbeth, nobody can beat him for these tragic dramas. But after Shakespeare, there are many dramatists in the world literature who gave a new direction to society and their drama based on the real life.

Indian English drama has produced by Mahesh Dattani who is a great thinker and Indian dramatist in English literature. He was born in Bangalore on 7th august, 1958 in a Gujarati family. He is a socially committed artist with a unique position as a contemporary Indian English dramatist. His languages and themes are very innovative in plays. Dattani's work examined the realities of society which lay behind many facades and for this, he is largely responsible for the rising of realistic social drama. He is the first playwright in English to be honored with a 'Sahitya Akademi Award' for the contribution of world drama. His plays are very realistic and deal with religion, sexuality, and racial discrimination issues. Indian drama is entirely based on Indian myth, culture, and society and for that, we can say that Indian Drama is the mirror of our society.

Mahesh Dattani the creator of 'Tara', the drama here I am highlight in this paper. It is a third drama staged in Bangalore. It was directed by Dattani himself. By this drama, he reveals how a child girl victim and subjected to gender discrimination in an educated society. Dattani has fearless presented the reality and position of woman in society. He is tried to show the ugly, mean, and unhappy truth of our society. In this drama, we can see his concern about discrimination against child girl in society. Definitely, many writers have written on it and perhaps even further will be written on it because over the year the society has not throw-out gender discrimination against child girl.

We have read Shakespeare's drama and his very interesting drama 'Hamlet' is a superb tragedy and it is the most peculiarly artistic as an extraordinary powerful in its effect. In this drama, we can see

individual person's madness, tragedy, and revenge but here Duttani depicted in *'Tara'* that many child girls are killed every day even before they born into this world, and this is becoming a big and serious tragedy in the world. He tried to explain the world's madness and I don't know what revenge with a small child girl. *'Tara'* has been written in 1990. It deals with prejudices imposed by old-age social order on the gender discriminatory attitude of parents for their children. Through this play, Duttani nicely presents people's morbid expectations and desire to seek pleasure from the pain of others. It is the story of educated Indian family Patel and his wife Bharti who were an educated, but they created gender discrimination against a girl child. *'Tara'* is a story of a girl, just like her name she wants to live with a shine. In this drama, we can see unfair differences between male and female. Mahesh Dattani says in an interview:-

"Well, basically, it began with, you know, reading an article in a medical journal about Siamese Twins being separated, and, of course, they were invariably of the same sex and there was this thing about a fused leg and which had the qualities of both left and right so there had to be some careful consideration as to which twin was supplying the blood to the leg and the journal went into the detail because obviously it was a very unique operation and separation. Although that was the inspiration, but I think by then having written *Dance Like a Man*, I was prepared to take on the gender issue head on, and I think that was a powerful metaphor. Again, you know, the play is misread and, you know, people tend to focus on the medical details but that's really not what the play is about. It's a metaphor either for being born equal as male and female and sharing so much more and with the surgical separation comes a cultural distinction and prejudices as well, but on another level, it could also deal with the individual having the male and female self...[2].

Here Dattani presents a story about a girl and his brother, name were Tara and Chandan who are born with three legs. Actually, they were Siamese twins and conjoined from the chest down. The problem begins when it is recognized that it has been unequal and after a major and difficult operation that they were separated. It is an unfair operation because in this one child could be live with two legs and the other had survived with only one leg. In other words, this operation means the death of either of the two. After a

big operation it is decided to give the third leg on to the male body. So that is completely unfair decision against female child. Here Dattani attempt big question that why we do discrimination between male and female. Everyday 1000 child girls are dying because of hunger, poverty or they are forced to become child labor.

In this play Dattani's theme of consciousness, love, guilt relationship between sister and brother. After this unfair operation Chandan live with two legs but his sister completely lame and she has not enough time to live because after this operation she was physically weak. After all these, Patel's attitude never changed and always negative for her, but his mother realized that she had wrong with her and her guilt started. She was worried about her daughter. When she had grown up and read about gender discrimination and his unfair operation, she completely straggles but never gives up. She lived her life with one leg and fight against gender discrimination in society. I thought that a girl and boy are born from the same mother but how big differences between them. A father always wants to son and wants to, my son will be my old age stick and my descendants will carry grow and on the other hand their perception for a girl, she is useless in life and no need of any kind of education for her.

"Tara, a feisty girl who isn't given the opportunities given to her brother [although she may be smarter] eventually wastes away and dies. Chandan escapes to London, changes his name to Dan, and attempts to repress the guilt he feels over his sister's death by living without a personal history. Woven into the play are issues of class and community, and the clash between traditional and modern lifestyles and values."[3]

Our social system killed many child girls and makes their life a burden on earth. In most parts of the world, women faced many problems in our society like oppression, abuse, violence, and discrimination. Gender discrimination is a type of violence against women. The UN declaration of the elimination of violence against women states that:-

"Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women" and that "violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men."[4].

In most parts of the world, females are looked at as less worth than males. Gender discrimination is a curse of our society, and we always forget that we cannot exist without women in the world. Today many girls are illiterate only for the morbid mentality of our society in which education is important for only males and not to be female. Now we have to do something for women and what kind of world do we want to live in without women but that is not possible we cannot imagine and exist without women in the world.

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