

Women's Defective Inheritance by Gender Disparity with special reference to Meena Kandasamy and Bama

Jeevalatha.I¹, Dr. R. Kannan²

¹Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Languages, Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, Padur, Chennai – 603 103

²Associate Professor, Department of Languages, Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, Padur, Chennai – 603 103

Abstract- Gender disparity is a sad and fair truth of our society. People often differentiate between the genders, with males inappropriately getting the edge. Sadly, females in our society go through a lot of evils. The researcher inspired and motivated to fought and rise against feminism in Tamil Nadu. Meena Kandasamy and Bama are two famous authors usually focused their writings for and against feminism. The authors highlight gender discrimination and imposed isolate for female in various situation and time being. In addition to the imposed sociocultural practise influenced the women as ineffectiveness in decision making. It also highlights the male domination and creating female inheritance against decision making. The researcher has chosen 'When I Hit You' and 'The Gypsy Goddess' of Meena Kandasamy. On the other hand, 'Karukku' of Bama has chosen to generalise the gender discrimination, women defective inheritance and isolation in society. When I Hit You is a famous novel by Meena Kandasamy that tells the story of a young, educated, and successful writer who marries a university professor and experiences extreme violence and social isolation at his hands. The another novel of Meena Kandasamy taken for study is 'The Gypsy Goddess'. In 'The Gypsy Goddess', the author narrates recounts the 1968 massacre of forty-four landless villagers striking for higher wages in the village of Kilvenmani, Tamil Nadu. Meanwhile Karukku is a famous novel of Bama summarise about the life history of Bama as Roman Catholic Christian growing up in a small village in Tamil Nadu, becoming educated, entering a convent, and leaving from home seven years later, disillusioned by the persistence of caste oppression and discrimination within the church and its institutions. The all three selected novels portrait the women characters in dimensional curiosity. Hence the researcher made an attempt to generalise the fact against feminism and to conclude a appropriate result on the basis of moral arbitrary of the novels. The aim of this article will be to analyse the different ways in which Meena Kandasamy and Bama, so far known as a critically acclaimed poet,

uses the novel as a literary genre, together with some well-known postmodern theories and strategies, in order to disclose the shortcomings of traditional linear plot-driven novels, criticize the exoticism so often displayed in contemporary Tamil Nadu fiction, unearth the "other" side of official Indian history, dig up the traumatic story of an entire Tamil Nadu society fight for freedom of gender disparities, and give voice to those who were for so long relegated to silence, invisibility, and oblivion. As this analysis will make clear, the experimental nature of this novels of Meena Kandasamy and Bama to confront readers with an unpalatable reality beyond the capacity of the conventional realist novel.

Keywords: Gender disparity, Meena Kandasamy, Bama, When I Hit You, The Gypsy Goddess and Karukku.

INTRODUCTION

Feminism is a range of social movements, political movements, and ideologies that aim to define and establish the political, economic, personal, and social equality of the female gender. Feminism is being defined as the layout and frontier for female how to act and react in front of society and culture. Moreover the conceptual framework of feminism has been derived for the female gender by opposite gender, since the female gender is being imposed and discriminate by the socio-cultural psychology.

Gender discrimination occurs when a female is treated negatively or unequally based on the socio-cultural factor. It includes restricted access to education, jobs, and healthcare; unequal pay; and much more. Gender discrimination can affect people's rights, opportunities, and access to resources. It can also harm society as a whole. **Women form the majority of those living in poverty.** They have fewer resources, less power and influence compared to men,

and can experience further inequality because of their class, ethnicity, and age, as well as religious and other fundamentalism. It is one of the oldest and most pervasive forms of inequality. For centuries it has caused discrimination and exclusion of women, non-binary, and from social, political, and economic life. It has also blocked women from leadership roles and has led to increasing gender-based violence.

Altogether gender discrimination has become a center factor for the root cap against the welfare of women's in our society. It creates an imbalancing situation and affect quality of women in both professional and personal perspective. The family members thought that women are ineffective in decision making regarding financial and for self-status. It creates a new impaired condition and left the important decision in the hands of male elder of the family. In some special clauses the dominant female leaders are also being criticised and raised as barbaric and autocratic nature.

The works of Meena Kandasamy and Bama are the relevant authors were examines about gender discrimination. 'When I Hit You', 'The Gypsy Goddess' and 'Karukku' are the sample novels were chosen for generalise the concept of gender discrimination and the related social evils for the identification in favour of women against gender disparity in the society.

Authors Biography

An author's biography briefly reveals about the poet and writers. The reader can understand about the author's credentials, writer journey, and previous works. It's not just a simple overview, it's a strategy used to highlights about the author while justifying the prestigious dignity in addition it also understand that the work was confined under similar platform of research. The present study has taken the works of Meena Kandasamy and Bama.

Meena Kandasamy

Meena Kandasamy (b. 1984) is an anti-caste activist, poet, novelist, and translator. Her writing aims to deconstruct trauma and violence, while spotlighting the militant resistance against gender, and ethnic oppressions. She explores this in her poetry and prose, most notably in her books of poems such as *Touch* (2006) and *Ms. Militancy* (2010), as well as her three novels, *The Gypsy Goddess* (2014), *When I Hit You* (2017), and *Exquisite Cadavers* (2019). Her

latest work is a collection of essays, *The Orders Were to Rape You: Tamil Tigresses in the Eelam Struggle* (2021). Her novels have been shortlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction, the International Dylan Thomas Prize, the Jhalak Prize, and the Hindu Lit Prize.

She has been a fellow of the University of Iowa's International Writing Program (2009), a Charles Wallace India Trust Fellow at the University of Kent (2011) and is presently a fellow of the Berlin-based Junge Akademie (AdK).

Activism is at the heart of her literary work; she has translated several political texts from Tamil to English, and previously held an editorial role at *the backward class*, an alternative magazine in 2002. In her late teens, she translated the essays and speeches of Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi founder-leader Thol.Thirumavalavan into English: *The Fiery Voice of the Liberation Panthers* (2004). In 2007, she translated Dravidian ideologue Periyar's feminist tract (Why Were Women Enslaved?). She holds a PhD in sociolinguistics. Her op-eds and essays have appeared in *The White Review*, *Guernica*, *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*, among other places.

Bama

Bama (born 1958), also known as Bama Faustina Soosairaj, is a Tamil feminist, teacher and novelist. Her autobiographical novel (1992) chronicles the joys and sorrows experienced by Christian women in Tamil Nadu. She subsequently wrote two more novels, *Sangati* (1994) and *Vanmam* (2002) along with three collections of short stories: *Kusumbukkaran* (1996) and *Oru Tattvum Erumaiyum* (2003), 'Kandattam'(2009). In addition to this, she has written twenty short stories.

The comprehensive paraphrase of When I Hit You

In her novel *When I Hit You* we hear the original, unique voice of the writer Meena Kandasamy recounting a story of domestic abuse in southern India. It is not only a harrowing story of escalating violence, but also an account of the effect of this violence on the narrator as a writer. The beginning of the novel contains both these things: we meet her mother, citing the shocking state of her daughter's feet and the armies of head lice in her hair as proof of her husband's neglect. But her mother's lamentations are swiftly overtaken by the writer claiming authorship: *I must*

take some responsibility over my own life. I must write my story.

She begins with a description of Primrose Villa, the house in Mangalore where she spends the first few weeks of her married life. We immediately get the sense of this as a place of confinement-*this is the space within which I must move*-where she spends her days shopping, cleaning, washing clothes, performing the routine, repetitive household tasks of *the perfect wife*. These scenes are narrated as if part of a film script, where the narrator is acting a role-except that she's forbidden the glamour of stardom when ordered by her husband to wear drab, loose fitting clothes, T-shirts and pyjama bottoms, in line with his revolutionary Naxalite beliefs. (One of the many criticisms he throws at her is her petit-bourgeois background and he's bent on a period of *re-education* to get her to reject lipstick and hair care in favour of solidarity with her peasant sisters in the fields).

His control soon extends to her writing life: he insists she delete her Facebook account, takes over her emails and restricts her Internet usage to 3 hours a week, cutting her off from essential contacts and sources as well as from friends. Then the hitting begins, and as with the film script, she adopts a writer's viewpoint to distance herself and cope with what's happening: *On a dull afternoon, I can catalogue the weapons of abuse that have gathered around the house. The cord of my Mac-Book which left thin, red welts on my arms. The back of the broomstick that pounded me across the length of my back.*

The narrative is non-linear and scrolls back, some way in, to tell us how the narrator found herself in this marriage. Her husband is a college lecturer and political activist whom she admired and married on the rebound from a previous love affair. They move to Mangalore where he has a teaching contract and where she hopes to find work. But the reality is that the work never materialises, and, cut off from friends and family, not speaking the local language or having local contacts, she is trapped. She phones her parents regularly and complains about her husband's controlling behaviour and eventually of his violence. They are concerned but advise her to change, to adapt, to accommodate his demanding ways: depressingly, her mother says she's been through it and the first year of marriage is the worst. We know from the introduction what ignominy these parents will have to

face in Chennai if their daughter leaves a marriage after only four and a half months.

The violence escalates to rape. The narrator begins fearing for her life and at that point determines to get away. She learns something about her husband's past which she uses to gain the upper hand with him in one of his rages. She is taking control of their narrative, he's disempowered, and she manages to escape. However, that's not the end of the story. She makes a complaint to the police about his violence and threat to her life. Two and a half years later the case has still not come to court, her husband has re-invented himself and carried on working and even progressive, liberal people are leaning on her to drop the case. Eventually she takes her father's advice and leaves the country.

This is a depressing and shocking account of domestic abuse in India and the unwillingness of the Indian state and society to intervene to protect women. But is also a clever and nuanced account of the writer resisting the subjugation of the experience through writing. She employs techniques like the distancing mentioned above. She employs changes of mood and tone to insist on and express the range of her emotions, as in the tender account of the love she felt for the older politician, the tough, sometimes ironic tone of her take on life at Primrose Villa. She also sees the protective power of words: *wrapping my body into words, I proof it against the prying eye, against inspection. I have sheathed it against the hands of others. My woman's body, when it is written down, is rape resistant.* The narrator's story is fiction and as such she is unassailable: *I am the woman at whom society cannot spit or throw stones because this me is a she who is made up only of words on a page, and yet she is giving voice to the experience of many :.....and the lines she speaks are those that everyone hears in their own voice.*

Meena Kandasamy uses her writerly sensibility to approach the issue of domestic abuse with a fresh voice. Completely in control of her material, she combines an account of the brutal abuse suffered by the protagonist with a lyrical insistence on the right of women to be free, defiant, sexual and resistant. *When I hit you* was deservedly short listed for the Women's Prize in 2018 and I shall go back to it again and again.

The comprehensive paraphrase of *The Gypsy Goddess* Meena Kandasamy's "The Gypsy Goddess" is a powerful and disturbing novel that confronts readers

with the brutal reality of caste-based violence in India, specifically focusing on the 1968 Kilvenmani massacre where a group of agricultural laborers were brutally murdered by upper-caste landowners in Tamil Nadu. Through a raw, unflinching narrative, Kandasamy gives voice to the marginalized, exposing the systemic oppression and brutality they face, while simultaneously critiquing the complicity of the state and society in perpetuating such atrocities.

The novel is primarily a denunciation of the caste system, highlighting the inhuman conditions endured by backward agricultural labours, who are treated as sub-human by the dominant uppercaste landlords. The graphic depiction of the massacre serves as a stark indictment of the violence inherent in the caste hierarchy.

Meena Kandasamy explores the deliberate silencing of the victims' stories, as the authorities and upper-caste society actively suppress the truth of the Kilvenmani massacre. The novel acts as an attempt to break this silence and force the reader to confront the horrific events.

The novel also examines the intersectional nature of oppression, highlighting how a landless backwards landless agricultural women labours are particularly vulnerable to violence and exploitation. The female characters in the novel often bear the brunt of the trauma, further emphasizing the complex layers of marginalization.

While the narrative is bleak, it also portrays the spirit of resistance among the backwards landless agricultural labours, showcasing their struggle for basic human rights and dignity despite the overwhelming odds against them.

"Karukku," meaning "palmyra grove" in Tamil, is a powerful autobiographical novel written by Bama, a village Christian woman from Tamil Nadu, India, which details her harrowing experiences growing up in a religion ridden society, particularly focusing on the pervasive discrimination faced by backward village within the Catholic Church and broader Indian society.

The central theme of "Karukku" is the brutal reality of gender discrimination, highlighting the daily humiliations and injustices Bama and others endured in their village, from being denied basic human rights to being forced to perform menial tasks considered "impure" by ruling dominators.

Bama candidly narrates the specific forms of violence and oppression faced by backward Christian women, including sexual harassment, early marriage, and the lack of agency in their own lives.

A significant aspect of the book critiques the hypocrisy of the Catholic Church, exposing how caste hierarchies persist even within the religious institution, with backward Christians often relegated to the margins and denied leadership roles.

Bama's personal journey through education is a crucial narrative thread, illustrating how gaining knowledge and literacy became a means to challenge the oppressive caste system and give voice to her experiences.

CONCLUSION

Meena Kandasamy's narrative strategy delicately depicts the patriarchal values in the institution of wedlock. Unfortunately, women are blamed for not being submissive to the orders of their spouses, which has become a norm in familial life. The writer explains different ways of abusing a woman prevalent in the contemporary society, where a woman becomes an instrument of subjugation in the institution of marriage. In this situation, the twenty-first century woman is anxious to express herself, for pouring out her heart and soul in authentic notes to be heard and appreciated, not to be ignored and scorned at. She begins to be assertive and to express her emotions boldly to subvert the male hegemony, though she lives in the realm designed by man. She always longs to rejuvenate her abilities to enjoy much societal autonomy. To sum up, the balance between emotion and action is required in marital life, which can be derived through persuasive techniques.

As Bama is known for her writing in favour of backward landless agricultural labour. The author highlights about gender disparity and social evils faced by backward landless agricultural labour women in the society. In Karukku it is depicted that upper class landlords has fixed lower wage and discriminate the wage for women and men. It shows how far the women discrimination has not rows against social evil caused by upper class landlords. Bama has strongly evident that backward women slavery throughout their lifetime. On another hand she also examine how the Roman Catholic Christian raise out from the gender disparity even faced in church and home country. The

backward class women has threatened within the coops under the roof of society and poverty.

As the conclusion of present study feminism has been raising forward in various dimension of various classes of women's life. It's evidently proved that women's decision making is also being metamorphic in marital status. The women married University Professor and lost her identity and being isolates within a small circumstance. Another end of gender disparity has directly violates the welfare of women and make them slaves. Altogether women's are facing gender discrimination and accepting the social evils without any compromise. As a centre of the study, the researcher suggests that the feminism should be defined by women protagonist. Since the women protagonist have better understanding about women inheritance, meanwhile women should give opportunity to make decision on her own in their own preference and choice. Moreover the backward class landless agricultural women labourer should be aware about socio-economic and political status of country and state for their well-being. Let us let the women to flourish a blossom in future.

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