

Metamorphosis of Women in Sudha Murty's Mahashweta and Gently Falls the Bakula: A Study

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Abstract:

Indian English novels delicately capture the complexities of life and provide a meaningful and comprehensive depiction of human existence. The difficulties of Indian women to forge their own identities, work through emotional upheavals, and regain their place in society are brought to light by some novels. Numerous Indian novelists depict the true nature of Indian society, the condition of women, and how a woman deals with home oppression, misery, and the challenges of establishing her own life. The books Mahashweta and Gently Falls the Bakula by Sudha Murty show how women go from being oppressed and excluded to becoming strong and self-reliant. The hardships, setbacks, and victories of the female protagonists are highlighted as this paper explores the transformation of women in these two books. This research examines how Sudha Murty's writings subvert patriarchal conventions and honour the revival of the feminine spirit from a feminist perspective. While they face challenges in the areas of work, healthcare, and property rights, women in India work to live with dignity. The main focus of the article will be the patriarchal dominance in society and the challenges surrounding women's identities.

Keywords: Resistance, Crisis, Consciousness, Struggle, Patriarchal, Indian, Females, Work, Subjugation

Introduction:

A well-known Indian author, Sudha Murty is noted for her provocative novels that examine the intricacies of interpersonal relationships, societal challenges, and women's empowerment. She explores the lives of women who experience major changes in Mahashweta and Gently Falls the Bakula, two of her well-known works that illuminate the challenges and victories of womanhood.

Marriage and the family, two social constructs that are fundamental to any community, are today confronting particular difficulties as a result of numerous necessary changes. The dissolution of marriages can be caused by marital stress, especially when one person puts their career before their marriage. This is particularly prevalent among Indian men. Conventional, ethical, and religious values in Indian society have been called into question by the swift revolutionary changes that have occurred over the past fifty years. Marital values have become even more unstable as a result of prevailing ideas, growing obligations, and shifting lifestyles. Since lifetime stability is frequently not attained even after utopian weddings, the idea of stability in marriage is now called into doubt. Couples, and especially women in their roles as spouses, are impacted by both large and little pressures, which have an impact on their social, economical, emotional, and family lives. Rather than ideals that are centred on the community, the current generation is more concerned with personal development, freedom, and privacy.

These days, there are very high expectations placed on a spouse, including their financial, mental, and emotional well. When women are unable to achieve self-actualization, they frequently feel extremely depressed. The position of educated, modern women in the family is still up for debate, despite the fact that they enjoy personal freedom, professional advancement, and career development. Since their income or professional advancement frequently do not enable them to take an active role, economic independence does not always equate to influence inside the family.

Physical difficulties without the ability to make decisions leave a gap in the marriage, leading to couples drifting apart and finding it difficult to protect their union from harm. The relationship is uncomfortable when adjustment is viewed as a duty placed on the wife rather than as a collaborative approach. In India, the feminist movement has actively promoted women's identity while working to define, develop, and protect women's rights. Women are disproportionately burdened by the demands of marriage, especially during the early years. The difficult issue of juggling family obligations is something that many couples encounter during their marriage. It might become challenging to share everyday tasks, which can cause tension and rage. Differences that cannot be reconciled may arise from this susceptibility.

Mahasweta and Gently Falls the Bakula, two of Sudha Murty's books that are the subject of this research, highlight the problems that protagonist couples encounter, which ultimately result in their separation either early in their marriages (Mahashweta) or after many years of marriage (Gently Falls the Bakula). The pressures can occur at any point in a marriage, and although many couples are able to overcome them, this is frequently because Indian women are inclined to give in or compromise. In Indian society, the institution of marriage perpetuates the stark differences between men and women that are caused by traditional gender roles. Differences between genders in the division of authority within marriage are the main topic of this paper. It draws attention to how Indian women are excluded from decision-making processes and makes the case for a more accepting attitude in order to empower them and increase their influence inside the family. Additionally, it highlights how a person's personal beliefs, values, and knowledge mould their ability to make decisions and their place in society at crucial moments in their life, impacted by both social and personal conditioning. Exploring Women's Strength and Struggle in Sudha Murty's Mahashweta and Gently Falls the Bakula:

Anupama is portrayed in the book Mahashweta as an excellent pupil and artist who has a deep understanding of classical music from India. She is introduced to Dr. Anand by Dr. Desai, who notes that she has translated and dramatized Sanskrit novels written by the eminent scholar Bana Bhatta. She takes up the important role in the play "Mahasweta," attracting Dr. Anand with her beauty and artistic talent [16]. Everyone in the crowd is fascinated by her performance, including a wealthy suitor who decides to marry her after seeing her play.

Gently Falls the Bakula explores the life of Shrimati, a woman divided between her expectations on her family and her own goals. Shrimati's transformation from a youthful, aspirational student to a devoted wife overshadowed by her husband's professional achievement is shown by Murty. Topics including identity, sacrifice, and the changing nature of marriage in contemporary India are all covered in the book. Shrimati's quiet resolve to pursue education and personal development in spite of social pressure to put her husband's career first exemplifies her dedication. Murty's portrayal of Shrimati's internal conflicts and emotional struggles highlights the complexities of women's roles within traditional family structures [17]. By applying feminist theory, we investigate how Shrimati's journey speaks to more general themes of autonomy, agency, and the pursuit of self-actualization in the face of familial expectations.

Anupama neglects her work after marriage and lives only for her husband's affection. Her mother-in-law, on the other hand, is brutal and powerful, representing traditional Indian views. When vitiligo strikes, Anupama's life takes a terrible turn, turning her into a social misfit who is eventually abandoned by her mother-in-law and her careless husband. Her misery is emphasized

by her trips to the dermatologist and her emotional upheaval, which includes a brief suicidal ideation. But she is held back by an invisible force, which makes her wonder why she should give her life for a heartless husband. Sudha Murthy depicts a woman's unspoken bravery and dignity in the face of hardship while bringing attention to the predicament of patients with cosmetic illnesses like leukoderma.

In order to reveal the ways in which women are abused physically, emotionally, and psychologically, this paper also examines the chosen novels from a gender critical viewpoint. Anand and Shrikant, two individuals motivated by a desire for luxury and social advancement, are the main focus of this study of male-female interactions, the search for belonging, and the suffering of loneliness in modern society. As the main female character discovers that the showy norms and money-driven objectives do not translate into personal contentment, their avarice for status and power proves costly. To break down social barriers and live meaningful lives, the women put out endless effort.

Conclusion:

Despite their crucial contributions to society, women around the world persist in experiencing economic challenges, marginalization, abuse, and prejudice. Despite persistent barriers to their empowerment and fundamental rights, they are nevertheless on a path to assert their rightful place in society. With women empowered to confront patriarchal conventions, address the underlying causes of injustice, and assert their entire range of rights, this study demonstrated the tenacity and resiliency of a thriving women's movement. Empowerment increases capacity by utilizing the fundamental ideas of power, control, and choice. The protagonists, Anupama and Shrimati, undergo agony that changes their paths to empowerment in Sudha Murthy's two novels, *Mahashweta* and *Gently Falls the Bakula*. The courage and perseverance required to overcome hardship and forge their identities are demonstrated by their stories. Comparable to the chopping and scissoring methods employed by the well-known Portuguese football player Cristiano Ronaldo, the metaphor of skill acquisition emphasizes their capacity to retaliate against mistreatment. It is depicted as 'Naari Shakti' (Women Empowerment), demonstrating the empowerment of both Shrimati and Anupama. This essay emphasizes the books of Sudha Murthy's continuing significance in the current conversation about women's rights and empowerment by taking a feminist look at the travels of Anupama and Shrimati. By virtue of their agency and tenacity, Anupama and Shrimati become representations of fortitude and resolve, encouraging readers to imagine a society that is more equal and inclusive.

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