

The Critical Study Of Valiantness In The Novel *Mahashweta*

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Abstract

This paper is studied from the perspective of a girl named Anupama who undergoes tremendous life changes after marriage when she comes across skin pigmentation because of leukoderma disease. *Mahashweta* is based on a Kannada novel through the literary work of Sudha Murty. Anupama the female protagonist is left behind by her husband after marriage and abandoned by her in-laws due to a white patch on her skin forced to leave home. The social stigma attached to such a disease forced her to leave contemporary society.

Keywords: leukoderma, insensitive, social stigma, ostracism, contemporary society.

1. Introduction

The novel *Mahashweta* is pitiable and narrated by Indian author Mrs. Murty, originally written in Kannada. It tells the inspiring story of Anupama, a young woman who faces the challenges of social stigma and prejudice due to her condition, leukoderma. The novel delves into themes of resilience, self-discovery, and the power of the human spirit.

2. Literature review

In the paper “*EXPLORING SUDHA MURTHY’S NARRATIVE MAHASHWETA: A JOURNEY FROM REJECTION TO EMBRACING TO EMBRACING FEMALE IDENTITY.*” The research scholar Prajwala S Sanil has investigated that Despite facing societal prejudice and a challenging battle against skin disease, Anupama’s unwavering spirit and compassion win the hearts of those around her, including Dr. Vasant. This transformation marks a new chapter of self-discovery and triumph, as she overcomes adversity to find peace and fulfillment. In the paper *Dissemination of Social Awareness in Sudha Murty’s MAHASHWETA: An Inexorable Oppression of Anupama* by Ms. S. Prema, a Research Scholar investigates through Murty’s literature, she aims to shine a beacon of hope for those who silently endure suffering due to societal prejudice. By crafting characters, themes, and plots that resonate with individuals worldwide, she endeavors to raise awareness about the diverse experiences of human life.

3. The Research objective

To study the Impact of Social Stigma.

To analyze the Female Empowerment and Resilience.

To study the Role of Family and Relationships.

To study the Exploration of Identity.

To study the Social Commentary on Beauty Standards and Discrimination.

4. Hypothesis

1. Societal stigma can have a profound and lasting impact on an individual's self-esteem and well-being in the novel *Mahashweta* (2000).

2. Education and personal growth can empower individuals to overcome adversity and challenge societal expectations.

3. Family relationships can be both a source of support and a source of pain, particularly in the face of discrimination and prejudice.

4. The exploration of identity is a crucial aspect of personal growth and resilience.

5. Challenging societal beauty standards and discrimination is essential for promoting social justice and equality.

5. Limitations of the study

There are some limitations to consider when studying the novel *Mahashweta* (2000) from a Single Perspective as it is studied from the single character’s perspective. The novel is told from a single perspective, that of the protagonist. This limits the ability to fully understand the experiences and perspectives of other characters, particularly those who might have differing views or experiences. Interpretations of the novel’s themes and messages may vary depending on the reader’s personal experiences, biases, and understanding of the text. Complete justice is not performed with other themes of the novel so further research is required from different angles. In the wake of translation, the true essence of the text is lost and it impacts certain elements or passages.

6. Plot of the novel

Mahashweta (2000) is a touching tale of the young woman Anupama, who faces the challenges of societal prejudice and discrimination. Anupama, a talented and beautiful girl, marries Anand, a doctor from a wealthy family. However, her life takes a drastic turn when she is diagnosed with leukoderma, a skin condition that causes white patches on the skin. Her in-laws and even her husband abandoned her, ostracizing her due to her physical appearance. Devastated but determined, Anupama decides to rebuild her life. She leaves her village and moves to Mumbai, where she faces numerous hardships and struggles to find acceptance and independence. Through her resilience and strength, Anupama overcomes adversity and eventually achieves success and happiness. The novel explores themes of societal stigma, discrimination, and the power of the human spirit to overcome challenges. It is a powerful and inspiring story that highlights the importance of inner beauty and self-worth.

7. The act of Bravery

The courage to stand bravely in whatever circumstances Anupama comes across. “This time Anupama did not weep-there were no more tears left inside her” (Murti 69) Anupama was no more taking into granted sole responsibility for the negative incidents that were occurring one after another due to her leukoderma. The face of a sense of responsibility is reflected. “ She is the one who sheltered and nurtured the baby within her body while the father watched from the sidelines,” (2) The bravery movement starts from the womb itself. And the one who delivers the baby, the mother resembles the epitome of courage as compared with men. Being literate is a weapon. “I have my education” (81) Anupama was highly qualified and the strength of education escalated her great confidence in herself, it boosted her courage to make the right decisions at the right time. While exclaiming to her friend Sumi she confesses not to talk about past events but to look forward to a better future.

A lonely woman is considered as an easy prey for a man. “Hari reached for Anupama again” (88) Anupama does not even for a second thought about Hari as Sumi’s husband when he tries to assault Anupama and in return she agitates against his advances with bravery. It takes great strength to express the pain “But you never bothered to console me even once” (147) Anupama collected great courage to explode all her humiliations and grievances in front of Anand as how badly she was treated after Anand’s departure to London. Anupama expressed all the sorrows and insults she went through but did not surrender to the tests of time and came up with more flying colors with the right decisions for her future betterment after her eviction from her in-law’s home.

The wise decision matters a lot. “Let us part with good grace” (149) Anupama was very clear with her future decisions that she no longer requires any male support to withstand any obstacles in her life nor does she want to under the sympathy of someone from the society. Even deserves to reflect her self-identity in the community where nobody judges her by the color of her skin rather than her talent. Anupama clearly states to get apart with mutual understanding.

8. Discussion and Analysis

Sudha Murthy’s “Mahashweta” is a poignant exploration of societal prejudices, female resilience, and self-discovery. The novel offers a powerful critique of beauty standards, discrimination, and the impact of social stigma on individuals.

1. Societal Stigma and Discrimination:

The novel highlights the devastating impact of societal stigma on the protagonist, Mahashweta, who is ostracized due to a physical imperfection.

Murthy explores the psychological and emotional toll of discrimination, emphasizing the importance of self-acceptance and resilience.

The novel challenges societal beauty standards and expectations, suggesting that inner beauty is far more valuable than external appearances.

2. Female Empowerment and Resilience

Anupama’s journey is one of self-discovery and empowerment. Through education and personal growth, she overcomes adversity and challenges societal expectations.

The novel celebrates female resilience and the importance of supporting women in their pursuit of independence and equality.

Murthy emphasizes the power of education to transform lives and break free from societal constraints.

3. Family Relationships and Betrayal

Mahashweta’s experiences with her family highlight the importance of unconditional love and support, even in the most difficult circumstances.

The novel also explores the concept of chosen family and the significance of supportive friendships in overcoming adversity.

4. The Exploration of Identity

Mahashweta's journey of self-discovery is central to the novel. She grapples with questions of identity and belonging in a society that often marginalizes those who do not conform to societal norms.

The novel emphasizes the importance of embracing one's individuality and rejecting societal pressures.

Murthy suggests that true self-acceptance is essential for personal growth and happiness.

5. Social Commentary on Beauty Standards

"Mahashweta" offers a powerful critique of societal beauty standards and the discrimination faced by individuals who do not conform to these norms.

The novel challenges the notion that beauty is solely determined by physical appearance, suggesting that inner beauty and character are far more important.

Murthy's message is a call for a more inclusive and accepting society that values diversity and rejects superficial judgments.

Overall, "Mahashweta" is a thought-provoking novel that offers valuable insights into societal issues and the human experience. By exploring themes of societal stigma, female empowerment, family relationships, identity, and beauty standards, Murthy provides a powerful critique of discrimination and a message of hope and resilience.

9. Conclusion

"Mahashweta" concludes with Anupama, the protagonist, standing strong against societal pressures and traditional expectations. She rejects her husband's attempts to reconcile and chooses to live independently, pursuing her education and career. The novel ends on a note of empowerment, as Anupama becomes a symbol of a new-age woman. She defies societal norms, breaks free from the constraints of marriage, and carves her path. The conclusion suggests that despite facing adversity and discrimination, women can overcome challenges and achieve their goals.

10. References

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