

Male Dominance in Vijay Tendulkar's Plays

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Abstract: - Vijay Tendulkar (1928-2008) is India's most famous Marathi play writer. Through his writing he focuses on the contemporary issues of society. The *Vultures*, *Sakharam Binder* and *Ghashiram Kotwal* in these plays he focuses on the male dominance, women Discrimination, Gender Inequality, Violence, man woman relationships. The *Vultures* which were published in 1961 and *Sakharam Binder* in 1972 *Ghashiram Kotwal* in 1972 shows the male dominance in the society and how men overpower woman as well as conflict between human relationship and the actual picture of the patriarchal society. His prolific writing over a period of five decades includes thirty full-length plays, twenty-three one-act plays, eleven children's dramas, four collections of short stories, two novels and five volumes of literary essays and social criticism. His female characters are mainly from the lower- and middle-class families such as housewives, teachers, mistresses, daughters, slaves and servants. The issues of male dominance, gender discrimination, greed for money, sexual norms, violence, manwoman relationship, social issues, power and morality have been featured prominently in his plays. He deals with all the problems and conspiracies, of the contemporary society. The conspiracies are discussed in this paper under the heading – Male Dominance.

Keyword: - Male Dominance, Women Discrimination, Gender Inequality, Violence, etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

Male Dominance, Women discrimination and Gender Inequality is the problem percolating since the ancient ages. In the patriarchal society in the shadow of women empowerment still women are discriminating and man always enjoys more power than the women. In the *Vultures*, *Sakharam Binder* and *Ghashiram Kotwal* he concentrates on different aspects of male domination and complexity of man-woman relationship. These plays depict male oriented society in which women are mere slaves for the achievement of men. It exposes the inhuman violence in its verbal form of the patriarchal society against women. The themes of the plays are based on the present socio-economic situation, family and marital relations: **The Vultures** was written by Tendulkar in 1961, but it was not produced until 1970. The play was set in a morally collapsed family structure and explored the theme of violence. In his following creations, Tendulkar explored violence in its various forms: domestic, sexual, communal, and political. Thus, *Gidhāde* proved to be a turning point in Tendulkar's writings with regard to establishment of his own unique writing style. Through this play he focuses on male dominance in the society. In one of the scenes.

Umakant: First settle our account! Then I'll move! Pappa's hidden hoard. Manik's money. Mother's jewels....
Ramakant: Ask from outside! Then you'll get them! All after you've got out! Out! Umakant: Go on. Wait. As if I'm all ready to leave. I'll quit when I've got every single paisa, you bastard! I won't let you get away with it. I'll sit on your neck. I'll make you puke it out! Bloody animal! Swindler! I'll see you in the gutter. The quarrel was between two brothers, yet it is not over. They also harass their sister, Manik. They both wanted whole property and don't want share it with Manik. They also blackmailed Manik's lover- the Raja of Hondur for money and create hindrance in their relationship. They broke the leg of Manik so that she can't meet her lover. When all were playing cards, Umakant tried to choke Manik to death. When they come to know that Manik's lover, Raja of Hondur died due to heart attack, they shocked that their plan to blackmailing him failed. They crossed all levels of brutality to fulfill their need of money. They kicked Manik's belly hard, as she was pregnant by Raja of Hondur, because they wanted that Manik should abort this child. It shows their dominance over their sister. It is the heartless relationship of Ramakant and Umakant with their own sister.

Manik has a fear of being killed. She does not believe them. She was blaming her brothers for mixing poison in her medicine when she was suffering by typhoid. In this context, she says: "...When I had typhoid last years, far from looking

after me, you'd all plotted to put poison in my medicine". It reflects that these two brothers can go any level to grab money. There is no value for blood relations. It shows that they want money to succeed in getting the bank balance and the fact of today's scenario that even in 21st century woman is getting their rights of property, though their name is there in property paper but when time comes it goes to the brother or brothers, if she does not have brother then it goes to them. In many cases we have witnessed the quarrels between brother and sister. In this play also both brothers fighting with each other for property and can go to any level to finish their sister.

In the Act II, Rama pleads her husband, Ramakant to leave the house because nobody can be happy in such a haunted house. Umakant wants his share and possession of the mortgaged house, but Ramakant refuses to help him to pay his debt. Thus, Umakant takes revenge on his brother by telling him that Rajaninath is the real father of Rama's child. On hearing it, Ramakant becomes restless. He broods over it and decides to abort. Here without trusting his wife ramakant directly come to the decision to abort the child without concerning his wife Rama even today also many families force to the woman to abort their girl child after baby identification though there are very strict rules against it. People are doing what they want unbalancing the boy girl ratio. In many cases the mother does not want to test for baby but due to the family force she is compel to do the baby identification, because the family wanted the boy to continue the family name. It is due to the male dominance in the society. We are so sick minded male that we kill the girl in the womb of mother and we are doing this sin since many years.

Sakharam Binder was written by Tendulkar in 1972, Tendulkar dealt with the topic of domination of the male gender over the female. The main character, Sakhārām, is a man devoid of ethics and morality, and professes not to believe in "outdated" social codes and conventional marriage. He accordingly uses the society for his own pleasure. He regularly gives "shelter" to abandoned wives and uses them for his sexual gratification while remaining oblivious to the emotional and moral implications of his exploits. He justifies all his acts through claims of modern, unconventional thinking, and comes up with hollow arguments meant in fact to enslave women. Paradoxically, some of the women which Sakhārām had enslaved buy into his arguments and simultaneously badly want freedom from their enslavement.

Sakharam Binder shows this fact that how male dominate woman. In one of the scenes Sakharam declares, "I'm hotheaded. When I lose my temper, I beat the life out of people.....Won't put up with slipshod ways.....I'm the master here." Laxmi deserted by her husband has to yield herself to Sakharam's despotic ways. Without becoming his legal wife, Laxmi fulfills all his needs but in turn she receives only rebuke and blows. He never lets anyone to boss over him. He says, "I had six before you. I disowned my own father. I wouldn't let anyone boss over me." He is the master of the house and he treats the woman he has brought worse than slaves. He is a self-styled man and is not even afraid of God. He says, "This Sakharam Binder – he's a terror --- He's not scared of God or of God's father" (Unlike Laxmi, Champa is physically strong, plumb and looks charming. Both Laxmi and Champa are forced by destiny to live with Sakharam. Sakharam exploits both the women and squeezes them for the food and shelter he provided for them. He demands more from the women than what he actually provides for them. Though Sakharam boasts of his honesty and straightforwardness, he behaves like a tyrant master. He calls her a slut, a bitch and a niggling bit of a cast-off woman. His ego is hurt because Laxmi dares to raise her voice against him. He couldn't digest Laxmi bossing over him. Laxmi who suffocates all these days bursts out: I've never heard a kind word here. Always barking orders. Curses. Oaths. Threatening to throw me out. Kicks and blows. [Wipes her eyes with the end of the sari] There I was in agony after I'd been belted, and all you wanted me to do was laugh. Laugh and laugh again. Here I am on the point of death and I'm supposed to laugh. Hell must be a better place than this. [Whimpers] If I die, I'll be free of this once and for all. For Sakharam, it is easy to rule cast-off women like Laxmi and Champa as they cannot claim their rights. He wants to enjoy all luxury of family life without the bondage of marriage. His infatuation for Champa reduces the intensity of his tyrannical nature. His lust for her body weakens him. Laxmi who has come back to Sakharam couldn't bear her place replaced by Champa. Innocent Champa permits Laxmi to stay with them against the will of Sakharam. Laxmi is waiting for a chance to throw Champa away from home, because she lost her control over Sakharam. Champa submits her body to Sakharam by force. She shocks Laxmi by her secret affair with Dawood, Sakharam's friend. Champa is very stubborn and gives her body to Sakharam only after taking alcohol. Moreover, the presence of Laxmi in the kitchen makes Sakharam impotent. Champa shouts, "Stop that 'Champa – Champa— 'You're not a man – not since she came.

She's made an impotent ninny of you. Don't have the guts to take me before her. You turn into a corpse – a worm.” Unlike Laxmi, Champa is able to overpower Sakharam because of his lust for her body. Her affair with Dawood is out of her own will. Innocent and meek Laxmi becomes villainous and reveals Champa's unfaithfulness to Sakharam. This provokes Sakharam to murder Champa. Sakharam loses all his power and becomes weak with this murder. Laxmi makes use of this situation and turns the wind in favour of her. The power structure changes at the end with Laxmi assuming more power to lead Sakharam. In Sakharam Binder the issue is sexual power. When that power is threatened, the protagonist is confused and lashes out viciously, taking a life. The equations change in an interesting round of musical chairs that tilts the balance off and on, and each character seems to reflect the role of another. (Agrawal 199)

Ghashiram Kotwal is a Marathi play written by playwright Vijay Tendulkar in 1972 as a response to the rise of a local political party, in Maharashtra. The play is a political satire, written as historical drama. It is based on the life of Nana Phadnavis (1741–1800), one of the prominent ministers in the court of the Peshwa of Pune and Ghashiram Kotwal, the police chief of the city. Its theme is how men in power give rise to ideologies to serve their purposes, and later destroy them when they become useless. It was first performed on 16 December 1972, by the Progressive Dramatic Association in Pune. Jabbar Patel's production of the play in 1973 is considered a classic in Modern Indian Theatre. Ghashiram Kotwal is the perfect example of male dominance. Ghashiram Savaldas arrival with his wife and daughter to Poona is to seek his fortune. Gouri the daughter of Ghashiram, he uses her as a means to acquire power and fulfill his oath. He decides to sacrifice his daughter to Nana in exchange of power. Since Nana is in love with Gouri, Poona comes under the reign of Ghashiram. People are whipped, sued and arrested. Any sin can be committed with the permission of Kotwal. Power makes Ghashiram insensitive to the sufferings of people. Sutradhar says, “Gauri orders, Nana does, Ghashiram rules” (387) Without Kotwal's permission nothing can be done. Kotwal's permission is necessary even to walk on the road at midnight and to call a midwife to attend a delivery. Gauri's sexual power fetches Ghashiram a chance to reign Poona as Kotwal. He was like a dictator and people are like his slaves. And Nana becomes the puppet in the hands of Ghashiram. He was using him as per his convenience. Here we find the sick mind of Ghashiram kotwal. Actually, Ghashiram is the representative of this kind of sick tendency. Today girls are reaching to many top positions and achieving great success but simultaneously girls are raped and exploitation of women and family violence depicts the fake, pseudo dominance of male. In the play Ghashiram is ready to offer his daughter Gauri for the sake of power. And he can do anything to get power or to dominate the people. His woman characters— Gauri, Rama, Mitra, Sarita, Kamala, Laxmi, Champa and Manik are no doubt the victim of male dominance and existing norms of the society. Through his plays He presents women discrimination of the society. He believes that gender inequality is not today's problem it is perculating since ancient ages.

II. CONCLUSION

As we all know Vijay Tendulkar is the writer who shows the ground reality of our society. Through his plays like - The Vultures Sakharam Binder, Ghashiram Kotwal he tries to show the male dominance of the society. In today's scenario though women are getting reservation in almost all the sector and many laws came to protect their rights and empower women but it is only on the paper. Women are getting exploited even today also and many family violence cases are being launched to police station. But the fact is those are approaching to police station that number came to focus, what about the women who are tolerating the male exploitation and hesitate to launch complaints. Many Female SARPANCH are there in Maharashtra. They got elected due to reservation, they become the SARPANCH, but all the businesses of gram panchayat are being done by their husband. This is the ground reality of our male dominated society.

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