



SARAT CHANDRA CHATTOPADHYAY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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ABSTRACT:

The idea of women's empowerment has drastically changed over the past 50 years, moving from a welfare-oriented perspective to an equity-oriented one. It has been described as the method by which powerless acquire more influence over the situations in which they live. In particular, control over resources and ideology is a component of empowerment. Although the idea of empowerment is not exclusive to women, it is distinct in that it transcends all castes and social classes as well as households. In this paper a brief analysis has been done based on Sarat Charndra Chattopadhyay's writings. Various writer's and researcher's findings have also been analysed in this paper.

Keywords: Women, Empowerment, Reality, Social, Education, Characters

INTRODUCTION:

On September 15, 1976, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay was born in Debanandapur, Hooghly. Sarat Chandra had to relocate due to his father's job change, and these memories are woven throughout all of his writings. Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay is a realistic novelist who uses in-depth psychological research to define his female characters. He depicts the phenomenological interactions between women in his era. Through fiction, stories, novels, essays, etc, he presented real society. His writings had a profound impact on women and society. Women are a bright presence in all of his varied short works. Additionally, he has emphasized the significance of women's education as a development strategy. Thus, in his different short stories, he has highlighted the significance of women's development as well as various duties of women in Indian Culture.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

The objective of the study is to figure out how Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay defined and portrayed women empowerment with the help of his works.

METHODOLOGY:

The subject matter of Sarat's works and the ongoing secondary resources are analysed in this study using the content analysis method. The majority of the research is conducted using content analysis. To arrive at a conclusion, a thorough analysis drawn from numerous sources has been conducted. Various historical methodological approaches have been used to examine important situations, including sociological, anthropological, and cultural assessments.

REALISM:

There is no denying that Sarat's writing is realistic. However, its reality is very different from that of Western literature. Since most writers have produced treatises on various facets of Sarat literature, it's possible that the reality that characterizes Sarat literature escaped their grasp. There are several connotations associated with realism, and these meanings frequently overlap. Folktales are realistic in the sense that they help the reader form a mental image of the people and circumstances. This is primary the definition of realism. The second connotation is that detailed description brings individuals and occurrences to life. The third interpretation is a realistic depiction of modern society and living. The incorporation of psychological principles into character actions and reactions constitutes the fourth meaning. There are many more definitions of realism that may be discussed here, but for the sake of this discussion, the four definitions of realism will be sufficient to understand the type of realism Sarat Chandra considered when defining his characters, especially the female characters. Many critics believe that the flow of consciousness is the foundation of all realistic works. Sarat's writings are realistic in their depictions of people because they reflect life as it is lived. They are also filled with references to current social, political, and economic issues.

THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN

As previously mentioned, Sarat believes in portraying reality. Sarat has never promoted a woman to the position of a goddess who illuminates celestial light, nor has he ever held a woman responsible for the misery that exists in the world. His writings are devoid of fancy and convey the truth. In his books and short stories, fabrications and reality are expertly blended. In his works, women are portrayed as pragmatist societal forces that reflect their true place in society. His ladies are strong, independent, and disobey social norms. Sarat places women in important roles within society. The suffering and exploitation of women are defeated by the male-dominated society. Every woman appreciates becoming a mother and is a part of the family. In Sarat's novels, men are shown as being weaker than women. In Devdas the hero drinks too much to die for the sake of his love.

THE SOCIAL CHARACTERS:

Sarat was well-versed in Western philosophy and literature and had an interest in the social sciences. However, his writing has deep roots in the land of his nation. Sarat writes excellent autobiographical books that depict his own life experiences. Paru, who appears as Paro in Devdas and Rajlakshi in Srikant, is a playmate with whom he plays with, quite frequently. Later on, Rajlakshi transforms into Pyari Bai, the prostitute in Srikant, who shares similarities with Chandramukhi from Devdas. In his books, he also discusses women's psychoanalysis, drawing inspiration from the tale of Savitri from Charitrahin. But for the first time, Charitrahin represents the chastity structures through Kiranmay, which also reaches a peak through Kamalmayi in Ses Prasna. He explains the emotional fluctuations in

the mind of the contemporary women. It emphasizes the intelligence and feelings of women. The primary focus of their life is the battle for love. Upendra, for example, is able to overcome his feelings for Surbala but loses Kiranmoyi in Charitrahin. In a similar vein, Satish wins Sarojini over but loses Savitri. The majority of his books offer a compelling depiction of the struggles involved in finding true love. Sarat illuminates the horrific practice of child marriage and the brutal treatment of young girls who are forced into marriage. They consequently become widows and suffer abuse from having to live in society as refugees. Women in the patriarchal culture are solely valued according to their castes. Numerous female characters in Sarat's works are depicted as impoverished, which weakens the influence of Tagore and Bankim. Sabitri comes from a low-income household, and Rajlakshmi has sold for money. Kiranmayi's life is negatively impacted by poverty.

EDUCATION:

Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay recognized that women needed education. In contrast to home education methods like charka cutting, he discussed women's higher education. He was against inequality and prejudice based on gender. He wanted women to be involved in politics, religion, education, and other fields. An example will make this explanation simple to understand. The two tales, "Anuradha" and "Darpachurna" (broken pride), have been selected for analysis.

"Darpachurna" revolves around two primary characters: Indumati and Bimala. Sarat Chandra, one of the writers, portrayed Indumati as an independent, wise woman. At the beginning of the novel, the author introduces several believable modern claims into the story. According to the author, Indumati eventually got married there, as planned, and continued to attend school there until she was older. Due to the fact that Indumati's parents refused her marriage to Narendra after first approving it. But Sarat Chandra has portrayed Bimala, an uneducated lady, as docile, understanding, responsible, and unwavering in her devotion to her husband. In order to achieve the ultimate goal, she not only wants to win arguments, but she also wants everyone to appreciate her highly. She is aware that respect must be reciprocated. The author uses Ambika Babu's wife as an additional illustration of a woman's obligation to her husband. Thus, it can be inferred that Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay must prioritize women's responsibilities to their families. For this reason, Bimala must teach Indumati the responsibilities of a wife and family. A wife might gain authority and love by being reliant on her husband for support and affection. Indumati first noticed Bimala's bondage to her husband at the beginning of the story, and subsequently, it was interpreted as authority. When Bimala's husband sent Bholu, and when Ambika Babu sent his servant to ask his wife if he might attend the museum. Instead, he felt as though he had shrunk in their eyes and the anguish started to reverberate in his head. She was aware of the dynamics of the connection, in reality. Furthermore, Bimala clarified that respect is a prerequisite for love. That is to say, the author has taught women the actual meaning of education, shattering the pride of the Indumati in their conceit about money and education.

In an alternate story from "Anuradha," Sarat Chandra demonstrated that Anuradha's maternal affection transcends all levels of wisdom. Vijoy, Kumar's father, is overcome with the mother's affection that in taking care of the motherless Kumar, Anuradha has showed. Both Kumar's stepmother and aunt, who will be bringing him up, have earned B.A.s. However, they were unable to be the mother that Anuradha had; perhaps she lacked formal schooling. The woman is educated; the only question that remains is whether or not her coursework will cause her to lose her compassion.

SARAT CHANDRA AND OTHER AUTHORS:

Sarat Chandra and Rabindranath Tagore belonged to the same league. Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay and Rabindranath Tagore, two writers, had different perspectives on women and their proper place in society. Both, despite their differences in age, were of the same generation and had comparable perspectives on Bengal. A writer's background and judgment may have contributed to their disparate approaches. Nevertheless, their impact on the advancement of women in Bengal and their literary contributions to Bengali and Indian literature could never be overlooked.

Sarat and Hardy both questioned societal convention, which forbids women from being forgiven and penalizes them severely for small transgressions. They attempted to convey to readers the need for a better society and the inadequacy of ingrained societal customs through their writing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay believed in showcasing the real picture through his works. Hence, he depicted the reality of Indian Women in his works as well. Various characters from his works have been mentioned in the study. Each of the examples discussed here either portray themselves to be empowered or they had the zeal to get empowered in that era. As per Sarat Chandra, education could have played a major role in Women Empowerment. It gives a kickstart to women's journey of self-development. Although, he highlighted a darker side of the same. According to him, pursuing education is good but not at the sake being ignorant towards your family responsibilities. A woman should use it as medium for self-development. Hence, at the same, she should retain the values inside herself in order have a happy life filled with both positivity and prosperity. A comparative analysis was also done among Sarat Chandra and other writers/authors from the same league. Despite having different perspectives, we have found similarities in Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's views with both Indian as well as Western writers like Rabindranath Tagore and Thomas Hardy respectively. The same has been discussed with the help of examples.

CONCLUSION:

In our culture, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay has accepted modernism with dignity. Indian culture places a high importance on women's responsibility and affection. Sarat Chandra is motivated by her desire to see women's education and advancement along this cultural path. Sarat Chandra has succeeded in preserving the spirit of the Renaissance. He was well aware of the status of women in his era, who were determined to pursue human principles and unconditional love despite facing social restrictions. As a writer, he has fulfilled his responsibility to argue for the need for social reform and to establish the groundwork for societal transformation, which fuelled the spirit of the Renaissance and helped it find its way. Notably, he has examined the enormous possibilities for the New Women and expressed an urge that society needs to reform to make lives better.

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