



Exploitation of Women in Mahesh Dattani's *Tara*

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Abstract

Exploitation is an act of utilizing something in an unjust or cruel manner. Exploitation includes political economy, economics, and sociology, exploitation involves a persistent social relationship in which certain persons are being mistreated or unfairly used for the benefit of others.

Key Words: Different Stages, Women Exploitation, economic exploitation, Abuse, Domestic Violence, Female Infanticide and Feticide, Dowry, Rape Issues.

Mahesh Dattani's women characters are not stereotypes but larger than life characters that grow from immaturity to wisdom, from weakness to strength and from loneliness to female companionship and bondage, and they sometimes even deteriorate from self-empowerment to self-centeredness. The women characters in Dattani's plays show the relevance of woman as a subject matter to his drama. Woman exploitation is also described in the plays of Mahesh Dattani but the female characters are able to fight back in the plays of Mahesh Dattani. He gives solution to the exploited characters. In this article, woman exploitation is discussed in the following play written by Mahesh Dattani.

This noun is from Middle English *expleit*, *exploit* "outcome," from Latin *explicitus* "unfolded, set forth." The verb *exploits* means to use someone or something, usually selfishly or for profit. The following paragraphs may clear in elaborative manner the meaning of exploitation.

Exploitation also refers to the use of people as a resource, with little or no consideration of their well-being. This can take the following basic forms: taking something off a person or group that rightfully belongs to

them. Making somebody to work using somebody against his will, or without his consent or knowledge, imposing an arbitrary differential treatment of people to the advantage of some and the disadvantage of others. The word exploitation is used to refer to economic exploitation; that is, the act of using another person's labour without offering them an adequate compensation

Meaning of Women Exploitation

Woman abuse is the intentional and regular use of tactics to establish and maintain and control over the thoughts, beliefs and behavior of a woman by creating fear and/or. All forms of abuse result in the woman losing some if not all dignity, safety and power. Abused women change their behavior, preferences and/or choices because they fear the consequences or retaliation of their abusive partner. There are different stages of women exploitation. They are; pre birth stage of women, infancy stage of women, childhood stage of women, adolescence stage of women and reproductive stage of a women. There is different form of women exploitation in the society. Such forms may be described as follows.

Domestic Violence

In Indian family the man is the head and women is the inferior as well as subordinate partner and societal pressure force women to maintain this status quo. Wife beating is the most prevalent form of violence against women in the Indian society and it is viewed as a general problem of domestic discord.

Female Infanticide and Feticide

Female Infanticide and Feticide play a significant role in lop sided sex ratio in India. Poor families in certain regions of the country sometimes resort to killing baby girls at birth, sometimes from the womb to avoid an unwanted burden on dowry and family resources. Sex selective abortion has also been common in the country. It's dangerous to abort the fetus after 18 weeks of pregnancy and quiet harmful for mother, too at such a late stage.

Dowry

Dowry is another form of women exploitation. The Government of India also recognize dowry as a social evil and strives to curb its practice. The Dowry Prohibition Act enacted in 1961 and the act was modified with the Dowry Prohibition Amendment Act of 1984, which has again been modified with Dowry Prohibition Bill 1986. Various female run organizations have played key role in the process of change. The

1961 Act define dowry and makes the practice of dowry-giving and taking, a punishable offence. Dowry is one of those social evils that no educated woman will own up with pride; still many are adhering to it. The practices of dowry tend to subordinate women in Indian society.

Rape Issues

Rape incidents are also recognized as women exploitation. It is an act which is proves as against will of woman. Gang rape is also treated as women exploitation Abuse is also a part of exploitation. In case of women abuse, laws are framed in rigorous punishment in India as well as across the world but the crime ratio are not getting low. The types of women abuse are as, physical, psychological, emotional, sexual, verbal, environmental financial, social and religious.

Woman Exploitation in Tara

Tara is the great example of woman exploitation in Indian society. She is born with physical defects and deserted in sense of full treatment to save her leg as a twin with his brother Chandan who narrates the drama .The author has beautifully designed the characters on women exploitation as grandfather and Tara's mother, Bharti. Tara is the victim of society that of love and affection because she is handicap by birth. Once on affection, she utters:

“May be we still are. Like we've always been, inseparable. The way we started life. Two lives and one body, in one comfortable womb. Till we were forced out... and separated” (Collected Plays, 325.)

The decision taken by Mrs. Patel leaves *Tara* crippled for life and it is noticed that Mrs. Patel's guilt gets revealed repeatedly throughout the play. She tries to compensate for this unfortunate decision (about their daughter) through her excessive concern for her. Her sense of regret is so deep that she agrees to donate her kidney to her daughter so that she may survive a few more years. While conversing with her son, she tells him: “I plan to give her happiness. I mean to give her all the love and affection which I can live. It's what she... deserves. Love can make up for a lot”. (Collected Plays, 349).

Indian societies have always had a male-dominated perception. All decisions in a family are taken only by the senior male member of the family. Even if there is a female member who is elder to the male, she is not given as much authority as the male. In the case of Mahesh Dattani's *Tara* also Mr. Patel's father-in-law the eldest among the three members of the family is also a powerful and an affluent politician.

He was the person who decided about the operation in which the conjoined leg was to be given to Chandan instead of Tara. He had even bribed the doctor with the sanction of a piece of land in Bangalore. Dr. Thakkar fell from his high status in the society without giving a second thought, along with his team, while deciding the nature of operation. Instead of taking a sound medical decision of allowing Tara to have her second leg, he favours it to Chandan who loses it ultimately as his body does not accept it. He had sold out his conscience for his ambitions and the temptation.

The long speech by Mr. Patel gives the whole essence of the play. The play centers around the theme as to how the physical separation manipulated by their mother and grand-father to favour the boy over the girl results in an emotional separation between the two conjoined twins. Tara, the unlucky-girl who has not been given enough opportunities like her brother, finally dies. Chandan attempts to repress the guilt he feels over Tara's death. His sense of trauma and anguish is so intense that at the end of the play, Dan apologizes to Tara thus: "Forgive me, Tara, Forgive me, for making it my tragedy". (Collected Plays 380.)

Thus, woman exploitation in *Tara* does not give exemption to the physically handicapped girl child like Tara even though the defect is a God gifted to her. It also appears in the drama that from baby girl to womanhood journey of life in Indian society, the evil of exploitation as female is associated with the life of woman in the society.

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