

Suffering of Women in the Poems of K. V. Dominic

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Abstract

Feminism means equal rights for men and women. In our society, rights should be given to women as equal to men. In our society women are discriminated in many ways. They are discriminated against in their family, in their workplace, as well as in their society. They are dominated and reduced to do only household work after marriage. In our Country still, now there are many villages are there who do not allow women to study and to grow up well in their career as well as in their society. In some places, women are stopped up to their higher secondary level education and they are not allowed to continue their higher studies because of their poverty in their family and status problem of education by which girls father was expecting to make marriage with the same status of the Boy which his daughter is having. Whatever measures have been taken by our Government as asking dowry is a punishable offense but still, now it was happening in some places. Some uneducated women are working in our society in many roles like cleaning public places, selling groceries, doing marketing; such women are also discriminated by men in our society in some places. If women are educated, they're also problems arise. They are discriminated in their workplace in the form of sexual discrimination and harassment. It was not happening in every place throughout our country. In some places, the working institution is also taking severe action on such cases. The present paper is an attempt to study the suffering of women as found in the selected poems of K.V. Dominic.

Keywords: K. V. Dominic, Suffering of Women, Discrimination, Domination, Dowry, Society.

Introduction

Indian English Poetry is one of the oldest forms of Indian English Literature. Indian poets write in English and they have succeeded the natives English to reveal typical Indian situations. There are many poets in the 21st century who excel in writing poetry in English. Among them, K. V. Dominic is one of the famous poets in this century. In K. V. Dominic's poems, he narrates about the women sufferings which they are facing in their society as well as in their family life. Women are doing all their household work, and they are taking care of their children. But usually, men are not supporting women. They always blame women for unnecessary reasons. Women are doing hard work the whole day for their families as well as they are very cautious and caring for their men too. But men are not thinking about her hard work and they are not sharing her work and understanding her. Some men are always busy in a liquor shop and they are spoiling their own life itself. The narrator portrays this was the main reason why women are suffering and dominated because of men. The following poem is one of the best examples by K. V. Dominic regarding the domination of women in society.

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Ms. N. Divya Bharathi, M.Phil. Scholar Suffering of Women in the Poems of K. V. Dominic

68

Gender Equality—Still a Dream

Dear my fellow human beings
there's no discrimination
of male or female in animal world
But look at the plight of female
in human world (1-5)

In the above stanza, the narrator tries to highlight that in animal kingdom there is no discrimination or any preconception like that between men and women in this voracious world. The poet informs the readers about the predicament or suffering of women in the world.

Her birth is ill omen
Millions are butchered
before they are born
Parents receive her
as burden to the family (6-10)

Here, the births of women are considered as a bad symbol. Many of the people in the family are cursing her for being born as a woman. Parents also consider her as a burden in their family. This is true in the context of many Indian families, where the birth of a female child is unwelcomed and thought of a debt.

She is destined to live
under her brother's shadows
Has to live on his leftover (11-13)

After the birth of a girl child, she has to compulsory live under the shade of her brother till the end of her life. She did not have any freedom to live her life on her own.

She is denied good food
denied good dress
denied schooling
denied entertainments
Always jailed in kitchen
compelled to work
from dawn to midnight (14-20)

The women of the family were forced or compelled to refuse good food. Besides, many things are refused for girl children such as not wearing a good dress, not having the right to study, not having the right to have some entertainment. She was always dominated to be in the kitchen always like a jail, and she was compelled to work forcefully from early morning to midnight for the sake of others in the family. Nobody cares for her and nobody understands her feelings, emotions, about her health as well as her desire.

None listens to her complaints
but tortures
if she opens her mouth
She has no choice
for her spouse (21-25)

In her family, nobody is ready to listen to her feelings and her soul which was filled with a lot of pain and suffering. But the family members are always ready to discriminate her if she will open her mouth. Even though she was not having the freedom to talk, or to share her feelings with her man in that home.

Often raped by her husband
He never cares
for her desires
Feeding of children
falls on her shoulders (26-30)

The woman was raped by her husband. He was never treated his women as her wife. He never cares about her feelings and desires what she was thinking off. Hence he was such a brutal man for her in her life. The women's duty was to feed her children and make her children fall asleep.

Sacrifices her health
for the entire family
Her struggle starts
from early morning
fights with utensils
in the kitchen
and then goes for
hazardous labour
till the dusk (31-39)

She has sacrificed her physical health for the sake of her entire family. She struggles from early morning when she woke up from her bed and she works hard in the kitchen by making breakfast, lunch, and dinner with the help of her kitchen vessels whole day. Apart from that, she has to do extra work by working in the field up to evening when the sunsets.

She is born with a cry
goes on crying and crying
till she reaches
her destination death (40-43).

Hence from her birth itself, she was cried a lot thinking of her sufferings which she was faced in her family from her childhood, adulthood and after motherhood itself. This sadness continues in her entire life up to her death.

Woman is most venerable
for she is your mother
she is nurse and teacher
and above all
she is the lamb of house (44-48)

As the narrator can notate that women should be respected in society. She plays a vital role as a mother to her children, as a nurse who cares for each everything like what wants all are needed, she satisfies their wants. She was also a good teacher to make her children study in their academic life as well as she guides her children in their personal life to be always honest and must choose always right path which was the safer side for her children. Finally, she was always a pity, and showing affection to her family always in her house.

Sexism is contemptible
A product of patriarchy
Patriarchy reigns supreme
in families, institutions
societies, nations
politics and religion (49-54)

Sexism is a shameful act. Here the elder male members of the families were having the only rights for all positions and to make decisions whenever necessary regarding their all kinds of aspects in the family. While women are not considered even as a human being in the families, in their working institutions in their schools, in their societies, as well as in their country, in their environmental politics and in their religion too.

Woman is exploited everywhere
Religion aimed at ethics
discriminates her
Why can't women be priests
in churches, mosques and temples?
Can't she enter and pray
in her Heavenly Father's abode? (55-61)

Women were misused in their society in the form of sexual harassment. Many men are taking advantage of this problem among women. They are misusing and making them a week. Religion always tells us moral values and principles but here it leads to female discrimination. The narrator also arises questions that why a woman cannot able to be priests in churches, mosques and temples. Whether they are not having freedom in this society to attain this position? Whether they are not having the rights of freedom for praying in temples to their gods?

Man, woman is your counterpart
Why can't she be taken
as your own body?
Why is she viewed
as a consumer product?
Why do you look at her
with lascivious eyes? (62-68)

The poet tries to drive home the point that men and women are equal. The way of thinking by both of them will always be different. Why women are not accepted by their men as their soul. If men understand his women's soul as his soul he will never hurt his women. Why women are seen at the point of consumer product? Why men are always seeing women in the wrong aspect or wrong perspective?

Hasn't she right over her body?
Why do you dictate her apparel?
Why do you forget
that she is your mother
she is your wife
she is your sister
or she is your daughter? (69-75)

The narrator questions every man that whether his women were not having rights among her body? Is she was always a slave for her men. Why you are not giving her rights for every

aspect of her life as well as her taste of dressing in a well mannered? Why you are not realizing that she was your mother that is the reason today you are a man? Why do you forget that your woman was a good wife for you that is the reason she gave birth to your children and she made you proud to become a father to your children? Why do you forget that your sibling was a woman in the role of your sister and that is the reason today she made you in the position of being a good brother for her in this society? Why do you forget that your daughter was a woman who made you proud forever up to the end of your life, that is the reason you have become a father for her in her life? The narrator finally connotes to men that please realize the value of women and give her freedom and self-respect because she is everything and every cause that you are today.

Discussion and Interpretation

Throughout the poem the poet tries to make the readers understand the suffering undergone by women. When born, the female child is considered as an ill omen due to the burden the girl child brings to the family. Here, the poet indirectly points to the dowry system which has burdened poor families and marrying off their daughters remained a dream. The poet has focused on the evils against women in the Indian Society.

Conclusion

In our society female discrimination must be avoided. To avoid female discrimination and domination by men, they should understand the soul of their women. If every man will think and understand their women's sufferings and situations mean this problem will be reduced automatically in our society. Men should also understand that they should not demand dowry before marriage. They have explained to their parents in which difficulty the bride's family are making marriage arrangements for them.

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