



Available online at: <http://www.advancedscientificjournal.com>

<http://www.krishmapublication.com>

IJMASRI, Vol. 2, issue 1, pp. 103-105, Apr. -2025

<https://doi.org/10.53633/ijmasri>

**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY
ADVANCED SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
(IJMASRI)**

ISSN: 2582-9130

IBI IMPACTFACTOR 1.5

DOI: 10.53633/IJMASRI

RESEARCH ARTICLE

SUPPRESSION OF WOMEN IN MANJULA PADMANABHAN'S LIGHT OUT

Devi Priya P¹ and Dr Raja Rajeswari Jayarani B²

¹Ph.D., Research Scholar, Department of English, Arignar Anna Govt. Arts College, Villupuram

²Associate Ptofessor & Research Supervisor, Department of English, Arignar Anna Govt. Arts College, Villupuram

Abstract

Many Indian women writers have volunteered themselves for the development of Indian writing in English. These writers took Indian writing into the respectable place. Manjula Padmanabhan is one among them, born in New Delhi, India 1953. Manjula Padmanabhan a sensitive writer addressed many social issues in her work, she aims to focus on women's suppression and a positive way to change themselves from the society. The present paper focuses on Manjula Padmanabhan 's Light Out (2000) in the light of gender insensitivity and violence. It is based on a true incident of gang rape took Place in the under constructed building in Mumbai. The play set in an urban socio - cultural society where women suppressed and brutally victimized. Most of her play based on women and their pathetic condition in society and family. It shows the curiosity of people to watch the important in men's reaction and non - interference even in a serious situation. Even men were not ready to listen the words of women in their family. Throughout the play Bhasker's wife Leela suffers by the screaming sound of gang rape took place in opposite building and begging her husband for a justice.

Keywords: Lights Out, Gender, Violence, Suppression, Self-Identity, Victim, Escapism

Introduction

The major issue for contemporary female is suppression. Indian Women were torn between custom and tradition, she is the one who is looking for self-identity, she is the one who attempts to give shape and content to an individual in the society.

While suppressing them, they lose their self identity. According to wikipedia "A term woman has progressed over the past millennium from wīfmann to wumman to wumman, and eventually, the modern spelling "woman". Man represents responsibility, power and sense of security in the society as well as in family, someone who can protect or take care of the

family from adversity. Women has been so adapted socially as well as mentally that is in the set family structure and tradition, especially in India. As a woman she has to balance her family and society. As a wife she has to tune herself to achieve her desire. While the man (husband) is a crude companion and a heartbreaker for the woman in the family, the wife is unable to make her own decisions. In olden period, a girl child or women addressed as a gift to her family and her future family. At mid, they considered as a curse, because it is highly challenging for a parent to grow up the girl child till her marriage. At present, women have education as a tool or a weapon to take care of themselves.

ManjulaPadmanabhan, the Indian women dramatist speaks on the truth of women in the society through her play *Lights Out*. The play draws the attention to the women sufferings in the society. It is based on the true incident took place in Mumbai. Bhasker and Leela a middle-class couple stays in the sixth floor in Santacruz building in Mumbai. In their neighborhood under constructed building, the couple hears a cruel woman's voice. They are hearing the voice frequently and thus Leela is upset. She is frightened and horrified hearing such voices. She is stressed over the continuous assault happening in neighborhood building. When Bhasker is out of home, Leela was more scared. She shuts the door, windows, draws curtain, shut the children's room asking them not to leave the room. She places cotton in her ears; however, she actually hears the voice. She requests Bhaskar, her husband, contact the police and file a complaint. Yet, Bhaskar just wants to ignore the incident. Bhaskar is so passive. Being a woman Leela wants to take an action, she cannot tolerate the crime undergone to another women, it affects her mental state. Bhaskar asked her to relax and if they call the police, it would affect their family and he informs her about the arrival of his friend Mohan Ram from Delhi. Bhaskar consoles Leela to remain silent and asked her to consult her yoga teacher.

The next scene starts with appearance of the Mohan, Bhaskar's friend. Through the conversation Mohan comes to be familiar with the incident and he is more inquisitive about the incident rather than

helping a victim. Mohan and Bhaskar are keen on investigating the incident but they were not ready to find a solution for the victim. Bhaskar further informs Mohan regarding the attacker and their nakedness. Leela exaggerate that she could not tolerate the rude and screaming sound. Mohan wanted to know about the screaming sound, what kind of screaming is it? whether it is high-pitched or hysterical? After hearing all the explanation from Leela and Bhaskar, Mohan further transforms the conversation into different direction expressing that it would be a religious ceremony since it is religious no one will involve themselves, not even the police. It is their sacred rites; the constitution has provided the permission to perform the rituals and guarantees us the freedom to worship. The practice of giving a horrible crime in a religious name is known as escapism. Immediately Bhaskar turns his intention into religious ceremony and Mohan confess that we do not offend the feeling of others. Both Mohan and Bhaskar are again curious to know about the victim instead of helping the women. They forgot their social responsibility. But Leela insist the feeling and pain of the victim. Mohan compares the unendurable pain of the victim to 'sadhus' a religious ascetic, who inclined themselves to sit on the nail or walk on the smoke coal.

"LEELA: But what about the victims? Surely their sensibilities are being offended?"

BHASKER: I'm not sure you can even call them victims any more! At most they are in pain. That's not the same thing as being a victim.

LEELA: But isn't it wrong to be in pain?"

MOHAN: Not if it's in the name of religion. Look at sadhus? They sit willingly on nails or walk on smouldering coal. Look at the fast days? The flagellation with knives?" (LO 31.)

This perspective shows the inelegance of people who are very close to the victim without doing anything. The public and people are turning deaf and dumb since they have lost the sensations of humankind.

The distinctive sound of a victim screaming for help can be heard through the window. The sound was truly rough and uncomfortable to Leela. At first, it was strenuous and determined, with recognizable words - "let me go", "help me" and so on. Then it turns into normal screaming and again grows into vigorous. Bhaskar and Mohan both were not worried about that sound but Leela worried. Just then Naina, Leela's friend and neighbor joined Leela and had a discussion with them. Naina too worried and wants to help the victim rather than just stare and ignoring the crime.

Later Naina's Husband Surinder joined them and he wants to kill the assault. He was not like the other men who are just ignoring the crime. Surinder planned to kill them with knives, acid, petrol and a camera to take a picture. With a perfect plan they zoom a focus camera from the cupboard and Surinder's car for chasing. Everything is in set they were ready to execute. But at last, it was worthless because the screaming stopped and no one left out there. Leela disappointedly "Oh! Then it must be over for tonight " (LO 63). All the men simply had a conversation about the occurrence and are not intrigued to call the police and make a move. The women are helpless and weak in front of their family, they could not take any independent decision. Though they have a capacity to overcome all the problems around them but they are suppressed by their family. Finally, nobody goes to assist the women and the sound stops as the attackers were taking off from the spot.

Manjula Padmanabhan shows the insecurity, lack of confidence of women living in the society. She clearly speaks about the truth happening in the society and the darkness around us. Everyone around us have darkness in physical sense and mental sense "lights out" is reflected in the mindset of individuals who need to examine the crime and notice it from a far off and sit idle without doing anything.

The Women in the society has been changed, they took part in all the fields like politics, sports, education, science and technology, media, art and culture. There are many women who shows their self identities, who lives independently, who rules the country and so on. Every woman should learn, how to take a decision. To take a decision on their own, woman needs a moral support from men. As we all know the charity begins at home, so it is the duty of the parents to enrich their children in the better way. Parents can enlighten their children to respect the words of others, especially the women who can also take a better decision at a critical time. At least a man should support or listen to the words of women who completely depend on the man.

References

1. [https:// www.wikipedia.org](https://www.wikipedia.org)
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_in_India
3. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355734643> Manjula Padmanabhan's Play Lights Out:
4. The Manifestation of Female Consciousness and Male Chauvinism Padmanaban, Manjula. Lights Out. Worldview Publications, 2020.
