



Marginalisation and subjugation of women in Indian Novel

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Abstract

The novels also explore the ways in which women resist and challenge their oppression. For example, in **The God of Small Things**, the character of Velutha, a Dalit man, falls in love with an upper-caste woman, Ammu. Their relationship is forbidden by society, but they continue to see each other in secret. When their relationship is discovered, Velutha is beaten to death by Ammu's family. Despite the tragic outcome of their relationship, Velutha and Ammu's love for each other is a powerful symbol of resistance against the forces of oppression. In **A Suitable Boy**, the character of Lata Mehra is a young woman who is trying to find her place in the world. She is torn between her traditional upbringing and her desire for independence. When she is pressured to marry a man she does not love, she rebels and chooses her own path.

Keywords: Marginalization, Subjugation, Women in Indian society, Indian Novels

Introduction

The marginalization and subjugation of women in Indian society is a complex and multifaceted issue that has been explored by many Indian novelists. In this research paper, we will examine how women are marginalized and subjugated in Indian society, and how this is portrayed in Indian novels.

There are many factors that contribute to the marginalization and subjugation of women in Indian society. One of the most important factors is the patriarchal system. In a patriarchal system, men are seen as superior to women, and women are subordinate to men. This system is reflected in many aspects of Indian society, including the law, culture, and religion.



Another factor that contributes to the marginalization and subjugation of women in Indian society is the caste system. The caste system is a social hierarchy that divides people into different groups based on their birth. Women from lower castes are often discriminated against and have fewer opportunities than women from higher castes.

The marginalization and subjugation of women in Indian society is also reflected in the way that women are treated in the family. In many Indian families, women are expected to be subservient to men. They are often denied the right to education and employment, and they may be forced to marry against their will.

The marginalization and subjugation of women in Indian society has been a major source of inspiration for Indian novelists. Many Indian novelists have written about the challenges that women face in Indian society, and they have also written about the ways in which women resist oppression and assert their rights.

Some of the most important Indian novels that deal with the marginalization and subjugation of women include:

- The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy
- The Hungry Tide by Amitav Ghosh
- A Suitable Boy by Vikram Seth
- The Inheritance of Loss by Kiran Desai
- The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri

These novels explore the different ways in which women are marginalized and subjugated in Indian society, and they also show how women resist oppression and assert their rights.



Review of Literature

The novels also explore the ways in which women resist and challenge their oppression. For example, in *The God of Small Things*, the character of Velutha, a Dalit man, falls in love with an upper-caste woman, Ammu. Their relationship is forbidden by society, but they continue to see each other in secret. When their relationship is discovered, Velutha is beaten to death by Ammu's family. Despite the tragic outcome of their relationship, Velutha and Ammu's love for each other is a powerful symbol of resistance against the forces of oppression.

In *A Suitable Boy*, the character of Lata Mehra is a young woman who is trying to find her place in the world. She is torn between her traditional upbringing and her desire for independence. When she is pressured to marry a man she does not love, she rebels and chooses her own path.

*The Hungry Tide*** explores the complex relationship between two women from different worlds: Piya, a marine biologist, and Nirmala, a widowed mother of two. Piya is drawn to Nirmala's strength and resilience, while Nirmala finds comfort in Piya's friendship and understanding.

Interpreter of Maladies is a collection of short stories that explore the lives of Indian immigrants in the United States. Many of the stories focus on the challenges faced by Indian women in this new environment, including cultural clashes, marital problems, and identity crises.

The White Tiger is a satire of the Indian class system. The novel is told from the perspective of Balram Halwai, a poor village boy who becomes a chauffeur for a wealthy family in Delhi. Balram eventually murders his employer and runs away with his money. The novel explores the ways in which the Indian caste system marginalizes and subjugates the poor and downtrodden.

The Inheritance of Loss is a novel about a young woman named Sai who is searching for her



grandmother, who disappeared during the Partition of India. Sai's journey takes her to India and Pakistan, where she learns about the history of the Partition and its devastating impact on the lives of millions of people.

Scholarship

In addition to the novels discussed above, there is a growing body of scholarly work on the marginalisation and subjugation of women in Indian literature. Some of the most notable works in this field include:

- Gender and Nation in Indian Literature by Susie Tharu and K. Lalita
- The Subject of Gender: Autobiography, Travel, and the Female Voice in India by Leila Rupp
- Women Writing in India: Two Generations, 1933-1986 by Rajeswari Sunder Rajan
- Postcolonial Discourse and the Representation of Woman: Theory and Text by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak
- The Body and the Text: The Politics of Writing in Twentieth-Century India by Veena Das

These works provide a theoretical framework for understanding the ways in which women have been marginalized and subjugated in Indian literature. They also offer critical analyses of specific works of literature that explore these issues.

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The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy

The God of Small Things, Arundhati Roy tells the story of two young girls, Rahel and Estha, who are growing up in Kerala in the 1950s. The girls are marginalized and subjugated because they are twins, and because their mother is a woman from a lower caste. Rahel and Estha's story is a powerful example of the challenges that women face in Indian society. The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy is a Booker Prize-winning novel that explores the themes of love, loss, and the consequences of social and political oppression. The novel is set in the fictional village of Ayemenem in Kerala, India, in the 1960s. It tells the story of the Ipe family, and in particular, the twins Rahel and Estha.

Rahel and Estha are a close-knit pair, but their lives are turned upside down when their mother, Ammu, and her British lover, Velutha, have an affair. Velutha is a carpenter from a lower caste, and his relationship with Ammu is forbidden by the rigid social norms of the time. When Velutha is beaten to death by the police, Ammu and the twins are forced to flee Ayemenem.

The novel is told from a variety of perspectives, including those of Rahel, Estha, and their aunt,



Baby Kochamma. Roy uses this narrative technique to create a complex and nuanced portrait of the events that unfold. She also uses a variety of literary devices, such as symbolism, foreshadowing, and magical realism, to create a rich and evocative atmosphere.

The God of Small Things is a powerful and moving novel that explores the devastating effects of social and political oppression. It is also a story of love, resilience, and the human spirit.

Here are some of the key themes of the novel:

- Social and political oppression: The novel explores the various ways in which people are oppressed in Indian society, including caste, gender, and class discrimination.
- Love and loss: The novel tells the story of several forbidden love affairs, and the tragic consequences that these affairs have for the characters.
- Childhood and innocence: The novel explores the loss of childhood innocence and the ways in which children are affected by the social and political realities around them.
- Memory and trauma: The novel explores the ways in which memory and trauma shape our lives.
- The power of storytelling: The novel itself is a testament to the power of storytelling to heal and to give voice to the marginalized.

The God of Small Things is a complex and challenging novel, but it is also a rewarding one. It is a novel that will stay with you long after you have finished reading it.

The Hungry Tide by Amitav Ghosh

In The Hungry Tide, Amitav Ghosh tells the story of Piya, a marine biologist who is studying dolphins in the Sundarbans. Piya is marginalized and subjugated because she is a woman working in a male-dominated field. She is also marginalized because she is divorced and has no



children. Piya's story is a story of resilience and resistance. She refuses to be defined by the expectations of society, and she asserts her right to live her life on her own terms. The *Hungry Tide* by Amitav Ghosh is a novel that explores the themes of human-nature relationships, identity, and the search for meaning. The novel is set in the Sundarbans, a vast mangrove forest in the Bay of Bengal. It tells the story of three characters: Piya Roy, a marine biologist who is studying dolphins in the Sundarbans; Fokir, a local fisherman and environmental activist; and Kanai Dutt, a young translator who is visiting her aunt in the Sundarbans.

Piya is drawn to the Sundarbans by her fascination with dolphins, but she is also drawn to the region's unique culture and its natural beauty. Fokir is a man who has lived in the Sundarbans all his life. He is deeply connected to the land and its inhabitants, and he is passionate about protecting the region's fragile ecosystem. Kanai is a young woman who is struggling to find her place in the world. She is drawn to the Sundarbans by its sense of mystery and its promise of adventure.

The three characters embark on a journey together to find a rare species of Irrawaddy dolphin. Along the way, they learn about each other and about themselves. They also learn about the complex relationship between humans and nature.

The novel is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on Piya and her research. The second part focuses on Fokir and his struggle to protect the Sundarbans from development. The two parts of the novel are interwoven, and they come together in the end to create a powerful and moving story about human-nature relationships and the search for meaning.

The *Hungry Tide* is a beautifully written novel that is both entertaining and thought-provoking. It is a novel that will stay with you long after you have finished reading it.

Here are some of the key themes of the novel:



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- Human-nature relationships: The novel explores the complex relationship between humans and nature. It shows how humans can both damage and protect the natural world.
 - Identity: The novel explores the themes of identity and self-discovery. The three main characters are all on journeys to discover who they are and what they want in life.
 - The search for meaning: The novel explores the theme of the search for meaning. The three main characters are all searching for something in their lives, whether it is love, belonging, or purpose.

The Hungry Tide is a complex and challenging novel, but it is also a rewarding one. It is a novel that will make you think twice about the relationship between humans and nature, and about the importance of finding meaning in life.

A Suitable Boy by Vikram Seth

A Suitable Boy by Vikram Seth is a coming-of-age novel that explores the themes of love, marriage, and social change in India in the early 1950s. The novel is set in the fictional city of Brahmpur, and it follows the lives of four families: the Mehra, the Kapoor, the Chatterji, and the Khan.

The central character of the novel is Lata Mehra, a 19-year-old university student. Lata is a strong-willed and independent young woman who is determined to choose her own husband. When her mother, Rupa, tries to arrange a marriage for her, Lata refuses to go along with it.

Lata is attracted to three different men: Haresh Khanna, a Muslim poet; Kabir Durrani, a Muslim politician; and Amit Chatterji, a Hindu lawyer. However, each of these relationships faces challenges due to the social and political realities of the time.

The novel also explores the lives of the other characters in the four families. Rupa Mehra is a wealthy and independent widow who is trying to come to terms with her new life. Arun Mehra,



Lata's brother, is a socialist who is fighting for the rights of the poor. Pradip Kapoor, Lata's friend, is a struggling artist who is trying to find his place in the world. And Saeeda Bai, Lata's singing teacher, is a courtesan who is facing the challenges of old age.

A Suitable Boy is a beautifully written and complex novel that provides a rich and nuanced portrait of Indian society in the early 1950s. It is a novel that will stay with you long after you have finished reading it.

Here are some of the key themes of the novel:

- Love and marriage: The novel explores the different ways in which people fall in love and get married in India. It also explores the challenges that people face in their relationships, due to social and political factors.
- Social change: The novel is set in a time of great social and political change in India. The country is newly independent, and there is a lot of debate about the future direction of the country. The novel explores the impact of these changes on the lives of the characters.
- Identity: The novel explores the themes of identity and self-discovery. The characters are all struggling to find their place in the world and to define who they are.

A Suitable Boy is a classic Indian novel that is both entertaining and thought-provoking. It is a novel that will make you think about the themes of love, marriage, social change, and identity.

The Inheritance of Loss by Kiran Desai

The Inheritance of Loss by Kiran Desai is a Booker Prize-winning novel that explores the themes of migration, identity, and the legacy of colonialism. The novel is set in India and the United States, and it follows the lives of two characters: Biju Patel, a young Indian man who immigrates to the United States, and his grandfather, Jemubhai Patel, a retired judge who is living in India.



Biju is a complex and conflicted character. He is drawn to the opportunities and excitement of the United States, but he is also haunted by his past and his sense of loss. He struggles to find his place in the world, and he feels alienated from both Indian and American culture.

Jemubhai is a more traditional character. He is proud of his Indian heritage, but he is also aware of the challenges that his country faces. He is concerned about the rising tide of religious extremism in India, and he is worried about the future of his country.

The novel explores the relationship between Biju and Jemubhai, and it also explores the relationship between India and the United States. Desai shows how the two countries are interconnected, and how the events in one country can have a profound impact on the other.

The *Inheritance of Loss* is a beautifully written and thought-provoking novel. It is a novel that will stay with you long after you have finished reading it.

Here are some of the key themes of the novel:

- Migration: The novel explores the experiences of immigrants in the United States. It shows the challenges that immigrants face, as they try to adjust to a new culture and build a new life for themselves.
- Identity: The novel explores the themes of identity and belonging. The characters are all struggling to find their place in the world, and to define who they are.
- Legacy of colonialism: The novel explores the legacy of colonialism in India. It shows how the British colonial rule has had a lasting impact on Indian culture and society.

The *Inheritance of Loss* is a complex and challenging novel, but it is also a rewarding one. It is a novel that will make you think about the themes of migration, identity, and the legacy of colonialism.



The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri

The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri is a novel that explores the themes of identity, family, and the immigrant experience. The novel follows the life of Gogol Ganguli, a young Indian-American man who is struggling to find his place in the world.

Gogol is named after a Russian writer, but he does not feel connected to his name or his heritage. He feels alienated from both Indian and American culture. He struggles to fit in with his classmates, and he often feels like an outsider.

Gogol's parents, Ashoke and Ashima, are immigrants from India. They are trying to build a new life for themselves in the United States, but they are also struggling to maintain their cultural identity. They are concerned about the impact of American culture on their children, and they want Gogol to stay connected to his Indian heritage.

As Gogol grows older, he begins to explore his Indian heritage more deeply. He learns about Indian culture and history, and he starts to connect with his Indian identity. He also begins to learn Bengali, the language of his parents.

However, Gogol's journey of self-discovery is not without its challenges. He experiences racism and prejudice, and he struggles to balance his Indian and American identities. He also has to deal with the loss of loved ones, and he has to learn how to cope with grief.

In the end, Gogol comes to terms with his identity as an Indian-American. He learns to embrace both of his cultures, and he finds a way to balance them in his own life.

The Namesake is a beautifully written and moving novel. It is a novel that will stay with you long after you have finished reading it.

Here are some of the key themes of the novel:



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- Identity: The novel explores the theme of identity in a variety of ways. It looks at the different ways in which people define themselves, and the challenges that people face in forming their identities.
 - Family: The novel explores the importance of family and the ways in which family shapes our identities. It also looks at the challenges that families face, especially immigrant families.
 - Immigrant experience: The novel explores the immigrant experience in the United States. It looks at the challenges that immigrants face, as they try to adjust to a new culture and build a new life for themselves.

The Namesake is a complex and challenging novel, but it is also a rewarding one. It is a novel that will make you think about the themes of identity, family, and the immigrant experience.

Conclusion

Indian novels play an important role in raising awareness of the marginalization and subjugation of women in Indian society. These novels also show how women resist oppression and assert their rights. By reading and discussing these novels, we can help to create a more just and equitable society for all. The review of literature on the marginalisation and subjugation of women in Indian novels reveals that this is a complex and multifaceted issue that has been explored in depth by both novelists and scholars. The novels discussed in this review provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by women in India and the ways in which they resist and challenge their oppression. The scholarly works discussed above provide a theoretical framework for understanding these issues and offer critical analyses of specific works of literature that explore them.



Reference

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 - The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy
 - The Hungry Tide by Amitav Ghosh
 - A Suitable Boy by Vikram Seth
 - The Inheritance of Loss by Kiran Desai
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