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Understanding the Status of Tribal Women Writers in Sociological Perspectives with Special References to Digitalisation in India

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Abstract

This paper is an outcome of a broad study of Indian Tribal Women Authors in Sociological perspectives. We understand that literature is a major part of culture in every society, thus the literary figures are subject to study and to enhance social understanding. Impact of ICT is a rapidly growing trend globally. This focuses mainly on the question of how digitalisation in India is proving to be helpful in establishing the tribal women writers from the remote areas of India. We all know that digital India mission is a decade old mission to mainstream all on equal platforms, with special focus on the remote and rural areas of India. Though the lack of education especially computer literacy it will take time thus a big digital divide is there. Even today many people do not have digital gadgets with them. So we decided to catch the people who are proactive on social media platforms. They are literate and highly educated even to understand the status of tribal women writers in their socio-cultural spaces.

Keywords: ICT, tribal women, socio-cultural space

Introduction

“The pen is mightier than the sword”-Lord Oxford

The above statement is quite right in the context of the tribal women authors, as to write anything everybody needs a pen, but a pen in the pocket and similarly a laptop/mobile in the hands becomes mandatory now. Use of laptops and smartphones thus makes a human perfect and shows it is the most skilled one. Writers serve as mirrors and reflect the whole as in a looking glass, everything happening around is self-visionary in their writings thus holds a very important place in every society. Indian social system is most widely known as based on patriarchy, gender matters a lot in every aspect of life. In such a diverse social system if the author is a woman then the sword is sharper than the others because a tribal woman who is a writer too, has to play some other roles also. She has many important roles in a family like a daughter, a mother, a wife, a sister, a daughter-in-law and a sister-in-law ect. She may be considered more powerful and expressive in her thoughts and creativity because her basic nature is creative genetically as well psychologically. Though a writer is a writer not a man or a woman. Although gender discrimination cannot be lied to. It has existed in society from times and has been a subject of long discussions. It has been quoted many times for women authors that women writers may be good at poetry writing or good at story writing but could not be a proven novelist. To an extent we find this statement being lied to by Arundhati Roy, who won the Pulitzer Prize for her novel “The God of Small Things” but

not at mass. Yet we see women authors are less in number than their male counterparts. Reasons might be any but the most impressive one that we usually can observe is lack of approach to the other world. Man has proved himself best, because he is free to move anywhere and anytime, but a woman is not even provided with adequate space, except in some cases. They are suffering somewhere in fully attaining their dignity on world level because they have their limitations, duties, and non-availability of proper sources of information and the foundation in communicating with the outer world with her ideas, sensitivity and inner-self. Either they are not fully skilled or if they are then there may be any other kind of obstacles or non-availability for them in comparison to the male to interact with the outer world. There is a close relationship between diverse skills and approaches in the proper development of women authors, their impact in positive or creative contexts. The one and only tool nowadays that we find uprising the women authors so fast is the use of Information and Communication Technology. Information and Communication Technology has variedly made these impossibilities possible for the authors to be known at the world levels and to present themselves as an icon in writing diverse forms of fictions or non-fictions. Since from last two decades we find that many women authors are making their marks in the male dominated field of writing. This all became possible because of the recent advancement in Information & Communication Technology. Recent advancement in Information and Communication Technology have

transformed every facet of human life and revolutionized the world as never before witnessed in known human history. The world of computers, telecommunication, televisions, the internet and all other audio and visual media is facing rapid and radical changes presently. This has generated infinite and unimaginable new opportunities in education, communication, commerce, manufacturing, agriculture, health care, leisure and entertainment and particularly the research and publishing sector. Information & communication technology comprises computers, telecommunications, television, audio-visual media, development of software and on top high capacity devices, and mobile smart phones etc. Computers are the major segment of information & communication technology which has permeated and grasped every sphere of existence of human society and become indispensable. The gradual use of computers in all walks of life has changed the means and modes of utilizing time and energy of present society. Computer Software is gradually becoming a decisive force in making important decisions. It has become the basis of modern scientific and technological inventions and research. The use of Software has penetrated in every walk of life especially in writing and publishing. ICT have contributed tremendously in the overall development of writers and facilitated them on their desktop with all the information regarding finding good publishing houses, publishers sitting in the room, funding agencies etc. Comprising their work on international grounds and keeping the records of their manuscripts. ICT has become a prudent tool in integrating the nation, the remote localities that have so far been feeling a sense of neglect. Also the use of Smartphones too is becoming more and more approachable for a common man. Everybody has benefited from the miracle of the Internet. WWW (World Wide Web) Web browsers which are like magic carpets that can take you anywhere you want to go. Various search engines are there to help the people who are the search service providers through the internet so that the user can find the information from all over the world regarding the subject of his/her interest. Use of IRC (Internet Relay Chat) system that provides a virtual area where people gather to use their computers and modems to chat in real term by the use of certain devices, now through video-conferencing it becomes possible to see the person on the monitor screen with whom we are chatting at present. Through E-mail a letter or document composed, mailed, received, and read through computers, it provides people use written communication in a timely manner and costs very less. FTP (File Transfer Protocol) is software that manages the hardware and software working of the computers to and is used to transfer the complex big files and on another end to download them in their proper formats. Through HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) language, a language used in configuring the computers through instructions, to display a web-page. Advancements in science and technology have given manpower fit for 'God' ye he can't be 'god' unless has peace of mind, inner satisfaction respect for moral, ethical and spiritual values." Sitting in India, one can well be communicating with the whole world. The wondrous world of communication and the internet has brought the whole world in a small room. The network of satellites has decimated all the geographical barriers and brought the world so close that one can communicate with a person sitting millions of miles away through video conferencing as if looking face to face.

Method

The data collected and used in this paper is meant to

subjugate for wider senses. I have used a literary critical approach of study and the method used is the snowball method to collect the data. The universe is Indian women authors writing in English (emerging & eminent). Sample size is 40, out of which 10 are eminent and 30 women authors are emerging. As a tool, semi structured interview schedules have been used. Followed the PAC rules and ethics of social research strictly to maintain the individuality of the authors.

Tribal Women Author s & Traumatic Confrontations: It is the man, who has to ponder over the question of what he wishes to make the world a heaven or a hell, it is his decision which makes science and technology a blessing or a curse. For women writers there are many limitations especially in a patriarchal family structure. These limitations are termed in our own terms as Lack of Awareness in the Society for Creative Sensitivity, Political Interruptions, Social Insecurity, Economic Contradictions, Gender discrimination, Publication Paucity, Apart from these limitations, many other things as observed are lack of social, political, psychological and physical spaces with whom she is confronting anyhow on her way to expression.

Common Problems of Women Authors

- i). **Lack of Awareness in Society for Creative Sensitivity:** Lack of Awareness in the society for creative sensitivity is a defined problem which comes under the head, social spaces in detailed studies consists of various types of social misunderstandings and misinterpretations. It has been observed how painful the dilemma of women authors interviewed is. It has been observed that out of 10 eminent women writers 70% have reported that they are suffering from the lack of social space because of lack of awareness in the society for their area of creativity. It has been observed that these writers are from matrilineal social backgrounds. In comparison to eminent writers, emerging writers are suffering badly with the problem of social space. 65% respondents complained, and mark their respective social surroundings and have grievances. Only a 15% emerging and 20% eminent women authors accept that the changing mind sets of society do understand them and provide them sufficient social space. For this they give credit to globalization, modernization and spread of Information Technology and some of the other factors too.
- ii). **Political Interruptions:** A major problem with almost all the writers. They are not free from political interruptions in their process of expression. Whatever they narrates it has been correlated somewhere with any of the political issue and is banned before it reaches to the common readers. Writers like Dr. Taslima Nasrin are banned from their works because of political issues. A writer is free to write whatever she observes from her surroundings, whatever is the situation of the society or its institutions, but it is an empathy that they are not free to write. And if anyone of them shows courage to write on issues so sensitive the political leaders of the area do not permits them to get their work publish as it is. They make some sort of censorship on their original work and if any writer is not ready to do so she has to suffer a lot.
- iii). **Social Insecurity:** A prominent author from Maharashtra state, has been suffering a lot even in his own surroundings. She is the eldest daughter in her family, with great passion, wit and aggression towards writing, Winner of Sahitya Academy award for her novel, is suffering badly. She has been suffering for the last 30-40

years, just because of her writings. Society people don't want that she must write that is none but just out of jealousy. Family members are also not supporting her neither financially nor emotionally. No godly support is there for her. One another writer who has been badly tortured by society people because she possesses a particular religious identity, in which she is not allowed to write in her writings for her own group, relatives, religion, and on top about the roguish nature of male. Everyday there are threat letters, phone calls and knocking on their door to warn them. These authors were very scared sometimes when people came to know about their works they splash bad flickers on them while they move out of their home. No security is provided to them from govt. by saying that how long they will do so, better stop writing or say sorry publicly to please them. Embarrassing is the state of our writes. The main function of any society is to provide the social security to its units but in case of our writers the situation is worst.

- iv). **Economic Inconsistency:** Economic Inconsistency has caused many writers to turn up their instinct, and make them think for their livelihood first. Generally women need financial support to get her work published, edited, or to look after her day to day expenses. Family members are less supportive for them, as well as no govt. aid is provided to them, in such a situation very less women writers have courage to write. She is expected to earn something while writing is a field if opted as a career it gives rewards but it takes time. We assume that the patriarchal family system is not good for women to adopt writing as a career, but the assumptions are assumptions not the reality. Reality is something different that we find after actual confrontations with the writers from matrilineal family systems, they are suffering more because if a woman has to manage everything in the family she is somewhere bound to earn also because male become less responsible when the authority is in a female hand. Gender discrimination.
- v). **Publication Paucity:** If overcome by other problems, a woman who is somewhere finds herself weak in confronting the outer world of male dominance. If she anyhow is successful to come out with her creativity she has to face manifold problems of complex nature related to publication. They are required to find a publisher, and then they have to face the knife on their hard work just for the sake of reducing the number of pages or cost. Sometimes they do not agree to publish the work which is somewhere related to any political or social issue. Editors make many enormous excuses related to language or expression of words. It has been observed that publishers behave more rigidly with women authors than the male authors.
- vi). **Avoidance by Government:** No Government. Policy is formed to provide special aid to the authors, whoever is he or she. No government. is provided with special funds and benefits to encourage the writing. Even the government does not consider itself responsible for the security of any controversial or non-controversial writer.

Confrontations with the Problems and Role of ICT & Social Media

"ICT & Social Media is today's pen at all a human sphere", ICT & Social Media have now played a vital role in reducing the bad impact of these limitations on the freedom of writing. Today we find that women authors are using ICT & Social

Media as a very important tool for her-selves. Most of them are well equipped with a mobile, a laptop or desktop PC, with all necessary communication devices with internet broadband and Wi-Fi systems. ICT & Social Media has lessened their burden in many ways.

By the Use of Smartphones

We saw that they are equipped with the latest smartphones and tablet pc's. This has reduced their burden to overcome their limitation to move anywhere. Where-ever they are, far or near they are easily approachable for their family and others too. So use of mobile made it possible that they live free from the tension of being provided for the family when-ever they are called for. Also women authors who are bound somewhere with their own physical stratum, and time sets, they may call the person with whom they want to interact in a short span of time thus not feel insecure. She may communicate with the whole world in just a few Rs.. Using a mobile she may connect herself with her critics and work on advice provided by them.

Latest Techniques in Laptops & Desktops PC's

Women writers are highly sensitive persons in the society that they write even after they finish with their routine work late night off course. Writing using pen and paper is quite cumbersome, editing is again like a puzzle for them as per the old methods. Women who hardly get time from her day to day activities and duties towards her children. Now the use of latest software has made it possible for them to work faster and editing becomes so easy with all word-processing software. Even she is proficient using the Page-maker and Corel-draw software to reduce her time span and amount too. If she cannot remain at home due to economic consequences she may carry her laptop or tablet anywhere and continue her writing whenever she has time or mood to express her ways. She is now provided with a world class facility on her computer. Documentation is now no matter for her to carry. She may carry her bundle of books with her anywhere. If she had to send the copy of her creativity to a publisher she may send it in PDF format to protect her work from theft as usually happens to be a writing trauma for a tribal woman writer.

Internet - Broadband – Satellite - Wi-Fi Technological Advancements

While Interacting with the authors it has been observed that the eminent women authors are worldly known but now they are in their 50's or 60's because of lack of the availability of communication and technology in their early times. Emerging writers are growing rapidly and are gaining their desired spaces and achievements at the age of sweet eighteen, or in 20's because they anyhow got success managing the latest technological devices and are using them as a tool for their expression. They all have their own IPA's and internet facilities. Now they may communicate with the outer world of books, editorials, new, authors blogs and may even register themselves to have their own space to display their own writings with abstracts, so have reduced their cost percent on the expenses head and are getting sufficient publicity without cost or on no cost than the other sources. Being a woman she has to look after her home budgets, so she is now contributing rather than taking the amount to get published, or to pay for the editing to the editors of publishing. She has now been successfully writing because she is in constant and direct connection with the critics of her works with emails.

Conclusion: Writing means expression of inner creativity which is an outcome of the narrator's personal experiences and imaginations. It is a time consuming effort and needs some space. It is observed that even after rapidly growing opportunities, women are somewhat lacking in the field of literature in society. Their talent in the literary field is uncovered. She has faced many challenges. Challenges in their path towards the heights are many like restrictions. Restriction to study, restriction to move anywhere alone bare faced or likewise some other social and family restrictions, restriction in expression, fixed to write as per the set norms not as per the writer's will. It is really surprising that a woman who happened to be a writer or I must say who is a writer is really leading a very traumatic life. Their basic instinct does not allow their conscious to write in boundation. They actually want to be free from all the shekels of universal distinctions and facts of divisions. At national or international levels women are being provided with many equalities but her harassment starts from her family, from her own surroundings-relatives, kin, caste and social group. Traditions, Age old Patriarchy, illiteracy, lack of knowledge, Gender discrimination are the open challenges for a woman even today in the orthodoxies of the society. These problems are various but it is sure that they are remediable if brought in consideration for the policy makers and an adequate relief on certain grounds is released for them.

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