Chapter - II

GENDER POLITICS IN THE
PLAYS OF VIJAY
TENDULKAR

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The plays of Vijay Tendulkar selected for the study seem to project in bright light the confinements of women in general and Indian woman in particular. At the same time, these plays depict the ways through which woman can have their independence. Tendulkar’s plays represent the contemporary Indian woman’s struggle to define and attain an autonomous selfhood. His female protagonists are at great pains to free themselves from the traditional constraints.

The social and cultural change in the post-independence India has made woman somehow conscious of the need to define herself, her place in society and her surroundings. Through his plays, Tendulkar depicts the portrayal of the predicament of middleclass Indian women, their inner conflict and quest for identity. He highlights the issues pertaining to man-woman relationship, marriage, sex and their exploitation. His female characters are not against the entire social system and values but they are not ready to accept them as they are. They are modern, strong and take bold decision to survive in the patriarchal society. In his writings, he has emphasised the issues of patriarchy, inter-caste marriage, family bond, female-male bond. He has portrayed his women protagonist as victims of biology, gender concept, domestic violence and circumstances. Simone de Beauvoir in her book The Second Sex comments:
One of the important obstacles to a woman’s freedom is not her biology or the political or legal constraints placed upon her, or even her economic situation; rather it is the whole process by which femininity is manufactured in the society. (Beaviour 125)

Sakharam Binder (1972), a play by Tendulkar, depicts the ideology of the middle-class man with all his complexities, envy, and covetousness. It has three acts: The first act deals with the relationship of Laxmi-Sakharam, the second one, that of Champa-Sakharam, and the last one, that of Laxmi-Sakharam-Champa. The performance of the play in 1972, created a lot of controversy. It was highly criticized for its unconventional thoughts. Sakharam, the central character does not believe in the institution of marriage. So, he remains unmarried all through his life. However, he arranges a contractual relationship with a helpless, deserted woman in the society, not with a view to improving her lot but to exploiting her further by fulfilling his sexual lust. Wine and woman are his central concerns. The relationship is a kind of game where the woman has to follow the rules unquestionably. The play opens, when he brings Laxmi to his house, the seventh one in the series of his women.

Sakharam appears to be a man who is true to himself and to his life. Outwardly, he shows that he is a saviour of women, but actually, he is an epicurean, a self-centred pleasure-seeker. What he develops in his so-called house is a victim victimizer relationship, which is worse for the woman who suffers more with Sakharam than with her husband before. The woman has to live like a wife to serve his needs. And he is ready to throw each of them out when there remains nothing womanly about her. He wants his woman to slave for him day and night, to respect his wishes and satisfy his excessive physical lust.

Sakharam’s anger, apparently, appears incoherent but it can be understood as the symptom of a victim of society. The harsh treatment
that he had received from his upper-caste father is the responsible factor for the sense of instability, his anger and frustration that he exhibits throughout. Like the protagonist of an avant-garde play, he shows himself alienated from society by rejecting the established cultural norms and moral values. Circumstance and heredity play a major role in shaping his identity.

Sakharam gives shelter to a helpless and abandoned woman in society. He exploits her and puts his benefits beyond anything else. This contractual relationship based on mutual convenience; everyone has the same right to break this contract anytime. At the very outset, he makes everything clear to every new woman coming to his home. The woman has to perform all the duties like a sincere, obedient, faithful wife and in return, he gives her food, clothing, and shelter. The woman has to follow his word like a law. Therefore, exploitation, oppression, suppression, and subjugation of woman are the characteristic features of the relationship that exists between Sakharam and his woman.

The play begins with the entrance of Laxmi, the seventh woman to his home. The moment Laxmi enters his house, he tells her:

.....This house is like me. I won’t have you complaining later on. Yes, look carefully around the place ..... This is not a royal palace. It’s Sakharam Binder’s house. And Sakharam Binder is not like your pervious man..... I’m the master here. You agree to all this?..... In this house what I say, goes. Understand? (Tendulkar 125-126)

When he gets bored in this relationship, he just throws and brings another as he says, “the game is over”. A new one is coming on the heels of each former woman’s departure. He does not bother himself to think what will happen to them afterwards. He tells his friend Dawood:

It ‘s a good thing I am not a husband. Things are fine the way they are. You get everything you want and yet you’re not tied down. If you’ve had enough, if she’s had
enough, you can always part. The game is over. Nothing to bother you after that..... But the husband – he's proper swine! He ties her down; he doesn't get tied down himself? He flits around again- a free bird! Now look! I'm being quiet frank. As far as I'm concerned, I don't believe in double- talk. What have I to gain from that? (Tendulkar 129- 130)

Sakharam is the representative of the angry and frustrated post-war youth. He condemns his women, and the world at large, explicitly and implicitly himself, too. He is least concerned about the world but wants the world, particularly his women to care for him. The indifference of the society towards him has generated a kind of fierceness in his temperament. As a result, he turns into a masochist who gets a sadistic pleasure in inflicting pains and miseries on others.

Laxmi is portrayed as the replica of an ideal Indian woman. Her husband has tortured her due to her failure of conceiving a child by him. Now, for her, Sakharam is her husband. She tries her best to fulfill his every need despite the fact that he even fails to understand her expectations and exploits her physically as well as psychologically.

Sakharam's association with Laxmi brings about some good changes in his life-style. He becomes devoutly religious, takes a regular bath, and transforms himself into a responsible “family man”. He himself notices these changes occurring in him but fails to understand them in totality and to attribute the credit to Laxmi. That is why he says to Laxmi:

Haven't I been drinking less this year? Eh?..... And don't I do my puja properly ? Go on, tell me. I bathe every morning, and then I sit here for my puja. Don't I ? ..... I had six before you. I disowned my own father. I wouldn't let anyone boss over me. But I did listen to you, didn't I? Didn't I? (Tendulkar 148)

Tendulkar attempts to highlight women's wise and power on affecting men's behaviour. Though they are oppressed and are treated as inferior, they can make a great impact on the men's mind. Laxmi is
depicted as an obedient woman who can affect Sakharam’s mind and let him follow her words. When Sakharam tries to throw her out of his house, Dawood tries to stop him but his effort ended in a smoke. Consequently, he could convince Laxmi to go her own way.

You can’t really cope with me anymore. And I can’t cope with your sort of nature..... We’re not married. There’s nothing to bind us. We don’t need to remain tied to each other. You can go your way. I can go mine. You don’t owe me anything. I owe you nothing either. Let’s be free of each other. (Tendulkar 151)

They are different from each other in temperament so their relation does not last for long time. On her departure, the playwright succeeds in convincingly showing, the deep impact of Laxmi’s daily religious routine on Sakharam’s mind through his confession: “There have been many women here, but this one left a mark before she went away.” (P 153)

The relationship of Sakharam and Laxmi remains very short-lived as they are totally in contrast with each other. Laxmi is very kind, cool, and tender-hearted. Sakharam is very aggressive, violent, and passionate. Laxmi falls short to fulfill his excessive physical lust and Sakharam remains blind to her expectations. Consequently, both of them cannot satisfy each other either physically or psychologically. There is no sharing, no harmony in their relationship. Ultimately, they part company, saying good-bye to each other in good humour and in a very cordial manner.

When Champa the police officer’s wife comes to his house, he repeats the same scenario about his liking and disliking but situation here is somehow different. Her response was different from that of Laxmi’s and his other previous women. She is younger than Laxmi, slightly plumb, and confident of her own beauty. All desirable changes in Sakharam’s life end with Champa’s arrival. When her husband comes to Sakharam’s house, she treats him very badly. Sakharam is surprised to see such behaviour of Champa “What kind of a woman are you? Look, what you’ve done to
him! He’s your husband. Haven’t you a heart.” (Tendulkar 167). Champa appears to assault her husband wildly. In the patriarchal society, this kind of behaviour or treatment is accepted from man but not from a woman. Dawood also realises how Champa is different from other Sakharam’s women. Tendulkar shows the noticeable presence of Champa through her rebellious action and language. It is known that abusive language is always masculine and submissive language always feminine. Nevertheless, in case of Champa she breaks all rules “Scared? Who, me? And scared of whom? My husband ?(Spits)What can he do to me? ...You think he’d have the guts to do it, that ninny?” (Tendulkar 157) According to the patriarchal norms, woman should be passive during the sexual relation. However, Champa’s language and her behaviour is a challenge to the norms in the patriarchal society. She says to Sakharam: “You’ll have your fun..... Wait. I ‘ll give it to you. Fun for anyone who comes along” (Tendulkar 157).

Champa’s appearance, behaviour, dialogues, and even her name indicate that she is whimsical by nature. All good, desirable changes in Sakharam’s life in his association with Laxmi, come to an end with Champa’s arrival. A religious, responsible “household man” emerges as a lewd, sensual drunkard.

The difference between Laxmi and Champa is quite clear from the very beginning. When Sakharam brings Laxmi to his house, she appears embarrassed and awkward. Although she has been starving for a week, she remains cool and quiet. When Sakharam lectures to Champa laying down his terms and conditions in his usual vein, she responds to him rather indifferently and to Sakharam’s surprise asks him to prepare tea for her. Thus, she dispels his false notion: A woman has to attend the household chores. She never seems disturbed by Sakharam’s demands. On the contrary, she stuns him by frankly expressing her opinion about Dawood, “He’s nice!” (Tendulkar 159) Though Sakharam cannot
appreciate this, he remains helpless. His conception about the sanctity of home ends with Champa’s arrival in his house.

Sakharam is a prey of his lust, which makes him cross all boundaries and leads to his downfall as well. The play reaches to its climax when Laxmi returns to Sakharam’s house. He abuses and beats her violently and asks her to go away from his house. However, Champa affects his decision and persuades him to let her stay. “She can help me in the house. Anyway, I can’t cope with the house and with you. She I’ll look after the house. We don’t have to give anything except a little food and my old saris” (Tendulkar 184). Furthermore, Champa goes out every afternoon, so Laxmi suspects her behaviour. Soon she comes to discover her relation with Dawood. She is confused not knowing what to do. She prays to God and asks for a solution to show her the right way. She says:

The whole of last week. Where does she go every afternoon? I went for his sake. My misfortune, I couldn’t keep the man I married. For me this one was my husband. I worshiped him. Even when I was a way, I’d worship him in silence every day. ...If I have to be kicked, let him kick me; if I have to die, let me die on his lap- in full glory like a married woman. (Tendulkar 187)

Laxmi wants to live and die for Sakharam. It might be due to this reason and she wants to remove Champa from her way and keeps him for her alone. Tendulkar successfully sheds light on the psyche of the characters, reasons and causes of their violence. There is a kind of complexity in the relationship between the feelings of pain and pleasure, violence and love, hatred and sympathy in the mind and psyche of the major characters in the play.

The relationship that exists between Sakharam and Champa is totally contradictory to the previous one that with Laxmi. Laxmi accepts Sakharam almost as a husband and, therefore, remains faithful to him and submits herself to him willingly. Champa, on the other hand, accepts him
merely as “her man” in sheer helplessness and for not having any alternative. She has no option but to share bed with him. However, for that, she has to reluctantly help herself with an alcoholic drink of course. All men, for her, are equally bad; a man is, in her view, either a “corpse” or a “dog”.

Through Champa, Tendulkar has represented a bold, stout woman. She is a rebel against the male-dominated society. She challenges the conventional norms and values regarding man-woman relationship. No doubt, she is naive and sexy, but her mother and husband have been responsible for her being what she is.

Laxmi represents the traditional woman who accepts and internalises the patriarchal ideology and becomes a part of it. She cannot go against the system that is naturally man’s establishment. In the patriarchal society, man can develop living relationship with a number of women and expects his woman to be faithful to him. He is always the “Absolute” and she is always the “Other”.

Repeatedly, Sakharam likes to change his women. On the other hand, Champa may be she also likes to change her partner as she has more than one man in her life, her husband, Sakharam, and Dawood. Being different from other, she is isolated by Laxmi and at last, she is defeated both: man-women and woman-to-woman relationship. The outwardly timid and sensitive Laxmi turns out to be wily and vicious and becomes the cause of Champa’s death.

In the beginning, Laxmi tries to develop nice relation with Champa’s husband, the police officer. It indicates that she is not an easy character and she is planning something for her. She tells him that he can come if there is no one at home. She proves that how some women can be the enemy of other women and can destroy each other. The dramatist highlights the lack of sisterhood among women.
It is observed that Laxmi successfully cools down Sakharam’s sensuality to certain extent, while Champa intensifies it. The presence of these two women together, who are totally contradictory to each other, disturbs him. The lack of sexual potency on his own part and Champa’s sexual association with Dawood, his friend hurt Sakharam’s ego acutely. As a result, he turns into an impotent man. Laxmi adds fuel to the fire and unable to control his wrath, he turns into a cold-blooded murderer.

When Sakharam murders Champa, she tells him that you did a great thing because she is not honest and deserves to be killed. She will go to the hell. How she gives herself right to judge and give charge on other person without investigation and listening to Champa. Physically, it is Sakharam who killed Champa but actually, Laxmi is responsible for her murder. He killed Champa because Laxmi brought to his notice that Champa betrays him with his friend. Champa also herself tells him that he does not satisfy her anymore. Partially, she is responsible for her own destruction. Like any man, Sakharam has male pride and he believes that woman is inferior, evil and dangerous. Champa hurts his sexual ego as a man, which results in his jealousy and impotent rage. “Yeah. Can’t take it anymore- not even with all that drink inside me. If you can’t make it, go and lie down quietly. Haven’t been able to make it these last few days.” (Tendulkar 193)

Actually, it is Champa who persuades Sakharam to give shelter to Laxmi after her return. However, the presence of Champa and Laxmi, at the same time and under the same roof, creates a psychological turmoil in Sakharam. He grows impotent. Laxmi remains friendly to Fauzdar Shinde while Champa to Dawood. Since Sakharam can no longer sexually satisfy her, she develops a sexual relationship with Dawood. Laxmi finds nothing wrong with her association with Shinde but cannot bear Champa’s affair with Dawood and she informs it to Sakharam. Getting his masculinity doubly hurt, Sakharam kills Champa in his rage. Thus, the outwardly
looking generous and kind-hearted Laxmi, turns out to be vicious and violent. On Champa's murder, she shows greater boldness and presence of mind than Sakharam. It is she who suggests to Sakharam to bury Champa within house. When the Sakharam fails to follow her instruction, she herself takes up the shovel and does the grave-digging.

Tendulkar’s plays show his acute observation of life and society around. Majority of his plays are based on the real-life incidents. His women characters appear to be the mute witnesses of womankind’s endless suffering in male-dominated society. Woman is always oppressed and occupied an inferior status in the society. It is considered to be a natural phenomenon and it is more or less practiced all over the world. Many playwrights like Tendulkar attempt to show through their characters the effects of a patriarchal system upon the characters’ life and shaping their destiny. The downfall of Sakharam is because of his ignorance of all social norms. In addition, he does not try to treat a woman as human being who can commit mistake; she has flaws, limitations, feelings and heart.

Outwardly, Laxmi represents a passive, obedient, helpless, typical, conventional woman whereas Champa represents a rebellious, rude and aggressive woman. She drinks to run away from the real world. The dramatist depicts the idea of victim and victimizer within the patriarchal society. Silence and obedience are the part of the patriarchal conception of femininity. Through this play, Tendulkar provides the readers with the relationship of surprising equality within the boundaries of the patriarchal Indian society. Woman can be dominated, aggressive, oppressor... etc. On the other hand, man can be submissive, oppressed, helpless, dependent... etc. Tendulkar through Champa’s language and actions proves the existence of both masculine and feminine qualities within both males and females.
Champa, unlike Laxmi and the previous women of Sakharam expressed her sexual power over men very bravely. For example, her description of her husband and her words with Sakharam throw light on her boldness in man-woman relationship “Come You want to have fun?” (Tendulkar 172). Her sexuality is not something that is to be locked up. Champa’s physical submission to Sakharam is not willing at the beginning but since she could not oppose him. She used to hand over her intoxicated body to be used by him. This is the pitiable condition of the woman again designed by the patriarchal set of mind. She attacks her husband physically and threatens him strongly. “Just you try and set foot here again! I’ll roll you in chilli powder.” (Tendulkar 168) This power is seen as unexpected from woman. “What kind of women are you?” (Tendulkar 167) Tendulkar de-feminizes Champa and at the same time, depicts her husband’s weakness as unexpected to her strength. Champa’s ways to overrule her husband shows inversion of sexual relations and the order of gender politics as well. Champa’s domination over her husband reflects the larger issue of female involvement in the political structure and a woman’s possible domination over man.

Tendulkar reflects the cultural expectations through Laxmi’s character. He reflects the potential conflict arising from female ambition and society anticipation from women. Through her character, the playwright wants to communicate that without the willing participation of the subjugated person his/her freedom from the enslavement is impossible. In other words, the will for freedom should generate in the mind of the victim. Individual consciousness leads to the recognition of the trappings. Laxmi is an ideological victim and not biological. Despite Sakharam’s attitude towards Laxmi, she does not show anger, hate or any bad feeling towards him. For him, she possesses nothing but forgiveness and love. “...I belong to him. If I have to be kicked, let him kick me, if I have to die, let me die on his lap - in full glory like a married woman.”
(Tendulkar 187) She is the representative of majority of Indian women who bear the suffering and humiliation rather mutely imposed upon them by the male-dominated society considering it to be their fate. Through his women characters, Tendulkar tries to delineate gender issues. He has given a comprehensive view of life with equal emphasis on both male and female characters. He represents Sakharam as over whelmed man by nature and social norms. The social norms give male power to dominate the female companion. At the same time, they make woman oppressed, submissive and inferior. Champa transgresses the patriarchal bounds of femininity. Sakharam’s bitterness leads him to believe Laxmi and kills Champa. Sakharam is temped when Champa drawn him away from his lust and desires. All characters are the victims of the social conditions for, which they were personally in no way responsible. The Marathi critic Vasant Palshikar comments as:

Sakharam kills Champa as a revenge for his incapacity to satisfy her sexually. However, due to the incident of Champa’s murder, the dramatic action of the play suffers a set-back and becomes rather flawed and cheap.” (qtd in Wadikar 103)

Women alone are simply unable to function independently in such culture represented by the play. It can be assumed that women are unable to protect themselves from the conception of society of them. The patriarchal system makes woman the weaker and dependent. Laxmi and all his women suffer because of the patriarchal values of manhood. However, women sometimes can handle the situation with cleverness and a manipulation, which outwit the male. When Champa persuades Sakharam to let Laxmi stay at his home, she uses her cleverness that appears obedient in her disobedience. She slips into the role of a submissive wife.

Tendulkar provides us with the real women rather than stereotypes. He depicts how new women refuse to adhere to the
stereotypes of patriarchal society and how they end. Besides, he really depicts death or unhappy ends as an assertion of self-hood and an act of defiance to the patriarchal laws. Champa meets her end tragically. Sakharam strangled her to death.

Noticeably, many societies ignore the issues of sex and love. Men have sexual liberty whereas women do not. The general attitude is to see women as at their best when they are submissive, silent and obedient. The action and self-organisation enable individuals to move from a negative self-image to a positive self-image to change from self-blame and self-pity to self-confidence and progress. It is said that woman is intellectually, physically and morally inferior to man. She is considered physically and emotionally weaker “the second sex or the weaker sex.” Woman should stay at her place at home, where she should serve her husbands, fulfilling his needs. Woman has always been at disadvantageous position socially, economically and politically. The misogynist ideology towards female existed everywhere among all classes.

All the characters are complex; they change according to the situation. Every character in the play is a combination of good and bad; of strength and weakness. Tendulkar depicts the real characters in the real situation as they are. In the beginning, Laxmi gets the audience’s sympathy as she bears and adjusts herself with all his barbaric treatment. However, she can rule him and he becomes her slave. By the end of the play, she reveals her real nature, as she is responsible for Champ’s death.

The playwright tries to picture the inherent human nature of violence as it is. Sakharam’s violent nature is associated with his physical desires. It seems that sex and violence are intermingled. Noticeably, Laxmi does not satisfy him, so he beats her wildly for any reason. Apparently, men satisfy their ego by beating their wives. To be a master of the house means to be wild and dominated, in order to be able to rule the house.
Some men establish the authority and obedience by beating their wives rather than love and mutual understanding. In the patriarchal society, woman must give man physical pleasure and domestic comfort. In return, she may get shelter, protection and love.

Tendulkar depicts his character’s violence effective throughout the play. He believes that good and evil, love and violence co-exist. The nature of all the characters is characterised with violence. Laxmi cannot fulfil Sakharam’s physical demands unlike Champa. Though, Laxmi appears the embodiment of virtues, observer of morality, religious, innocent, she doesn’t see Sakharam’s act as a crime. However, she provokes him to kill Champa. The ruthless murder of Champa scares her in the least. On the other hand, Sakharam who appears violent, over-confident, heartless throughout the play, gets bewildered and chocked. She takes the responsibility of burying Champa’s dead body. Besides, she tries to relieve his tension saying, “She was unfaithful to you. You are a good man. God will forgive you. I’ll tell him. He listens to me. Wait I’ll go and get the shovel. You keep sitting - I’ll be back.” (Tendulkar 197).

Champa is also violent and aggressive in her treatment with her husband. She beats, insults, threatens him and shows her hatred for him. Tendulkar highlights man-woman relationship in a strange way. When he portrays Sakharam’s violence against Laxmi, he portrays Champa’s violence against her husband. He proves that woman can be rude and aggressive. In addition, man can be submissive and obedient.

Laxmi’s reappearance in their life makes the situation more complicated. Two women in the same house make a strange effect on creating a psychological confusion in Sakharam’s mind. Both of them suffer physically, sexually and psychologically at the hand of their male companions. Sakharam has become a slave to Champa’s body. He thinks only about her body and sexual pleasures. His sexuality makes him turn
so violently against her. She breaks the boundaries of behaviour in her relationship with her men. She has a full power of speech. Sakharam has lost control and power over her. He becomes a man without a will. She insults him “Stop that Champa - Champa- You’r not a man - not since she came. She’s made impotent ninny of you. Don’t have the guts to take me before her. You turn into a corpse, a worm.” (Tendulkar 193) Sakharam understands that Laxmi’s presence is the reason for all these problems. Therefore, he decides to throw her out “Leave this house. This very minute. She says you have made a ninny out of me, you beggar.” (Tendulkar 194) For this Laxmi decides to pay her back in the same coin saying:

It’s true - it’s true - these lips have never spoken a lie
yes - She’s unfaithful to you - Yes - with Dawood. She goes
to him - every afternoon - when you’re at the press. I’ve seen
them - seen them with my own eyes. (Tendulkar 196)

The allegation of Laxmi against Champa humiliates his male hood. Such a thing in a patriarchal society on the part of a woman is a serious crime. The criminal deserves no sympathy since she is a woman. The punishment for such a crime is death penalty but for woman only. On the other hand, Champa finds Sakharam as timid and impotent like her husband. Now she realizes that she cannot pull on with him any longer. When Sakharam felt bored of Laxmi he searched for another woman. In the same way, Champa pays him back. She may feel bored of him and search for another man. Through these two women characters, the playwright had shown two varieties of woman.

Sakharam realises that it is so difficult to live with two women at the same time so Laxmi has to leave. Laxmi informs him about the relationship between Champa and Dawood. Sakharam in anger strangles her. The impact of the incident on both the characters is different. Sakharam, henceforth, appears weak whereas Laxmi grows strong. The
strength of her personality could be seen in many events such as the digging in the kitchen. It is a symbolic representation of the changed nature of the woman. The pair Champa and her husband demonstrate that given an opportunity a person male/ female may turn into an oppressor.

At the close of the play, all the major characters namely Sakharam, Laxmi, Champa and Shinde appear to be changed drastically. Laxmi the passive woman at the beginning of the play turns out to be more active and assertive whereas the dominate and cruel Sakharam appears passive and submissive. The changes have been made by the passage of time. The tragic life of Shinde as a husband transforms from bad to worse. The characters who transgress the social norms are bound to meet their tragic end. Noticeably, the patriarchal society uses the reward and punishment policy to strengthen its system.

Sakharam Binder was banned for its anti-conventional theme. It was viewed as a threat to the institution of marriage. The central character does not believe in the marriage system. He brings helpless women to live with him in a contractual relation. Such kinds of relations are not allowed in the orthodox society like Indian society. The dramatist sheds lights on the different relationship existing in the society. When he portrays Sakharam’s violence against Laxmi, he portrays Champa’s violence against her husband. He proves the exit of masculine and feminine features in human being. He portrays violence in every part in the play. However, the most violent one is when Sakharam strangles Champa to death. Tendulkar leaves a chance for the audience and readers to play with the possibilities and draw their own conclusions.

Silence! The Court is in Session (1967) is one of Tendulkar’s well-known plays. It may be considered as a bitter satire against the social odds in society. It depicts multi-themes through it. It is considered as the millstone in his career as the pioneer playwright in the history of Marathi
drama. He pictures various issues of the native life ranging from the social-individual tension to the complexities of human being. He is labelled as a rebel against the established values of the orthodox Indian society. It is a good explanation of the social-political dynamics of Indian society.

Tendulkar effectively criticizes the hollowness and hypocrisy of the society. He depicts the violence as an inseparable part of human life. He has chosen a very apt title for this play; it is understood as a socio-political and moral stand against all forms of violence, suppression prevalent in society. He emphasises the double standards of morality. Standard of morality should be applied for girls and boys equally. When a woman violates the moral values and norms of society, her action is unforgivable and no punishment is enough for her mistake. However, in the case of man, nothing will happen to him and he never takes any responsibility of any act.

The protagonist of this play is an unconventional female character Leela Benare who goes against the social norms and dictates. Such action is being punished by the society. They ignore her privacy and constantly and inhumanly attack her below the belt. The agents of patriarchy gang up against Benare using all possible way to prove her moral negligence. She suffers publically and privately. During the mock trial, her personal life is exposed and she is punished publically, revealing her relation with professor Damle. She takes the responsibility of her action all alone. The man who is equally responsible for this matter goes unquestioned even unnoticed. Professor Damle is absent at the time of trial, and his absence denotes total withdrawal of responsibility either social or moral. They consider him as a witness while Benare is accused of illegal motherhood. Furthermore, as the actions proceed the playwright pictures how she attempts and struggles for protecting her womanhood, motherhood and to be accepted by the society.
Leela Benare, a middle-aged woman, a schoolteacher, has a natural lust for life; she is cheerful, hardworking and deserves the love and respect of all her students. She is proud of herself not only as a woman but also as an individual. She is not ready to live in restrictions referred to as the social norms and rejects all barriers – boundaries in the patriarchal society. She says:

We should laugh, we should play, we should sing! If we can and if they’ll let us, we should dance too. Shouldn’t have any false modesty or dignity. Or care for anyone! I mean it, when your life’s over, do you think anyone will give you a bit of theirs? .....I, Leela Benare, a living woman, I say it from my own experience. Life is not meant for anyone else. It’s your own life. It must be. It’s a very, very important thing. Every moment, every bit of it is precious. (Tendulkar 60-61)

Miss. Benare is a member of the amateur theatre group. The other members of this amateur theatre are the Kashikar, Balu, Rokde, Sukhatme, Ponkshe, Karnik, Professor Damle and Rawte. As the play starts, Samant, the innocent, compassionate, stranger and Leela Benare are talking on an empty stage “a completely empty hall” (P 55). She shocks Samant with her sudden proposal “Let’s leave everyone behind, I thought, and go somewhere far, far away, with you” and she continues, “I like you very much” (Tendulkar 55-56). She comes closer to him many times; Samant himself feels embarrassed by her physical closeness. She loves Prof. Damle genuinely, but she already knows his reaction to her pregnancy. He denies any sort of responsibility regarding the child in her womb. He is very selfish, cares only for his status in society. This action may indicate her needs for love and support or may be the dramatist wants to show the necessity of man in the life of woman. Though she is independent, she got hurt repeatedly and still she is in search of a father for her baby.

When the members of the amateur theatre reach the hall, they decide to take a local man Samant because of Rawate’s absent. He hasn’t
seen a court in his life, so they decide to perform an imaginary scene to show how the procedure of the court works. They plan to perform an imaginary case against someone. They all agree to be against Miss Benare. Mr. Kashikar starts it saying:

Prisoner Miss Benare, under Section No. 302 of the Indian Penal Code you are accused of the crime of infanticide. Are you guilty or not guilty of the aforementioned crime? (Tendulkar 74)

Miss Benare likes to criticize and attack the false manhood concept. So, as a revenge they pay her back and plan to humiliate her and expose her past life. She is labelled as a bad woman “Woman is a wife for a moment, but a mother forever” (Tendulkar 80). When Mr. Ponkshe is asked about Miss Benare’s behaviour, he says that, she runs much after men. Rokde says that he saw her in a compromising situation with Prof. Damle at night-time. Even Samant a stranger is called as a witness. He gives an imaginary accusation, which shows to be correct afterwards. He says that he saw Miss Benare in Prof. Damle’s house crying and asking him:

If you abandon me in this condition, where shall I go?” .....Prof. Damle replied, “Where you should go is entirely your problem. I feel great sympathy for you. But I can do nothing. I must protect my reputation.” (Tendulkar: 92)

Benare’s attempt to leave the hall abruptly come to nothing as the door was locked from outside. She is symbolically trapped by her conspires. When they discuss how Miss. Benare does not get married until this age, Mrs. Kashikar sarcastically replies:

That’s what happens these days when you get everything without marrying. They just want comfort. They couldn’t care less about responsibility! .....It’s the sly new fashion of women earning that makes everything go wrong. That’s how promiscuity has spread throughout our society. (Tendulkar 99 -100)
Miss Benare wants to live free from all rules and regulations; however, she is criticised by everybody. Being different in such society means to be an object of criticism. No one is ready to accept her ideology even from her own gender. Mrs. Kashikar comments:

Free! Free! She’s! Free! She’s free all right - in everything! I shouldn’t say it. But since it’s come up in court, I will. (Tendulkar 100)

All the witnesses agree that Miss Benare has a very bad past and she is an immoral woman. Consequently, Mr. Kashikar remarks that, “No allowance must be made because the accused is a woman. Woman bears the grave responsibility of building up the high value of society.” (Tendulkar 115) Being pregnant without marriage is a serious sin and Nanasaheb, the Chairman of the Education Society decides to dismiss her from her job. Sukhatm pleads the most and greatest punishment for her crime.

The woman who is an accused has made a heinous blot on the scared brow of motherhood-which is purer than heaven itself. For that, any punishment, however great, that the law may give her, will be too mild by far. The character of the accused is appalling. It is bankrupt of morality. (Tendulkar 114)

The society will not allow the birth of a child outside wedlock. Benare is accused of being immoral. She is punished severely for being the unwed mother of a child. Prof Damle’s absence in the play is very significant however; he does not have the courage to accept his act. Actually, both of them are equally responsible for the so-called crime. Benare tries to defend herself through her soliloquy. She expresses her innermost thoughts. With a crying heart, she states:

These are the mortal remains of some cultured men of the twentieth century. See their faces -how ferocious they look! Their lips are full of lovely worn-out phrases! And their bellies are full of unsatisfied desires. (Tendulkar 117)
Her monologue, that takes place towards the end of the trial, is her self-defence. She is confused whether to hate her body or love it. She cannot hate or reject because it gives her a beautiful moment of motherhood. She says:

.....my son - my whole existence! I want my body now for him - for him alone. (Tendulkar 118)

The court gives the verdict after listening to her defence. Mr. Kashikar says that her sin is difficult to be forgiven and motherhood should be secure and pure.

No memento of your sin should remain for future generations. Therefore, this court hereby sentences that you shall live. But the child in your womb shall be destroyed. (Tendulkar 119)

The play dramatizes that it is difficult for woman in any patriarchal society to live as an individual. It pictures the powerlessness of a woman. In the patriarchal society, woman cannot enjoy sex; if she does, it is considered as something odd and she is blamed as dirty and deserves all bad adjectives. No one is ready to accept woman as human being who has vices as well as virtues. Woman is identified by her body, but not by her intelligence, and her knowledge. It is surprising to see woman herself accepts this ideology about herself. The patriarchy succeeds to make her internalise this ideology and look at herself as mere body, as an object of entertainment and she does not value herself as an individual and independent human being.

Mrs. Kashikar is a middle aged, married, disapproving of women like Benare who is free, independent, searching for equality with men. Miss Benare has her own existences, unlike the emptiness in the life of Mrs. Kashikar. However, when a woman does not have any supporter, she becomes the easy victim of verbal violence. Mrs. Kashikar has no choice expect to be a member of the patriarchal system. She attacks Miss Benare
in a very cruel and aggressive way. When she is asked why Miss Benare remains unmarried till this age, her reaction is very malicious and spiteful. She does with Miss Benare, which men shy away to do it. The men do not have the courage to force Miss Benare into the dock but Mrs. Kashikar does it aggressively.

Tendulkar attempts to show the consequences when women act according to their wishes, and how society reacts to such behaviour. The patriarchal society will never accept them as individuals. It drives them to live in isolation and become a matter of criticism. He portrays his women characters as oppressed, humiliated and exploited socially, emotionally, physically and mentally. Economic independence gives woman the power to choice her own destiny. However, even women who are economically independent can be undermined. Apparently, even education does not bring satisfying changes in their position in the society.

Tendulkar depicts human alienation, loneliness, violence, humiliation, social inequality and men's dominance over women, social artificiality, and women's position in the society, the relationship between individual and society, and unmarried motherhood. He believes in achieving justice for victimized people. He was against the structural violence and unequal morality in society. He deals with ideas that are anti-romantic, anti-establishment, and anti-humanitarian. Through his works, he tries to send the social messages. Shailaja Wadikar states that;

The playwrights seeks to present the modern man with his predicament, his challenges, his difficulties, and his complexities. (Wadikar 2)

In this play, Tendulkar has combined the social criticism with the tragedy of the individual who is victimized by the hypocritical society. The identity of the individual is determined by the society's norms and regulations. In this play, all the characters represent orthodox society and Miss Benare alone represents the exploited victim in this trial. The silence
imposed upon her symbolizes the oppression of women in society for centuries. The mock trial holds a mirror how the society reacts to such things. In any society, women can be easily exploited and be subjugated.

Through this play, the dramatist highlights the conflicts between the individual and society. The identity of the individual is determined by the society’s norms and regulations. He supports the individual freedom with some limitations. This play spotlights on the maleness legal action particularly the trial of sexual crimes like motherhood, marriage, abortion and martial relationships. It shows woman’s position in the patriarchal society. It is not surprising to find in the globalised world that a woman is still considered inferior to man in society, and the woman who stays at home and takes care of her children, and behaves what man wants her to be is considered to be ideal. Woman suffers humiliation physically, mentally, socially and economically all over the world. In this play, Tendulkar has combined the social criticism with the tragedy of the individual who is victimized by the hypocritical society.

Though Miss Benare represents the sophisticated, confident, strong and educated woman, she does not have the power to overcome all exploitation and traditional barriers of her gender. In fact, woman everywhere still is trapped by the male dominated society. She is punished for any mistake whereas man’s crimes go scot-free. The notable writer Deborah Rhode in Justice and Gender, Sex Discrimination and the Law proclaims that

We must insist not only on equal rights for women, but also on equal recognition of the values they have traditionally sustained. (Rhode 321)

Tendulkar succeeds to picture the inherent evil, cruelty, and violence as a part of human nature. The mock trial shows how people are interested in victimizing other who are helpless or without any backing or supporter. Though, the people in this play are educated, civilised, they are
aggressive and violent, and find their entertainment through others suffering and humiliation.

Tendulkar highlights the agonies, anxieties and tension of human being. In this play, he shows that all are victims of certain circumstances they come across and these are reflected in their ill treatment and evil tendency with others. He projects their realistic picture through their dialogue, gesture and mannerism. He spots light on their inner sense of frustration, helplessness and failure. So, Tendulkar depicts the helplessness of human being against destiny and fate. Like, Shakespeare, he pictures human being as an actor in this world. They believed that man is like the puppet in the hands of the fate, destiny and circumstances. The characters always feel frustrated, helpless because they are unable to achieve their goals in life. They are suffering due to their environment in which they are born and brought up and due to the inherent wickedness.

As a part of men’s revenge on society, they just humiliate and ill-treat women inside their home and outside. Women lose their freedom, their lives only for the sake of love. Actually, they are somehow conscious of their humiliation, injustice and inequality, which is imposed on them but they do not show any interest to correct their position or rebel against their male counterpart. Therefore, they are partly responsible for their own suffering. They are victimized by the ambitious and achievement of their male counterparts, therefore they cannot overcome the traditional silence. Through this play, Tendulkar shows that women themselves are responsible for their own oppression, exploitation and humiliation. They do not have the courage to overcome their limitations and change the unjust social norms around them.

Throughout the play, Tendulkar makes fun of the trials, judges and justice today. The law is made for men to men. But transparency is not maintained in the treatment of men and women. The charge takes place in
the absence of Damle and nobody asks about him. Everything is made for the benefit of man. Simon de Beauvoir in her book “The Second Sex” claims:

.....Humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him... She is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject the Absolute...she is the Others. (Beauvior 18)

In this mock trial, Miss Benare was trapped by conspiracies. Not only men criticize Benare, Mrs. Kashikar treats her very badly. In fact, she is more aggressive and violent in comparison with the male-counterparts of the so-called game. She becomes happy to be an instrument to make a helpless woman suffer and be trapped. In fact, Mrs. Kashikar’s involvement in the mock trial against Benare reveals how women remain contributory for the creation and survival of the oppressive patriarchal society. Women accept and internalise the man’s domination and at the same time, they turn against other women who transgress the social norms and consider them as ‘Others’. When Mrs. Kashikar asks if there is any evidence against Miss Benare, she replies;

What better proof? Just look at the way she behaves. I don’t like to say anything since she’s one of us. Should there no limit to how freely a woman can behave with a man? An unmarried woman? No matter how well she knows him? Look how loudly she laughs! How she sings, dances, cracks, jokes! And wandering alone with how many men, day in and day out! (Tendulkar 100)

She always criticizes Benare’s behaviour though she herself does not agree with the traditional norms of the society. Tendulkar portrays two women characters in the play to show how women can be oppressed and suffered by other women also. The character of Miss Benare and that of Mrs. Kashikar are in contrast with each other. Miss Benare represents a new woman, educated, civilised, independent, and has her own style and values whereas Mrs. Kashikar is the representative of an uneducated,
traditional woman, married, childless, dependent on her husband. There is some sort of ignorance of her existence, as her first name is not used. Miss Benare has more meaningful life compared to Mrs. Kashikar who is commanded by her husband. However, Mrs. Kashikar has somehow stable, protected, and safety life for being married. Nevertheless, such women still are longing for free and meaningful life. Therefore, normally such woman can be angry and jealous and her behaviour with Miss Benare shows the depth of hatred and jealousy. She tries to be equal to men in their aggressive and exploitation.

This play shows how law is used as an instrument to silence the women’s voice. The hypocritical moral code is made to subjugate women as the weaker sex. They are the victims of the hegemonic power-structure. Men always try to show their power on the powerless people in the social hierarchy. Further, Deborah Rhode in Justice and Gender, Sex Discrimination and the Law assert that:

A primary objective is to reorient legal doctrine from its traditional focus on sex-based difference toward a concern with sex-based disadvantage. By examining how the law reflects, reinforces, or challenges persistent patterns of inequality, we may gain a better understanding of both the cultural construction of gender and the most promising strategies for cultural change. (Rhode 1)

Benare asks Rokde to marry her but he refused absolutely. Though she tries to convince him by giving him different offers such as she will support him, he will get a chance to live an independent life free from Kashikar’s domination, he does not become ready to marry her. He remarks: “I’m scared. And if I marry you when you’re in this condition, the whole world’ll sling mud at me.” (Tendulkar 110). According to the patriarchal society, the mistaken woman does not deserve to get anyone to marry her and she becomes unfit to rear the children. Everybody in the
orthodox society punishes women spontaneous. No one is ready to forgive her for any rash act.

Tendulkar wonderfully reveals the inner psyche of the characters and its impacts on others. People enjoy others people’s sufferings. Even if they get a single chance to demean other, they do not hesitate to do it. He pictures the central character as an oppressed woman who is suffered, subjugated and silenced by the hypocritical social norms. However, there is a sort of change in her character. She becomes a new woman. She is now able to speak, challenge the society for her right, and express herself as an independent person. “My private life is my own business. I’ll decide what to do with myself; everyone should be able to! That can’t be anyone else’s business; understand?” (Tendulkar 117) Tendulkar tries to picture the position of woman in the civilised society. He criticizes frankly the hypocrite’s moral standards of the so-called modern society. Through his characters, he encourages women for a revolution against all odd and established values in the patriarchal society.

Women are struggling for liberation from all patriarchal subjugations. Their fate is already decided and mostly the same. Benare is demanding to get liberation for herself and for her babe in her womb, which is not acceptable in society. According to the patriarchy, this kind of freedom will threaten the existence of society. Thus, her demand is strictly and immediately rejected. “Motherhood without marriage has always been considered a very great sin by our religion and our traditions.” (Tendulkar 115). Women are always looking for love while men are looking for sex and body only. When she was just fourteen, her maternal uncle seduced her. Because of her strict environment she was living in, she loved him, she says “he was the one who came close to me ...gave me love.” She was very small to know the meaning of sin “I didn’t know what sin was.....” Of course, when she realises the situation, he left her alone suffering, he “turned tail and run.” (Tendulkar 117) She tries to suicide but
she does not succeed “my body didn’t die! I felt as if feelings were dead - but they hadn’t died either then.” (Tendulkar 118) Her first experience doesn’t make her wiser. She loves again and faces the same fate. “Again, I fell in love. As a grown woman. I threw all my heart into it; I thought, this will be different....” (Tendulkar 118) Unfortunately, she was trapped into the same trick again, she thought he is different; he will love her as a human not just as a body to use and throw.

He wasn’t a god. He was a man. For whom everything was of the body, for the body! That all! (Tendulkar 118)

First love makes her emotionally weak while her second love destroys her, emotionally, economically and socially. Now, her dream is to become a mother unwed mother of a son. She tries to get a father to her son but she could not success. It is surprising for such a rebellious woman that she wants a son not a daughter. May be she does not want her child suffer like her, or maybe she has the same ideology of the son baby.

Towards the end, Miss. Benare has a desire to be a mother. Her tragedy was because of men and the very men punish her alone for the sin, that is, love. But it is also surprising to find her, by the end, want like any traditional woman a house, a father and a good name to her son. She wants to live like any other women in the patriarchal Indian society.

He must have a mother-a father to call his own - a house - to be looked after- he must have a good name! (Tendulkar 118)

Miss Benare does not find justice either in court or in real life. This play shows the hypocrisy of the society. It forgives the man and punishes the woman for the same offence. It is believed that the new women are threatening the established cultures and they must be controlled. Men can easily withdraw from any responsibility they may face. Mr. Damle does a dual crime. One is against his wife who gives him her trust and another
against Benare who gives him her heart. Though he is absent, he throws a deep shadow over the play and in destroying her future life. Despite the fact that Miss Benare is an independent woman, she falls a victim by men’s conspiracies. Society alienated her for her action.

Tendulkar attempts to reflect the society’s reaction to such issues through the mock trial. What is wrong and immoral for woman is not applied for a man in the hypocritical society. Damle is treated as a witness not as a sinner for his illegal action. Justice is applied only for the powerless people. Woman is the victim of the society taboos and structures. All these structures, rules and taboos are manmade. Man makes woman as he wants her to be, weak, passive, obedient, exploited, servant, voiceless...etc. If she goes against the rules, she must be punished.

Benare starts independent, free minded, cheerful life but these two incidents, which took place in her life, affect her character. She becomes submissive to the norms of the society. She tries to settle the situation by her own way, by looking for a father to her son especially after the real father refuses to accept this relation and the son in her womb. She wants to be protected by a husband, to be a mother, to have a house, name to her child and family. Though she knows the father of her child, she cannot do anything. She cannot force him to marry her or take any kind of responsibility. Conversely, her decision to keep the developing child in her womb is a challenge to the established norms of the society. At the same time, she wants to make it acceptable to the society by finding another man who can take the responsibility.

In this play, the dramatist presents the vain struggle of a woman in the patriarchal society in the post-independence period. With the independence, one can think that woman’s issues could be solved. After independence, there are priorities that are away from woman’s emancipation; still they have specific needs, which remain negated and
neglected. Helie - Lucas remarks about the women's position during the Algerian revolution.

It would have seemed so mean to question the priority of the liberation of the country, and raise issues, which would not be issues any more after the liberation: we believed that all the remnants of women's oppression would disappear with independence.....We are made to feel that protesting the name of women's interests and rights is not to be done NOW.....not during the liberation struggle..... Not after independence, because all forces had to be mobilised to build up the devastated country..... defending women's rights now - this now being ANY historical moment - is always a betrayal of the people of the nation, of the revolution..... of cultural roots..... (Rai 11)

In short, Tendulkar pictures the hypocrisy of the society and repeatedly he attacks the artificial and dual moral standards of the civilised society. The play is a critique of the patriarchal values and existing institutions. Tendulkar leaves the play open ended and raises several questions rather than giving solutions.

Kamala (1981) a play of two acts, portrays the terrible position of women who are treated as mere changeable objects. They can be bought, sold, abused, humiliated...etc. Tendulkar uses media as a tool of the publicity of power. He attempts to expose the evils in the field of journalism by criticizing the concept of newspaper reporting. The media should be a means of social reform rather than being an object of getting name, position and money whatever is the price.

The playwright represents Jaisingh, the central character as a modern and sophisticated man who is ready to sacrifice human values to achieve his goals. In other words, Tendulkar attempts to present selfishness and hypocrisy of human beings. This play highlights the violence that is practiced by human beings and how they can do anything that can bring them reputation and promotion. He projects the real picture of married life in the middle class Indian society. The important events go
around the three central characters in the play Jaisingh, Sarita and Kamala. Through this relation, he tries to portray the complexities of the human being.

Jaisingh Jadhav, a careerist young man, ambitious, aggressive, self-seeking, hard working and dynamic journalist, buys a poor tribal woman named Kamala. He tells his wife that his main aim in taking such risk is to expose the burning fact that human flesh market is still in existence. Sarita, Jaisingh’s wife does not appreciate him for this act. Though, he tries to persuade her that he wants to use Kamala only for social reform and to prove the occurrences of the flesh trade, he uses her as a millstone in his professional life. Kakasaheb, Sarita’s uncle warns him for his ambitions. His action exposes his inhuman nature towards helpless people like Kamala. He considers Kamala as a tool that can help him to succeed in his professional life rather than human relation. Outwardly, he asks, struggles and fights for freedom and equality but inwardly he treats his wife as a slave.

This play deals with many layers of complexities in society. Woman is treated as a product that can be bought and sold. She is treated as the objects of sexuality. She does not have any identity apart from her physical identity. Through this play, there is a realistic image of man-woman relationship in Indian society. He shows the styles of traditional and modern life simultaneously. His plays aim at a re-evaluation of the Indian social norms. He represents woman as a victim of man’s oppression. Woman is trapped and becomes a victim of man’s conspiracies for centuries. The major features of Indian society are exploitation, oppressions and subjugation. Through his characters, he portrays the hypocrisy and selfishness of the patriarchal system. Woman is helpless, weak, exploited and treated as inferior everywhere. Effectively, he depicts the gender politics, which lays in society norms of family and gender
relations. How the woman is humiliated and demeaned is discussed thoroughly in his plays.

Tendulkar depicts his characters as victims of their circumstance and social norms because he wants to study in depth the human conditions. The agony and suffering of woman is the theme of this play. He highlights the hypocrisy, sex, violence, love in society and its consequences. He expresses his dislike against the established norms and asks for the better changes. The conflict between the individual and his society is effectively highlighted in his plays. His themes touch almost all our lives. Tendulkar creates a big storm through his plays. He inspires his themes from the real incident in the society. He wrote on unfamiliar man-woman relationship in different ways. Instead of focusing on the love and affections, he focuses on the sensuality and violence. He presents them from different perspectives.

Successfully, he projects women's perversion and degradation in male-dominated society. Women are exploited, humiliated inside and outside their home in varied forms. Men are exploited outside their home by their mangers, employers then they themselves become exploiters and exploit their wives inside their home. As Sarita works for her husband, he works for his boss. However, there is a lot of difference between the two, Jaisingh works to get salary, existence and evaluation in his professional life whereas Sarita works for him only to give him satisfaction, comfort, and pleasure. Everything goes on changing; only women's position remains the same.

Gender issues must be understood with reference to the culture of the society. The context of woman's suffering shows the social and culture norms that are rooted in each particular place and time. The awareness of the cultural and family rules that are replicated in many situations is important to be understood. The oppression appears in different types as
the oppressive forces of capitalism on working class people, the oppressive power on women by men and of women over other women. The perception of gender was radical because it highlights the fact that being a man or a woman is not only natural state but also a product of society. As Simon de Beauvoir explains that, we are not born women but we become. Our performance is constructed and a result of sequence practices in society over the time, by them we labelled as masculine or feminine. Largely, religion and tradition together regulate our life in several ways. These norms implant not as rules but as ideas and notion, which can direct our life.

According to the patriarchal values, woman’s intellectual inferiority is mirrored by her physical inferiority. Millet believes that there is an inherent intellectual inferiority in the nature of woman. When woman disobeys and violates the rules of the patriarchy, she is punished disproportionately to such act. Moreover, man’s access to financial power provides him with a superior economic position and puts woman into contrast with him as inferior.

The family has the essential role in establishing the gender roles. Millet says that the chief institution of patriarchy is family. The consent for sexual politics is obtained through the “socialisation” of both sexes to practice the basic patriarchal policies. The patriarchy gives the man almost ownership over his woman. He can do whatever he wants, including physical abuse, insult, humiliation, beat... etc. To achieve their exploitation they use the physical and sexual violence as a device. The patriarchy demeans women and turns them against each other. Woman must be the source of entertainment, pleasure, satisfaction and flattery of man. Despite the great achievements, the position of woman is still suppressed and man still practices the patriarchy over woman.
The man-woman relationship is political relation as it is based on power. According to Millet, physical power is always associated with patriarchy. The characteristics of power appear as racism, colonialism and sexism. Patriarchal power relies on form of violence like rape, aggressiveness, hatred and the desire to break down personality. The justification of this is that woman is considered inferior and secondary. Consequently, she is oppressed and dominated by male power.

Jaisingh is married to a well-educated woman Sarita. They live in luxury and their life does not lack any modern facilities. He is a master of the house. Of course, he has a complete authority on it. With his masculine qualities, he is very much ambitious, angry, and bold and uses his power only to serve his own ambition.

‘Kamala’ is a play of a real-life incident. Throughout this play, the dramatist wants to show that even educated people in this century still treat woman as a slave and as an object of sex. They act as the open-minded people but in reality, they are all same. In this regard, Simone de Beauvoir says:

The men of today show a certain duplicity of attitude which is painfully lacerating to women; they are willing on the whole to accept woman as a fellow being, an equal but they still require her to remain the inessential. (qtd in Lodge & Nigel 101)

Man treats woman as a use and throw object. Woman has to obey man unconditionally. Social norms and social conditions play a major role in woman suppression. Mainly, man tries to use violence and emotional abuse to control his family. It is believed that man is the real decision maker in the house and woman is expected to follow like domestic workers. He likes to be a man who is rough and tough. Man always likes to blame other for their violence. For example, he blames his woman, as she is the reason for provoking his bad behaviour and violence.
The playwright depicts Jaisingh-Sarita relationship as the typical Indian husband-wife relationship. Through giving some hints the dramatist highlights the real relationship of them that is similar to that of master-slave relationship. Man can exploit woman in different ways. For example, the way that Jaisingh exploits Sarita is different from Kamala’s. It highlights several ways of woman’s exploitation within society. In the patriarchal society, man always attempts to choose a woman who must meet his expectation physically and socially. Jaisingh has chosen a woman who meets all his needs and expectations. Sarita appears as a traditional wife doing all her duties and responsibilities faithfully towards her husband and house. She is educated, modern, and sensitive; she feels sympathy towards Kamala, whom her husband brought. Though she is educated and modern, she cannot escape the traditional role of a woman.

Wollstonecraft is perhaps the earliest feminist thinker to challenge essentialist notion of femininity qualities, which seemed neatly to oppose those rational virtues of human or male nature. She confirmed that woman was viewed as an incapacitated person physically and mentally. In Vindication of the Rights of Women 1792 by Wollstonecraft, she powerfully argues that woman capacity for rational thought has been suppressed by her lack of education. Woman is everywhere in this terrible state. Woman must have the right to educate like man because everyone deserves an equal chance to develop the capabilities and achieve personhood. Wollstonecraft encouraged woman to be treated as an autonomous decision-makers. For woman’s salvation, she suggested that woman should have been economically independent of man. For that, she provided woman few recommendations to achieve her independency. To be independent, woman needs the same civil liberties as men have.

Strengthen the female mind by enlarging it, and there will be an end to blind obedience..... Besides, the woman who strengthens her body and exercises her mind will, by managing her family and practicing various virtues, become
the friend, and not the humble dependent of her husband. (Wollstoncraft 21-41)

Through the book, Subjection of Women, Johan Stuart Mill calls for change in the education of women. He claims that the change in the way of education will allow women to show their true nature and not what they are taught and cultured.

Jaisingh brought Kamala from the flesh market for the exhibition at the press conference. Jaisingh proudly told his wife that he bought Kamala from the flesh market where women are auctioned. They are humiliated like any other cheap product.

They sell human beings at this bazaar at Luhardaga beyond Ranchi. Human beings. They have an open auction for women of all sorts of ages. People come from long distances to make their bids..... The men who want to bid-handle the women to inspect them Whether they are firm or flabby, young or old. Healthy or diseased. How they feel in the breast, in their waist, in their thighs and..... (Tendulkar: 14)

Heartlessly, woman is treated as a commodity, which can be sold, used and thrown. Man treats woman as a slave to satisfy his ego and needs. In the beginning, Sarita decides to support Kamala and challenge all the odd norms in society not for an individual but for all powerless women in the world. Through the characters of Sarita and Kamala the dramatist attempts to emphasise the importance of the sisterhood among women. Afterwards, she decides to help herself first because her status is not much different from that of Kamala’s. She notices how her destiny is not much different from Kamala’s. She starts to search for her identity and makes strong decision to change her life. Unfortunately, she postpones this decision to stand with her husband when he is fired. This incident shows her ability to deal according to the situation. It may indicate that still she does not have the complete courage to take responsibility of her decision. Besides, she can be considered as a complex character.
Tendulkar, through his plays, shows the fact that the destiny of all women is mostly the same whether they are educated or not, from tribal or urban area, from high or low class with less or more differences. They are helpless in front of men conspiracies. Women are subjected to humiliation and suffering throughout their life. Sometimes women do not have the full courage to overcome any unjust norms. Moreover, they are very much emotional and their emotion can affect their decision. They keep delaying their decision until they forget their revolution. It can be assumed that there is a kind of endless struggle between men and women.

The dramatist seems to suggest obliquely that family becomes a place of woman subjugation. Marriage is a basic relation that forms the structure of society. It should be full of understanding, love, respect and cooperation from both sides. However, what is happening is that from the beginning man tries to dominate his woman. According to the social norms, man should be powerful, decision maker, do not listen to his woman, and use violence to control his family. Unconsciously, man does all this to be acceptable as a man in the power system. Man always treats woman as “other” and gives her only the subservient roles.

According to Simone de Beauvoir, gender is constructed. The body has been interpreted according to the cultural meanings. For Beauvoir woman is forced to occupy secondary roles. In addition, she argued that gender is variable and suggested that one is not born as a woman but rather, becomes. She claims that the attitudes of girls and boys during the first three years or four are almost the same. However, the social norms encourage and support man to be active, important and superior. In addition, the same norms enforce woman to be passive, docile and inferior. Both the sexes are the products of society. It is depicted that family is the space where woman will certainly be exploited and destroyed. Moreover, marriage is a privileged thing in society where
woman is oppressed, exploited and suffered. Unconsciously, woman becomes a slave of her master rather than a partner or human being.

I was asleep. I was unconscious even when I was awake. kamala wake me up. With a shock. Kamala showed me everything. Because of her, I suddenly saw things clearly. I saw that the man I thought my partner was the master of a slave. I have no right at all in this house. Because I ‘am a slave. (Tendulkar 46)

According to Virginia Wolf, the realisation of the oppression and consciousness of the right is the important leading solution of all the woman problems. Marriage is not based on love but rather on power. Automatically, woman has learned to suppress her individuality and work for man’s wishes and needs. Sarita, in the absence of her husband does all things related to him, and she is scared of him if she does not do the things the way he wants her to do. Through their dialogues, we find the hollowness in their relation. Sarita is the representative of majority of Indian women who, though highly educated, are used by their male-counterparts as stepping stones in their achievements. Even education fails to bring any substantial change in their status in family and society.

After marriage, woman becomes a slave to her husband, no personality, no dignity, even the way of life changes after getting married. She has to be submissive in her husband’s home and does all duties related to her husband’s family. Though, Jaisingh has a servant, he enjoys ordering his wife and considers this as his natural right. She performs her duties perfectly as an efficient housekeeper and as a good wife. In fact, woman herself is the prisoner of these ideologies. Tendulkar through his plays highlights the man’s dominance over woman in different situations to demonstrate how gender and power are associated with each other.

Man wants wife only for his domestic comfort, sexual enjoyment and also for social companionship. Sarita puts all her energy and life to support her husband. She tries to stand with him to be a successful
professional man. Whereas she remains at home powerless. To be a wife in a patriarchal society, she must adjust, compromise and self sacrifice for the happiness of her husband and his family. The valuation of man and devaluation of woman are effectively highlighted in this play. To be an ideal woman, one has to support the man, suppress oneself from every and each desire, and need not only as a woman but also as a human being.

Sarita cannot practice any sort of authority in the house, she has to ask her husband’s approval for each thing. She has to bear all kinds of degradation to keep her status in society as a married woman. She must be patient when he scolds or humilates her for any reason because he is the master, and the owner. He has a right to become nervous and out of control whenever he wants. At the same time, they deny woman’s right to become angry, out of control, nervous, tired, and complain for any reason, because she is treated as a servant. If she gets aggressive, everyone will criticize her, abuse her and she deserves to be punished. They will consider such action as unnatural one. In such society, men’s aggressiveness appears as something natural whereas that of women’s cannot be. When Sarita becomes upset and tired, she asks her husband to send her to her home. He does not have any problem of her departure. Instead of persuading her to stay with him, asks about her inconvenient, tries to understand her problem, directly he books her ticket. This incident shows her insignificant position in his life throughout ten years.

Sarita remains unconscious about her oppression and humiliation by her husband. Kamala’s arrival at her home is considered as the turning point in her life. Kamala makes a starting point in Sarita’s acknowledgment of her own subservience to Jaisingh. Kamala thinks that Sarita is another purchased slave. Therefore, they have to live together as sisters. Though Kamala is uneducated, poor, she can realise the situation in a better way than Sarita who is educated; Kamala tries to do a contract with Sarita saying:
So, memsahib, both of us must stay here together like sisters. We'll keep the master happy. We'll make him prosperous. The master will have children, I'll do the hard work, and I'll bring forth the children, I'll bring them up. You are an educated woman. You keep the accounts and run the house. Put on lovely clothes and make merry with the master. Go out with him on holidays and feast days..... Fifteen days of the month, you sleep with the master; the other fifteen, I'll sleep with him. Agreed? (Tendulkar 35)

After her conversation with Kamala, she realises her position and rethinks of her own life. She wants to live her own life with self-respect and dignity. She wants to be an independent human being who can decide her life. She wants to choose the life she wants it to be. Sarita does not feel jealous from Kamala but rather she is insisting on her staying with them. Sarita's sympathy for Kamala is noticeable when she refuses to let Kamala go to the press-conference in torn cloths by saying “She is a woman, after all. And her sari is torn.” (Tendulkar 21) She asks her husband to allow her to cover Kamala’s body in a proper way. However, Jaisingh wants her to appear as she is, without any kind of sympathy or considerations. His inhuman treatment with Kamala is effectively highlighted. For Jaisingh her torn sari is more important than her dignity and self-respect. For all that, he insists to accompany him in such cloths. He acts as a free-minded man who pleads for freedom and equality and rejects all sorts of corruption in the society but in reality, he is all together different if it comes against his benefits.

The playwright depicts the crudity and brutality of social system through the incident of the purchase of Kamala and her presentation in the press conference in almost denuded form. Jaisingh is proud of his action “Even a bullock costs more than that I thought her dirty cheap.” (Tendulkar 145) Kamala is a victim of a patriarchal society that considers woman as nothing but a property of man. Generally, men use women for their own need, throw them away and get another. Jaisingh uses Kamala
for getting promotion, fame and success and after one day, he throws her at women home. He tells his wife that he did a great thing for society by exposing the flesh market “Do you know, I turned the world upside down to find this bazaar. I was the first journalist to reach it.” (Tendulkar 15).

For him, those people like Kamala have a natural endurance. So, he does not let her take bath after their long journey, because if she becomes clean, he will not win other’s admiration. She will not affect other people the way he wants. She will not score the desirable effect.

.....And people of her kind don’t have a bath for days on end.....And you’ll be surprised- she’ll feel dirtier after her bath. (Tendulkar 18)

He never considers Kamala as a human being, who can feel tired, hurt, loneliness, embarrassed and weak. He does not stop a minute to think about her life and what is going to happen to her afterward. He thinks about her only as an instrument to achieve his purpose. Outwardly, the purpose of the press conference is to expose all kinds of violence against the helpless women. Inwardly, he exposes the poor woman physically and psychologically. Jaisingh’s insisting to attend the press conference as she is, in her torn cloths, exposes her physically. Furthermore, he orders her to answer all their shameless questions that expose her psychologically. The dramatist highlights the effect of money and reputation on human being. Consequently, they make people blind and careless about other’s sufferings.

In the press conference, Kamala does not get any kind of sympathy and no one cares about her as a human being. Actually, the economic needs make woman looks as something inferior and an easy victim of verbal violence. They ask her embarrassing and full of degradation questions quite inhumanly. For example, how many men have you slept with? They cannot see her miserable condition. They left all-important issues related to her sufferings and ask such shameless questions. It
suggests the fact that people get sadistic pleasure in inflicting miseries on others. They focus on the form, neglecting the content. Their questions are meaningless and it shows their hollowness, and bad thinking towards women. Moreover, it is suggested that lower caste and poor women are not to be expected to be pure and chaste. They are considered as the easy sexual prey. This depicts the crooked psyche of the educated people in this so-called cultured, modern society. Jaisingh justifies it saying:

Don’t misunderstand Kakasaheb. We people ask serious and good questions too. If the subject is serious, sometimes they leave an intelligent politician speechless. (Tendulkar 29)

According to them woman’s suffering and her being publically sold is not a serious subject; it does not need any effort to solve such issues and stop it. Instead, they are making fun of it. Jaisingh proudly says: “But you need a serious situation for that.”(Tendulkar 29), which kind of seriousness they need more than this situation. They make fun of such powerless woman.

The relationship of Jaisingh and Sarita is similar to the colonized and colonizer relationship. At certain point Sarita realises her victimisation by her husband and decides to change her position and starts declaring her individuality. Apparently, there is a sort of change in her behaviour towards her husband; he is surprised to see such behaviour from his wife “Never noticed any signs of it before. If you didn’t want to come, you could at least told me earlier.” (Tendulkar 45) In addition, she does not agree with her husband in sending Kamala to an orphanage. She refuses to go with him to the party and refuses to give him his physical pleasure. He feels a bit of rebel in her behaviour. She rebels against him physically, socially and emotionally. Besides, she thinks of arranging a press conference to expose his reality in front of the world.
I am going to present a man who in the year 1982 still keeps a slave, right here in Delhi. Jaisingh Jadhav. I’m going to say: this man’s a great advocate of freedom. And he brings home a slave and exploits her. He doesn’t consider a slave a human being—just a useful object. (Tendulkar 46)

There is a voice of protest against the marginalised condition of woman as inferior. Sarita asks:

“If a man becomes great, why doesn’t he stay a great man? Why does he become a master? (Tendulkar 47)

Tendulkar, through Kakasaheb’s character, succeeds to present gender discrimination as a social norm passed down generation. He also brings to notice that the position of women remains the same for centuries. He tells Sarita that:

Sarita, the question you are asking have only one answer. Because he’s like that. That’s why he’s a man. And that’s why there’s manhood in the world. I too was just like this. Don’t go by what I seem to be today. I gave your aunt a lot of trouble. As if it was my right. I didn’t care what she felt at all. I just marched straight ahead looking in front of me. I was confident she would follow, even if she was limping. And she did follow, the poor thing. (Tendulkar 47)

For Millet the entire culture supports male authority. In such patriarchal society, man in the position of authority centred and identified. These cultural norms reflect and serve all the men’s interest and expectations. Unconsciously, they passed down the generations. Women must try harder to discover their identity and puts themselves on the way of self-discovery. They should be full of hope and determination. However, it seems that women’s total emancipation may be something impossible due to several factors. Therefore, they must understand their inner psyche, personality, their hidden strength, weakness and value what actually they have. They must value themselves as they are; master their own mind to be able to achieve equality historically, politically and socially.
This must be changed. Those who do manly things should be equal to men. Those who don’t, are women. And there will be some among them who have beards and moustaches too. Isn’t being Prime Minister of India a manly thing? And isn’t it an effeminate thing to grovel at that Prime Minister’s feet? (Tendulkar 47)

All through the ages woman was considered subordinate and secondary in a society. Woman was actually placed in the secondary position, but in the course of time, according to the changing needs woman contributed for economic prosperity and was working with man shouldering the responsibilities. Woman has proved that she too has the strength and potentialities to equal man. Women can work harder than men do to achieve acknowledgment. Though they are different, they can do all things equal to man, and they want to treat equal. Therefore, they internalise the patriarchal norms and accepting man as a model of success. As a result of this they become oppressors of other women and men in their context. In other words, while trying to remove patriarchy unconsciously they become a part of it.

Kakasaheb and Jain do not look very much different from Jaisingh’s patriarchal ideology. They are also a part of the patriarchal system. Kakasaheb, who firmly believes in principles and ethics, does not see Jaisingh’s treatment of his wife as unusual practice in marriage life. He says:

'It may be unpleasant, but it’s true. If the world is to go on, marriage must go on. And it will only go on like this. (Tendulkar 47)

He gives Sarita some advice to adjust and to make a compromise in such a male dominated society. He tells her that he himself mistreated his wife in his youth time. Moreover, Jain the minor character follows Jaisingh’s way as a patriarchal agent. He also makes fun of Kamala in the press conference. Sarita behaves like many traditional women who decide
to be different, independent but postpone it for many reasons such as social state, economic reason, shelter and protection or maybe they still do not have the courage to overcome all these discriminations. Though she determines to start her journey of self- discovery and reshapes her real identity, she postpones it to stay and support her husband who is dismissed from his job “but a day will come”. Sarita starts becoming a new woman who is able to think and question the whole practice of patriarchy. She says:

Why? Why can’t men limp behind? Why aren’t women ever the masters? Why can’t a woman at least ask to live her life the same way as a man? Why must only a man have the right to be a man? Does he have one extra sense? A woman can do everything a man can. (Tendulkar 47)

Through this play, the dramatist attempts to portray the reality of marriage life in middle class Indian society. Though wife is considered the companion of her husband, she does not have an equal position or status to the man inside the home. Husband is considered essential, superior, and the wife, the inessential, subordinate and inferior. Across all cultures, women are secondary to men’s position. Woman has to be ruled, dominated and controlled by man. In their home, they are protected by their father and brother and after marriage, their husband and sons protect them. It is suggested that women are not fit for independence. Therefore, family institution becomes the place of subjugation and oppression to protect them from any kind of violation.

Actually, the play Kamala does not attack the male domination only but also highlights the important issues of society that women are partly participating in their exploitation and responsible for their own sufferings. Though Sarita becomes aware of her own exploitation and takes her decision so that she will become an independent woman, she postpones it and stays with her husband.
I’ll go on feeling it. But at present I’m going to lock all that up in a corner of my mind and forget about it. But a day will come, Kakasaheb, when I will stop being a slave. I’ll no longer be an object to be used and thrown away. I’ll do what I wish, and no one will rule over me. That day has to come. And I’ll pay whatever price I have to pay for it. (Tendulkar 52)

Woman to woman relationship is highlighted through such characters as Kamala and Kamalabai. Actually, the way Kamalabai passes comments about Kamala shows how the patriarchy succeeds to turn women against each other: “Good thing she’s gone. She was a bad sort.” (Tendulkar 42) The innocent question of Kamala “...how much did he buy you for?” (Tendulkar 34) leaves Sarita untoward. Jaisingh pays `250/- for Kamala whereas he is paid `700/- as a dowry from Sarita’s father.

Listen to the story of how he bought the slave Kamala and made use of her. The other slave he got free - not just free - the slave’s father shelled out the money - a big sum. As him what he did with it. (Tendulkar 46)

Thus, Jaisingh exploits both of them for his benefits. He considers them as objects of pleasure, money and as stepping-stones to his own achievements. His declaration of his authority in his home gives a real picture of married life and husband – wife relationship in the patriarchal society. “It’s I who takes decisions in this house, and no one else. Do you understand? (Tendulkar 42) Such declaration makes Sarita realise her position, which does not much differ from that of a slave. Jaisingh considers woman as an object of exhibition rather than human being. Sarita gives him a domestic comfort, physical pleasure and social companionship whereas Kamala helps him in getting promotion, fame and money. The incident of presenting Kamala at the press conference in torn clothes reveals to Sarita his real nature as a hypocritical person. Consequentially, it makes her understand her real place in his life. There is a sort of definite progress in Sarita’s character from a docile to a new
woman. At the end of the play, though Sarita decides to support her husband emotionally, she declares her determination to become an independent woman in the near future. "... a day will come" (Tendulkar 52) The utterance of Sarita stands for her firm hope of a better day in future wherein she would be an independent woman. The playwright wishes to bring home the idea that even the woman who is settled economically, financially and socially falls a prey to the forces of patriarchy. The woman of Tendulkar, therefore, does not appear radical in nature. She resubmits to the force of oppression under the guise of home and children.

**Kanyadaan** (1983), a controversial play has two acts, five scenes with a limited number of characters. The actions of the play revolve round the theme of inter-caste marriage. It shows how unequal marriage can be a cause of unpredicted complex problems. He frankly depicts the conflict between the upper and lower class people. Tendulkar portrays the position of women and that of Dalit people in Indian society. The play ends leaving the audience free to imagine and find a suitable solution.

According to many thinkers like B.R. Ambedkar inter-caste marriage is one of the best solutions to end the evil of caste. One important question comes to our mind: Is the inter-caste marriage really the best solution to uproot caste trouble from the society. Inter-caste marriage is considered as a complex social concern especially in Indian context. Though many social reformers and organisations declare it as the most important device for changing and destroying caste system in Indian society, the inter-caste marriage is not largely welcomed and encouraged in Indian society. It is observed that the inter-caste married couple may face problems and difficulties, which other couples are not necessary to face in society. This is because the inter-caste marriage is the result of cultural differences between different castes, which are brought up in different environment. Their way of living is very different. So, they need time for adjustment and to destroy the cast dilemma. It is claimed that the
western culture affects somehow the culture of various castes leading to some changes and developments in society norms.

Literary works may reveal various aspects of life in a very effective way. It portrays and reflects our life effectively. Some reformist dramatist like Tendulkar and Karnad and others aim to make a change in the ideology of Indian society. Through their writings, they try to create an ideal world where human being is treated equally with respect. This play highlights a layer of complexities and shows the fact that it is not an easy task to solve sociological problems. So, for the better results, it is good to start changing the essential consciousness of cast and gender and then only, changes will take place at the practical level. Through this play, the dramatist highlights different themes. He does not portray a Dalit character that is oppressed by society and wants equal rights with upper cast people. He presents Arun Athavale, as a young Dalit boy who gets a chance to get married to a girl from upper class. He considers her as an object of revenge against all higher-class people “Women are regarded as gate ways – literally points of entrance into the caste system.” (Chakravarti 579) Here the situation is different; a girl of higher class is suffering, and being humiliated and exploited at the hands of a Dalit person. According to many critics, this play succeeds to produce the anti-Dalit feeling rather than arouse sympathy for them. Other critics justify that Tendulkar by this way wants to analyze the psyche of the men who are oppressed and humiliated for centuries and how it is difficult for them to co-exist easily with the upper class people. They are born with inherited quality of hatred and desires for revenge for all injustice norms. They do not trust upper class people even if they offer them a hand. Tendulkar successfully depicts the exploitation of the Dalit and women in the past and its effect in present time.

The play pictures the civilised family of Nath Devalikar who does not believe in casteism. So, Nath does not feel surprised from his
daughter’s intention to marry a Dalit boy—Arun Athavale. Instead, he heartily welcomes this idea. On the other hand, her mother, Seva is also a socialist and holds ideal ideas but she is a realistic woman. She shocks and rejects Jyoti’s decision of getting married to a Dalit. She asks Jyoti about Arun, his family, his background, his job…etc. On that basis, she attempts to convince her to rethink and not to be hurry in such decision.

My anxiety is not over his being a dalit. You know very well that Nath and I have been fighting untouchability tooth and nail, God knows since when. So that’s not the issue. But your life has been patterned in a certain manner. You have been brought up in a specific culture. To erase or to change all this overnight is just not possible. He is different in every way. You may not be able to handle it. (Tendulkar 509)

Tendulkar tries to depict the vast gap between the low and upper class people life style. Though people take higher education, none of them is ready to accept the other. It is highlighted through the characters of Jyoti and Arun. Blindly, Nath supports his daughter’s decision rather than listening to others opinion. However, he pretends that he is a modern man; he ignores other’s opinion and never considers them. Through Arun’s visit to Jyoti’s house, Tendulkar presents the Dalit’s boy psyche and life style. Each word of Arun is sufficient to show the vast gap between the two families. He shows how much his life style is depressed and different from Jyoti’s lifestyle. Though Jyoti becomes aware of all such differences, she accepts to marry him. She thinks that she can improve him and change his way of life. Actually, Arun does not cheat her, he frankly warns her about such differences.

Will you marry me and eat stinking bread with spoilt dal in my father’s hut? Without vomiting? Tell me, Jyoti, can you shit everyday in our slum’s village toilet like my mother? Can you beg, quaking at every door, for a little grass for our buffaloes? Come on, tell me. (Tendulkar 513)
A wife is treated as a mere thing. Beating a wife for some husbands is not a crime; rather it is part of his right. Arun loves Jyoti and beats her. He considers violence as a part of his life. He is not ready to change himself a bit. Men think that they are superior and have every sort of rights over their wives. Arun not only treats Jyoti badly but also abuses her parents. He accuses Seva that she provides the socialist leaders with several girls. And he says that Jyoti’s real father is not Mr. Nath. By such dirty accusations, he attempts to demean and humiliate her parents morally and take revenge on them for being the upper class people.

For Nath, the inter-caste marriage is an experiment to remove the evil of caste from the Hindu society. However, this inter-caste marriage between backward class boy and superior class girl failed to achieve its goal. This failure happened because of caste and class-consciousness. Indian society is well-known as a caste society. Caste system is deeply rooted in the psyche of Indian people. Much effort has been done to remove this bias and close the gap between the classes. We find many writers have discussed the caste issues and try to reflect its true reality and its consequences.

Through this play, Tendulkar succeeds to portray the fact that even in the globalisation era low class people are still humiliated, suffered, and treated badly at the hands of upper class people. Until present time the inter-caste marriage is not largely encouraged. Many people are against it theoretically and practically. The danger of caste system cannot be bridged even after some conscious effort. This is because the seeds of caste consciousness are deeply rooted in the minds of people. The failure of inter-caste marriage is because it is not the marriage of individuals but of ideologies. Some people encourage the inter-caste marriage with the hidden purpose. Sometimes the aim is to get the name and fame among people. In case of success, the inter-caste marriage will bring a great social change but this kind of change still is theoretical not practical. The changes
can easily happen at external level but it is very difficult to bring inner changes, and changes such ideologies, which are passed on from generations to generations. The changes will not take place by words only.

This play highlights the caste and gender discrimination in Indian context. There is a strong relation between caste and gender. Some people believe that there is a close connection between the purity of women and purity of caste. Women have been exploited for centuries in all over the world. They are depressed and deprived of all rights even to speak or to act. They do not have any kind of right as independent human beings. Moreover, they do not have courage to revolt or raise a voice of rebellion and if it happens, it is immediately suppressed and silenced.

Arun is aware of his inferiority, low caste in society and this makes him feel helpless and does not let him think about other positive things that he has in his life. According to gender discrimination, he is practicing the complete control over his wife. Though she is from upper class family and well educated, she is humiliated and suffered at the hands of her husband who is a low class man. She gets a further lower status in the society and her husband is now ranked higher than she is. She suffers double humiliation. By her acceptance such marriage, she makes a great mistake of her family, herself and her children afterwards. When children grow up in such environment, the girl will suffer like her mother and be oppressed, submissive, and the boy will act like his father and be aggressive in the future.

Jyoti, the wife suffers on account of her gender and the bias the husband had nurtured since his childhood. The husband and his caste, thus, have been made culprits whereas the caste and class of the wife have been projected as ideal. On the other hand, her father Nath also has to suffer twice publicly and personally. He suffers the public harassment and humiliation for being deadly against the orthodox society and personally
because of his daughter’s suffering at the hands of the husband. Nath tries to uproot the caste evil from society but he could not understand the internal ambiguity as he always looks at the surfaces. “We haven’t even seen if the boy is dark or fair...” (Tendulkar 501). He does not try to take his own time to know more and understand the personal level in Arun’s personality. They are suffering because of the artificiality of their idealism. Nath thinks that all human beings all equally good and deserve equal respect. Through his conversation with Arun he concentrates on the appearances and surface not on the content.

The marriage is the creation of a mutual identity and long life relationship. Arun fails to go beyond his caste complexities. He does not succeed to treat Jyoti as a partner not as an upper caste wife that make this marriage full of violent, humiliation, pain and frustrations. He is exploited and exploiter at the same time. Considerably, the person who experiences the exploitation, violence, and humiliation should be a way of humiliating and exploiting others. Arun’s ill treatment to Jyoti was as kind of revenge on upper class people. There is a close relation between gender and power.

Nath is a democratic person, and he does not believe in partiality among people. He looks as a modernist and democratic person but in the course of time, he realises the artificiality and hollowness of his ideals. Such a battle needs a firm commitment and people should be aware of such changes. Such changes need people understand the internal caste consciousness and sacrifice much to make such venture a successful one. Noticeably, Arun is under the stress of various ideologies. Because of the inter-relationship between caste and gender, women face double oppression of caste and gender.

To the upper cast ideology, the Dalit woman is an object that can be used and abused. They are treated as the easy object of sex. They suffer a
double humiliation because of their gender as women and because of their caste as Dalit women. Accordingly, there is an important association between female purity and purity of caste. The honour and respectability of men is protected and preserved through their women. Arun’s attack on the character of Seva is not simply a reply to the biased mentality represented by Seva against Dalit woman. Nevertheless, at the same time, it proves that women irrespective of their society and caste fall victim to the lust of men around. The high caste position or low caste location of a woman does not guarantee that she would not be a prey to the lust of man. Though the subjugation of women is a universal feature all over the world, the form and level of that subjugation and subordination vary according to the social and cultural background in which the women have placed.

Tendulkar through this play tries to present a realistic picture of caste dilemma in society. The aim is to create casteless society. Society should be free from all these artificiality norms and people should be treated equally as human beings. Tendulkar ends this play leaving many questions in the audience’s mind. Though his works create a big storm and many times, he has been attacked physically, he did not change his way of writing and dealing with such issues frankly.

Tendulkar attempts to unite two cultures by shaping the boundaries of caste as immemorial obstacles. Dalit men and women suffer much as they are the victims of the institutional body of powers in Indian society. Though Arun gets a high praise for his autobiography, name, fame and position in society, not all this succeeds to bring any kind of changes in his psychology and his feeling of inferiority. Education should make people conscious, go beyond caste, class, religious, gender, and treat all people equally with respect. Furthermore, education should influence man in his thinking and in his personality evolution.
Arun treats his wife very badly and he does not stop torturing her even in her pregnancy. He is a prisoner of his own perceptions. His violence is not without reasons. It is a part of his revenge on upper class people for treating his ancestors inhumanly. Some men show their manhood and power only in front of their powerless wives. The world is still a male dominated world and women are born for suffering and just for fulfilling their needs. On the other hand, women should be aware of their right and their dignity, overcome the oppression and come out of all odd norms in society. Under the institute of married life, wives are ill treated and exploited by their husbands. They are oppressed, humiliated indoors and outdoors in the patriarchal society.

He wonderfully depicts the inter-relationship between human minds. Through his plays, he attempts to raise a voice against violence in all its forms. He effectively highlights the husband-wife relationship and suffering of children. He successfully brings out the awareness in Indian societies. Any society cannot change through words only. The words must be accompanied with action. Nath tells his wife:

Look! Seva, society cannot be transformed through words alone. We have to act as catalysts in this transformation. The old social reformers did not stop with making speeches and writing articles on widow remarriage. Many of them actually married widows. Why did they do it..? That was also an experiment, a difficult experiment. But they dared to risk it. (Tendulkar 524)

There must be no postponing for the change. Everyone in society must be involved in the process of changes for getting a united world full of respect and equality. If the mindset of whole society changes there will be new perception full of love and respect to everybody living in the society. This transformation will take place through action not through speeches and writings.
Most characters are round characters not flat one. Jyoti decides to take responsibility of her decision. Whatever is the cost she will continue to make changes in her future life with her husband whom she has chosen? Though Jyoti enjoys economic independence, high position in society she accepts such humiliation and decides to continue her marriage. From the early beginning, her mother and brother do not agree for this unequal marriage. She does not try to foresee her life with him after marriage. Marriage is a lifelong relationship not just one-step in human life. Though her mother warns her of the consequences of this marriage, Jyoti does not think seriously about what will happen afterwards. Her mother is just worried about her future.

But your life has been patterned in a certain manner. You have been brought up in a specific culture. To erase or change all this overnight is just not possible. He is different in every way. You may not be able to handle it. (Tendulkar 509)

There is an argument that women are lacking in rationality and they are lead by their emotions. Unlike, Tendulkar pictures Seva as a strong woman who can think rationally, foresee the future and able to give a right judgment for Arun’s behaviour. Through Seva’s character, the dramatist tries to show women’s wisdom. After marriage, it is very difficult for a woman to change her decision or turn back. “Saying something is easy, but doing it is very difficult... And later there is no chance for a woman to hide or to run away.” (Tendulkar 509). As a woman, she has to take the whole responsibility of her own decision. Tendulkar represents Jyoti as a strong woman who knows what she is doing. She declares her whole responsibility. “It doesn’t seem to me that I would run away”. (Tendulkar 509). In the patriarchal society, the role of husband and wife is already defined. In the failed marriage woman is only the victim and she has to pay the cost of her failure or for her bad luck. The patriarchal society considers her as the only reason of such failure. In
such society, everyone puts blame on woman, that she does not meet the
social expectation. So, she has to be punished and man will be rewarded to
get another woman. On the other hand, man always goes unquestioned;
he is free to go and exploit another victim easily. The psyche of men can
only see women as something inferior, changeable object and her duty is
only to make man comfortable and fulfil all his needs. It is not surprising
to see men and women punished transgress woman for any fault.
Tendulkar portrays the helplessness of human being in front of the destiny
and fate. Human being feels helpless and frustrated because they cannot
change their destiny or achieve their aims in life.

After marriage, Jyoti comes to know the worth of her mother’s
advice. She realises the fact that she has made a great mistake by getting
married to a person who is not suitable for her. The person can be judged
from the distance but this judgment will be different when he comes closer
to the content. The background of a person is very much important to
know his personality and behaviour. We can get an idea about Arun’s
personality, his background, environment in, which he had grown up
from his speech. When Seva asks him why he beats Jyoti he replies;

From childhood I have seen my father come home
drunk every day, and beat my mother half dead, seen her cry
heart out. Even now I hear the echoes of her broken sobs. No
one was there to wipe her tears. My poor mother! She didn’t
have a father like Bhai, nor a mother like you..... What am I
but the son of scavengers. We don’t know the non violent
ways of Brahmins like you. We drink and beat our wives.....
we make love to them .....but the beating is what gets
publicized. (Tendulkar 539-540)

Men are oppressed outside home. When they return, they show
their anger. They practice their power and take revenge from the exploited
society on their powerless wives. Dalit women have to deal with
discriminations on two levels being Dalit and female. They have had to
face the double barriers of casteism and sexism. In the other words, the
situation of Dalit woman is more vulnerable than that of non-Dalit woman. She has to suffer in the family and she has to face the society as a Dalit woman. Women’s own experiences, the women’s movement and feminist writing have played the important role in raising women’s consciousness about their oppression. Women should understand well the basis of their oppression that will lead a revolution against all forms of discrimination. Women should try to understand the source of their oppression and try to overcome it. There is a need of change in the entire system of the society. There must be reconstruction of all social norms. Changes must happen for getting a democratic society where everyone has equal rights and should be treated humanely. In Indian society, people are divided according to their caste, class, gender, religion, and it is difficult to deny the status of anyone in the society. Naturally, Indian society considers as the patriarchal society. The renowned Indian writer Chakravarti comments thus:

The general subordination of women assumed a particularly severe form in India through the powerful instrument of religious traditions, which have shaped social practices. A marked feature of Hindu society is its legal sanction for an extreme expression of social stratification in which women and the lower castes have been subjected to humiliating conditions of existence. (Chakravarti 579)

Nevertheless, there are many homes like Nath’s home where they practice democracy. On the other hand, he does not take his wife and son’s opinion seriously. The family of Nath on the surface appear democratic in temperament. The parents did not treat the children differently based on their gender. But at the occasion of an important and serious decision, it is always the say of Nath that prevails over the opinions of others. Therefore the preparing of tea by Jayprakash and offering it to the members of the family appear secondary since his voice / action is not taken into consideration seriously in moments important “shall I make some coffee for you?”. On the other hand, the take of Arun on helping Jyoti in the
The kitchen is taken as an act of devaluation of his manhood. He puts it: “No, men who sit and chat in the kitchen are pansies!” (Tendulkar 513) The environment of Arun is very different from that of Jyoti’s. This is the important reason of his violence.

The parents of the protagonist could not find time for their children. It is the unavoidable reality of modern society. The lack of communication between parents and children results in horrible consequences. The biased attitude of the husband against the upper caste section contributes the gloomy atmosphere in the family. The wife who believes firmly in the institution of marriage at the end declares her firm decision thus:

I have my husband. I am not a widow. Even if I become one I shan’t knock at your door. I am not Jyoti Yadunath Devalikar now, I am Jyoti Arun Athavale, a scavenger.... I am one of them. Don’t touch me. Fly from my shadow, otherwise my fire will scorch your comfortable values. (Tendulkar 566)

The plays of Tendulkar taken up for the study depict how society curves its individual’s freedom under the pressure of patriarchy. He also highlights the power relations that govern society. The plays bring to our notice the secondary status of woman designed by the discrimination in the name of gender. The lowly status of woman forces her to accept the ill-treatment at the society in general and the male in particular. The women projected in the plays taken up for study seems to have been awakened but they could not transform their will and pleasure into reality. They retreat from the path of self-awakening and submit to the oppressive hegemonic structure in the name of security and stability.


