CHAPTER-II

Female Marginalization in Rama Mehta’s INSIDE THE HAVELI

1. Introduction:

Women writers emerged in the times when women education was banned. So, an attempt of women writers in Indian literature is appreciative. Rama Mehta’s Inside the Haveli is the answer to all people.

1.1 Biography of Rama Mehta:

Rama Mehta was born in Nainital, India in 1923. She became a top sociologist, lecture and novelist. She was an Indian sociologist. She is specially remembered for her novel Inside the Haveli written in 1977. This book received 1979 Sahitya Akademi Award for English.


She was one of the first women to be appointed to India’s prestigious Indian Foreign Service. After her marriage, she was pressurized to resign her position. She died in 1978. Her only novel Inside the Haveli is her remarkable contribution to Indian English Women’s Fiction. Her Literature is translated in Hindi, Assamese and Urdu. Significantly, the novel and her other non-fictional books centre on issues of Indian women trapped between the tradition and modernity.

1.2 Brief Summary of Inside the Haveli:

The novel begins with the wedding ceremony of Geeta, a protagonist of the novel. She is a representative of modern women who believe in individualism and freedom. Geeta hails from cosmopolitan city of Bombay, which is the hub of modernity. Geeta is a lover of freedom and wants to lead a free life of independence –both of body and spirit. She gets married to highly
qualified Ajay, who works as Professor in the University at Udaipur. Prime Facia, Geeta has been kept away from the truth of conservative attitude of her in-laws house. Ajay belongs to an austere family that confines to preserve and practice the age old paramount traditions and customs in their lives. Geeta is unaware of these unwritten codes of conduct of the family. At the time of departure, Geeta’s mothers advises her to be good and obedient in in-laws house. When Geeta enters the city of Udaipur, she gets encircled by a number of women who appear covered with pardah. They express their surprises on the unveiled face of Geeta. Immediately, she does not notice Ajay who was with her, till then she gets astonished of on account of such behavior of those women. The whole atmosphere becomes suffocating for Geeta. These women would pass various comments on her behavior, her body language and her dusty complexion. It hurts Geeta much and unknowingly, it becomes the cause for her aloofness with them later in the haveli. Geeta realizes the conservative atmosphere of the haveli. She is also asked to pull pardah on her face. She experiences suffocation behind this curtain of custom, curtain of demarcation and curtain of confinement. Geeta has never experienced such a subordinate status in her life when she was in Bombay. Bombay appears a city of promise, of freedom whereas Udaipur becomes a symbol of confinement for her. As per the custom of the haveli, women are not allowed to face the males in the haveli without pardah. Her mother-in-law is the strict follower of patriarchy. For her, her husband becomes god to whom she serves untiringly. Women are not supposed to take any decision in the haveli. They merely follow the decree of males. The customs of the austere family appears different. Geeta too senses the discrimination behind this convention. Her husband, Ajay also does not visit her cubicle in day time. She never notices him in day time nearby her, except at the evening time. During these hours, the males of the family remain in separate apartments for solace of mind. Women are strictly prohibited to enter in these apartments. No men could talk with women directly except, in some exceptional situations. There are so many servants to help men and women in the haveli. They live in the haveli itself. They usually get up in the morning and help the people in haveli work. Geeta too is always surrounded by such women servants. Pari, the main servant of the haveli, usually guides each woman in the haveli. She lives in haveli since her childhood days. Her parents drop her in the house to avoid adversity regarding her and so Pari has become the care-taker of the haveli. She guides Geeta from time to time about unwritten traditions of haveli. Geeta feels suffocating in such a liberty-forbidden atmosphere. She talks with Ajay regarding her tantrums. Ajay
understands Geeta’s tremors and promises her of shifting to Delhi in the days to come. Geeta feels relaxed from inertia and decides to adapt to the situation for the time being. She starts to ignore the atmosphere in the haveli. Dhapu, one of the servants, always interacts with Geeta about the haveli’s interior routine.

A parallel story runs in the haveli that tells about the subordination of the society. Geeta witnesses such characters that arouse plight in her mind about them. Their lives’ journeys oblige Geeta to think in other direction. There is story of Laxmi; a servant woman who appears different among other servants. She dislikes her husband Gangaram who is absolute contrast to her personality. Laxmi hates the life of being servant and pines to enjoy lavish life. Everybody in the haveli knows the temperament of Laxmi. But they all ignore it. But Laxmi always ignite the flame of freedom in her heart. So, she hates her poverty and usually expresses scornful statement about her situation. Both Geeta and Laxmi conceive babies. The treatment given to both of them highlight the discrimination in case of poverty in Indian society. Laxmi too senses this and become more morbid regarding every act that marginalize her. Once, a driver in the haveli namely Heeralal courts her by offering gifts. Obviously, Laxmi rejects these gifts. She conceals the incident from everyone to avoid unnecessary discussions. But later the issue discloses and everyone denounces her. Her husband, Gangaram also calls her street woman. Laxmi does not bear such stigma on her character. She gets disappointed by the behavior of everyone in the haveli. In the anger, Lakshmi leaves the haveli and her newly born Sita also. She never returns to haveli ever after. During, Geeta too comes to know unavailability of Ajay to shift to Delhi. Geeta’s dream shatters but she opts other things to cope with haveli culture. She commences the classes in her cubicle. Her mother-in-law dislikes of such step taken by Geeta. But Kuwar Sa approves Geeta’s adventure and supports her regarding this act. Many relatives protest the path of Geeta’s teaching especially to servant children. Geeta is aware of the ill-literacy among people. So, she determines to spread education among them. She feels support of her father-in-law whom she never talks directly. Sita, a daughter of Laxmi and Vjay Bai Sa her own daughter embark associated life of going in school. Geeta violates the haveli culture by registering the name of Sita in the school. It becomes the adventurous step to hammer the rigid wall of tradition. Unfortunately, she fails to protest the child-marriage of Sita. She feels agitated right from this incident inside her heart. Later, situation changes and Geeta notices the plight of Laxmi being deserted wife. She compares ‘herself’ safe in the haveli culture. The marriage proposal for
Vijay Bai Sa from other haveli makes her furious. She protests such a proposal unconditional. But the soothing words of her father-in-law make her serene. She visits the proposed bride groom and embarks to think in other direction. She plunges into the channel of thought. During, the ailing Kunwar Sa talk with her and she again gets trapped in the culture of the haveli unknowingly. After the demise of Kunwar Sa, she accepts the designation of the mistress of the haveli who remains bound to an unwritten code of conduct and culture. Her life begins with new image in the haveli.

2. Female Marginalization (General View):

*Inside the Haveli* points out the marginalization of women in the feudal system. The novel focuses on the inner outburst of women behind the ‘pardah’ of the haveli culture. Here, all women are obliged to follow the norms of society in the name of culture. Women in this novel assemble under the ceiling of the haveli and feel secure under the impact of the feudal culture. The norms of the Indian social structure especially the feudal system appear more rigorous than anything else. Women can not escape from the clutches of these norms but they reflect their bondage of these confinements. Later, they become habituated to this secured and safe side of life and enjoy the confinement on the name of ‘culture’. The whole novel depicts the appearance of many women in the haveli but even the absence of men occupies the haveli by their desires to fulfil. The central character of this novel Geeta faces the marginalization of patriarchal mind-set whereas Lakshmi, a servant of haveli, gets marginalized at both the patriarchal and poverty level. All the servants in the haveli such as Pari, Lakshmi, and Sita have the common thing of being marginalized at similar level of poverty. Thus, the marginalization of these women can be different but they all are bound under the ceiling of the haveli. The infrastructure of the haveli plays a pivotal role in displaying the inner grief of women through this novel.

2.1. Sita:

Sita is Lakshmi’s daughter. Lakshmi is a servant in the haveli. Her mother discards her husband in the anger of being getting humiliated in the name of infidelity. In the whole procedure, Sita misses the maternal love but she gets nurtured by fellow servants of the haveli with love and care. The privilege of the haveli life makes Sita enjoy her childhood days with Vijay Bai Sa, a daughter of mistress of Geeta. She always remains a responsibility of the haveli that to be
fulfilled in the absence of her mother. Every other servant always makes her aware of her status in the haveli. They make her realize about her belonging to the class of poverty-sticken people. Being an abandoned daughter, belonging to lower class community and being a woman she suffers from marginalization.

### 2.1.1 Gender-biased Perception:

Gender-bias is the prominent factor of Sita’s marginalization in *Inside the Haveli*. Women face the gender stratification right from their birth in the Indian social structure. The Indian mothering breeds among the women a trait that develops in their minds from the very beginning of their lives. In upbringing of boys and girls, the mothers’ role appears very important. The mothers give water to the ‘masculine trait’ among boys that is why they escape the situation of conviction and on the contrary girls get trapped in all such situation. Many women become the victims of such a situation.

Sita becomes the victim of gender-biased attitude right from of her birth. The Indian gender oriented social structure prefers superiority of males to females. The reactions of relatives after Sita’s birth throw the light on gender – oriented views of the Indian society. The conversation between Khyali, a cook in the haveli and Gangram, Sita’s father is displayed in the following snap:

‘Why worry? God takes care of all those. He sends into the world. Girls are a burden, I admit; said Khyali with sympathy, ‘but what can one do once they are born? So for I have been lucky. But who can tell of the future?’ (7-8)

The birth of girls always appears a one kind of burden on the mind of parents. The above remark expresses the same thing. Gangram becomes unhappy because of the birth of a girl-child Sita. The people always like to welcome boys than girls. The boys’ birth confers the pleasure and assurance of security in the old days to everyone and girls’ presence creates frowning faces of everyone as if their births are a menace in their lives. The situation gets expressed through the inner feelings of Gangram. He says:

---, Sarju would have come out in the rain and thunder shouting, in her shrill voice’, It is a boy; it is a boy. Give me money.’ (7)
The people in the Indian society are quite crazy after the birth of boys. Usually, such happiness spreads after the arrival of a baby boy. This differentiates the gender-biased perspectives of the Indian society.

Sita belongs to the poor class of servants. She, being a girl, receives partial treatment regarding her education and marriage. Sita gets uplifted by Geeta, a modern mistress of the haveli. The people in the haveli decide to arrange marriage at the teen age as per the tradition of society. Geeta expresses her displeasure for this but nobody listens to her opinion. For Sita’s marriage, two proposals came and everyone approves of one bridegroom named Shivram who possess land and house. Everyone has become happy on account of securing such an educated husband for a servant daughter like Sita. It happens so because Sita is an abandoned daughter and belongs to the poor class. There is nobody who could take her responsibility. So, naturally people in the haveli decide to arrange her marriage to get rid of her burden. Her education stops after her marriage. The distribution of rights gets imbalanced after the marriage in case of women. The same happens with Sita, who desires to pursue her education. Education is denied to her later by forwarding the cause of household duties. Thus, the rules always appear different in case of girls.

Sita’s education gets dissolved in the shadows of orthodox prejudices and gender-biased doubts. Her prospective in-laws dislike continuation of her studies. They do not want to allow their would be daughter-in-law to attend the school. The education of women is always put in sidelines. Pari says:

‘The aunt took me aside and begged that Sita stop going to school as soon as she is engaged to be married. As it is, the village elders criticize them for educating the boy instead of putting him to work in the fields. It’s enough for them to have a girl who can read and write. But a prospective daughter-in-law who is attending school would never be accepted by the elders and even the family would think she was lacking in modesty.’ (187)

Thus, both a being a lower class person and a woman, Sita’s education gets discontinued as per the desires of her would-be-in-laws. Women can not make their own decisions to stop or continue their studies. Sita too wants to pursue education after marriage. Majority of the girls suffer from such crisis in their lives. Family members allow their education only to secure a
proper husband to them. The same happens with Sita which is reflected in the conversation of Geeta and her mother-in-law. Her mother-in-law says:

---, ‘Binniji, you have made Sita’s life. We have all been proved wrong. But now we must accept their condition. Marriage is the only security for women. It is you who have made it possible for her to be married into a family with land, with a well, a brick house and bullocks. Don’t insist further.’ (188)

The above lines illustrate how the women’s education is neglected. Education of women never becomes a priority in their lives. The Mistress says:

---Marriage is the only security for women.--- (188)

Thus, the role of a mere housewife revolves around Sita also. The lives of women settle only after the marriage. It is imbibed on the mind of every human being from generation to generation. Consequently, the academic career of women always falls in disaster before marriage and after marriage also. The incident of wedding ceremony also focuses the gendered attitude in case of Sita. At first, all decide to have engagement first and then marriage. But later Sita’s future-in-laws send a word of sudden marriage because of the ailing condition of the head of the family. Thus, marriages always go as per the desires of men rather than of women. A woman like Sita always accepts everything who is double marginalized in society. Sita gets marginalized on the basis of gender and then because of poverty. Thus, Sita becomes the victim of gender-biased society.

2.1.2 Poverty Marginalization:

Poverty is a social and economic problem that drags the persons to the bottom of the social stratification. The financially weak people maintain their own different culture and mutually accept their inferior status in the society. These people transmit their common norms from generation to generation and design their own culture. These two types of poverty, first the poverty of finance and second the poverty of mind brings them on the back foot of life.

Lakshmi’s daughter Sita becomes the victim of poverty marginalization. Her mother discards her right from her birth to punish and express her anger against her husband who has insulted her for baseless allegation of infidelity. Sita is of at the same age of Vijay Bai Sa, the
daughter of the haveli. The treatment given to both of them highlights the differences in financial status. Sita, being a servant’s daughter receives the treatment full of annoyance. The treatment given to Sita underlines the effect of poverty which gets reflected in many incidents. Once Sita sleeps like Vijay Bai Sa in the haveli and does not get up early. The servants are supposed to get up early in the morning, but Sita does not do so. The rules for servants and their daughters appear rigorous while dealing with even casual things of life. So, Champa; another servant attempts to wake her up with acronyms:

‘Get up immediately or I will really give you a slap. What has come over you? Day by day you are getting worse. Soon you will be asking to eat from a silver thali. You are no longer a child. Remember that! Learn to clean and sweep or even the mistress will have no use for you. Just because Vijay Bai Saheb plays with you, don’t imagine you are her equal.’ (93)

These words underline the marginalization of poverty that hovers around Sita. Poor people have the sense of deep rooted marginalization in their minds. These people transmit the same kind of attitude to their children in the same above mentioned way. Vijay Bai Sa attends school and enjoys lavish life of haveli whereas Sita remains in house doing household duties because of the differences in financial status. Everyone brings Sita up as a girl-child of servant. Being an aware of teen age of Sita, Geeta tries to soothe her. But Pari’s reply draws the paradigm of differences:

‘Binniji, I know you love Sita but she must not be spoiled. After all, she is only a servant’s child and without a mother to care for her. If she gets used to a soft life, she will suffer later on. Besides she must learn to obey us, the maids.’ (96-97)

It is the mutual culture of society where generally the servants and their kids get prohibited from attending school. It is in order to implement at the culture of servants for serving the elite class. Servants can not uplift and enrich their lives by learning words. The following conversation between Pari and Geeta regarding Sita throws light on this issue. Mehta illustrates:

‘Vijay Bai Sa, God bless her, is the daughter of this haveli. How dare anyone point a finger at her? She has the protection of wealth and family. What does Sita have? She must be protected from the outside world. Binniji, you do not yet know Udaipur and its customs. Sita has to marry. Leave her to us, the servants. We know what is best for her.’ Pari spoke with unusual bluntness. Geeta felt
outraged at the maid’s accusation. Her eyes flashed in challenge, but she
controlled her natural impulse to answer back. Seeing Geeta silent, Pari said,
‘Binniji, don’t’ be upset; there are other ways of helping Sita. You can give her a
big dowry and so help her get a good husband.’ Pari’s voice was gentle. Then she
added softly, ‘Binniji, a girl who has to live in the village must be sturdy. She
cannot be pampered. Her limbs must be strong to pull water from the well, to
plough the fields, collect the cow dung. (98-99)

The present study points out the differences in about the upbringing of Sita. It is said that the
poor people should be strong enough by physic and mind also in order to face the hardships of
lives. Consequently, they are kept away from the habit of luxurious life in order to maintain their
poverty; in fact they are obliged to do so. Naturally, servants’ children become the victims of
poverty marginalization. Many servants in the haveli face the poverty marginalization among
themselves. Poverty is designed to satisfy the demands of the elite class so that they can maintain
the standard of their life style. Thus, these poor people inherit the ideas and habits of their own
class and live happily in the same narrow and shallow world by sharing, transmitting the things
from generation to generation. In the haveli also, servants remain servants for years after years to
serve the Masters? Sometimes, their masters keep them away from amenities of the society like
schooling or many other similar things for their own purpose. Such an attitude is displayed in
this novel Inside The Haveli where the wife of Bhagwat Singji regrets for allowing Sita to take
education for her own growth. She lives in the false pride of the haveli which is surrounded by
various servants. She becomes afraid if the daughters and sons of servants would become the
educated stake-holders, then who will serve the masters. Realizing such forthcoming menace, the
mistress creates a lot of hurdles on the path of Sita’s education. These poor people never secure
such an opportunity to uplift their minds. The decision of sending Sita to school arouses fear in
the mind of the mistress, who seems reluctant to allow Sita to join school. An awareness of
education of servants makes them think of education in the wrong direction.

Thus, Sita faces here the double marginalization. The first is Sita’s belonging to poverty and
second of belonging to the class of women, to the female gender. The social- structure gives a
powerful position to men whereas women seem to be bound to domestic unproductive labour. In
earlier times, the male- dominant society kept the girls away from pursuing the education. Thus,
they appear less bestowed with education.
The enrollment of the name of Sita in school arouses the frowning faces of others. They are against the design of giving any education especially to girls. Khyali, the cook, expresses the opposition to educating girls in his words:

---Does Binniji think just because we are servants she can do as she pleases with our children? Let her try and send a daughter of mine to school and see. Yes, you can do what you like with boys but to expose a girl to the world! Never!’ (126)

Thus, a male dominant society denies the education to girls. So, in the haveli nobody likes the decision of sending Sita to a school. Sita too gets afraid of school because she never learns anything about a school from any other servant in the haveli. None of the servants especially girls are allowed to have to education in the haveli. Consequently, no body has the experience of schooling and so they try to soothe Sita. It happens because they always remain deprived of education in their lives. Poverty marginalizes the people and they are kept away from the upper class manners and etiquettes. The awareness of marginalization remains alive in their heart years after years; as it is transmitted among them from generation to generation. Pari’s word emphasizes the same situation. She says:

‘---‘We are only servants. Our destinies are tied with the mistress but, no matter what she does for us, we and our children will remain servants. No one but God can change one’s destiny.’ (127-128)

This helplessness is the mark of deep rooted poverty among the minds of the poor people. But Pari’s statement hurts Bhagwat Singhji’s wife who dislikes her words. She says in anger:

‘--- Yes, servants will remain servants, no matter what you do for them. It is not in their nature to be grateful.’ (128)

These words even speak of underlying deep rooted poverty marginalization in the heart of elite class people. Bhagwat Singhji’s wife feels that servants should be grateful to her for being letting Sita to school or being kind-hearted to all of them. It seems a rift of poor and rich among the people. The authority of the haveli becomes reluctant to accept the upliftment of servants. Bhagwat Singhji’s wife speaks about Sita’s education on the basis of position and gender. She expects gratitude from all these servants for opening the access of education to Sita. But
following words explain the poverty marginalization which is the result of discrimination. Mehta says:

‘As soon as Bhagwat Singhji’s wife turned her back, the maids looked up, stunned. No one spoke. In spite of the mistress gossiping with them, and sharing her life with them, there was never a question of taking any liberty with her’. (128)

The above depiction points out the poverty marginalization that always sustains in the minds of the elite people. Even though they do show off of equality to others but inertly they feel the thought of discrimination. This minority group lives differentially and bears unequal treatment. They regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination. Thus, the novel Inside the Haveli shares the poignancy of servants in an austere family.

To release from the annoyance of others in the haveli, Sita decides to go to school. An austere family of the haveli usually draws an invisible line between the haveli and others. Unknowingly, this attitude too appears in Vijay Bai Sa who too marginalizes Sita by her behaviour. The following conversation throws light on this issue between Sita and Vijay Bai Saheb:

‘Vijay Bai Saheb, after how long will school open again?’ asked Sita absent-mindedly. ‘I don’t know,’ said Vijay carelessly. ‘But not for a long, long time. I am so happy. I hate school.’ ‘Bai Saheb, you know I like my school,’ said Sita in a small confidential voice. ‘You stupid! You like school, do you? You are a real silly. You can’t even read or write properly and you like school’, Vijay mocked. ‘Stop talking nonsense. Get up and help me gather the mangoes.’ Sita’s little dark thin mouth closed up immediately as if thorn had pricked her finger. But she did as she was told. She felt hurt at Vijay’s remarks but did not answer her back’. (141-142)

This kind of austere talk creates a rift between the rich and the poor. Despite this, Sita remains silent. The poverty class designs their own sub-culture of inferiority from generation to generation. They marginalize themselves and pass on this kind of attitude to the next generation also. The same happens with the generation of Sita, who being a poor servant gets subdued in the limelight of the haveli. In the same manner, the dominant attitude of austere family sparks even in the girl-child Vijay Bai Sa. She too marginalizes Sita on the basis of the financial structure as noticed in the conversation above. When the members of the haveli register her name in the school, Sita too rejoices to attend the school. The children of poor people are not psychologically
fit to get full the advantage of the opportunities of changing conditions because of the deep-rooted inferiority complex in their hearts. They all become habituated to get subordinate status and do not allow others to get coddled with luxurious temptations.

Everyone in the haveli fixes Sita’s marriage to an educated boy. Sita dislikes to get married and expresses her desire to pursue education. As belonged to the poor class, Sita is compelled to marry even though she is of the age of Vijay Bai Sa. The norms for poor people and elite class point out the difference in the opportunities of accessing the value of education. Here, Sita’s eyes moist by hearing the decision of her engagement. Tears start rolling down from the eyes. Then, Dhapu’s statement proves an attempt to draw a code of conduct for women. She says:

Only a mother-in-law will put her right’--- (190)

It means, the mother-in-law will fathom out Sita for her arrogance. Dhapu fails to understand the inner turmoil of Sita regarding pursuing education. Dhapu feels it as an opportunity to skip from domestic duties than a tool of improvement. Dhapu continues:

‘She has got used to an easy life; that is why she likes school. Who wouldn’t? It’s better to be opening and shutting books than sweepin and cleaning.’ (190)

In this regard, Simon-de-Beauvoir (1997:307) says “woman is a trait that develops in her from the earliest years.” The women grow up with same kind of mentality. Dhapu’s reaction to Sita’s act displays the same attitude. Thus, readers can realize how from generation to generation poor people devour the prejudices about education. The havelis do not allow poor to learn and get updated. The elite class knows this very well that once the poor learnt, they will not serve the haveli ever after. So, these people prohibit poor girls’ from accessing to education. Pari points out the status saying:

‘--- Hukkum; most of them now can read and write; they can get work, they don’t have to depend on the havelis,’ (191)

But the words of the mistress focuses the light on communal hurdles for allowing the poors to enter the door of knowledge. The Mistress says:
‘---Pari, but our life is with the women in the havelis; we can not afford to displease our own community beyond a point’. (191)

It shows the disinterestedness of the elite class in uplifting the poor people. The same attitude goes with Sita. Although, she receives the attention of the haveli regarding upbringing but this favor remains under the impression of a benefactor. She carries this burden of benefaction throughout her life. Thus, it shows the marginalization of a poor servant girl Sita at the financial level. Despite of such perception, Sita too faces poverty marginalization in this novel Inside the Haveli.

2.2 Pari:

Pari is the head of all servants in the house. She manages the whole routine of the haveli. The Mistress believes and asks for suggestion relating any issues of the haveli as she has been witnessing many events of the haveli since long back. Her views, her perceptions go in the direction of welfare of the haveli only. So, every Mistress of the haveli believes her blindly. On account of the weak financial situation, her parents drop Pari at the haveli door at a tender age. Thus, she continues to live in the haveli right from her childhood days without any complaint. She remains loyal to the haveli culture and becomes a guide to inform the newly-wed bride of the austere family about the feudal culture. In her whole life, Pari mostly faces the poverty marginalization but never makes a frowning face. She accepts the bitter truth of life and dedicates her life to serve the austere family.

2.2.1 Poverty Marginalization:

Many times it is noticed that poverty has become the main cause of the occurrences of a catastrophe in the lives of many disturbed and troubled people. Women’s marginalization goes at double level marginalization when she belongs to poverty too. Poverty seems to be the cause of various other issues and poverty enhances the intensity of marginalization. The poverty obliges them to think in a restricted manner and remain deep-rooted in the heart and brain of people. These thoughts are never free from the thought of poverty marginalization.

Pari, the head servant of the haveli, becomes the prey of poverty marginalization. Their poverty drags her in the haveli atmosphere. During the crisis of famine of Rajasthan, Pari’s parents lost their three sons because of loss of everything. In her childhood days, Pari’s parents abandon Pari
in the haveli of Singhji in order to avoid repetition of the same kind of catastrophe with her like her kinship. Mehta comments:

‘Pari was her father’s favourite child. He did want to see her suffer from hunger and then slowly wither away like the other three. So he decided to give her away. In this he was following a common practice of feudal Rajasthan where villagers in desperate circumstances gave their sons and daughters to the care of aristocratic families’. (9)

Thus, many boys and girls like Pari become the victims of poverty and continue the same life of poverty forever. Pari appears a representative of such a poverty marginalization. Poverty makes her a servant in Jeevan Niwas haveli right from her childhood days. She gets her destined position in the haveli. Her young age does not make any excuses of exemption from exertive work. She was a servant rather than a child, so she was required to indulge in continuous work at the haveli. Pari informs:

‘When I had a minute to myself I stitched my clothes; and that was not often. After I had washed the utensils, and there were at least fifty pots and pans, and swept the courtyard, the morning was over. In the afternoon I pressed your great grandmother-in-law’s feet till she fell asleep. But before her afternoon rest she always gave me a sack of full grain to clean’. (24)

Pari never has a spare time to play and laugh and inculcate the ‘happiness’ even. The locus of servant makes her engrossed in serving all the day and night. Pari’s life is poverty-sticken that keeps her away from independence and freedom. The poverty snatches the golden moment of her childhood days and drops her into the world of drudgery. Pari continues:

‘The mistress was shrewd. She knew if I had time on my hands I would get into mischief. After all I was young and loved talking with servants. I was not allowed to play like other girls of my age. It was considered proper for a widow to be gay and carefree’. (24)

The poverty-sticken people always receive rigorous restriction of various things on their shoulder. They abide to imitate from of the encoded culture preserved by conservative Indian social structure. Pari becomes marginalized at both levels at once. She gets marginalized on the basis of poverty and on gender level. In this regard, a sociologist Stiver (1991:146) says “---mothering, love, affection, shelter, protection, security, food and warmth make them continue with their masochism.”
Thus, their poverty makes them committed to serve the elite class people. Till the end of her life, she remains stuck to the haveli tradition. It happens only because of poverty of her life that brings her on the door of the haveli. These poverty-sticken people most of the time become helpless and defend less. So, it happens with Pari who mutually accepts the status and leads her life guiding the haveli brides.

2.2.2 Gender-Biased Perception:

The Indian social structure appears with biased view for women in every walk of their lives. In this connection, Haralombs (1981:452) says “The universal evaluation of culture as superior to nature is the basic reason for the devaluation of women.”

It appears true in so many issues regarding child marriage, widow remarriage and so on. The lives of widows go partial restricting them from various deeds in society. The widows are not allowed to participate in pious, domestic as well as social functions. They do not take initiative in such celebrations. Nowadays, the scenario has been changed bit but the immense effect of social conventions still keeps women away from certain things. This thought is such deep-rooted in the mind of women that sometime, these widows also marginalize themselves to avoid intricacies and humiliation.

Pari also becomes the victim of gender-biased society. She gets married at early age and soon becomes a widow. She suffers a lot being a woman and sticks to the house of Jeevan Niwas forever. The widows in those days get marginalized at every level. Widows usually receive mal-treatment and get restricted for so many accessories. Men always keep away from main stream issues. Pari says:

‘Then once I became a widow, she would not let me put on coloured saries or bangles like the other girls. I don’t know what colours a widow can put on in your part of India, but in Udaipur we can only wear grey or black’. (23)

Such restrictions appear rigorous for women. The above statement brings into focus the fact that she is restricted to wear ornamental things by the mistress’ of the haveli. In the teen-age, she even does not understand the meaning of prohibition. She never receives anything colorful right from her childhood days. She never enjoys the happiness of looking colorful. She is kept away from colorful things and colorful happenings of life. Pari begins to wear only grey or black
colour. These colours become her all time companions in the rest of life. The Indian society never restricts men from wearing any accessories of any colour. But women live the life like punishment. Thus, Pari accepts all these things mutually and becomes habituated to this situation. Her life deprives her from the taste of everything of the life. Her plight goes beyond imagination. Thus, she becomes the victim of this gender-biased society without any complaint.

2.3 Geeta:

Geeta is the central character in the novel *Inside the Haveli*. She hails from the cosmopolitan city of Bombay but even she tries to get adapt with the elime of austere culture in Udhaipur after her marriage. She feels suffocating in the feudal culture of the haveli. At first, she endeavors to adjust with conservative culture by consoling her mind as she knows her short time stay in the haveli. She knows about the efforts of her husband to shift to Delhi University. After realizing the truth of her permanent stay in the haveli, she becomes restless. Later, she attempts to mingle with the atmosphere by accepting some unwritten encoded norms which she dislikes. The whole novel focuses the events in the life of Geeta and her circumstantial surrender to patriarchy unknowingly. The whole depiction of Geeta’s character is the marginalization of woman in different states.

2.3.1 Patriarchy:

Patriarchy remains paramount in the Indian social structure. It revolves around one supreme person holding the whole authority at domestic as well as outside world. Generally, the norms of feudal culture appear more rigid than anything else. At the superfluous level, the women seem to be having the reins of domestic atmosphere but if seen from the close quarters, they are mere puppets in the hands of men. The present study reveals the paramount status of patriarchy even in the absent in a physical sense in the daily routine of the haveli. Thus, patriarchy plays a pivotal role in maintaining feudal culture. The novel *Inside the Haveli* registers the exuberance of Geeta converting defendless in patriarchal mind-set.

Geeta appears to be a modern woman of new generation believing in freedom. Her parents tell her about Ajay, a boy from rich family of Udhaipur and of highly educated attitude and profession. She does not ask more about his family to her parents. She remains in dark about the conservative feudal attitude of the family. Thus, she becomes the victim of patriarchy as she
blindly plunges into the decision of marriage initiated by her parents. Ajay’s family also approves Geeta and happy wedding takes place. Remaining dark about the rigorous feudal culture, she enters the house where she comes across many unusual situations in her life. Geeta becomes the victim of patriarchy when she enters Udaipur. Mehta depicts:

‘She was immediately encircled by women singing but their faces were covered. One of them came forward, pulled her sari over her face and exclaimed in horror’, where do you come from that you show your face to the world?’ Geeta, bewildered, frightened, managed to get into the car ---. (17)

Geeta faces the first blow of patriarchy of wearing “pardah” a sheer wall between her and other members of society. Purdah is a tool to subdue women on the ground of tradition. In this regard, Karuna Chanda (vol.50, No 1: March 2001-42) says “Purdah or seclusion and sex segregation are the most important social practices to control women which are linked to protection and management of female sexuality. Purdah is the symbol of encoded behavior for only women. It affects the world of women and restricts them to mere household duties.” Chanda also continues saying (vol.50, No.1: March 2001-43) “In a society, ---pardah along with early marriage is a useful device and puts women under the control of men of the family.”

Pardah is a tool to prohibit women from free behavior. It works as milieu between the world and women. It becomes the stumbling rock in the lives of women where they face its aftermath all the time. It is said that pardah symbolizes the power of patriarchy over women. It works for the control of female sexuality and avoidance based on respect. In case of female sexuality, the purdah keeps away the women from an interaction with other men. Women are not allowed to come in front of other men. In fact, the purdah is the deliberate hurdle in the path of progress of the community of women. It works as a device of protection from threatening outsiders, especially the males. Simultaneously, the other factor of ‘avoidance based on respect’ obliges women to get confined to the bondages of their conventional social structure. Both these aspects work at different levels but simultaneously drag the women to be dependent on men by all means. The acceptance of pardah is the acceptance of supremacy of male-dominance. It is the mark of being subdued to male-dominant society. It is not mere a rift between women and men but Engels (Vol.50, No.1, March-2001:43) quotes “---pardah did not only mean secluding women behind veils or walls, but entailed an all encompassing ideology and code of conduct based on female modesty which determined women’s lives wherever they went.”
Here, Geeta also experiences the awkwardness of purdah as she enters the haveli. She realizes
the meaning of purdah in her life. So, she feels suffocated inside the purdah but other women do
not allow her to lift her face. It is the custom of the haveli that the daughters - in - law should
cover their faces all time. Whenever any male encounters she is supposed to veil her face. Geeta
never talks to her father - in – law nor could convey any message to him. The daughters-in-law
are always supposed to remain away from the communication of males in the family. The males
always go out for business work but even their presence was conspicuous all over the haveli in
their absence also. Mehta states:

‘The whole day they were away in their offices or busy in their section of the
house. They came into the interior courtyards only at meal times. Though to her
they were only names, their presence was felt everywhere in the haveli. Nothing
was done without consulting them. It was around their desires that the whole
routine of the house revolved’. (19)

The above statement emphasizes the impression of patriarchy over the whole haveli even in the
absence of men. In this regard, Kate Millet (1972:26) says “under patriarchy the female did not
herself develop the symbols by which she is described. As both the primitive and civilized
worlds are made male worlds, the ideas which shaped culture in regard to the female were also of
male-design.”

Geeta too accepts this. She observes silence relegating all the issues in the haveli. She mutually
understands the undeclared supremacy of male-dominant hearth in haveli. There are unwritten
norms for women in the haveli about where to go or where to stroll. Geeta too can not walk
freely everywhere in the haveli. She is supposed to follow the restrictions while making her
move anywhere. Once she goes in the men’s apartment to observe the things with curiosity. But
suddenly Pari comes there and makes her aware of unwritten patriarchal norm of the haveli
culture. She says:

‘What are you doing here all alone, Binniji? I know you are an outsider but it is
time you learned our ways. In this section of haveli women come only when
properly escorted’. Pari’s tone was severe. ‘What would your father-in-law think
if he saw you with your face uncovered? Binniji, daughters-in-law of this haveli
do not behave like this.’ (20)

Women especially daughters-in-law of the haveli are supposed to follow rigorous customs of the
haveli. It seems that patriarchy has even controlled women’s self. Geeta too is obliged to follow
this code of conduct. Geeta realizes that she has become the victim of the patriarchal mind set. Women receive this dictum right from their births. Geeta is required to hold the same view that makes her accept the supremacy of patriarchy in her mind. She remembers the words of her mother who offers her the tips of surrendering to the patriarchal view. Her mother says:

‘Keep your head covered; never argue with your elders; respect your mother-in-law and do as she tells you. Don’t talk too much.’ (16)

Geeta receives such advice from her mother. Geeta’s mother appears to be an example of Indian mothering. She tries to shape her daughter in a submissive and subordinate manner. She does not unfold the tradition of purdah to her daughter. It seems that Indian mothering always waters the feeling of subordination among the girls. Geeta’s mother also postulates her daughter for the mutual approval for the pardah. In this regard, Gilligan (1982:160) says “feminists hold that care and its allied virtues, empathy, nurturing, subservience and tolerance –are acknowledged and stressed by tradition as the emblems of womanhood and contend that a woman’s “identity is defined in a context of relationship and judged by a standard of responsibility and care.”

Her feminine traits are underestimated by patriarchy in the name of womanhood. The women in the haveli receive such subordinate treatment but nobody has its realization except Geeta. She usually receives instructions from others about the code of conduct in the haveli. She sits submissive and subordinate bearing plenty of taunts about her upbringing. They wish that Geeta should mingle with them perfectly. Mehta points out:

‘Geeta soon discovered that she had little time to brood over her difficulties. If she was sitting head bent, with relatives, then she was in the kitchen, helping to prepare refreshments for them. In spite of the many maids and a cook, her mother-in-law was in and out of her kitchen, seeing that there was no waste’. (22)

Geeta tries to adapt to the situation by involving herself in the casual house work and gets ghettoized from the outer world. She feels unable to maintain her hobby of reading because of the dominance of patriarchal atmosphere. She seldom speaks to the relatives in order to follow the family norms. She simply nods her head demurely and answers the questions asked by relatives only. She seems to be subdued in this patriarchal set up by discarding her aspirations, her will and her life style.
Each and every day in the haveli gives her the experience of patriarchy. Her mother-in-law confers her plenty of instructions about the code of conduct. The norms of these codes of conduct underline the subordinate status of Geeta in the haveli. Geeta’s development almost becomes difficult under patriarchal impression. So, Kanwarani Sa, her mother-in-law gives her various tips about household things. She wants to show Geeta’s gentle and submissive attitude to other relatives. It is postulated that the modern and independent girls always appear arrogant and become the stigma on society whereas submissive women give proud honour to the haveli. The whole concept is used for the convenience of patriarchal mind set. Geeta too follows those instructions very much strongly to display her submissiveness to others. The submissiveness becomes an appreciative feature for women in patriarchy. Regarding this, her mother-in-law desires that Geeta should be moulded in a subordinate locus and universally approved position of women. An awareness of women’s subordination in patriarchy seems the cause for their marginalization. The series of instructions follow in the following words by Kanwarani Sa to Geeta:

‘---keep your face covered by now you should be able to move around without uncovering face.’ Then after a brief pause, as if to give emphasis to her words, she said, ‘Do not talk too much to your young cousins-in-law its not becoming. You know, the women are critical because you are still clumsy. I want to show them that even an educated girl can be moulded’. (30)

Patriarchy exactly does the same with women by obliging them to submissiveness. Everyone in the haveli is afraid that she would embarrass them by an indiscreet word or a faulty move. At the time of naming ceremony, she imitates what is told by elders in the family. Mehta depicts:

‘The heavy sari, the full pleated skirt, the gold, all combined to make her feel as if she was a heavy log of wood that had no mobility’. (34)

This reveals her locus in the haveli which is engulfed with the patriarchal mindset. Geeta walks on the path paved by elders especially males in the haveli. Though, the elders decree the things in the haveli but their implementation is rigorously carried out by women. Thus, it shows how women get impressed by patriarchy. Geeta too remains undeveloped in this atmosphere. When Ajay declares his decision of continuation in the haveli instead of shifting anywhere in order to achieve job, Geeta gets shattered. Then she decides to keep alive her spirit of living by spreading the education among the people around her. So, she takes the permission from her father-in-law
through Pari. Though, she strives for the education of other children, her legs remain bound in convention of patriarchy. She seems unable to get developed fully. But later on; Geeta too accepts the patriarchy and becomes subdued in the haveli. She unknowingly gets under the impression of patriarchy.

2.3.2 Gender-biased Attitude:

The Indian social structure gives priority to gender-stratification. Many more issues in the Indian society relates to the gender. The society looks at the things with a gender biased view. Women always face this perception at home pitch or outside that world. But women’s whole analysis goes as per the gendered view. In Indian social scenario, gender becomes paramount followed by caste. So, male-dominant society designs the world of women as per the gender oriented view. Here, in this novel Geeta becomes the victim of gender-biased attitude. After the entrance in Udhaipur, women with rigorous traditional custom, introduce her to other relatives and say:

‘Soon you will know everyone. It is in these families that you will have to make your reputation as a good devoted daughter-in-law. Don’t ever forget that your head must always remain covered’. (18)

Thus, in Udaipur women follow the rigorous rule of culture to maintain the prestige of the havelis. The reputation of the havelis relies on the discourse of women. In this the whole whirl of tradition, women become the victim of gender view. The rules appear hard for women and become the bondage of confinement in the name of convention. In this regard, Chanda compiles the statement of Sudhir Kakkar (2008:195) who says “India as a “shame culture” rather than “guilt culture” and in shame cultures family reputation and notions of honor are of paramount importance.”

Thus, this biased attitude gives weightage to the perfection of women and they should not commit any mistake in following womanly rituals. On the contrary, all paradigms for men keep them aloof from such a custom. Mehta depicts:

‘As Geeta awkwardly bent down to touch the feet of what seemed to her a hundred women, they said’, Look at her, she does not even know how to touch the feet properly.’ (18)

Modern and liberal kind of Geeta touches the feet in the usual manner but other women denounce her for improper method. These customs appear strict to brides of the families. It
draws an invisible line between her and other women. After some days, Geeta notices the provision of men’s separate apartment in the courtyard of the haveli for the sake of their relaxation. She witnesses this amenity once by entering the apartment. The whole apartment looks a splendid one. The hall appears pleasant and full furnished with full of lavish objects for the relaxation of men. But women never receive any such favour, such kind of provision for their leisure. In fact; they never receive free time to relax. Geeta finds the separation of men and women apartment fascinating and romantic with full of mystery. Mehta illustrates:

‘But in the haveli men were regarded with awe as if they were gods. They were the masters and their slightest wish was a command; women kept in their shadow and followed their instructions with meticulous care’. (21)

Thus, men receive special treatment though without having any responsibilities of domestic affairs. Ajay, also like other males in the family rarely visits his wife in the day time. Geeta feels embarrassed by such conservative behavior of the haveli. The rule of haveli culture appears equal to males and females. No one would dare to challenge it; not even Ajay. The frequent visit to women’s apartment is supposed to be an undignified deed for males as per the family culture. Mehta illustrates:

‘Though men could come to the women’s apartment when they wished it was not considered dignified to do so during the day except when women had to be consulted on some family matter. Like everyone else in the haveli there was a form that men maintained too’. (21)

Geeta realizes gender differences in the occasion of rituals performed in the haveli. After the rituals, all men leave the place and women of every age sit there to rejoice dancing, singing and so on. Every woman gets up and performs as per her capacity to entertain themselves. But Dhapu, one of the servants tells Geeta about a special arrangement of an event of professional singer for the men of the haveli.

Women get entertained themselves by singing and dancing, on the contrary, men get entertained by a professional entertainer. It shows that the women are not benefited with any such favours. Their tiredness, their fatigue are always marginalized and they remain aloof from the relaxation. Thus, gender biased treatment peeps in entertainment also in the haveli culture. At entertainment level also women get sidelined by the men who on the contrary arrange special performance for them. Geeta is aware of such a partial attitude of the haveli in case of women. But unfortunately,
none of the women feel such issues wrong. Moreover, they advocate such deeds by accepting certain things of life mutually.

**2.3.3 Subordination:**

In Indian social structure, women are subordinated at various stages of lives. It happens because of the imbalanced priorities offered by culture rather than by nature to women. Here, ‘culture’ means men control the resources and regulate nature. Men’s ideas and technology have the power over nature. Consequently, they appear superior to nature and in this scenario, women remain at the subordinate level. Thus, subordinate status sidelines women at each level of the social structure. Being subordinate, she becomes the victim of various factors that drag her to debacle. Years after years, women are subordinated in the male-dominant society.

Geeta too feels subordinated in the atmosphere of the haveli. She senses suffocation of the patriarchal dominancy of the haveli. She fulfils the duty of the mistress in the absence of her mother-in-law. But she never becomes happy in performing that. She feels subdued of the supremacy of customs and traditions of the haveli. The arrival of the masters of the haveli is the sign of spreading of calmness in the haveli. It illustrates the subordination of women in the haveli. Mehta depicts:

‘---the sound of the horn from the gate was heard. The maids fled in various directions. The arrival of the master of the haveli was always a sign for the maids to stop talking and get on with their work. The cook took the lentils off the fire and put a big pot of water to boil for the master’s bath. There was instant activity in the courtyard’. (99)

Women in the haveli stop chatting immediately after the arrival of masters. It shows their supremacy in the haveli. In the absence of mother-in-law, Geeta, being a mistress of the haveli; Geeta too senses the subordination under the name of the haveli culture. She gets exhausted of doing routine household duties. She wants to be left alone but she knows that she would have to wait till her father-in-law eats the dinner before going up to his room. The living rooms of women do not appear so exciting as of men. The comfort in the room brings out the subordination of women in the society. Mehta remarks:
‘The room was cold and there was not the same kind of comfort as she had seen in the men’s sitting room. There was also nothing beautiful in it. The painted scenes on the walls were crude’. (100)

She gets trapped in the customs of the haveli. She even can not talk or seek any advice from her father-in-law directly. The process of seeking permission emphasizes the subordinate status of women in the haveli. Geeta too follows the same procedure of seeking advice. Mehta highlights the subordination through the conversation of Geeta and Dhapu, a servant. Dhapu says:

‘In the past that has not prevented you from making known your wishes. Do you forget when you wanted to go to your parent’s house and Kanwarani sa refused because it was Diwali? Well then, think who conveyed your wishes to him,’ said Dhapu, her eyes sparkling. ‘Now listen carefully. While kanwar sa is having his food, I will tell him you want to ask his advice. Then you tell me what is on your mind and I will convey it to him just like the last time. Kanwar sa will take the right decision’. (101)

Thus, the whole procedure underlines devaluation of women’s status in the haveli. In this regard, Haralombs (1981:452) remarks “The universal evaluation of culture as superior to nature is the basic reason for the devaluation of women.”

Here, Geeta does not speak directly to her father-in-law. She regrets for being a stranger to all the members of her family only in the name of traditions. The pardah becomes the hurdle for all of them and prevents creating affection among them. All the customs in the haveli emphasize the subordination of women. When Gita touches the feet of Pari, she blesses saying (107) ‘May you live in your husband’s shadow her a hundred years….’. It is seen that the lives of women begin from the name of husbands and end in their names. It is emphasized that the existence of women is related to their husbands. Thus, women always become subordinate regarding this. Geeta is a modern girl who craves for her own space also but she feels suffocation in the atmosphere of feudal culture. The subordinate existence of women in the haveli makes her distressed. But nobody notices her inner turmoil. Other women in the haveli accept it mutually as the fate of their lives.

Geeta, being a modern woman is aware of the importance of education. She decides to register the name of Sita in the school. She seeks the permission of Kuwar Sa through the milieu of
servants. Geeta never witnesses the participation of women in any decision making in the haveli culture. Women always remain behind the curtain regarding every situation related to the haveli. The culture of the haveli likes to subdue women. It does not want to make them bold enough to crave for liberal perception. The haveli authority does not anticipate decisive women in their culture. Geeta too is not an exception to this. It appears the unwritten rule of the haveli culture to accept the subordinate status mutually. When Geeta reaches the haveli of her mother-in-law’s brother, she comes to know the spread of news of enrolling the name of Sita, a servant girl in school. Geeta’s mother-in-law feels it insulting by Geeta’s nurturing the decisive attitude in an important issue of the haveli. But she hides it saying:

‘Who is Binuji to make such decisions? Retorted Bhagwat Singhji’s wife. She moved up closer is she said stiffly: ‘My husband has been thinking for sometime of sending the servant’s children to school, even the girls. You know as well as I do that havelis can no longer give employment to the servant’s children. Times have changed. It is our duty to prepare them for the future.’ She talked rapidly as if to cover up something distasteful. She did not want anyone to think that Geeta had become bold enough to take decisions on her own without consulting her. (113-114)

Under the false pride of the haveli and male-supremacy, Geeta’s mother-in-law forgets her own existence. She feels proud in obeying her husband and remains subdued to him. She gets infuriated by the decisive ability of Geeta. She feels it shame to disclose this among her relatives. Women grow under the impression of men in such a way that they even forget their ‘self’ in lives. They spend their energies in maintaining the dominance of men in the social structure.

Kunwar Sa tries to remark about the dominancy of man and subordination of Geeta while disclosing the decision in above lines. Women’s decisive nature seems to be underestimated in the Indian social view. It goes with the Geeta, who should not be expected to dart like modern and liberal women. Geeta, being a subordinate woman is not allowed to make such decisions. So; she faces many hardships while sticking to her decision. But later, Geeta remains silent regarding some other issues in the haveli. She does not rebel strongly against the system of the haveli culture. It may so perhaps because she has witnessed the catastrophe of Lakshmi, another servant who discarded the safe-guard of the haveli. Lakshmi lives the life of apocapsy after discarding safe ceiling of the haveli. Perhaps, it has made Geeta to ponder over the issue day by day she becomes silent towards many issues. She fights for registering the name of Sita in the school but
the same Geeta keeps mum at the time of Sita’s early marriage. She remembers the co-operation of her father-in-law while commencing the class of education for poor people and registering the name of Sita in the school. By this attitude, her mind starts to succumb to the atmosphere of the haveli where women remain subdued. It is displayed in the incident of marriage proposal of Vijay Bai Sa, Geeta’s daughter. At first, Geeta is infuriated by the thought of even early marriage of her own daughter but later she adopts silence regarding the marriage. In the end, the novel does not focus on the stand of Geeta in case of this decision. But untold answers oblige to arouse some doubts in readers’ mind. The first doubt is about her silence that indicates the acceptance of subordinate status in the haveli. It imprints strongly on her character after the acceptance of designation of ‘Mistres of the haveli’ after the sad demise of her father-in-law. Her silence appears significant here that compel the readers to think sensitively on these strategies of patriarchal mind set that work as slow-poisoning where it victimizes Geeta unknowingly. Thus, Geeta becomes the victim of subordination.

2.3.4 Cultural Marginalization:

Culture is characterized by the creation and application of symbols. Culture has a variety of meanings that come up with variety of shades. Superfluously, it changes its pattern as per the common mutual concept of particular society, particular nation and country. It adopts the shape as per the norms of its existence. To be a cultural goes at the subjective level, so each one maintains the peculiar habit of living and later it takes the image of culture. A human being sticks to his/her own culture and underestimates others’ way of living. In case of women, it goes in the manner of displacement. Many times, women live in their own discourse but later the same discourse is criticized by others when such women enter another world of culture. The diversities in cultural atmosphere make them diasporphic. This diaphora sense becomes supreme in the process of marginalization. In this respect, such displacement of women makes them dilapidated with their own culture. The same reflects in the character of Geeta, who too gets marginalized on the basis of cultural differences. Her own culture in the parents’ house and the austere culture at in-laws house make her broken at the later stage of life.

Right from the day, Geeta enters the house, she listens the nags from her mother-in-law and especially other women. Geeta hails from the cosmopolitan city of Bombay so it is but natural that she comes from free culture which reflects in her behavior. The atmosphere in the haveli
appears absolutely contrasting to that of Bombay culture so she feels suffocated in the conservative culture of the haveli. Though she tries, still that frankness reflects in her way of style while in the haveli. So, many times she receives a lot of instructions of how to behave serenely and in a cultured manner in the haveli. This cultural discrimination builds loneliness from external world in Geeta’s mind. Despite her academic learning, for the sake of her parents, she accepts the bridegroom, a man with high profile. But later the entrance in the haveli unfolds her various practices in the name of false feudal culture. She remains in dark till the realization of the pardah system. After her marriage, she enters Udaipur and her loneliness begins with her dislike of conservative customs of the haveli. Earlier, Geeta enjoys her education with boys and girls but when she enters Udaipur, Mehta depicts the beginning of herself marginalization in the hatred of cultural marginalization. Geeta realizes it after the procession of their marriage. She says:

‘--- She was immediately encircled by women singing but their faces were covered. One of them came foreword, pulled her sari over her face and exclaimed in horror,’ Where do you come from that you show your face to the world?’ Geeta, bewildered, frightened, managed to get into the car without talking to the women who followed her, singing as loud as they could. It was then the car started she realized that her husband was not going to join her. She had lost him while the women had crowded around her’. (17)

Thus, she gets afraid of the attack of so many women around her all of a sudden. They denounce her for her behaviour. She for the first time, observes so many women with their covering faces. Geeta understands the reality that these women are not allowed to interact any male and should not encounter anyone without pardah. It creates an ache in her mind after the realization of the fact. Consequently, she draws an invisible line between her and the haveli. This conservative family of the haveli offers Geeta a huge amount of loneliness to cherish for the rest of her life. Geeta enters the haveli and feels exhausted for the rest of the day. She feels lonely in spite of being in the company of a lot of women. Mehta remarks:

‘She blushed as she remembered one of them saying disappointedly: ‘She has good strong features but she is dark. Let us see how she adjusts. After all she is educated and on top of that she is not from Udaipur. What a risk to get an outsider, especially when there is only one son.’ (18)
These, words give her the feeling of marginalization in the haveli culture. Her every behavior becomes the topic of discussion for others. From the entrance in the haveli, these words separate her from others and make her engross in loneliness. Even after so many years later, the pardah still makes her a stranger to her mother-in-law and to her father-in-law. It becomes the stumbling rock between her and others. It boosts her loneliness and feeling of being an ‘outsider’ even after the couple of years of marriage. The whole culture of the haveli appears full of gender- biased. It is the culture of the haveli where she meets her husband in the end of the day not in a day. If any male meets his wife in a day, he would bear the condemnation of the whole society. Geeta comes from such an atmosphere in which the relations of men and women go hand-in-hand and altogether. On the contrary, the haveli culture marginalizes such attitude of being together. Naturally, she does not receive the company of her husband when she feels fear. All these things enhance her loneliness. Mehta comments:

‘Even after two years her father-in-law and his father were strangers to her. She had never spoken a word to them. The men, including her husband, seemed to disappear as soon as it was daylight. The whole day they were away in their offices or busy in their section of the house. They came into the interior courtyards only at meal times. Though to her they were only names—’. (19)

Naturally, she construes unwilling separation from others in the family. She feels unable to trust anyone in the haveli because of the differences in the culture. All seem to be under the impression of austere family tradition. They seem to find out her mistake every time. Mehta remarks:

‘when Geeta first come to her new home, she had no one she could trust. Everyone was waiting to find fault with her’. (21)

This ‘fault-finding’ attitude creates a rift between her and the other family members. The show-off of every manner drags Geeta to the path of loneliness. Thus, the sense of cultural marginalization secludes her from others. She feels unable to talk with others. She even receives frequent instructions from family members about the way of conduct. They teach her even how to deal with her own child in front of others. Geeta bursts into words saying:

‘Stop lecturing me, I am fed up with all the pretence that goes on here,’ said Geeta in a high - pitched voice, at last releasing the irritation she felt. ‘I
hate all this meaningless fuss! Don’t tell me what I should do with my own child!’ (32)

This hypocrisy of the haveli creates aloofness between her and others. It results into an enhancement of loneliness in her life. Right from the childhood days, Geeta was always frank with her parents and other relatives. But after marriage, the life appears contradictory to her. Haveli nurtures its different culture which she finds difficult in adopting and adapting the situation. In daily routine also, everyone moves cautiously in the haveli. Nobody expresses likes and dislikes in front of others. Every relation gets measured on the paradigm of controlled feelings. The nervousness of life bestows her with the loneliness. Mehta remarks:

‘In the two years Geeta had lost much of her exuberance but still she was unable fully to control either her words or her feelings. She was still capable of talking frankly with her younger –in-laws. Because of this, her mother-in-law kept reminding her of the importance of reticence’. (33)

And obviously this reticence brings her on the road of loneliness. Family programmes of the haveli under surveillance make her very nervous. She continues the life in the haveli on one hope that her stay in the haveli will be temporary as she is aware of Ajay’s job shifting to Delhi University. But after the conversation with her husband Ajay, she realizes the truth of cancellation to shift to Delhi. This stroke makes her fatalised to make adjustment in the haveli culture. After some years, Geeta gets adjusted with the haveli culture. But it never fills her emptiness by adding friends. She feels lonely even though surrounded by other women. Mehta states:

‘Geeta felt more at ease. She could now admire the graceful movements of the women without feeling clumsy herself. But she had made no friends. The daughter and daughters-in-law of her age in the other havelis were no companions to her. With all these bashful glances and their timid ways she found them shrewd and calculating’. (87)

Thus, Geeta too feels tough to make friends with others. Every time, she is reminded of the past days and becomes unhappy of being in the austere family. It offers her an unending solitariness of life. Once, she feels depressed and desires to get back in the house of parents. She remembers:
'In Bombay, her father was always ready to answer any of his children’s questions no matter how busy he was. Then she thought of the day when they got married. How her mother had stood at the door fighting back the tears that clouded her eyes, but had managed to say to Ajay, ‘Take good care of my child. She is very precious to us. Do not be impatient with her if you find her too outspoken.’ (100)

She remembers those days with moist eyes. She starts to roll down the tears in frustration. She feels suffocating and trapped in the haveli with its tradition and unchanging patterns of life. Thus, her loneliness is bestowed with rebellious thought. But still she subdues her feelings towards the haveli though she desires not to follow. Geeta desires to register the name of Sita in school. But of course she can not make any decision at her own level. The servants’ suggest her to take permission from the father-in-law. But she is not allowed directly to convey her thought to asking for permission. The servants mediate to convey her thought. Geeta listens to the affection of her father-in-law from the servant. Geeta feels overwhelmed by the affectionate talk of her father-in-law. But she cannot express it to him because of the austere tradition. She feels sad for this:

‘Even after seven years I am a stranger to those that are mine, and I will always remain a stranger.’ (103)

The feeling of strangeness emanates from the thought of cultural marginalization that makes Geeta lonely. Regarding the decision of educating Sita, Geeta feels detached from others especially from the world of women. Although, Pari helps Geeta in making decision, Geeta feels apprehensive of her mother-in-law who denounces her for the culture of liberty that she possesses in her. She feels more lonely after the execution of her desire. Her apprehensiveness expresses in her words:

‘I have disturbed her life and, above all, my own’. (106)

It illustrates her subdued nature in front of the traditions of an austere family. She feels lonely in the decision of Sita’s education. She behaves absent-mindedly when left alone. Mehta remarks:
'What a terrible mistake I have made,' said Geeta to herself. The screams from the next room became louder, but Geeta absentmindedly continued to twist the strands of her hair’. (106)

Her mind starts to contemplate on certain things and drags her to loneliness. In spite of being in the company of servants, Geeta inertly feels lonely because of her disinterestedness in the hypocrite happenings around her in the haveli. Whenever she goes to meet relatives of the haveli, she feels an outsider. It is so because she does not have anything to convey others about the lavish and dedicated life in the haveli. At the same time, Geeta feels awkward, lonely. Mehta remarks:

‘---They shared each other’s joys and wept together in sorrow. They were strong and even ruthless when it came to upholding family customs and ties. Tradition was like a fortress protecting them from the outside world, giving them security and a sense of superiority. Geeta felt an outsider, an out looker. She could never share their past’. (114)

Thus, living with others, she always feels secluded from daily the routine of the haveli. Later, she commences the ‘learning classes’ but as per her expectation she receives criticism regarding her attempt to begin the classes. She alone bears these tantrums and does not share that with her husband. An austere culture decides to arrange marriage of Sita belonging to servant class. Geeta does not support earlier child-marriage of Sita but she again becomes lonely protecting her decision. After noticing the presence of Lashmi in the same city, Geeta announces search for Lakshmi. Unfortunately, every body in the haveli prohibits her to do so. But in this case, Geeta’s reply proves her inner seclusion saying (195) ‘I don’t trust any of you; I want to find out myself.’ This sentence highlights the solitariness of Geeta in the haveli.

Later, the marriage proposal for Geeta’s daughter Vijay Bai Sa again makes her upset and lonely. She feels engulfed in the commotion of emotion to burst into cry. Geeta feels afraid of ‘would be steps’ being taken by the haveli. The thought of engagement of her daughter even makes her nervous and lonely. Mehta comments:

‘Geeta sat ready in her room waiting to be called downstairs she felt a certain emptiness within as if she no longer had strength to play a part’. (214)
Geeta feels lonely while facing the rejection of the marriage proposal of Vijay. She hates the child–marriage in the golden name of convention. This convention becomes the milieu to oppress and subdue women. Though, Geeta lives surrounded by various people but she inwardly experiences seclusion from everyone. Mehta remarks:

‘Geeta was so preoccupied with her thoughts that she did not notice the happy faces of the people, nor of the children who peeped into the car when it stopped to let a pack of donkeys more off the road’. (215)

Geeta protests such unusual practices of false tradition of the haveli. But the feudal culture marginalizes her culture of freedom, culture that allows decisive ability and culture that boost rational view towards every happenings of life. The attitude of Geeta and attitude of feudal culture appear contrasting denouncing each others’ views. Geeta seems to be trapped in the intricacies of the tradition of the haveli alone by protesting mal-practices. Being a modern woman, Geeta faces this cultural discrimination after arriving in the haveli. Geeta attempts to assimilate with the haveli culture which becomes a tough task to subsist. The women in the haveli and Udaipur sidelines her for her upbringing in the modern attitude. There is always a distance between rural- traditional stricken women and modern women. The mistress and other women marginalize the perception of Geeta who strives for education for the awareness among people. Later, this awareness makes women craving for the excellence by prohibiting the mal-practices like child-marriage. This trans-culturalism waters the friction and conflict of assimilation. The rural women strictly stick to the view of socially approved things that perform the duty of married women to obey planarity and not to participate in the serious issues of the domestic affairs as well as nation’s affairs. But Geeta, being an educated woman, nurtures the broadness of mind. She looks at the every issue in the haveli through the global point of view. In the haveli also, Geeta faces her crisis because of her belonging to different perspectives of culture than the haveli culture. Her arrival in Jeevan Niwas haveli arouses frowning faces. Everyone becomes hostile towards Geeta. Geeta listens one of them saying:

‘--- She has strong features but she is dark. Let us see how she adjusts. After all she is educated and on top of that she is not from Udaipur. What a risk to get an outsider…’ (18)
Thus, women in Udaipur marginalize Geeta on the basis of their own subdued culture. Geeta dislikes the pardah system that creates the barrier between her and other family members. She feels suffocating in pardah but the haveli culture does not allow unveiling of pardah and mingling with anyone. The pardah makes her aware of her subordinate status in the society. Geeta belongs to the modern world where she can talk, meet anyone without any bias or barrier. But in the haveli culture, women are not allowed to stroll in men’s apartment or even can not talk directly with any men. So, once Geeta silently and anxiously enters the male apartment, suddenly Pari arrives and makes her aware of the austere culture. She says:

“What are you doing here all alone, Binniji? I know you are an outsider but it is time you learned our ways. In this section of haveli women come only when properly escorted.’ Pari’s tone was severe. ‘What would your father-in-law think if he saw you with your face uncovered? Binniji, daughters-in-law of this haveli do not behave like this.’ (20)

Geeta tries to mingle with the haveli’s manners and etiquettes. But she fails to do so. Dhapu, her servant tries to bring a make-over in Geeta’s personality with the austere tradition. Her modern attitudes get marginalized. Mehta remarks:

‘Dhapu told her the etiquette which was expected of daughters-in-law. She never made Geeta feel embarrassed not even when she instructed her that a daughter-in-law talks only when talked to by her elders. Without Dhapu, Geeta would have insisted on going back to her parents. She couldn’t have taken the taunts about her upbringing with the proper meekness’. (22)

It hurts and depresses her of being secluded from others. In this regard, a critic Chanda Mohanty (2008:247) comments “New homes and countries seem to promise freedom. But unmoored from old homes and ideas of duty however, often seems to cast them adrift on a sea of empty loneliness.”

Any festival in the haveli makes her unhappy as she gets underestimated under the surveillance of the austere family tradition. Mehta describes:

‘--- She thought of the courtyard full of women looking her over and criticizing her as they had the day she arrived, and felt depressed. She, like Lakshmi, looked forward to the twenty days’ seclusion of her room; she had


enjoyed the peace and quiet of the last two weeks. But now the period was more than half over. The thought of three days of feasting and merry - making made her feel positively ill’. (28)

This cultural discrimination makes her seclude from enjoying festivals. Even after couple of years, Geeta feels embarrassed in the haveli. She gets perplexed about her behavior. She does not feel comfortable moving around with her face covered. Geeta says:

‘---The remarks the women had made on her first day in the haveli came back: 'she will never adjust. She is not one of us.’ (29)

The function of the family appears as a freaks to Geeta who fails to adjust with its requirements. Thus, the functions become the ordeal of Geeta to observe manners and etiquettes of the haveli. She feels culturally marginalized in the haveli. The following instruction of Kanwarani Sa implies the cultural marginalization. She says:

‘---keep your face covered; by now you should be able to move around without uncovering your face’. (30)

Geeta believes in education so she attempts to create an awareness among women. When her shifting to Delhi gets cancelled, she confronts her mind to live in Udaipur. So, she cracks some customs in the haveli. After a successful attempt of Sita's schooling, she turns to other maids to teach. The custom of Jeecan Niwas never allows a woman to initiate and participate in any serious discussion. So, Geeta’s mother-in-law dislikes her endeavor of opening an access of education to the children of servants. She reluctantly holds Geeta responsible for every deed in the haveli. She feels it one kind of stigma on the history of the haveli. She says to Mani Bua Sa:

‘These are grand ideas, but Mani Bai sa, when you have to sit and roll out the rotis next to the fire and your maid is upstairs listening to stories, then let me-see what you say,’ said Bhagwat singhi’s wife wistfully.’ I can already predict that these classes will bring a bad name to the haveli.’ (151)

Nobody understands Geeta’s articulation regarding education. Her Mother-in-law marginalizes her work culture. It displays in the following conversation when her grand-daughter secures highest rank in the class. Mother-in-law says:
‘coming first is all right, Vijay but you must also learn to cook and sew. Don’t become like your mother’, --- (153)

The upbringing of the girl still goes under the impact of the male chauvanilist society. Geeta’s marginalization appears to be the marginalization of her work- culture. It is copying with illiterate persons who are traditional -stricken and intruders. Geeta commences classes to teach the children of servants. Her mother-in-law too dislikes the work of Geeta. Her efforts get marginalized on the basis of differences in cultural views. The paradigms of cultural views seem otherwise in case of Geeta, especially women. Each one, especially those belonging to the austere family denounce the academic act of Geeta. Manji Bai Sa, Kanta and Nandu all relatives of the haveli nag the attempt made by Geeta, Manji one of the relatives, says:

‘Kaki Sa, let me tell you also that all the havelis are criticizing you. They may not say anything to you, but behind your back they are saying that Jeewan Niwas always tried to maintain the dignity of your way of life - now this very haveli is undermining our authority and making rebels of our of our servants. Because you are rich and have many servants and your son is well placed is no reason why you should disrupt the havelis of the less fortunate ones.’ (165)

These words prickle the mistresses’ heart. Rather appreciating initiative taken by Geeta, they condemn her work and the haveli also. They feel that Geeta unnecessarily coddles all the servants. They do not recognize the value of her academic work, under implication of false esteem. They cover their eyelids with the false pride of esteem that oblige them to sideline the work done by Geeta. But later circumstances appear in such a way that Geeta strategically gets trapped in the austere culture and becomes one with it slowly and slowly. The earlier life in the haveli shows her suffocation in the dilemma of culture.

2.4. Lakshmi:

Lakshmi is one of the servants in the haveli. She appears different in her traits from any other servants in the haveli. Right from the beginning, she seems to be cognizant about every happening in her life. The remarkable thing about her is that she is aware of the marginalization of her own status. She knows that she is marginalized on the basis of being a woman, on the basis of being poor. But she appears different because she nurtures a rebellious spark in her
personality. She seems to be short-tempered and denies to mortgage her self-honor. She rebels against the established norms of the society and receives various hardships of life. She faces the marginalization in her life.

2.4.1 Patriarchy:

The lives of women in Indian culture are shackled on account the dominance of males. They design the things of society according to their strategy and impose a life of hardship for women. For doing certain things, the male dominant society takes the support of some ancient religious books and construes the wretched condition of women. Thus, women are supposed to live in accordance with the desires of men without asserting any word. Patriarchy works as the pivotal in life of women. The same goes with the life of Lakshmi who too faces patriarchal norms in her life.

The marginalization of Lakshmi begins right after her marriage with Gangaram, another servant in the haveli. Basically, it is the custom of the haveli to arrange the marriages of servants among themselves to maintain the provision of permanent servants. The marriage of Lakshmi with Gangaram becomes the matter of imposition. Basically, a marriage is a pious and exciting thing in the life of every woman. Women always nurture certain things about their marriage. So, marriage appears an exciting issue in their lives. Here, Lakshmi dislikes Gangaram as a husband. She has her own dream of marriage where Gangaram appears mis-fit for her. But nobody listens to her and she is obliged to marry him. She remains unhappy because of imposed husband in this imposed marriage. Every one in the haveli knows Lakshmi’s dislike for her husband. So, Heeralal, another servant takes disadvantage of her situation by flirting and offering gift to her. Lakshmi dislikes this but she knows that nobody will believe her. She gets afraid of forthcoming condemnation on her character. Therefore, she hides this issue from everyone. But somehow the matter is disclosed and she becomes convicted. In this whole procedure, her husband Gangaram represents patriarchal mindset. Without probing anything on the side of Lakshmi, he denounces Lakshmi assuming her behavior as adultery. Initially, Lakshmi asserts her mind to convey this thing to the mistress but wants for proper time. Unfortunately, this delay takes toll of conviction of disloyalty from her husband. Regarding infidelity, women are always put in the black side without any consideration. When Gangaram notices this, instead of believing his wife he
infuriates and tries to beat Lakshmi without investigating the matter from Lakshmi’s side. He denounces Lakshmi and says:

‘Where is that rotten woman? Let me catch her. I will wring her neck till she chokes to death’. (69)

Gangaram even becomes violent and holds her neck. Being a husband, he never considers her existence earlier but immediately infuriates when he senses the spark of disloyalty towards him. Basically, Lakshmi remains loyal to her husband but he does not make effort to soothe her. Instead, Gangaram abuses her mentally and physically without any proper interrogation. He represents those males who are rarely aware of mentality and the existence of women. Gangaram does not probe deep into the matter to search for the truth but simply goes on accusing her of infidelity. He says to his mistress:

‘Do not let her touch you, Hukkan. She is dirty’, said Gangaram as he spun around and faced the women. ‘Ask her, who gave her this and this. Ask her! She is worse than street woman, he said, flinging the blouse and the sari on the ground. His red eyes like fire balls bulged over his long crooked nose’. (70)

Heeralal neither does nor hand over these gifts to her; however he throws it at her that is why she could not react to these gifts. Lakshmi seems sure about it that nobody will believe her story. Gangaram becomes a dictator and anticipates knowing the gift giver.

2.4.2 Gender-biased Perspeception:

The rules of behavior for men and women go different in the Indian social structure. Women never receive any freedom like men. Women usually engross in domestic drudgery and remain away from outside work. The justification differs from men to women. Women are subdued right from their birth in every stage of their lives. From ancient times, the religious belief has observed rigorous demarcations of women. On the contrary, men escape from any such demarcations. These demarcations are obviously based on gender. Consequently, women suffer from huge amount of tantrums in their lives regarding various issues. The society acquits men from every involvement regarding women’s issues.

2.4.2.1 Marriage:
Lakshmi becomes the victim of the gender-biased society. She does not like her husband Gangaram but being a girl she accepts him as her husband mutely. In the Indian social structure, women are not allowed to choose their husbands but they have to accept. It is postulated that women should accept their husbands as they are. It should not matter whether they are right or wrong, good or bad, healthy or handicapped, handsome or ugly. Women should serve them till the end of their lives. Women should be felt privileged while serving their husbands. Lakshmi represents those women who accept their husbands mutually despite their dislike for them. Lakshmi too gets trapped in gender-biased perception. The mistress of the haveli arranges her marriage with Gangaram, another servant in the haveli. Belonging to servants’ kinship, Lakshmi does not dare to ask or protest the decision. She dislikes Gangaram as her husband. His personality does not fascinate her but she marries him as the decree of the mistress of the haveli. Her dislike for Gangaram is expressed by Mehta:

‘He went about his work quietly, never complaining, never grumbling. But Lakshmi found everything wrong with him. She complained about his temper and about his tattered clothes. She even blamed the mistress for marrying her to a poor man, and that too with a crooked nose’. (11)

Pari would comfort her for having a good husband like Gangaram. Lakshmi never gets convinced of it. Heeralal, a driver of the haveli courts Lakshmi but she ignores him. Everyone knows about Lakshmi’s nature who loves living lavishly. But being a servant, she gets deprived of luxurious life. Even the zest for lavish life and husband’s soft attitude does not allow her to be disloyal to him. Heeralal once throws a silk blouse at Lakshmi as a gift. He does not lend her a chance to pronounce a protest. But Lakshmi becomes afraid of forthcoming menace regarding this issue. So, she maintains silence in order to avoid intricacy of concerned issues. Heeralal assumes the silence of Lakshmi as approval for the matter. Later, he again throws sari and halva towards her. Now, Lakshmi decides to reveal the truth to her mistress but she knows:

‘No one will believe I am innocent. “Why did you hide the blouse? Why didn’t you tell us then?” they will ask. We know you, lazy good for nothing; it’s your entire fault. You are a bad woman. We know how you like the good things of life’. (64)

Generally, women never receive fair treatment in such cases. In fact, men and women judge issues of infidelity always from the side of men. Women go in the box of allegations. Lakshmi
also gets denounced without getting opportunity to clarify her side. Her husband even does not listen to her and nags her for infidelity. In this whole process, actually Heeralal appears responsible for such a critical situation but being a male he remains aloof from all such controversies. On the contrary, every one accuses Lakshmi. Basically, she suffers only because of intruder (Heeralal) in her life. Consequently, Gangaram denounces her, convicts her of infidelity and abuses her without hearing her side. Thus, Lakshmi receives stigma on her character without any fault of her own. In this regard, nobody shows daring to call Heeralal and inquire of him about his involvement. But being a man, he gets acquitted from all such allegations. Even nobody delivers any summons to him to know his responsibility in such an occurrence. But Lakshmi’s life gets on stake without committing any wrong thing. In this regard, Simon-de-Beauvoir (1992:395) says “Patriarchal civilization dedicated woman to chastity; it recognized more or less openly the right of the male to sexual freedom, while woman was restricted to marriage.”

Consequently, a mere suspicion drags Laxmi on the path of adultery. Simultaneously, nobody asks Gangaram about his ignorance towards wife if any. Being a man, he always remains on the safe-side. At the time of ordeal of the character of his wife, Gangaram forwards his blame and scorn towards her. He does not probe the matter deeply and support his wife. Thus, male-oriented Indian social structure always convicts women for their suspicion of even disloyalty. Gangaram even tries to beat her. The mistress intervenes the issue and he becomes calm. Regarding an extra-martial affair, women usually suffer a lot than men. At the night, Lakshmi reminds her husband’s accusing voice such as ‘You are a cheap street woman. I never want to see your face again. You are a street woman.’ (71)

After listening to such abusive words, Lakshmi tightens her lips and her body burns with rage. She feels insulted in the whole incident. Thus, she pays the toll of her life for having no fault of her own. In temper, she elopes away from home to teach her husband a lesson. She seems aware of the forthcoming stigma on her character. So, she refuses Pari and Khyali to accompany them back to the haveli after some days. Pari tries to solace her at her level. Her words point out the gender-biased perception. Pari says:

‘Every husband has a right to scold his wife, even beat her if necessary, but it does not mean a woman runs away from her husband’. (81)
Truly, the women always suffer more than men in such occurrences in life. They become responsible for their debacle. Simultaneously, women have to discard the shelter because most of the time women have no asset. Many women go shelterless after they get discarded by their husbands. So, the situation becomes more plightful for women than for men. The rebellious nature of women regarding this is taken as their arrogance. Obviously, the question arises about Lakshmi’s womanhood when she denies fulfilling child-rearing activity. Lakshmi becomes angry at the behavior of her husband. She protests it in her own style. Pari reminds her of the duty of mother. Then Lakshmi says:

‘Let the child starve to death. That will teach her father to control his long, poisonous tongue.’ (81)

But Pari points out an image of traditional women who feel that women should bear everything at the cost of her womanhood. She replies:

“What a woman’,---(81)

It focuses the ‘deep-rooted ‘gender-biased view in the society that always drags women on the path of being defenseless. Lakshmi never returns to the haveli and becomes astray.

2.4.2.2 Deserted Women:

The lives of deserted women always remain full of mental trauma and annoyance. Lakshmi too receives the same annoyance from others. She discards the safe-guard armour of the haveli culture. Society never confers any honour to any deserted women. Such women remain the stigma on society. But men appear devoid of all such tantrums. Nobody denounces men for any wrong deed. He gets acquitted at every ground and maintains the same honour as it was before divorce. But the women suffer from the wretched condition even when they discard husbands or husbands desert them. Lakshmi’s life becomes wayward after discarding Gangaram. Lakshmi remains mute even after acronyms of Gangaram. In this whole procedure, the main convict Heeralal, because of who the wretched incidents takes place remains away from intricate situation. The Indian society sustains with gender-biased attitude and Lakshmi becomes its prey. Her life becomes full of tantrums and gossips. The mistress of the haveli intervenes in the issue when Gangaram threatens Lakshmi for so called non-proven adultery. Lakshmi gets hurt by the
rude behavior of Gangaram. She decides to teach him a lesson by discarding him. In the night, she leaves the haveli when all fall asleep. She silently comes out leaving her infant daughter, Sita there. The lives of deserted women become plightful. Lakshmi is also representative of those women who bear annoyance of society around them. Lakshmi first lives in the house of the panwala and then goes to her brother’s house. But nobody understands her side. Parents never welcome women whom husbands discard. The same happens with Lakshmi. Her life too becomes unpredictable. Somebody gossips that Lakshmi leads a life that is not honorable (80). Lakshmi goes to her brother’s house. But nobody offers her shelter as she violates the rule of patriarchy, a rule of culture. Mehta states the painful situation of Lakshmi:

‘---Lakshmi’s brother had refused to keep his sister fearing that it would annoy the elders of his family. No one in his family understood Lakshmi’s behavior. To them it was natural that a husband scolds his wife. In fact, they were sure that once she knew that no one was on her side, she would return to the haveli’. (86)

The life of a deserted wife then goes beyond imagination of predicament. Society always postulates deserted women as stigma on society. Her life becomes unsettled because of husband’s infidelity or suspicion. Whatever be the reason, only women suffer huge hardships in life. Even her natal family and society denounce her for desertion. The words are little avail to describe the plight of such women. The same predicament takes place in Lakshmi’s case who discards her husband in anger as he wrongly suspects her of infidelity. Then the life goes hard for Lakshmi who starts to live alone. Everyone talks of her bad character and she appears as a stigma on the austere family of Jeevan Niwas where her daughter Sita lives happily. But Lakshmi does not get back to the haveli. She feels it as an assault on her ‘self’. She joins the job of house-keeping but never comes back to the haveli. Despite this her future remains dark.

Lakshmi usually offers laddos to Sita. But her wayward background makes her personality a riddle for everyone to solve. Her life becomes wretched in everyone’s perception and gossiping makes her life critical to survive. This situation appears different in the case of men. Gangaram and Heeralal seem to be the convicts in case of upheavals in the life of Lakshmi but remain safe in their changeless and settled lives. Instead, Lakshmi suffers a lot, goes through various trials of life whereas both these males continue their lives faultlessly, fearlessly. But
Lakshmi confronts her life becoming careless for every other people. The social outlook is often suspicious and full of prejudices for the deserted, divorcees or widows. Lakshmi represents those deserted women who always remain under the suspicious supervision of society. It reflects in the remarks by Khyali, a cook of the haveli, who reveals all the things to mistress.

Since desertion, everyone assumes that Lakshmi has become a prostitute who embarks living with different men. The mystery enhances when one woman visits the school of Sita to offer her ladoos. Later, all truth comes out from the speech of Khayali who says:

‘---the day I went to bazaar to change Sita’s silver anklets, There I met Hari the Panwala. You remember, Hukkum, it was in his house she first rented a room when she ran away from the haveli. He is a bad character but he knows what’s going on in the city. He told me that he had often seen Lakshmi at the temple. He couldn’t believe that she had all of a sudden become religious; so he observed her. Hukkum, he saw her buy the ladoos and puris and this further intrigued him. He knew Lakshmi couldn’t afford to buy the special ladoos, so he decided they must be for a special friend’. Khyali took a deep breath and then continued, ‘Hukkum, Hari one day followed Lakshmi and saw her enter Sita’s school. His evil mind immediately concluded she was going to see his friend, the watchman of the school.’ (239)

The words of Khyali focus the faulty perception of male-dominant society towards Lakshmi. Basically, the readers know that Lakshmi comes to school to meet her daughter. But male-dominant society always accuse a woman who is without support of traditional family structure. Thus, Lakshmi becomes the victim of such gender- discrimination. The factor responsible for her mishap is Gangaram, her husband and Heeralal who flirts. The gullible male-dominant society remains safe and being a woman, Lakshmi alone suffers a lot for her catastrophe. She receives the treatment of conviction. So, she does not participate even in the wedding of her daughter. What can be the plight of any woman more than this? Thus, Laxmi becomes the prey of gender-biased perception.

### 2.5 Mani Bua Sa:

Mani Bua Sa is a cousin of Bhagwat Singhji. She is in her sixties but still appears energetic. Each feature on her face is seen beautifully proportioned. She walks as if she does not bend in front of
anybody. She remains aloof but her tenderness fascinates others. At fist, Geeta too gets impressed by the beauty and dignity of her cousin-in-law. But later the interaction between both of them unveils her inner personality. Consequently, Geeta starts to love her for her compassionate feelings for understanding other people. She too has been the victim of marginalization in her life.

2.5.1 Gender-biased Perception:

The lives of women begin with the gender-discrimination right from their births. They get subjected to partial treatment relegating everything in their lives. Boys are offered to celebrate and girls are a tool to uphold the burden of culture on their shoulders. The births of girls make the parents gloomy. Though, now there is change in the attitude about the birth of a girl-child still the ratio is yet not satisfactory. So, women become the victims of the gender-biased perception of society.

Mani Bua Sa also becomes the prey of gender-biased attitude. Geeta meets Mani Bua Sa in the haveli when she enters to meet her mother-in-law’s ailing brother. Geeta gets encircled by various elderly ladies. After some time she feels suffocating, but can not have daring to get up and go outside. They all talk about Sita’s education initiated by Geeta. Mani Bua Sa, an elderly lady brings her on terrace and narrates her own story by appreciating Geeta’s attempt. The story of Mani Bua Sa sustains with poignancy of gender biased perception. She suffers a lot only in her life because of being a woman.

2.5.1.1 Education:

Being a girl, she never receives a chance to pursue education. The boys are supposed to be the stake-holders of education and not girls. Mani Bua Sa lives with family but remains deprived of education. She feels appreciative about Geeta and her education. She admires Geeta’s attitude towards Sita, a servant to be educated. Mani Bua Sa is very well aware of the education when she says:

‘But the children are grown up now and they will leave one day. If I could read and write, I would not feel so lonely. She realizes that education can be ship to float and the rest of life of sea. She narrates the poignancy of life being a widow girl. She narrates’. (117)
So, she never attends the school because women were supposed to attend the school. She remains illiterate throughout her life. This ill-literacy among women always become the cause for their downfall.

2.5.1.2 Widow:

Widows are the stigma on society. They are often considered to be cursed and kicked out from the house for carrying a bad luck for their houses. They are ostracized from the main-stream of society. They are prevented to participate in communal as well as domestic religious festivals. The lives of widows become plightful as they do not secure financial assistance. Apart from this, their emotions are marginalized at every stage of their lives. They strangle their minds, strangle their souls. They live in ghettos full of hardships of lives.

Mani Bua Sa too becomes the victim gender -biased marginalization. Naturally, as per the contemporary tradition, she gets married at an early age. Then, she becomes the child widow. The lives of widows fill with tantrums. However, as a child- widow the battement of women enhance. Mani Bua Sa appreciates her in-laws for being good to her she says:

‘I lost my husband in the same year his brother lost his wife. So, I brought up his two children. They became mine. Of course, I have not known many of the pleasures of life.’ (116)

This unveils the tremors of her life. She is deprived of the sensational things of life. She accepts the life as a surrogate mother to her niece. Her deep buried emotions become open in front of Geeta. It is the predicament of a widow that goes beyond imagination. She becomes a widow at such young age that does not understand the prohibition on beautiful things. Being a widow, despite of her age, she has been kept away from all lively things. She says:

‘As a young girl I could not understand why I was forbidden to wear jewellery and colored saris like the other women. A widow’s presence on religious occasions was considered inauspicious. That hurt me most; she never blames anyone for her situation’. (116-117)

She becomes the surrogate mother to her nephews and loves them as a mother. They also love her but somewhere the corner of contentment remains empty. Now, her life becomes empty as the children grow up. So, she supports Geeta in arranging the schooling for Sita. Women’s life
stops at these hurdles made by men only for women. Thus, Mani Bua Sa becomes the prey of gender biased attitude and suffers a lot.

The predicaments of various women at various grounds are presented in Inside the Haveli. The writer has tried to point out the lives and the status of women in the society. Some become aware of this marginalization and rest unknowingly become prey of such factors in the society. The novel Inside the Haveli reveals the psyche and plightful situations of women that are assembled in the haveli. It is exemplified through three generations of daughter and mother. It highlights the same torture of women in their lives. Although, modern society has changed a bit still the nature of torture continues in different forms.