

**RISING FROM THE ASHES: THE RESURGENCE OF DALIT PRIDE
WITH REFERENCE TO AMITA TRASI'S *THE COLOR OF OUR SKY*
AND SUDHA MURTY'S *THREE THOUSAND STITCHES***

Dissertation

*Submitted to the University of Calicut in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the
award of Degree of Master of Arts in English Language and Literature*

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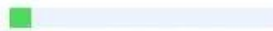
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled **Rising From The Ashes: The Resurgence of Dalit Pride With Reference To Amita Trasi's *The Color Of Our Sky* And Sudha Murty's *Three Thousand Stitches*** is a bonafide record of research done by **Aparna A S** (Register Number AIAWMEG006), has not previously formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Fellowship or other similar title.

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Place: P.Vemballur

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CONTENTS

1	Chapter I Introduction	1-9
2	Chapter II Women Victims of Sexual Assault in Amita Trasi's <i>The Color Of Our Sky</i>	10-20
3	Chapter III Violation of human rights in Sudha Murty's <i>Three Thousand Stitches</i>	21-31
4	Chapter IV Gender and Caste discrimination in Amita Trasi's <i>The Color Of Our Sky</i> and Sudha Murty's <i>Three Thousand Stitches</i>	32-42
5	Chapter V Conclusion	43-51
	Works Cited	52-55

Chapter I

Introduction

Literature is the reflection of human life. It is basically the appearance of human feelings, misery, delights and emotions. Literature is like an ocean, all the human beings are researching literature, but nobody can complete their research, it has no ending. Only in literature can we compare things with figures of speech like simile, metaphor, oxymoron, alliteration, personification etc. Women are like a Lotus. Similar to how Lotus grows, women frequently face difficulties and limitations that may negatively affect their self confidence and self esteem. They are still naturally able to overcome these difficulties and convert these difficulties into a chance for development and achievement. Just like Lotus we can compare women with Mimosa flowers. The mimosa symbolizes the power of women. It looks extremely rare but it is really powerful and has the ability of surviving in difficult conditions actually, similar to women. In ancient times, women should give each other mimosa branches as a symbol of support and dignity. We can compare women with Swans. Swans are important and expressive signs that have been connected with a variation of values throughout history. They are seen as signs of loyalty, love, morality, charity, insight, power, modification and beauty. I have selected this topic because I couldn't find much discussion on it. The aim of this paper is to find Dalit Feminism in *The Color Of Our Sky* and *Three Thousand Stitches*.

To achieve the goal I have divided the chapters into three. The first chapter deals with sexual abuse and problems faced by devadasis. In olden days, women were also a part of the society but men were superior. They do not provide rights and freedom. Women spent their time in the houses. Men do not have a chance for being independent. The second chapter deals with violation of human rights in the

patriarchal society. In the twentieth century women got some rights in labor. But the patriarchal society built rules for women. The duty of the women is cleaning, cooking, caring for children etc. Women do not receive education and are forced to do difficult work. The third chapter deals with the comparison of two novels with caste and gender discrimination. We know that in newspaper we see many suicides, rapes, murders etc. World has totally changed. But women are now focusing on their career. Women are handling all areas like arts, sports, education, science and technology, politics, media etc. Most of the women in our country are educated and independent.

The work *The Color Of Our Sky* is a novel by Indian writer Amita Trasi. She was born in Mumbai, India. She holds an MBA in Human Resource Management and she has worked for several multinational organizations for seven years. She presently lives in Houston, Texas, with husband and two cats. This is her debut novel published in the year 2017. She was inspired by nature. She wrote the same work in different languages. The work *The Color Of Our Sky* is going in dual narration. Mukta and Tara were the central characters in the novel. Mukta was a ten year old girl from lower caste and she was a devadasi. In the young age itself she became devadasi through the force of her grandmother. But she wants to escape from this culture. So Mukta sent to Mumbai for the upper middle class family for household work. There she finds a friend Tara, an eight year old girl. Tara helps her to recover from the wounded past. Their friendship soon becomes sisterhood. Mukta was kidnapped from Tara's house. After this incident Tara's family shifted to America but Tara can't enjoy the new life, because Tara always thinks about the missing Mukta. She thinks that she was responsible for Mukta's disappearance. After eleven years, Tara goes to India to find Mukta. When Tara investigates deeper into the harsh conditions of the practice of oppression, she discovers long kept family secrets that could perhaps reflect light on

Mukta's fate and the reason she moved in with Tara's family. This is a tragic and beautiful illustration of an unexpected friendship, a narrative of passion, treachery and finally redemption that moves from a customary Indian community to the active contemporary city from Mumbai to Los Angeles and return. In this work we can see many beautiful lines. "It is said that time heals everything. I don't think that's true. As the years have gone by, I've found it odd how simple things can still remind you of those terrible times or how the moment you try so hard to forget becomes your sharpest memory" (Trasi 2). Actually this line tells the true facts about life. Stars are created in the sky when we pass away. So that we can protect the people we care about. The life after death we don't know, the old people tell us about this we don't know if it is true or fake. But so many people believe that after death the soul will reflect in the sky as a star.

The novel explores the fortunes of two small girls in India from separate situations they saw unfortunately and built a bond of friendship. Amita Trasi describes some attractive actual human beings in this novel. She highlights the significance of human relationship. This novel generates realization regarding child abuse. The main theme of the novel was friendship, slavery, hope, human relationship, loss, womanhood, freedom and sexual abuse. The characters in this novel are completely imaginary, the objective for this novel develops in the author's experience with the daughter of a servant in Mumbai. She was the inspiration of the character called Mukta. The novel explores the tradition in the past that still remains and creates problems in the world. The system of devadasi is still continuing now. Actually devadasis were the servants of god, but this tradition is treated badly now. They are doing prostitution in the name of tradition. Lower caste girls were the victims of these social evils. They have to obey the rules of the society. All the

women in the world will break the rules of the society one day. Amita Trasi writes in simple language and with interesting ideas. She does not use difficult words to express her story but uses simple words. Her writing style attracts the readers to continue reading. Through the life of Mukta and Tara she portrays violation against women, child abuse, ill treatment of sex workers.

The work *Three Thousand Stitches* is a novel by Indian writer Sudha Murty published in 2017. She was born in Shiggaon, Haveri, Karnataka, India. She is known for her novels in English and Kannada and social work. She is the wife of N. R. Narayana Murthy, the co-founder of Infosys. In 2006, the Government of India awarded Sudha Murty the Padma Shri, India's fourth highest civilian award, for her social services. In 2023, she won Padma Bhushan, India's third highest civilian award. Her parents and maternal grandparents inspired her to write. Most popular books includes Mahasweta (2000), How I Taught My Grandmother to Read (2004), Wise and Otherwise (2002), Dollar Bahu (2003), Gently Falls the Bakula (2008), The Mother I Never Knew (2014), The Old Man And His God (2006), The Day I Stopped Drinking Milk (2012), House of Cards (2013) etc. She is a member of the Gates Foundation's public health programmes and the chairperson of the Infosys Foundation. She was TATA Engineering and Locomotive Company's first hired female engineer, India's largest auto maker (TELCO). She is the author of great works, including nonfiction, technical books, novels, memoirs and travelogs. Through her works she has got many awards in the field of social service, Karnataka Rajyotsava State Award was given in the year 2000. Ojaswini prize for outstanding social work in 2000. Sri Raja-Lakshmi Foundation in Chennai awarded the Raja-Lakshmi Award in 2004. R. K Narayan Award for Literature in 2006. She won the Crossword Book Award in the popular non-fiction category in 2018. Rotary South

Hubli Award for notable attitude towards social service, The Millennium Mahila Shiromani award is given to a woman who has made a contribution to society.

She uses simple language with different ideas. Average people also understand her language. Her writing style motivates her readers to continue reading. The work *Three Thousand Stitches* explores socio economic problems that destroy today's India. With her talent to write striking stories, Sudha Murty's useful insights have an important impact on her audience, inspiring them to reconsider their own beliefs and take concrete action to build a society. The work is based on her real life experience. *Three Thousand Stitches* is a collection of 11 short stories. Each and every story is powerful and encouraging. The title of the book itself is the name of the first chapter. She plans to work for devadasis and meet a group of devadasis, but her first experience was really bad. They do not consider her and throw their chapels towards her. After some days she again tried to coordinate with them but they welcomed her with tomatoes. After this incident she became upset and her father supported her. Finally she got support and love from devadasis and she started to help the group. Firstly she conducted an awareness program about the danger of AIDS. Many of the devadasis wanted to come out of this, she helped those devadasis. Through the Infosys Foundation, many devadasis become self-sufficient. After twenty years, this group of devadasis gifted embroidered bedspreads to Sudha Murty. She helped 3000 devadasis, so 3000 on the bedspread.

Variety societal concerns and difficulties, including devadasis, addiction, and slave trade are discussed in the work. The main theme of the story is the lives of sex workers or the devadasis, the author's determination to help them and make them self-sufficient, gender discrimination, education, rural development and social justice. Sudha Murty's all books deal with themes like social issues, friendship, compassion,

and kindness. Her writing style is fascinating and absorbing, so her writings are enjoyable. In *Three Thousand Stitches* we see beautiful lines “I can give you many examples of people who may not have studied much but have done well for themselves because they believed they could. Confidence doesn't mean that everything will go our way. It simply gives us the ability to accept failures that we will inevitably meet on our path and move forward with hope” (Murty 155—156). Actually these lines tell about confidence.

The both novels focus on the theme of Dalit Feminism in India. Dalit Feminism argues that caste and gender should be defined as connecting terms rather than as two opposite categories. Dalit Feminism is an approach to get gender equality and relief from caste discrimination in the Brahmin society for Dalit community. Dalit women face many problems through the Brahmins physically and mentally. In the past caste was important. Lower caste people are always inferior as seen by upper caste people. Patriarchal society denied their basic rights also. Actually these women are marginalized in society. Firstly, they are marginalized because they are women. Secondly, they are marginalized in the name of caste. There are many issues that occurred in the past through caste. Many famous people like Periyar and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar raised their voice against caste discrimination. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is considered as the founder of Dalit movement. In the 20th century, many of the writers and activists were against the caste system. Many of the writer's point out in their writings also. Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar an activist and a writer also, disapproved of the Devadasi system. So it was correctly pointed out in her work “Devadasis” in 1936.

In the 21st century many voice raises for Dalit community like journalists, media, activists and writers continue to focus on the problems faced by Dalit people.

Bama Faustina Soosairaj, was a feminist writer and she recollects her childhood memories as a Dalit in her debut novel *Karukku* in 1992. Many students committed suicide because of caste based discrimination. Journalists like Cynthia Stephen and Yeshica Dutt came out from Dalit community to raise their opinion against prejudice based on caste. Several digital organizations freely talk about Dalits and their basic rights. Through this many of the people are motivated. Mukta Salve was the first student Dalit writer. Actually Dalit writings came out from pain, inequality and anger, through their writings all the people get the clear picture about the discrimination faced by dalit women in the working place and in husbands house. In the husband's house they are treated like slaves. In workplaces landlords abuse them and also treat them like slaves. Dalit women express their problems in their writings through different voices. They express their sufferings, poverty etc. through their writings. Actually upper caste people do not accept Dalits people. They discriminate against them on the basis of their caste. Upper caste people treated Dalits as untouchables. They do not get their basic rights also. Dalits have been facing problems from legal, social, economic, religious, educational and other problems. Caste based discrimination led to marginalization. Dalits have been traditionally restricted to unskilled labor, and they get low payment, it causes poverty. They do not get education but high caste people get proper education. High class people believe that education was only for rich or high caste people. But beliefs are wrong because education was not their favor that was their basic rights. Dalit movement focuses on gender equality, provide education, provide wages without considering gender etc. Women are facing many problems than men. They are badly treated in the workplace.

Dalit literature focuses on incidents, lives, problems of the Dalit community in the name of caste, they face oppression, discrimination etc. The author wrote about

caste, class and gender based oppression in their works. Dalit women writers are few in numbers. The most famous writers are Bama Faustina, Baby Kamble and Urmila Pawar. They correctly point out the struggles of the Dalit people in their endeavors. All other people are motivated through their works and they also raise their voice against discrimination faced by Dalits. The main purposes of Dalit literature is equality, self respect and human dignity. The Dalit writers and poets are writing their poems, novels, tales and autobiographies etc. The common dealing theme of Dalit literature is poverty, untouchability, caste oppression, revolution and question of identity. We all are familiar with Sharankumar Limbale, he was an Indian Dalit. He writes about the problems faced by Dalit community in his famous works *The Dalit Brahmin* and *Akkarmashi*.

Dalits or lower caste people face many problems like oppression, poverty, inequality, and discrimination etc. Caste based oppression still exists in India. The main reason was lack of education and awareness. There are many murder occurred in the name of caste. Upper caste woman married a lower caste man, and the family members of the woman killed the man. They can't accept lower caste people. We can see many news stories based on this kind of murders. People become cruel through caste. Actually gender inequality and caste discrimination are the main problems. In the past, upper caste people got seats easily in schools and colleges. But now lower caste people are the priority. After that they consider upper caste people. That was the change that came in society. But at the time of admission they ask for the proof of caste certificate. Why? Caste is not an important element while studying. But we have to attach a caste certificate at the time of admission.

The primary challenge to the nation's open strategy is the inability to successfully advance Dalit education to the level they want. People who have an

education are able to participate in the economy and earn more money. Lack of education is the main problem of caste discrimination. Educated people do not discriminate against people in the name of caste and gender. The best solution for discrimination is education itself. Through education lower caste people get good jobs and earn money. Education is also a solution for poverty also. And awareness about class, caste and gender is also good. Medias or activists take proper action for giving awareness programs for all people. Conduct awareness programs about the value of education. We have laws but the laws are not strict. The judiciary, which has the responsibility to protect people's rights. The increase in violence and crimes caused by the caste against Dalit community. The courts and government have to work jointly to maintain and protect the rights of this community. In Kerala the law was not strict but in many countries like China, Iran, Saudi Arabia etc maintain the laws and order strictly. We want the strict laws in the world. Through the strictness people will afraid to all bad things.

Chapter II

Women Victims of Sexual Assault in Amita Trasi's

The Color Of Our Sky

Sarojini Naidu, Anita Nair, Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri, Arundhati Roy, Sudha Murthy, Toru Dutt etc are renowned Indian female authors. Another mature Indian writer is Amita Trasi. *The Color of Our Sky* is her debut novel. This paper aims to show the suffering of women in the Dalit community in India. Numerous writers have highlighted the plight of girls in society. One of them is *The Color of Our Sky*. In the novel, Amita Trasi depicts the tenacious strength of optimism and the unbreakable tie of friendship. This is a crucial, poignant and unwavering tale of the unbreakable friendship between two childhood buddies. The novel addresses sexual abuse. It perfectly captures the suffering of Mukta, the young girl. It portrays the pitiful state of the child of a temple prostitute. The writer relates a terrible reality is that a temple prostitute's daughter is treated as a prostitute by society. Virginity is viewed by society as something that only women and men can do. This book discusses human relationships, children's psychology, and other topics. Sexual harassment of young girls is becoming more commonplace are coming up. Worldwide, there are a lot of girl children who are raped. It is used by Amita Trasi; in her book *The Color of Our Sky* showcases her creative ability. She clearly highlights the Indian traditions and practices. In this novel, Amita Trasi describes several stunning real people. She stresses the value of interpersonal relationships. This book raises awareness of abuse of children.

The Color of Our Sky, Amita Trasi's first book, is a story of friendship, feminism, and optimism that puts a new spin on well-known themes. Despite being a beautiful novel, Trasi's literary creation ends up being a somber reflection of the harsh

realities of contemporary India. Amita Trasi wants us to recognize the evils of the Hindu caste structure and the Devadasi ritual while presenting a lovely friendship involving two teenage girls among various socioeconomic origins. An odd friendship develops between 10-year-old Mukta, the offspring of a temple sex worker, and 8-year-old Tara from higher caste Mumbai. Mukta seems destined for a career in the sex industry, but due to her mother's tireless efforts, she enters foster care, which also has a cost. Unfortunate circumstances cause Mukta to relapse into her sadness, and an unexpected turn of events places Tara in a foreign country, out of Mukta's reach. The first of the two storylines presented to readers in *The Color of Our Sky* follows the life of Mukta in 1986. The next one jumps to Tara's tale, which takes place in Los Angeles in 2004. The story of Mukta and Tara, as well as that of an ever-present city that is unable to escape a terrible truth and a wonderful friendship that fell apart, is the topic of the heartbreaking story *The Color of Our Sky*, which inspires hope for many more to blossom.

Amita Trasi's engaging book *The Color of Our Sky* explores social injustice, friendship, love, and loss through the eyes of Tara and Mukta, two adolescent girls from different circumstances. The novel, which is set in India, explores the effects of the social hierarchy on society and also the sharp disparity between the existence of the rich and the poor. The narrative alternates between Tara and Mukta, who have been great friends since they were young. Mukta is a lower-class girl who lives in a village in rural India with her alcoholic father and violent stepmother, while Tara is a pampered upper-class girl who resides in Mumbai with her affluent parents. Despite their various ancestries, the two girls form an unbreakable bond and rely on each other for emotional support. However, their lives take drastically different paths when Mukta is kidnapped and forced into prostitution by a corrupt policeman. Tara is

devastated by her friend's disappearance and embarks on a dangerous journey to find her. As the story unfolds, the novel explores the deep rooted social and economic inequalities in Indian society and the devastating impact it has on the lives of ordinary people. The two girls develop an unshakable friendship and rely on one another for emotional support despite coming from quite disparate ancestries. However, when Mukta is captured and forced into prostitution by a dishonest policeman, their lives take radically different turns. After learning of her friend's abduction, Tara sets off on a perilous search for her. The novel analyzes the pervasive social and economic inequalities in Indian society and the terrible effects they have regarding the lives of regular people as the plot progresses. The reader is immediately transported to the busy streets of Mumbai and the arid countryside of India by Trasi's evocative and vivid writing. She skillfully combines the past and current stories of Tara and Mukta, gradually revealing the intricate web of connections and betrayals that resulted in Mukta's kidnapping.

Dual narration gives the story depth and complexity and enables the reader to view the events from many angles. The impact of the caste system on Indian society is one of the major subjects covered in the book. The caste system perpetuates social and economic inequality, and Trasi's shows how people are frequently evaluated and appraised based on their caste rather than their own merits. The book also examines how caste and gender connect, with Mukta's lower caste status rendering her more susceptible to abuse and exploitation. The strength of love and friendship in the features of adversity is another recurring topic in the book. Even though Tara and Mukta come from different social and economic backgrounds, their relationship persists and serves as an origin of support for both of them. Trasi demonstrates how friendships can cross social and cultural barriers and offer support and resiliency

during difficult times. The work also addresses forced prostitution and trafficking, two major issues in India. The horrific reality of this trade and its disastrous effects upon the lives of girls and women who are coerced into it are depicted in Trasi. She demonstrates how these women are frequently objectified and exploited like commodities, with physical and psychological violence destroying their bodies and brains. The powerful and emotional book *The Color of Our Sky* addresses a variety of difficult subjects through the perspectives of two girls from diverse origins. The reader is drained inside the story and is made to care a great deal about the characters because of Trasi's compelling and emotionally charged writing. A strong reminder of the value of societal equity and proportionality is provided by the novel's description of the social and economic inequities in Indian society. For everyone interested in learning more about the complexity of modern Indian society and the human condition, *The Color of Our Sky* is a must-read.

The Color of Our Sky depicts the tales of Mukta and Tara, two Indian girls who were born into radically different situations. Mukta is born into a prostitutes cult, where young people are compelled to offer their bodies as sacrifices to the Goddess. With no father in the picture, it appears that there is little hope for the better future her daughter will have till Tara is introduced to Mukta, who is saved and brought to live in Mumbai with a higher class family. Some difficult subjects are covered, and it was astounding to learn that societies continued to function like Mukta's village in the 1990s, that is, by telling these women at initiation. "You cannot marry any man. You are married to the deity and only after worshiping her will you be able to have a meal. You have to fast two days a week and oblige any man who comes to you. If he beats you, you must not retaliate" (Trasi 73). As early as age four or five, girls from low-income households belonging to the untouchable caste, a lower caste, are married to

Yellamma. They are required to devote their entire lives to serving the goddess and are no longer permitted to marry mortals. The Devadasi System, which commits young females to serve God, is a wicked practice. It is customary for young girls to marry their patron god before they reach puberty. They fan the god and dance and sing to serve him. Because of the Devadasi system, the monarchs and their close associates utilized them as sex prostitutes. The Devadasi system has not been completely abandoned in particular parts of India, despite popular belief that it was abolished years ago. The practice of sending girls to temples as offerings to satisfy the gods is referred to as the Devadasi system in India. Most people who still do this ceremony are from south India, specifically from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Through a formal marriage called Pottukittu, the ritual is carried out.

"Nobody looks for such children who have disappeared, madam. Look at all the children living in the slums-there is no one to take proper care of them, let alone worry how they are doing if they disappear" (Trasi 9). It is significantly more challenging for a female to access the legal system if she is struggling, from a lower caste, and resides in an isolated region. Across the nation, girls and women of Dalit descent experience abuse and victimization in towns, cities, and villages. Little girls get kidnapped and forced into prostitution or domestic service, while the Dalit Freedom Network (DFN) documents that they are killed and burned alive, raped, held captive in prostitution and temple ceremonies, and forced to work as bonded laborers all due to the fact that they were born into a specific family in a specific location.

The issue of sexual abuse is covered in *The Color of Our Sky*. The readers get awareness from this literature. Mukta, a little girl of only eleven years old. She is a temple prostitute's daughter. The men from the village visit her mother's home because she is a temple prostitute each and every day at night. These males never give

her child-rearing any thought. Her sentiments and emotions are never respected by them. They just treat her as a child, not as a mother or a sexual entity. Her job is to make the males in the community happy. She thus gives up her life due to the laws and ordinances of the town of Ganipur. She is Yellama's prostitute, the goddess.

Previously, this method was known as Devadasi. The Zamindars and Kings instituted it. The duty of such women was to sing songs, to dance and to worship God. But the system has totally changed. Each and everyone utilizes Mukta's mother, because of her destiny or malediction she becomes a temple prostitute. Mukta describes her mother's situation,

In the morning I was to enter the house only after Amma allowed me, only after the male left. But one day, out of curiosity, I opened the back door and stood silently in the doorway. From there I could see into the room the crumpled, unmade bed, alcohol, the Jasmine flowers strewn on the floor. I could also see the feet and hairy ankles of a man entwined with amma's. I didn't know what to think or feel. (Trasi 18)

When Mukta turns ten, her mother gets sick and they also experience financial difficulties. They're starving and really destitute. Because of her mother's illness, Mukta constantly receives criticism from her grandma Sakubai. Men avoid their home since her mother is ill. They therefore require money. Their line of work is under scrutiny. In order to turn Mukta into a temple sex worker, her grandmother sends her to the temple ceremony of God Yellamma. Mukta's grandmother makes her go to the event. After that ritual, Mukta becomes a sex worker at the temple. The mother of Mukta does not wish for her child to become a temple based sex worker like her. As a result, she disagrees with Sakubai. However, the young child is unable to understand anything. She is aware that life on this planet is an impossible coincidence. Thus, the

young child accepts the circumstances. She now visits the temple without telling her mom. She regrets doing that. Mukta is given a red saree there, and her face is heavily makeup. Mukta takes great pride in her stunning green lips and eyes. She appears to be really lovely. Still she is quite hungry, but the ritual prevents her from getting food. She receives the title of a prostitute following the ritual. They finally bring her to the palace of Zamindar. Grandma and Madam don't give any thought about her hunger. They want to force her into prostitution. They forward her to Zamindar's chamber. Sitting silently on the chair, she observes the surroundings and the ceiling fan. Quickly a large man enters the room and closes the door. She feels extremely worried after realizing everything. That big man takes off his shirt and takes his belt off. He puts her on the bed, and she can smell the smoke. She attempts to get his hands away from her, but he is too strong for her to succeed. She's having trouble breathing. The man leaves the room after two hours. She is bleeding profusely and in terrible pain. She is dressed up and taken by her grandmother. She isn't fed anything even now. After receiving money from the Zamindar, Madam departs from the palace. This is how she turns into a sex worker. In these words, she conveys her feelings:

He tipped my chin towards him with his hands, scrutinized my face with his drowsy eyes, and said this had to be done so the goddess could bless his family. Without another word the man began unbuttoning his shirt and loosening his belt shedding his clothes one by one and flinging them onto the chair. I slid under the bed and hid there, trying unsuccessfully not to cry. Everything was quiet for a while until his large, hairy hands reached for me, and dumped me on the bed. He said, "Look, don't cry. You are unnecessarily making things difficult for yourself" (Trasi 76).

In *A Walk Across the Sun*, Corban Addison portrays the suffering of two little girls and the difficult lives of women. Their lives and Mukta's are similar.

Sumeera left her with Shankar and closed the door. Ahalya started at a spot on the floor, trebling. She could not bring herself to look at the man who had brought her. He approached her and lifted her chin until she met his eyes. He smiled at her as he unbuttoned his pants. 'Tonight is your wedding night' he said and pushed her back on the bed. (Addison 102)

Women in India face several issues. Women have historically been described as being idealized as being kind, calm, and faithful. Some people have no sentiments at all and view women as nothing more than sexual objects. Women are categorized as sinners and slaves and are not allowed to study the Vedas. "A team of child beggars watched me curiously from a distance. I searched my purse to find some rupee notes and handed them to her. Within seconds all the beggars enveloped me, begging for money. I distributed some notes between them" (Trasi 10). Today's children are tomorrow's assets. But for many Indian children, particularly the impoverished, oppressed, and in great need, education which is a basic entitlement for every child in our nation remains an impossible dream. The two main causes of desperate behaviors like child begging, which are the utmost tragic and relevant issues facing our nation, are poverty and illiteracy. Many thousands of children have been severely affected by this act of child begging, since it has caused them to become slaves and lose their lovely, carefree childhood.

Mukta's coworker is Jasmine. She is a prostitute as well. Jasmine is killed by the heartless guys when she tries to escape Kamathipura, and they take her body and destroy it. Her friends and coworkers are the individuals who are aware of the hidden news. Even though they are aware of the problem they never disclose to others. Every

time an employee tries to leave the brothel where Madam's goondars apprehend and eliminate them. This serves as their punishment for the things they did. Women in the brothel house, such as Mukta, Jasmine, and Leena, desire a happy life with their relatives. They try to leave the area so frequently. But their attempts are ineffective. Their dreams and entire lives are completely broken. Mukta never forgot Suhana's death.

When that didn't prevent a girl from falling in love, all the women told the story of Suhana and her lover. Their bloated bodies were found floating in the sea near the Gateway of India, just because Suhana had escaped. She had married a customer and was living in her own home for almost three months until Madam's goondas caught up with them. No one knew if the story was really true but it resounded through the brothel, frightening any girl who dared to dream. (Trasi 251)

When Mukta was nineteen, she first met Sanjiv. Mukta develops feelings for him. Several people visit this brothel in search of sex. Sanjiv is a wealthy and twenty-year-old man. He genuinely loves Mukta. He gives a red rose to Mukta every Wednesday. He displays a gift, Rabindranath Tagore's Gitanjali poem. He informs Mukta that he wishes to display the world in her eyes. She recalls that she can only view the outside world when she is with Tara yet, her life completely changes the moment she walks into the brothel house. He tells Mukta that he wishes to marry her and save her. Mukta is currently recalling the miserable lives of several of the girls that work with her including Maya, Jasmine, and many others. She needs to live with him together. For the moment, she recalls Tara's words, "Sometimes one act of bravery is better than a life lived as a coward, as a slave" (Trasi 253). So, she is attempting to leave the brothel area with her friend's assistance.

Sanjiv tells Madam he would like to take Mukta to the market. However, as he is the wealthy businessman's son, Madam easily grants his demand. Two goondas are also sent by her to pursue them. Mukta and Sanjiv make skillful use of the chance. As though when they try to leave, the two goondas capture them. After killing Sanjiv, they kidnapped Mukta. She is a golden duck in their eyes. Her effort is unsuccessful. She says,

They dragged me away while I looked at his lifeless eyes one last time, the same eyes that had looked at me with such warmth for so many weeks, giving me hope of a better life. I knew as they piled me onto the backseat of the car when I looked at the long road we were leaving behind, his body lying at the end of it, disappearing from sight into my memories that the dreams I had of us together had always been an illusion. (Trasi 257)

She is forced to live the same life she did previously in the brothel home.

Mukta and her friends have to abort the baby because they become pregnant frequently. But she will have to give birth to a child once. Arun Sahib, the pimp, is the reason for the issue. Due to his attraction to Mukta's appearance, he seduces her and gets her pregnant. Madam requests an abortion from Mukta. Due to her history of multiple abortions, Mukta is unable to terminate the child this time. She may die if she follows through. She wants to make money, therefore the evil woman, Madam, demands it. Well, the child's father is Arun Sahib himself. That, though, he is not yet prepared to accept. He says,

If it's a boy, he can join me in my business, Arun Sahib kept telling me. I know the fate of children born to mothers such as us. At the most the boy would join him as a pimp bringing other girls into this trade, forgetting that his mother was once in this dirt. I never asked him what he would do if the baby

was a girl. I feared to think about it. All I could do was wait and hope this life inside me found a better life the dream my Amma once had for me.

(Trasi 286)

Arun Sahib and other similar individuals believe that women are nothing more than sexual objects without emotion. In the past, women used the name of Devadasi to become prostitutes. Though the system is no longer in use, many young girls are being cruelly abused.

In the current world, prostitutes are not the only women that suffer. Dr. Priyanka Reddy, the eight-year-old girl Asifa, and the Delhi girl Nirbhaya were all cruelly raped by males. Indian rape and sexual abuse crime rates are at a record-high level. This illustrates how dangerous our nation is for women. The fact that women are being treated as victims makes every Indian feel guilty.

Chapter III

Violation of human rights in Sudha Murty's *Three Thousand Stitches*

We all lose a few battles in our lives, but we can win the war. There's always hope.

—Murty, *Three Thousand Stitches*

In India, women have to face lots of problems. They have to suffer harassment, sexual abuse, gender discrimination, lack of education etc. In the world women are not an object for men but a representation of female power. Women are considered as a symbol of goddess in India, but now women are treated cruelly in the world. Every woman in the universe is not safe. Women are being bargained for sex, tortured in family and society, harassed at workplaces etc. Women, ignoring their caste, class and educational level are not safe. In modern civilization females go through the sufferers of abuse for a very long period in different fields in their life both mentally, economically, physically and socially. There are some causes of moral as well as sexual abuse which are highlighted by the media in present Indian society, and a lot of those also remain unfamiliar. While, such brutality opposed to women, sexual harassment, exploitation to women is not of new beginning, it's found in the history of early India. Women are facing problems in each domain of life like the Law of Inheritance. India is growing but women continue to face discrimination.

Sudha Murty is a Padma Shri Awardee writer and an energetic social worker. She mainly focuses on two languages, Kannada and English. Sudha Murty's novels reflect feminism. She doesn't directly criticize the male controlled society but she used several characters in her novels to criticize the society. In her novels the heroines belong to the ordinary family. They are patient, clever and offering. Each and every psyche in the narrative tells the real life of ordinary people. *Three Thousand Stitches*, the title of the book occurs from the opening story where she tries to convert the life

of sex workers by abolishing the Devadasi system. One prominent Indian English short story writer, Sudha Murty describes in her *Three Thousand Stitches* how misogyny damages women in unprivileged communities. The work is a group of 11 dissimilar tales, which she makes use of her life experiences, with a message carved in every tale. The main tale revolves around the life of the devadasi or sex workers, her resolution to make them self-sufficient and to dispose of the label of humiliation that was devoted to them. The beginning tale in this publication is regarding her work to raise the devadasi in Northern Karnataka as part of the Infosys Foundation. The tale concludes with an offering, a fancywork bedspread handcrafted by the devadasi for Sudha Murty. It requires the participation of every devadasi, which is why it has a three thousand stitches. The earnestly crafted bedspread is an evidence to the effect Sudha Murty has had on devadasi life.

Young girls were initially dedicated to the worship and service of a deity or a temple in good faith, but eventually, the word devadasi became synonymous with sex worker. Some were born into the life, while others were sacrificed to the temples by their parents due to various reasons, or simply because they caught a hair infection like the ringworm of the scalp, assumed to be indicative that the girl was destined to be a devadasi. (Murty 2)

After the dedication, some devadasi move into the sexual industry and a few ran prostitution in their villages and residence. Originally devadasi provide sexual service barely to the temple priests and the kings. As time goes, they begin to give sexual service also to the usual visitors of the temple. Devadasi were dissimilar from sex workers because they did not ask money for their services, and they only receive gifts. When they got aged, a few go back to home and settle with their husbands. It is

a tradition that they begin in five local residencies but this never succeeds in the present procedure of the system.

The culture of devadasi appeared out of an absence of education, where the simple girls had to go through multiple troubles and even connected with sex for existence. Their fundamental human rights like the life rights, entitlement to parity, right to marriage, freedom of choice, entitlement to social security, freedom from discrimination, being free from torture and ill-treatment etc. The growth of the concept of basic fundamental rights and human rights gave us a new way to look into the tradition and explore their problems generously. But current analysis observes that top levels of violence are faced by devadasi tradition. "Prostitution was carried on in the name of religion" (Murty 2). Devadasis are one of the most vulnerable to human trafficking, and religion is being used as a method to force females into prostitution. The main reason behind this dedication was poverty itself. Many of the devadasis came from lower castes. Their family forces them to go for it, because they believe that through the dedication of their daughters they can improve their social status and financial ability. So they do not hear their daughter's interest. They only dream about money. Actually this dedication was like a prostitution in God's name. In that time people believed that offering to a temple was a good thing. Actually they are the wives of god. But devadasis do not serve god; they have to satisfy higher class men. They gave gifts to them. Devadasis do not marry a man, because they have connections with men. "She'll write about us and make money by exploiting us" (Murty 5). Devadasis is afraid of the author's arrival, because they think that writer was a journalist and she writes about them. So they do not want to share their problems with writer. Actually devadasis misinterpreted the author, she had come to learn about their issues and wanted to assist them. However, they are unwilling to

confront her. Their behavior towards the writer was bad. Devadasis believes that writer came to exploit them while writing about them in the newspaper. Through this writing many of the people know them and they hate this type of woman. She donned glass bangles, a large bindi, a mangalsutra and a sari worth two hundred rupees. She dressed up as the usual traditional Indian woman, a *bharatiya nari* and brought her father with her to meet the devadasis. The author wants to build a connection with devadasis, so the author follows her father's instruction. She wore sari, bindi, mangalsutra and glass bangles. She ate local foods and sat on the floor. Through this she can build connections with them and know about their life stories. The author faces many problems to finish her project. The author becomes disappointed after seeing their behavior. But her father gave confidence and she went with her father to see devadasis. "Innocent girls had been sold into the trade by their husbands, brothers, fathers, boyfriends, uncles or other relatives. Some entered the sex trade on their own hoping to earn some money for their families and help future generations escape poverty" (Murty 9). The young girls are forced into becoming devadasis by their own family because they can earn money through this. Making young girls into devadasis is how stereotypes try to make them into assets in a culture when they are frequently viewed as burdens. Society considers women as selling objects to earn money. Many girls are willing to do sex trade for the financial stability of the family. They take sex trade as a job. "Our greatest difficulty is supporting our children's education, they said. Most of the time, we can't afford their school fees and then we have to go back to what we know to get quick money" (Murty 11). The author finally talks with devadasis and explains their suffering. The most important problem they were facing was their children's education. Their children do not know about their fathers. So they get money through sex trade. Through that money they provided their kids with

education. However, the author claims that they will cover their children's educational costs, but the author says that they must leave the sex trade now. That was the only demand of the author towards devadasis and they agreed. Actually they think about their children's future. The woman was in two minds, they wanted to stop this but while thinking about their children's education they stuck with this work. Money was their problem, so to get money they are deeply involved in sex trade. With the help of the author they get loans from local banks and they leave sex work.

The first chapter's conclusion tells that devadasis are happy. They called the author akka. They desired to provide a gift as a sign of their affection. Author gave light to the life of devadasis. They are double marginalized in society. Firstly they are marginalized in society as women. As women they are facing many problems. Secondly they are marginalized to uphold the inferior caste. Most of the devadasis are from dalit community. We know how society treats lower class people.

Engineering was clearly an all male domain and hence considered a taboo for girls in those days. There was no questioning the status quo, wherein girls were expected to be in the company of other female students in a medical or science college. The idea of a woman entering the engineering field had possibly never popped up in anyone's mind. (Murty 19)

Despite having equal performance, women may lack confidence in their talents due to the traditionally male dominated area of engineering. It's possible that gender stereotypes have the same role in why girls do not initially show an equal level of interest in engineering as boys. Society always thinks that engineering, medicine etc. are only for boys. They do not think about these types of jobs for girls. Society constructs a life for girls, they have to live like the institutions of the society. Their family does not educate girls. They force them to child marriage. They have no

choice, the decision was taken by the family and they have to obey their words. After marriage they have no opinion but to make a decision. Husbands do not respect them, their world is in the kitchen. But now the world is improving, so women are educated. Today women are doing every job equal to men. In the past, marriage was the final thing in girl's lives. But now education, job are important in women's lives. "If you go ahead and do this, no man from north Karnataka will marry you. Who wants to marry a woman engineer? I am so disappointed in you" (Murty 19). Through this statement we can see that her grandmother says that marriage was the ultimate goal within the life of girls. She is the favorite granddaughter but while hearing grandmother become hostile to her. Grandmother tells about her marriage. At that time no men liked educated girls, because they wanted a slave not a wife. So they never support educated girls. They prefer poor girls who are not educated. Engineering was only for men, not for women at that time. So she says that after completing engineering nobody came to marry her. Actually here the mentality of the grandmother should change, not the mentality of the girls. In the past women sacrificed many things for their family. But now women do not sacrifice their dream, education, job at any cost. "My child, you are wonderful at history. Why can't you do something in this field? You could be a great scholar one day. Don't chase a dry subject like engineering" (Murty 19). Here we can see the statement of her grandfather. He was supporting her for study. But he tells that engineering was dry. So he preferred her history subjects to study because she was good at history. "You are good in maths. Why don't you complete your post graduation in mathematics and get a job as a professor? You can easily work in a college after you get married instead of being a hard core engineer struggling to balance family and work" (Murty 19). Her mother is also supporting her to study. But she prefers to study post graduation in maths. She says that while

studying maths she has to become a professor. She was against studying engineering. She says that engineering was a struggling subject. A woman cannot manage this type of hard job after marriage. Becoming an engineer a woman can't balance both family and jobs after marriage. So her mother supports her to study post graduation and become a professor. But the words of the mother were wrong because she says that the job as an engineer was hard. Every job has its own difficulties. But her mother says that being a professor is an easy job.

I think that you should pursue medicine. You are excellent with people and languages. To tell you the truth, I don't know much about engineering. We don't have a single engineer in our family. It is a male dominated industry and you may not find another girl in your class. What if you have to spend four years without a real friend to talk to? Think about it. However, the decision is yours and I will support you. (Murty 19-20)

Her father was really supporting her. He always stands by his daughter. He is unaware about engineering but he supports her to do it. He says that in their family there is no single engineer woman, because engineering was the field only for men. So her father supports her decision. He says that taking decisions was her own freedom. "Many of my aunts also thought that no one would marry me if I chose engineering" (Murty 20). All the family members think about the marriage of the girls. Marriage plays a substantial part in the life of girls in the perspective of society. Engineering field was only for males not for females in their perspective. B. C Khanapura, the principal of B. V. B college of Engineering and Technology in Hubli, said the author's father,

I have a small request. Please ask her to wear a sari to college as it is a man's world out there and the sari will be an appropriate dress for the environment she will be in. She should not talk to the boys unnecessarily because that will

give rise to rumours and that's never good for a girl in our society. Also, tell her to avoid going to the college canteen and spending time there with the boys. (Murty 21)

Some strong beliefs and myths undermine her right to education, equality, liberty and participation in social culture. They also violate her right to be free from discrimination. Despite their seeming innocence the principal remarks are just as favored as those of an uneducated individual. “Finally, it was the lack of ladies toilets on campus that made me understand the difficulty faced by many women in India due to the insufficiency or sheer absence of toilets. Eventually, this would lead me to build more than 13,000 toilets in Karnataka alone” (Murty 22). The writer understands the problems of the girls facing in the campus due to lack of ladies toilets. Only a woman can understand the problems of women. So she found a solution for this and built more than 13,000 toilets in Karnataka. “A woman's place is in the kitchen or in medical science or as a professor, definitely not in an engineering college” (Murty 26). The statement shows how women are assigned to look after the home, raise children and work in technical fields like engineering where they are inferior to males. Women's lives are structured by society. They have to follow the guidelines. The women were only permitted to work in the kitchen, they were not permitted to perform any other jobs. The next comment was related to Hindu myth, about the marriage of Goddess Parvati and Lord Shiva. They say that Parvati wants to marry Shiva and they ask who is her Shiva? Through this comment it clearly indicates that women are meant to get married and fertilize.

Murty traveled to Kuwait and Dubai to present a few talks. She learned of several women's experiences at that time who had been mistreated by their staff and agents. Among them was Gracy, a well educated, intelligent, and attractive woman

from Kerala who secured employment as a tutor in a foreign nation. Her goal was to make sufficient funds to purchase a house and get married. When she confided in one of the teenage boys in her class that she was being mentally and physically abused, this continued for a year. He responded that his friend's lack of self control was not his fault. Nobody would desire her if she were as unattractive as the chef, Fathima. This response to a teacher that is both sincere and thought provoking highlights the amount to which women are objectified within our community and that students are more interested in a teacher's physical appearance than their identity. Two females who were sexually assaulted by their staff are also discovered. During their tearful sharing of their tales, Neena from Andhra Pradesh and Roja from Tamil Nadu. Their encounters were not as favorable. Both had been sexually harassed by their jobs, although having taken distinct routes. Their narratives demonstrates the violations of rights to life, privacy, liberty, freedom from abuse and brutal treatment ,freedom from slave trade, right to equal healthcare, freedom to enter and exit nation, right to wed and parental rights, speech freedom and knowledge, right to welfare, the privilege of resting and recreation and right to a living standard that is appropriate. The writer enjoys viewing films but only inspirational and religious films like Girija Kalyana, Rama Vanavasa and Sri Krishna Tulabharam were available to them. Watching love sequences in a film was considered inappropriate for adolescent girls. Just in preparation for their future marriage and partner, girls were kept pure, vaginal and religious. The writer also observed a lack of communication emerging between friends as a result of these social customs and prejudices towards girls, "All of us had secret crushes on the heroes but we felt awkward sharing this with each other" (Murty 107).

The writer spotted Jaya, a little beautiful girl whose father was a drunkard. Her narrative indicates societal views and discrimination towards the life of an Indian married woman. Marriage based crimes are not seen as offenses against society, thus a man can emotionally and physically abuse his wife and it looks natural in marital relationships. However, girls are expected to adapt to all of that. Jaya explained, “He would often get drunk and abuse my mother. She went through so much, and I had no idea what I could do to help her. I grew up scared of my father's temper and in an unhappy and tense atmosphere” (Murty 156). The writer responded, “I think I can understand your mother's concerns. Many in our society still judge women who are separated from their husbands and she's probably concerned about how that might impact her daughter's marriage prospects” (Murty 157). Actually, in the modern world, many women's only option is to enter the foundation of marriage. Furthermore, society judges a woman who lives alone in the absence of her spouse's companionship, placing all the fake blame on her. Based on Jaya's perspective, society and her spouse have violated her right to life, freedom for migration and freedom from abuse and cruel punishment.

The writer witnessed many situations of inequality based on gender, basic rights violations, societal judgment and social prejudice over her life. She was repeatedly victimized by all of these. The women and their future generations confirm that they have adapted into mainstream society, marking the last of the exploitative and oppressive generation and the beginning of a new one marked by unity, humanity and liberty. These devadasi women's and other sex workers' lives have undergone a significant change because of the author's teaching tool. By giving these women's children real education, the author's team was able to instill in them a positive outlook for their futures and a positive view of their children's success, which in turn acquired

these women's trust. This promoted the team led by author to begin their actual plan projects, one of which is education concerning devadasis. The bank concept, which these intelligent people came up with, transformed and saved 3000 devadasis, prostitutes, and their families from poverty.

Chapter IV

Gender and Caste discrimination in Amita Trasi's *The Color Of Our*

Sky and Sudha Murty's *Three Thousand Stitches*

More than 260 millions individuals worldwide are at risk of caste based poverty, prejudice and assault both mentally and physically. There are many countries affected by the caste system like India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh etc. In these countries patriarchal society still continues. They continue discrimination towards women and they reject basic rights also, because of the caste many of the people migrated to other countries. Dalit women faces many problems like discrimination, rape, torture etc. In India and Nepal Dalit women are forced to do trading in factories, sex industry etc. Actually girls and women are marginalized in the society for the purpose of caste. Dalit women are struggling to get their rights. Dalit women are the target of the dominant class men's, they are committing many crimes like rape, harassment etc, but they can't raise their voice against them, because they are powerful background. Why are women discriminated against in society through their caste? They want freedom, protection, justice etc. In the both novels, *The Color of Our Sky* and *Three Thousand Stitches* explore gender inequality, caste and problems faced by women as devadasis. In the novel *The Color of Our Sky* concentrates on the three main factors: gender, religion and caste. In this novel a small girl, Mukta was a victim of the devadasi system. Her mother was a devadasi. So all the females in that field forced her to become a devadasi. But her mother does not agree with their opinion. In the past, devadasis were the servants of God but now devadasis have become prostitutes regarding religion. Devadasis providing sex work for upper caste men. Basically devadasis are from lower caste. Their family forced them to become prostitutes and they got a good image through their dedication. Numerous girls

sacrifice their dreams and agree with the family's instructions. So lower caste girls, most probably dalits, think about their poverty and they become devadasis. They can earn more money through this. They are not mentally satisfied with this kind of job. In the story *Three Thousand Stitches* the author portrays caste and gender based oppression. So the author gives us a clear picture of the caste oppression, gender inequality etc. Both works are connected with the problems faced by women through caste, religion and gender. In the novel devadasi break the customs and they go for good jobs after the advice of the author. Here we can see women have the ability to make their own decisions. But in the novel *The Color Of Our Sky* Mukta does not take her own decision. Maybe her age was a problem but she can't accept being a devadasi.

Discrimination based on caste system happens when an individual is marginalized due to the social status related to their caste. People in these systems with this classification obtain their caste through historical tradition. Gender has an effect on all of us. In general, this form of inequality continues throughout history, everywhere it may be found for a very long period. Since ancient times, the nation has been patriarchal. Gender norms or regulations have been around since prehistoric times and clearly define what is acceptable behavior for boys, men, girls and women in our culture. Girls and women are frequently viewed as less valuable and socially inferior due to these stereotypes about gender. Patriarchy and male dominance which still exist today, have portrayed women as less valuable than males everywhere. The social, economic and cultural characteristics and opportunities that come with regard to males or females are referred to as gender. Being a man and woman in a country involves more than just having different physical and biological attributes. There are expectations placed on men and women differently about behavior, employment and appearance. Men and women's interactions in the home, at business, and in public also

reflect perceptions of the skills, features and conduct that are suitable for men and women. “Nobody looks for such children who have disappeared, madam. Look at all the children living in the slums there is no one who can take proper care of them, let alone worry how they are doing if they disappear” (Trasi 9). These are the words of the police officer. Tara came to search for Mukta after eleven years. Actually it was a long gap. But she wants to find Mukta. Mukta was a child of devadasi and they are from lower caste. Nobody shows any interest in the disappearance of lower caste people. All the people are aware about high class people. So the police officers also do not show interest in the missing case of Mukta. Individuals residing in slum areas don't get proper care. Nobody bothers about their life, because they are poor people. Mainly lower caste people live in slums and high caste people oppress them under the pretext of caste. Here we are able to observe the discrimination faced by the lower caste people. Here upper caste people avoid their basic rights. In Sudha Murty's *Three Thousand Stitches*, “However, as time went by, the temples were destroyed and the tradition of the devadasis fell into the wrong hands” (Murty 2). Here we can see how the devadasis become prostitutes. Actually devadasis were the devotees of God. But now women are treated for bad use. Devadasis are from lower caste itself. So the people are forced to become devadasis. Devadasis was like a prostitute in front of high class men. Dalits have historically experienced caste based discrimination and separation from cultural, civil, political and economic rights because they are the lower class in Indian society. This community women experience not just gender discrimination but also caste identification and the following financial hardship. Their caste and gender make them subject to sexual abuse and exploitation. Women from Dalits are exposed to miserable religious and social customs like devadasi which lead to the exploitation of them sexually for religious purposes.

“Sakubai used to say I was too fair for a lower caste, and it was clear I had inherited my looks and my green eyes from my father, who was an upper-caste Brahmin” (Trasi 14). Lower caste people are forced to become devadasis. High caste men come to see them for sexual needs. So in that relationship devadasis get a child. But their father does not accept them. Their mother never says anything about their father. So their children grow up without knowing their father, because their mother does not marry them. Their relationship was not legal, so they had to live without their father. That upper caste men do not think about the child. That was the situation of the devadasis. Actually in the time of prostitution they do not think about the caste. In that time there was no discrimination between high class and lower caste. After that time they think about the caste. Actually the men do not give any importance to the chastity of women. She has become aware of their suffering and intolerable adversity during the past year. Economically and socially lower castes continue to engage in the practice because, years of upper caste rule. Families who feel that committing the girl is essential to carrying out of their duties are heavily impacted by relevant caste and class features, because the entire devadasis community and the family participate in the commitment, the devadasis system is incredibly difficult to abolish, much like child marriage.

Every evening, shadows would creep up to our doorstep upper caste men often a different man every night and offer Amma half a bag of grain or some clothes. There were some who brought sweets or small vessels or a bag of coconuts. I wondered if any of these men ever noticed Amma the way she wanted them to. They were too drunk to notice that she had let her hair fall loose on her shoulders, that she wore a bracelet of jasmine flowers on her

wrist, or that the fragrance in our house was because of the lotus flowers she had spread on the floor. (Trasi 18)

Nowadays, a great majority of devadasis are from lower socioeconomic categories. Some families think that giving away their daughters will improve their social standing and allow them to move up the demanding caste system. Another major factor supporting the devadasi system that is still in use is patriarchy. Similarly, when patriarchy becomes firmly established in a family's culture, it may have a big effect especially on women who want to stand up for what's right, follow their ambitions, make their own money, study what they want to study or have a say in who they marry. When women act in this way they risk being ridiculed, humiliated and in severe situations even beaten. Here Mukta does not know anything, but she hates evenings. Upper caste men came to their house with lots of things. Actually she wants to sleep with her amma, but in the evenings upper caste men come and they go in the morning. Upper caste men discriminated against women sexually. Women have many reasons to come to these fields, it may be because of poverty, lack of awareness, caste discrimination, religion etc. In the novel *Three Thousand Stitches* it is visible to us that cruelty towards poor maids. Upper caste people treated lower caste people like slaves. High class people appointed lower caste women as their servants. Actually they are trapped by some people. Many of the women came to get good jobs. But they are helpless while going to another country.

I can't work today, I said tearfully. I am in pain and there's a constant throbbing in my head. Nonchalantly, she heated up a spoon on the kitchen fire, caught my hand and pressed the hot spoon on my wrist. I screamed and she shushed me. Don't scream. Nobody will come to help you. You are a servant

and must behave like one. Go and start working now, she said, her volume matching mine. (Murty 95)

Many people, especially those in high positions, have a tendency to utilize helpers and slaves to complete household work. These wealthy people frequently lack the skills necessary to complete numerous tasks on their own, but they are adept at getting their subordinates to complete them. A portion of these people interact improperly with the servants. When someone is helping them, they will discover several errors in their work. It gets really challenging for the assistants to please this group of people. Servants also face many problems. Firstly the owners treated them like their own family members. After some days their mood changes. They treated them like animals. They do not give any time to rest. We can see another situation in the appellation of caste itself. “One day, a friend of the boys came to her room and tried to forcefully kiss her. Due to her presence of mind, she managed to push him out of the room with all her might and didn't mention it to anyone” (Murty 99). This was the experience of Gracy, a teacher. She was an orphan, she grew up in a government house. In addition, she was a lower caste woman. So her students are from a high caste. So they treated her as a slave, because of her caste itself. Her student friend misbehaved with her. This was a bad experience of her life by the boys. It is their belief that she was not a teacher. They make jokes with those from lower castes all the time. The bond between Sanjiv and Mukta is shown in the book *The Color Of Our Sky* “Your father is a rich man, and that is why I allow you here. I know that even if you don't pay, he will pay to keep your name from appearing in the papers. Imagine what people would say if they knew a reputed businessman's son was rolling in this dirt” (Trasi 254). Actually high caste people don't interested relationship with lower caste people. However they don't think about the caste. Through this they are

marginalized in society. Sanjiv was the son of a businessman. So, while knowing the relationship his father does not accept it because he focuses on the alinence high caste people with money. They do not consider the value of their love, they only look at social status. The oppression of people in lower castes by those of the upper caste, who also treat some members of a particular class much worse than others because of other general discriminating behaviors, increases the outdated caste system, which aims to discriminate against people based only on their class within the system.

Inequality in gender leads to unequal chances in India, although it affects people of both sexes, girls are negatively impacted. In the world girls are more likely than boys to survive childbirth, to develop normally and to attend school. However, the only significant nation where the ratio of female to male mortality is higher in India. Also girls are more likely to leave the school early. In the novels *The Color Of Our Sky* and *Three Thousand Stitches* we can see many incidents of gender discrimination. "I will tell you, what your Amma doesn't want to tell you. You see, we are one of many women whose great grandmothers had taken a vow to dedicate all daughters born in this family to Goddess Yellamma. After your Amma's dedication ceremony, the men began visiting" (Trasi 20). Some women such as those who are perceived to have violated religious, cultural and social norms. The women who are single and living alone or members of a scheduled caste or tribe may be particularly vulnerable to harassment or significant violence. Still it is the individual's responsibility to prove this. Every case needs to be evaluated based on its unique set of facts. Here the dedication was only for girls. Small girls also was their victims. In the novel *Three Thousand Stitches* we can see another incident to prove gender discrimination. "Engineering was clearly an all male domain and hence considered a taboo for girls in those days. There was no questioning the status quo, wherein girls

were expected to be in the company of other female students in a medical or science college” (Murty 19). In that time the patriarchal society built some rules to discriminate against women. Engineering was only for male members, in that world there is no space for women. Actually it was just the rule of the society. So, those who are in the family obey the rules and regulations of the society. There is no partiality among men and women in the case of study. But society continues this myth. Male are always superior, women have to obey them. This is not practical now, women are doing better jobs than men in the world. “What tradition? What was decided? That we were going to sleep with men in the divine name, that we are servants of God but the wife of the entire village?” (Trasi 21). Women are not a thing to satisfy men. Each has their own autonomy. Men treated women like their servants to do all household work. Actually women are mothers, wives, daughters etc. They do not consider the feelings of women, they are ill-treated in the house. Marriage itself was a trap for women. Here we can see that a woman was the wife of entire villagers, which means it was similar to prostitution. Nobody treated women in a good way. They are always marginalized in society. Before marriage a girl must follow the guidelines of the father, the family does not ask their opinion in dress, food, course to study and marriage etc, after marriage she must obey the rules of husband and whole male members in the family. Throughout her life she must follow the rules of male dominance. “A woman's place is in the kitchen” (Murty 26). Here we are able to see that the author was going to study engineering. She received lots of feedback from her classmates, which is actually a belief of every male student in the class. They believe women are incapable of learning engineering. That was a field restricted to men. Good studies and employment were for males, while the kitchen was the place for women. “You are an intelligent woman to give birth to a girl, and she's a beautiful,

fair one too. Only people in our community realize how important a girl child is, to carry our tradition forward to receive the blessings of the Goddess. You cannot escape your fate by hiding your daughter” (Trasi 28). Actually Mukta’s mother was not willing to dedicate Mukta. In that time, the baby was a girl the devadasi women treated that was a blessing, it was a boy they cannot get money in the young age itself. They get profit only through girls. They sale beautiful, virgin girls for money. Through this they get more money, that was the reason behind their happiness hearing the baby was a beautiful girl. “She will be the only girl in college. It is going to be difficult for her. First, we don't have a ladies toilet on campus. We don't have a ladies room for her to relax either. Second, our boys are young with raging hormones and I am sure that they will trouble her” (Murty 21). The society dominated by men does not believe that a girl should pursue a career in engineering. She was the sole female who arrived with self assurance. Perhaps a lot of girls aspire to be engineers, but their families do not encourage them to do so. Their family follows patriarchal social norms. However, the author had numerous difficulties before going into engineering. Still, her father is on her side. She encounters numerous issues with boys when she first starts college, but she never bothers with them.

I think our life is like the sky, Amma sighed, as she still looked at the sky. Sometimes, Mukta...when you look at the sky it will be dark. You will not know who to rely on. You will wonder if anyone will be able to get you out of that darkness. But believe me, someday our sky will be bright again. And it will look and smell full of hope. I don't want you to forget that. I want you to hope, not give up. (Trasi 49)

Here we can compare life with the sky. We can see the sky as bright and dark. While in the morning the sky is bright. In the night sky is dark, actually dark is the symbol of

death, sorrow etc. But while seeing the moon and star. Bright sky symbolizes happiness, goodness, etc. In the daytime we observe the sun. But majority of the individuals like night, because in the sky we can see stars and the moon. So they say that their problems also have an end. Life will change like the sky. Sometimes it may be light and dark. Life is replete with happiness and sorrow. Nothing will remain the same. So her mother gave hope to Mukta. One day the gender discrimination and other problems faced by women will come to an end. All people in the world get equality. In the novel *Three Thousand Stitches* the author breaks the concept of the patriarchal society with her hard work. "I was proud that I was beating all the boys at their own game as I kept bagging the first rank in the university" (Murty 28). She proves that women are capable for studying engineering. Actually her success was the happiness and prayers of all women. She was an inspiration for all women to study engineering. Her success was the failure of male dominated society. She gave a good reply to the patriarchal society through her success. Yes, this was the correct reply for society. Through this incident many girls will come and study engineering without hearing the phrases used by the society.

If it's a boy, he can join in my business, Arun Sahib kept telling me. I knew the fate of children born to mothers such as us. At the most the boys would join him as a pimp, bringing other girls into this trade, forgetting that his mother was once in this dirt. I never asked him what he would do if the baby was a girl. (Trasi 286)

Here we can see how they think the child is a boy. He didn't say whether it was a girl child. He wants a baby boy. But she does not bother about gender. Always all businesses want a baby boy, because the baby is a boy, he can join in his father's business. So most of the businessmen like boys as their children. They don't prefer

girls, they believe that girls have no capability to look after the business. One day this kind of discrimination come to an end. We have developed a systematic approach to improving and strengthening women's political, social and economic standing. We must concentrate primarily on five challenges like provide education equally for men and women, give more opportunities for women, put an end to sexual abuse and exploitation against women, put an end to child marriage and gave information about their basic rights as Indian women. By concentrating on these five key areas, we may work for equality for genders and caste discrimination in our society.

Chapter V

Conclusion

The books *The Color Of Our Sky* by Amita Trasi and *Three Thousand Stitches* by Sudha Murty is a simple and beautiful story about the problems faced by women in the name of caste, gender etc. Caste and gender based discrimination still exists in India. Problems are still continuing day to day. The books deal with misunderstandings made in society because of religious beliefs, unfairness against women, and the so-called duties of women. *Three Thousand Stitches* novel raises voice for women's education and mental health. The books are the journey of various life experiences of betrayal, customs and beliefs, mental breakdown and independent women. Amita Trasi and Sudha Murty write with simple style and powerful meanings that captures the reader's interest and makes this book highly successful. The main theory focused in the project is about Dalit feminism. Dalit feminists continue to fight for Dalit women's equality with connection to caste, gender and additional issues. They established organizations, gave speeches in meetings, and supported the election of other Dalit women to positions of authority. Poverty is also common in Dalit women and in large numbers are illiterate. Men from various Dalit communities also abuse Dalit women and other men abuse them on the foundation of caste. Many people speak up for women's rights, job opportunities, educational rights, marriage, equal wages and many more. They also work for the defense of women from abuse, violence, slavery, and sexual exploitation. Through caste, women face many problems.

Both books with the influence of Dalit feminism talk about the nature of gender roles played by men and women in the society, it questions the gender discrimination and life experiences of women in the world. In the book *The Color Of*

Our Sky Amita Trasi shows how Mukta's life changes after becoming a devadasi. She is a lower caste woman, so she was forced to become a prostitute in the name of religion. In her family, all women are devadasi. Through this work Amita Trasi gave a clear picture of life. Mukta faces many problems in her life because of her caste. Through the caste many of the people are discriminated against. Society judges people in accordance with caste. Society built so many rules for women not for men. Men are always superior. Women are like their slaves. All terms and conditions of the society will be obeyed by women. Dalit women are forcefully entered into the devadasi system. In the past, devadasis were the Servants of God but now it was a kind of prostitution. High caste people think that education was only for rich people. Lower caste people have to become prostitutes for religious sake. High caste people do not give any opportunities to lower caste people. Caste based crimes like sexual harassment, rape, murders etc. Many of the people are murdered through caste. Upper caste people killed many lower caste people. Many of the girls are the victims of gang rape by upper caste people. Laws are in their control, so victims and their families do not get justice. Sexual abuse of ladies and kids is a social evil they are still present in the society. Lower caste women was the victims of the rapes, because they have no power. They are marginalized in society by gender and caste. Inequality is also a social evil. In many families, male children get more priority than girl children. In a family father or any male dominance is the superior. So in many families we can see inequality. So this inequality reflects in society also.

The main aim of Dalit feminism is equality for Dalit females predicated on caste, gender etc. Many people have raised their voice for Dalits. The main problems faced by the Dalits was caste discrimination and poverty. Why are Dalits marginalized in society? The main reason is caste discrimination itself. High caste people consider

Dalit people as untouchables. In the work *The Color Of Our Sky* Mukta's father is a high caste person. But he did not accept Mukta as his daughter because the father and mother relationship was not legal, it's illegal. She wanted the care and love of her father but faith was an evil within the lifetime of Mukta. It is an aspiring novel that tells about many things like the devadasi system, life in brothels, child smuggling, Mumbai terror attacks, AIDS, unstable families etc. The novel tells about the pair of girls emotional voyage, one is going through hardships to endure slave trade, while the other is trying to save her. The book reflects the cruel reality of the modern world. Amita Trasi tries to highlight the tragedies of devadasi tradition and the caste system in India and portrays the friendship of two girls from different caste systems. Mukta faces many problems at a young age, but she accepts her problems and lives with hope. She suffers the bad treatment and slavery by the prostitution. In their young age, they forced them into cruel lives and killed them if they tried to escape from this culture. The horrible thing is young females are compelled to sex trade because of their caste. The novel did not have a happy ending but it was thought provoking. Many people's eyes open after reading the novel and they get awareness of the situations that still exist in the world.

The work *Three Thousand Stitches* by Sudha Murty was an inspiring novel. In chapter one of the book the author helps the group of devadasis to leave their profession. The author wants to pursue a career in engineering but her family does not support her, because the engineering field was only for male members. But she does not bother about anything. She studied engineering and got higher marks also. The novel starts with women empowerment and ends with self empowerment. The author helps many women to obtain employment. Women must be independent in society, because the world is changing. Every woman in the world must have education and a

job. The author's family are orthodox, because of that she struggles a lot to study engineering. The family does not allow girls to watch romantic movies. They always support boys in the family. Here we can see gender discrimination. They believed that girls do not want education because they have to marry a man. So she must know the household work that is important in girl's' lives. Right to education was only for male dominance. Their right was to do jobs with a high salary. Why do people discriminate against women based on their gender? Every person has equality rights, but the patriarchal society still continues to blame women. Women face inequality in family, workplace etc. They do not get equal payments after doing the work. Men get correct money but women get less money. Here we can see gender discrimination. In the novel, the author fights for equality and she gives many opportunities to poor women. And help their children to get an education. Every section in the book is relaxing, fascinating and inspiring stories. It shows that the ordinary things of dedication and kindness make the greatest effects on other people's lives. Every chapter provides a unique story to share and an important idea to be understood.

The most delightful part about this book is that every chapter concludes with a lesson to be studied. It reveals her ability to organize people and develop plans to overcome barriers in life. Devadasi system and caste based discrimination was the social evil in the society. Through the caste small girls are dedicated to temples, actually it was a part of their religion. But they misuse the girls, they turn out to be prostitutes after the dedication. The author raises her voice against social evil. She helps the devadasis and gives opportunities for good jobs. She is a kind hearted person and she suffered many times to help the devadasis. Many of the devadasis have children and they are not educated. So devadasi women want to educate them but they have no money. But the author knows everything about them and she helps to educate

them. The author also faces inequality regarding gender. It still exists in the world by gender. The girls and women face this problem in different ways. India is a highly patriarchal society. A major factor in the basic inequality between men and women in the society is the role of patriarchy. Society thinks that women have no capacity to study or do a job since they were viewed as a component of household work. Dalit feminism argues that dalit women want their right to equality in every aspect the same as men. Dalits are marginalized in the society and they do not get any opportunities. Women are marginalized in two ways, firstly they are marginalized as women and secondly they are discriminated against by reason of their caste. Higher caste people avoid them and treat them like slaves. Many Dalit people suffer because of poverty. They do not get proper wages in order to look after their family. They work like slaves under high caste people. But they do not have proper wages. Women also work hard to get financial support for their family but high caste people misbehave towards them.

Women are a creature who have been neglected, mistreated, abused and raped since countless years. Dalit feminism as a theoretical approach focuses on the situations of women of Dalits in order to analyze patriarchy and the relationship regarding gender and caste. The majority women's movement completely neglected the caste structure and focused entirely on the gender roles in their version of oppression that exist. In India, women are experiencing many problems because of their caste. All women were treated similarly and equally exploited. Women's exploitation depended upon their identity, culture, power etc. Lower caste people are exploited more in our world. Actually they are afraid to raise their voice for their basic rights. But many activists came to help them. Many women writers raise their voice against discrimination due to race and sexuality in their writings. After reading

their writings many people get awareness about the problems faced by Dalits. Dalits are uneducated and poor people, so higher caste people use them as slaves. Dalit women are abused by higher caste people, but they remain with silence against their misbehavior. Lower caste people consider high caste people as their God and they believe them. But they consider them as their servants only. Throughout the globe, the rights are equal to all people. There are no separate rules for high caste and lower caste people. Readers are influenced to practice simplicity, charity, and understanding in their own life by Sudha Murty. She provides useful life lessons through the novel. The work *Three Thousand Stitches* is an inspirational read that points out the several social crises affecting India. She uses simple language, easy to read. The notable speciality was the story was relatable to common people's life.

The novels *The Color Of Our Sky* and *Three Thousand Stitches* explains about devadasi system and gender inequality. The devadasi women's are from lower caste especially Dalits. The society was under the patriarchal rules. They do not consider women as a human being. They believe that women was only for men's needs and household works. Their thoughts are really wrong, because all women have their freedom. In addition to frequently experiencing limited freedom to be limited to home, women's responsibilities are not valued socially. In regarding to patriarchy, women are considered as inferior to men and struggle with different kinds of problems like discrimination, abuse, rape, domestic violence etc. These types of discrimination have a negative impact on women's well being. Every society with gender stereotypes has these control systems. Dalit women are marginalized in the society. High caste people are always superior to others. Gender inequality and caste based discrimination still exists in India. High caste people do not value lower caste people. In the past, caste based discrimination was more. Caste was most important in

that time. Society values people on the foundation of caste. They consider lower caste people as their workers. They lack proper wages after their work. We know that many dalit men and women's murdered through upper caste people's cruelty. Dalit women was raped by high caste men. So through the caste Dalit men and women equally face problems.

The novel *The Color Of Our Sky* by Amita Trasi creates awareness about sexual abuse, child abuse, freedom, hope, caste discrimination, friendship and human relationship. Mukta's problems occur because of her caste itself. She was a lower caste girl and she was forced to become devadasi. After that she adjusted with her culture, and she lived with hope. She believes that one day her problems will end. This book focused on the darker side and the out break of sexual abuse. The novel deals with historical and current social issues. We can't imagine child prostitution. Actually we are afraid of hearing these types of cultures. The novel tells about two different problems, the caste hierarchy and prostitution. Today's world totally changed, child prostitution came to an end. But children are badly treated. They faces problems like abuse, rape etc. Small children are their aim. There is no protection for girl child and women. While reading newspaper we can see a news of rape. Men do not bother about the laws. Our laws are not active. We want strict laws in India. Many of the countries have strict laws. In this novel Mukta was afraid to raise her voice against their culture. But in the work *Three Thousand Stitches* devadasis are not afraid to put an end to their cultures. Actually devadasis are servants of god, not the servants of whole men in the society. Devadasi women will satisfy all men, it is a kind of prostitution. They are not aware of AIDS. But the author helps them and gives them good opportunities to live. She helps 3000 devadasis from brothels. The Devadasi system does not exist in India. Actually it was a cruel thing. The patriarchal society

abuses the lower caste girls through their caste. The girls are sacrificing their dreams and becoming devadasis.

Dalit movement came to help Dalit people in India. Actually they are not educated and live in poverty. Through this movement Dalit people can improve their financial, conversational and social conditions. After starting the movement upper caste people did not oppress and discriminate against Dalit people. This movement provides education, jobs etc for them. So their problems have come to an end. Now Dalits facing a problem is economic exploitation. All other problems like oppression and exploitation end through the movement. Many problems occur through their caste. The society identified people by their caste in the old days. Now the world changes, all the people are equal. Nobody bothers about their caste. But lower caste people get priority in school, colleges etc. In the old days, high caste people were given priority. Lower caste people do not get proper education. Today lower caste people have priorities. Everyone is now looking at character, behavior etc. They do not ask anybody about their caste. Gender inequality exists in India. But now it is better than the old days. Women have their own choices for education, marriage, jobs etc. Through education everybody supports gender equality. But many of the orthodox families still follow patriarchal society rules. Girls are doing jobs as engineers, doctors, lawyers etc. Only women can do double roles in home and workplace. Women can manage everything in the world. Dalit women also get good opportunities to earn. They are independent women now. They get awareness about their basic rights. Many of the movements help Dalit women. They are happy and they enjoy their work.

Through the tale *Three Thousand Stitches* Sudha Murty conveys the message to the readers that both men and women should be equal in society. All the people in

the world are also equal. There is no separation between caste and gender. The rules and regulations are also equal for all. Sudha Murty was an inspiration for all because her family did not support her to study engineering, but she only focused on her dream and spoke for her basic rights. Finally she finished engineering with a high mark. She also faces gender inequality in her family, and finally she becomes an independent famous woman. She faced many problems in her life but she reached her destination. The work *The Color Of Our Sky* by Amita Trasi conveys the message about the social issues like child trafficking, sex trade, caste discrimination etc. The novel opens the eyes of the readers. After reading the book the people know about the historical problems faced by women. Prostitution was banned in India. Actually it was illegal activity. Caste discrimination and gender inequality came to an end. Every woman has their own freedom and dreams. They must be independent in today's world. Do not judge anybody through their caste. Both works are clear critiques of Dalit feminism.

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