

Image of Women in the short-story of Uttara Bwiswmuthiary

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Abstract:

This research paper provides an analysis and discussion in the short-story of Uttara Bwiswmuthiary. She is a writer of Bodo literature. Women have the same rights as men, but they are not given the status as a primary in the society as well as the family. For which women are suffering mentally and physically in their lives and struggle due to conflict. They have to fight against men and the society for their rights. This paper attempts to highlight the image of women reflected in the short story of the Bwiswmuthiary. It is observed that she is not behind in focusing on women in her stories. Like other writers, she too has focused on women's suffering and struggle. She has focused on the life of a widow, how a widow has fought for her rights with society, and is prey to men. Her story has seen some questions arising in the minds of women.

Keyword: women right, women struggle, traditional, sacrifice, identity

Date of Submission: 01-06-2021

Date of Acceptance: 14-06-2021

I. INTRODUCTION:

Uttara Bwiswmuthiary is a female writer of Bodo literature. She has contributed so far three short-story books to Bodo literature, namely 'Raikhos Fisa', 'OnthØb' and 'Hawasi'. Her stories focus on the reality of society's problems of past and present, traditional life, complex life etc. As a female writer she does not hold back from highlighting the problems of women, along with other problems. She has tried to focus on the pain and sufferings of women.

II. AIMS AND OBJECTIVE:

The main aim and objective of this paper is to study the image of women in story of Uttara, how she has focused on the pain, suffering and struggle of women.

III. METHODOLOGY:

This is a descriptive study on the short story of the Uttara Bwiswmuthiary. In this paper, three short stories have been selected for study - 'Khwlwbwr', 'Adunggari' and 'Alasi'. Where the author has clearly highlighted the pains and problems of women. For the study of the proposal topic, the data has been collected from primary sources. In this research paper some books and journals related to this study have been resorted to.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

In the history of India or in a male dominated society, we have seen men persecuting women, Draupadi and Sita are its symbols. Where women are troubled and victimized in their lives, even women's rights were also limited. A widow is treated badly and is not given the same rights as other women in most parts of the society. It is seen that the widow can lose the inheritance of her husband's property if she has no children, or sons. In some societies, if a widow has daughter, and does not have a son, then the succession of her husband's property is not given to her, which causes the widow to suffer in her life.

In the story 'Khwlwbwr', Uttara Bwiswmuthiary focuses the pain, suffering, struggle, and rights of a widow and how she is treated in a society. 'Gaide' is the main character of this story, who has struggled for rights in her life, and is treated badly by her husband's brother and the society. 'Gaide' is a widow who is a mother of two daughters and pregnant at the time of her husband's death. When she wants to form a separate family from the joint family, she requests the property of her deceased husband. But her husband's brother refuses to give it to her. He tells Gaide that she has no right over her husband's property because she is a woman and has no son. Feeling helpless, Gaide calls the people of the village and holds a meeting. In the meeting the people decides that if the child she's pregnant with turns out to be a boy, then the property of her deceased husband will be inherited by him. As time passes by, Gaide gives birth to a baby boy and he inherits the property of his deceased father for which 'Gaide' had to fight for with her brother-in-law. It is a male dominated

society where a woman and her daughters have limited rights over their father's property, and only the son gets priority.

'Gaide' also suffers a lot as a widow in the society. Many people have a prejudice that a widow has physical relationship with other men, that they secretly invite men to have sex or someone tries to maintain a relationship with a widow. When 'Gaide' opens a tea and 'Phitha' (rice cake) stall to earn a living, many people come to the stall for some tea and 'Phitha'. Other women and men get jealous of her when she receives many customers at her stall. According to them, Gaide calls the customers in the name of tea and phitha, but secretly have physical relation with them, therefore the customers cannot stay without visiting her stall. Gaide knows that they envy her by seeing the customers gather at her stall. But she never cares about their opinion, their voices and continued her business.

It has been observed that in many area widows are victims of sexual harassment. In this story the author tries to show Gaide as a victim of sexual harassment. When she was in a joint family, her husband's brother cast a bad eye on her body, but Gaide knew nothing about it. When she breastfeeds her son, the husband's brother visits her and stares at her body. He even gives signal to Gaide while she never liked his behaviour. Eventually his real character comes to light one day. When all the family members leave for work, he quietly goes to Gaide's room and closes the door while Gaide is sleeping in the room. He touches her hair, massages her body, and asks her for relation of body. She is shocked and wakes up to see her husband's brother in the room. She is angry with his actions and says that this behaviour will be told to all the members of the house and rush out of the room. This is a picture where a widow is harassed by her husband's brother. Similarly in many areas widows are harassed by a family member or men in general.

In the short story 'Adunggari', Bwisumatary focuses on some questions that are arising in woman's mind. In male dominated society, some specific labels and sentences are used only on women. There are similar words for men to used on, but they are hardly used. Words which are traditionally used only for women and are becoming a hindrance in a woman's life. It is the term 'Adunggari', which is a label used only for women to describe when a woman is living unmarried or past the age of marriage. It is used in Bodo communities living in Assam, India. The author has stated that in this society an 'adunggari' has to face the problem of getting married. No young or unmarried person proposes to marry them. The proposal may come from 'Balonda' (a widowed man) or is already a father of one or two children. Society also judges them. As a female writer she poses a question through the story that if a man has passed the age of marriage or lives without marrying, why is no specific label or sentences are used for him? Why is it only for women? This shows that in the male dominated society they try to dominate the women and some rules are made to contradict the women.

'Poornima' is the main character of this short story. The character of the Poornima depicts various problems of women; Which is based on the true events of the society. In this short story, she presented the story of rural area. Poornima is a beautiful girl and specializes in various works of rural areas but cannot study more due to financial problem. She has to leave after passing the eighth standard. She becomes a servant at Rakheb's house. Rakheb has a son named Sunil. Purnima and Sunil fall in love with each other but are unable to confess to each other. When Sunil's mother comes to know about the antics of both, She forces Sunil to marry another woman. Sunil's mother is impressed by the work and activity of Purnima, but she neglects Poornima for her a poor family background. There were many more offers of marriage in Poornima's life but she did not marry anyone. When she lives without getting married to anyone, the society labels her as 'adunggari'. They make fun of her for living as a spinster.

'Alasi' (guest) is another story of Bwiswmuthiary in which she focuses on the struggle of women. Women have an important role in the family. A housewife does all the household work or has to do. They have to cook (breakfast, lunch and dinner), prepare tiffin, wash clothes (for her children and husband), clean the house and wash etc. The wife has to do the housework even after job. They are restless in their lives.

'Bwhwithi' is the main character of this story, who plays the role of a skilled housewife in the management of the house while working as a teacher in a school. Her husband also works in a bank. Sometimes office work has to be done at home too, so they are also busy. They have two children, a son and a daughter. There is no servant in their house, so the responsibility of managing the house falls on Bwhwithi. She does all the household work before going to school and after coming from school. Before going to school, she prepares tea for everyone, cleans the house, prepare breakfast and tiffin for the children and the husband, ready the books and school bags for the children, and husband's office files etc. After sending everyone out, she goes to her job. When she returns home from her job, she again does household chores, such as making tea, cleaning, making dinner, washing the dress of children and her clothes, etc. Therefore, she considers herself the secretary of the house. She sometimes gets angry at herself and sometimes at her husband.

If a guest comes to her house, she does not have time to discuss with them, express good and bad feelings. When the guest stays for a day or two, all the work of the kitchen has to be done by Bwhwithi. At night, meat, alcohol, etc. have to be arranged for them before eating food. Then she becomes angrier feeling like a servant of the house. Sometime she thinks in her mind, 'where will women get better luck like men? After coming from office men can enjoy the rest at home.' The authors focus on this, in which women are more

responsible and restless than men. Even when women has a job she also plays the role of housewife in managing the house.

In the story 'Alasi', the author has also drawn attention to the system of 'dowry'. The 'dowry' system is creating more obstacles in the lives of the girl and poor family. It is seen that a lot of marriage proposals are broken because of 'dowry' or lack thereof. If the marriage proposal breaks because of lack of 'dowry', the bride is forced to feel embarrassed for life. Even after marriage, if the bride's family does not give dowry, the groom's family harasses the bride. This has been imparted through the life of the 'Khonbai', Who is the second female character in this story and belongs to a poor family. She was living as a maid in 'Bwhwithi' house. She is a young girl and marriage proposal come for the first time in her life. The one who proposes to her, he also works in someone else's house. She accepts the marriage proposal, but there is a problem that twenty thousand rupees are demanded from the groom's family. Khonbai's family is poor so her family cannot fulfil the demand. Khonbai thinks, if the family is given twenty thousand rupees in the name of marriage, her family would be poorer than the present status. Therefore, Khonbai breaks off the marriage for her family. This is a very common problem in the society. The dowry practice affects a girl's life, especially in a poor family. The society that the author belong to traditionally did not have a dowry system, but gradually changed over time from other people's influence.

V. CONCLUSION:

This paper analyses the image of the women in the short story of Uttara Bwiswmuthiary. The researcher has focused on women's pain, struggle, suffering and so on, which is reflected in the story of Uttara Bwiswmuthiary. It is observed that her stories focus on the suffering and struggle of a widow, a widow has fought for her rights against her husband's brother and the society. A woman struggles in her life, even by doing a job, they keep themselves tied to household chores. Dowry is a major problem in the case of marriage. For dowry, people's marriage breaks down, and many women live on their own without marriage; which is a matter of thinking for the society. It has been observed that generally women are suffering and struggling because of traditional belief system in a male dominated society.

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Haina Brahma, et. al. "Conflict Resolution: Image of Women in the short-story of Uttara Bwiswmuthiary." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 26(06), 2021, pp. 01-03.