

## Sufferings of women in P. Sivakami's *The Taming of Women*

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### Abstract

The tolerance of women in society is inexpressible. P. Sivakami has adopted writing as the medium of expression. Her writing proved to be a way of acquiring empathy worldwide. Women have undergone torture and humiliation throughout their life right from childhood. Sexual and verbal abuses are rampant, and explaining the sufferings of women is very challenging. Women take oppression silently. The reason is the unawareness of women about their rights. The present article reflects the trials and tribulations of the Dalit women in the patriarchal society. Besides, it shows the harsh realities prevailing in Indian society in which the women have been caught in the clutches of men and have become victims and accepted their unchangeable fate. In *The Taming of Women*, Sivakami portrays the real sufferings of women at the hands of men in the marginalised community.

**Keywords:** oppression, society, trauma, family, gender, sexploitation.

### Introduction

*The Taming of Women* (2012) is the second novel of P. Sivakami in Tamil language. It is translated by Pritham. K. Chakravarthy from Tamil into English. P. Sivakami's *The Taming of women* portrays the war between men and women in contemporary society. This novel is based on how women struggle to safeguard their honour and how they are oppressed by the men. She categorically explains about the ages and generations of women who are forcefully made to undergo physical assault, sexual exploitation, gender discrimination and incestuous violence. She also depicts how the beautiful woman is forced to end her colourful life due to unbearable torture. It is very true to say that empowered woman is a threat to male domain, male power and male authority. The novel portrays the discrimination between men and women in which women have to pass through manifold trials and tribulations in course of their lives in a small village. The story tells about the wretched life of Anandhayi who is married to a womanizer, Periyannan.

Periyannan who is a contractor, is not content with the wealth that his farms bring him. He has an insatiable desire for power that money can only bring him. Besides, he has also an appetite for women in terms of physical needs.

## Major Thrust

Sivakami's novels portray the rustic story of women who suffer at the hands of men who strongly believe in and stand for patriarchy. The conflicts and struggles are between tenacious women and tyrannical men in the contemporary society. *The Taming of Women*, for the most part, portrays the discrimination between men and women in a small village. This is the story of hard-working Anandhayi, married to a womaniser, Periyannan, and their marital travails. But as with all good writing, it is not just that. There is struggle for power not only amidst genders, but generations and families within the village as well. Even peripheral characters like Anandhayi's mother-in-law, Chinnasami, and Lakshmi are infused with originality. In *The Taming of Women*, Anandhayi is seen getting over the oppression using her body as a tool. The opening chapter of the novel *The Taming of Women* is introduced with a bang. Periyannan's wife Anandhayi was in labour while he had taken another woman to sleep with him upstairs, brought to him by the midwife with whom too, Periyannan often had physical connection. The male domination in a woman's life is brought out clearly in this novel. Anandhayi was always suffering at the hands of her husband Periyannan. Periyannan used to dominate and subjugate her and she used to listen and bear the abuses hurled on her. But gradually she started to raise her voice whenever poked. Periyannan used to stay outside the house for weeks claiming that he is busy with the business and other stuff. Everyone knew that he is having an illicit affair with Lakshmi so does Anandhayi as well but she never used to protest against the same. But she decided to bring a complete full stop of the ordeal when Periyannan started accusing her of having an illicit relationship in his absence. Anandhayi didn't take this blame in her stride and hit back at Periyannan. *Taming of Women* by P. Sivakami unleashes the horrific condition of Anandhayi who suffers at the hand of her husband Periyannan. There are many incidents in the texts which informs us about the trauma and pain of Anandhayi. The opening chapter of the novel depicts the pathetic condition of female protagonist Anandhayi. While Anandhayi was pregnant Periyannan had taken another woman to sleep with him into his room. This shows the inhuman attitude towards women by men in their house. Periyannan pushed Anandhayi not

taking care of her condition.

*“Periyannan came down and pushed aside Anandhayi not taking care of her pathetic condition. He was blind folded due to his lust towards another woman Lakshmi” (TTW. ch.4)*

## **Conclusion**

Women in the Post Colonial era are far more career-oriented and educated than in the previous few decades. Women have understood their true worth and have outdone many men in the same. The opportunities are now equally available to all. P. Sivakami is a thriving example of the same. Her bold writing and imaging have acquired the topmost position in the literary genre. Through the story of Anandhayi's protests, Sivakami can formulate the poignant tale of a woman's struggle to battle and survive in a patriarchal society and culture that indicates that a stimulated and resistant speech optimistically substitutes silence and repression. The novel thus serve as an icebreaker from the beginning to the end and draw attention to the violent realities along with a message that a democratic approach to remove these oppressive agendas from the social fabric is necessary. Sivakami deconstructs women as survivors of casteism and reconstructs them as a community of patriarchs.

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