A Study of Psychological Resistance to Familial Authority and Social Violence in Sudha Murthy's *Mahashweta*

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ABSTRACT

Sudha Murthy's *Mahashweta* is a feminist novel that represents the lived experiences of a woman, whose identity is shaped by social stigma and patriarchal control in the family, through subtle forms of violence. Violence in the novel is represented through psychological illness, rather than physical harm. Pierre Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence demonstrates how such violence is internalised, leading the oppressed to think that their suffering is natural in a patriarchal society. Anupama's initial acceptance of exclusion reflects this internalised violence. At the same time, John Galtung's theory of structural violence

illustrates how social violence controls women in the name of cultural and moral codes, through marriage, family, and societal restrictions. This paper studies how structural violence functions subtly, humiliating Anupama's dignity in the name of cultural legitimacy, and the psychological awakening of Anupama, her education and economic independence, that act as a resistance to the structural violence, thus showing that empowerment is an inner transformation that demolishes inherited systems of authority.

Keywords: Stigma, Social violence, Resistance, Inequality, Empowerment.

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