



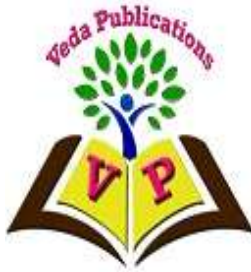
SURVEILLANCE OF THE POSITION OF WOMAN: A STUDY BASED ON THE TAMIL FILM, KAALAM MAARI POCHU

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ABSTRACT



This article is an attempt to analyse and disclose the stereotypical images of women, and speak about an exasperation and adversity of the married women in the patriarchal society as filmed in *Kaalam Maari Pochu*, a tamil film. There are many scenes in this interesting movie that showcase the statement, 'Women are under the control of men'. It strongly advocates feminism in a comprehensible manner. It exceedingly criticizes the typical and traditional concept of Indian Marriages. The paper is an attempt to analyse the endurances of the leading female characters of the film, *Kaalam Maari Pochu* in the context of gender inequality and emotional harassment. Dowry is a huge matter which is predominantly focused in this film. Overall, the film provides numerous comic situation, but through those comic scenes some important issues like, dowry and inequality are questioned.

Keywords: *Feminism, Marriage, Equality, Dowry, Property.*



Kaalam Maari Pochu is an Indian tamil film, released in the year 1996. The director of this film is, V.Sekar. During that period, it has emerged as one of the blockbusters of 1996 and it ran for 175 days. It has been created in many languages like, Malayalam and Kannada. It is considered a comedy film but it has screened significant social issues in the society. The songs and music in this film got famous and they are composed by the music director, Deva. In 1996, the film, *Kaalam Maari Pochu* has received the Tamilnadu State Film award. The leading roles are played by some important film actors like, Pandiarajan, Sangita, Vadivelu, Kovai Sarala, R.Sundarajan and Rekha.

The film, *Kaalam Maari Pochu* particularly explores the equality of men and women through comic manner. The issues like, dowry, inequality, harassment, patriarchy, humiliation, suppression are highlighted in this movie. There are many scenes which clearly expose the statement that, 'Women are under the control of men'. Women extremely suffer under the patriarchal system. Before marriage they are controlled by their father and after marriage, they are supposed to obey their husband. Throughout their life, women are struggling between these two different roles of men.

In this film, Vinu Chakravarty and Vadivukarasi have four daughters and one son. Vinu Chakravarty always have the opinion that his son is an asset to him and he thinks that his daughters are a big burden on his head. His cruelty and his thought of inequality are revealed through his actions.

Vinu Chakravarty's intention is revealed, when he decides to search grooms for his educated

daughters with help of his neighbor, Venniradai Moorthy. His daughters dream to marry a bank officer or Teacher. But unfortunately, their dreams shatter due to their father's unbearable action. Because of his enforcement, his first daughter Rekha marries a Cook, R.Sundarajan and his second daughter Kovaisarala marries a corporation worker, Vadivelu and finally his third daughter Sangita marries an Auto-rickshaw driver, Pandiarajan. During their marriage, no dowry is paid for his daughters. He wants his son to inherit all his property. The day after marriage itself, a drunkard Vadivelu create a mess in the family that his wife is not given respect. At that time, Vinu Chakravarty's son, asks his father, 'Where have you found such a person to be your son-in-law?' and Sangita replies, 'You should have thought about it before we are getting married' [41.60]

The film, *Kaalam Maari Pochu* strongly advocates feminism in a comprehensible manner. It criticizes the typical and traditional concept of Indian Marriages. As usual, many women have experienced domestic violence and many of them lack courage to boldly speak about their issues, but the irony is, if someone has the guts to voice about the inequality, then no one will support them, even their own family members. Patriarchy is defined as,

A social organization marked by the supremacy of the father in the clan or family, the legal dependence of wives and children and the reckoning of descent and inheritance in the Male line; broadly, control by men of a disproportionately large share of power.



The movie is a venture to break the stereotypical images of women, and speak about an exasperation and adversity of the married women in the patriarchal society. It analyses the endurance of the leading female characters of the film, *Kaalam Maari Pochu* in the context of gender inequality and emotional harassment. The three sons-in-law of Vinu Chakravarty wish to rely on their wife's property and they ask them to bring money from their father's house to start a new business. But Vinu Chakravarty's stern decision is to give away his all property to his only son. Here, the third daughter, Sangita is a degree holder who got a gold medal also. Before marriage, she puts a condition to her father that she wishes to meet the groom and ask him a few questions. She determines to choose a groom, who respects the feelings of women and their ambition. She asks Pandiarajan questions like, 'What do you think about women and their position in a family? [2.35:52].

In those times, women who raised questions were unaccepted. She too finally falls in her father's trap and marries an auto driver. When she comes to know the real face of her husband, she is shocked and shouts at her mother and father for betraying her and she feels that her parents have destroyed her life. But the tragedy is that she has to accept this marital life and she does not have any other option to vent her anger. That was the condition of women during those periods. In the earlier times, women were not allowed to go to a job. But in this film, Pandiarajan expects his wife to go for a job to support him financially to lead their family.

Throughout the film, the male characters want to be a dominant person in their family and their only motive is that they should exercise superior power. Vinu Charavarty's son falls in love with an MLA's daughter and the two families arrange their wedding. During their marriage, Pandiarajan, vadivelu and R.Sundarajan get insulted and pick up a quarrel which creates a very big problem. His son asks his sisters husbands to leave the place immediately. This scene finally brings up a trouble between the three couples. Vadivukarasi could not tolerate her daughter's sufferings and she asks her husband to justify the issues which hurt their daughters. She tells her husband to give money to their daughter's husbands and she states that, 'You were always biased' [1.37:12]. Then he replies to her through the following words, 'I won't give them a penny more'. Then she confesses her words in anger and she falls ill and dies.

You are a cruel man!

You will suffer for hurting my children!

God will punish you!

You will suffer for sure! [1.37:20].

The words of Vadivukarasi make Vinu Chakravarty angry and scolds her, 'You know nothing.... A woman in a good family should not raise her voice against man' [2.34:24]. Even he slaps Vadivukarasi for questioning him for the welfare of her daughters.

Dowry is a huge matter which is predominantly focused in this film. When the three sons-in-law come to know the truth that, they could not get their wives property, they start to hurt their wives. After that, their wives realize the situation and



want to prove that they are possessed with self-respect. Then they decide to work in a garment factory against the wish of their husbands. Vadivelu and R.Sundarajan plan to lash out their wives for not hearing their words. On the first day of their job itself, they have learnt the concept of equality. Kovai Sarala confesses to her husband, Vadivelu that,

If one day, I do sweep, then on the other you have to sweep the house. If one day I do wash vessels, then on the other day you have to wash the vessels. Because I too have started to earn money, so each and every household work should be done equally [2.00:25]

On hearing the words of Kovai Sarala, Vadivelu gets angry and tries to attack her physically. Then, Vadivelu confess R.Sundarjan that, '... You have never seen me fighting. Today you will see for sure' [1.58:48]. This was a famous comedy dialogue and it was enjoyed by everyone. But in reverse, Kovai Sarala beats her husband seriously. On the other side, R.Sundarajan makes an effort to beat his wife, Rekha, but she pushes him out. Overall, the film provides numerous comic situations, but through those comic scenes some important social issues like, dowry and gender inequality practiced in the patriarchy system are questioned.

In one particular scene, when the three daughters determine to file a case against their own brother for his cheating over property, they are humiliated and attacked by him. Vinu Chakravarthy plans for his fourth daughter's marriage. At that time problems occur and he beats up his one son which shows that he realizes his mistake. Beore, he never

respected his wife and daughters words and wishes. He always treated them like slaves and considered them a mean thing. Finally, he understands the significance of his daughters, because at the end, they only safeguard his honor among others. The three sons-in-law also finally realize their mistake and confess that 'A woman can do anything if they wish' [2.34:15]. Ultimately, Vinu Chakravarty agrees that his daughters also should get equal rights over his property. The film, *Kaalam Maari Pochu* ends with the positive note of equality.

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