

## FERTILITY ISSUES IN THE NOVEL ONE PART WOMAN AND KUTTRAM 23 MOVIE

Dyana Stephen. S

PSG College of arts and science

Email.id: dyanastephen77@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

*India stands next to China in population but at the same time subtly the level of infertility rate increases. This is one of the burning issues in today's society not only in India but world wide. This problem of infertility is not a new concept it existed from primitive days but now it's at peak due to lifestyle changes. Every needs and concern of man is reflected in myth where human raised symbols, god, goddesses, rituals and ceremonies for this purpose. Now a days technology gives a hand in this infertility cases which is a blessing for most of the couple but this technologies are sometimes exploited by humans. This paper foregrounds the fertility issues mentioned in novel One Part Woman and kuttram 23 movie. It also converges the influence of religion, society and culture on infertile couple in this work .*

**Keywords:** *Infertility, Environmental influence, Medical science*

### **Introduction**

India is a growing country in all aspects like technology, science, law, politics etc. In similar manner it is also the runner by population with around 1.35 billion citizens added to that in present days subtly the level of infertility escalates in our country. This problem even existed in former times in both areas that is agriculture and reproduction so to solve this issues people up heaved fertility symbols, Gods, rituals and ceremonies this shows how fecundity played significant role in the life of human being. The novel *One Part Women* by Perumal Murugan brings out the social, cultural, religious influence on infertile couple. The movie *Kuttram 23* brings out the environmental influence on infertile couple and the medical crime committed in fertility centres.

### **Environmental influence on Infertile couple**

The novel *One Part Women* by Perumal Murgan deals with Kaliand Ponna who loved each other unconditionally despite of 12 years marriage they had no offspring. The writer discuss about the entire problems faced by a infertile couple in this society .

Even if the couples are happy as the bride moves to grooms house after marriage, relatives play a major role in the life of new couples. In two or three months people start questioning about conceiving indirectly. When days pass by they start meddling with the lives of the happy couple with suggestions. Marayi the mother in law of Ponna waited for six months, then right away started her treatments. She always kept track of her daughter in laws menstrual cycle and gave her medicinal juice made of various herbs and shoots on the third day of her periods. Marayi forced her to drink those juices. Even though Ponna did not like her mother in laws compulsions, she drank every bitter juice only because of her aim to beget the child. She was taken to various places and was suggested to take various medicines but nothing worked out for her. Usually society, associates infertility issue immediately with women and they think that it is the responsibility of women to start the family right away by giving birth to children.

The progression of marriage depends upon the fertility of women, this is seen as base for marriage if they are diagnosed with any issues then the continuity of marriage will be under question. Lack of motherhood makes a bride's life miserable as the men are suggested to opt for second marriage as they believe that the problem is with the women. Once Chellapan visited the barn and advised Kali to sell the cows which has failed to yield calves despite of various attempts and also suggested to buy new cows but sarcastically he also compared cows with Ponna. Even Marayi started to talk about the second marriage to Kali but he never agreed to it as he loved Ponna whole heartedly but this made Ponna to be in more stress because she has no idea when Kali would change his mind on marriage. Even before the birth of female child in the family, the role of the female child in society is assigned prior. So when a female fail to attain these predestined tasks, they are considered as low when compared to other women. At one or another point when we lose all hope in life, most of the people end up in turning towards God. Few people turn towards religion and do offering, rituals in order to attain what they want. Kali and Ponna have spent most of their time in temples whether its small or big temple, they visited and prayed for child. They mostly promised to make an offering to almost all the temples they have visited. Ponna and Kali went to Dandeeshwar temple, next to that temple stands a human like tall barren rock which is otherwise known as *maladikkal* rock which was guarded by Dandeeshwar. The task was to come round the semi circular path which was outside the hill side. But it is not easy if you are not bold enough and lean over in fear one would end up dying. Some people have tried to walk on this rock in the act of hoping to fulfill their desires but they have vanished under the steep hills. It is believed that if anyone who walks around the barren rock would be blessed with child, but only women should do this prayer. When Ponna got ready to do the task tears rolled down from Kali's eyes, because if she tripped a little that would be the end of her life. They believe that their children are gifts from god and they are the product of their karma

so they think infertility is due to bad deeds done in past lives. Kali's mother told that one of ancestor of Kali's father had committed a great sin by raping tribal girl and strangling her to death along with his friends. It's believed that the curse of the young girl is still haunting them. To put end to this curse they met astrologer, so finally they came up with the idea of making offerings and prayers to Devaratha who dwells in hi The infertility in male puts his virility into question. Not only female is affected by this issue male also face humiliation among the people. Murugesan, the friend of Kali once insulted him in front of everyone on questioning Kali's virility when he teased Murugesan for his worst dance. This same thing happened with his another friend Subramani, everyone believed that who induce morning sickness in the women very soon after marriage was seen as man. Kali was also teased as the impotent one by his friends. He started to shrink in shame and he slowly started to avoid his friends. To retrieve his reputation in society, he wanted do second marriage but it might hurt Ponna very badly if the women he married next to her bears a baby. If she also does not beget a child, the life of two women will be waste and Kali might be pushed to even lower position in the society. Finally to resolve this issues both in laws came up with conclusion, that is to send Ponna to Chariot festival. As there is no light of science is found in their place during that period they turn towards god. On eighth day the God will be brought down from hills and eighteenth day they will be taken back to hill. On eighteenth day, the communities will liberal its rules for the people who are infertile, on the particular day the women can have sex with any man and give birth to child. The man will be seen as God and child will be seen as the child of God. But Kali can't even think of seeing Ponna in someone's arms. But Ponna was very desperate of having a child, so she would like to visit the temple with Kali's concern. But family member's tricks husband and wife, they sends her to the chariot festival.

### **Medical crime in infertility centre**

As years pass industrialization came into existence, this changes the people attitude and perspective towards life, later great development took place in various field especially science and technology. Development and new discoveries can be seen in every field in similar way the problems of human beings also increased day by day. Science gave solution for few issues but sometimes it also created barriers in human life. The number of fertility centre's have increased, this shows the prevalence of infertility issue in male and female. In modern days the treatment in fertility centers is seen as common as many have problem with fertility. Only the era has changed but people's attitude towards infertility issue still remains the same. *Kutram23* is a movie is based on the novel *Eni Ettavathu Naal* by Rajesh kumar which potrays the medical crime committed in fertility centre's. ACP Vetrимaran is the hero of the movie, his family is celebrating his elder brothers wedding anniversary. During this happy occasion, Abinaya's mother in law castigated her for not bearing the child after so many years of marriage life. Like everyone due to the longing for child and pressure of

society and family, they visit various temples for seeking god's mercy but nothing works, so they relied on science and landed in one of the famous fertility centres. After few checkups they come to know Abinaya is healthy but her husband is the one with problem. Like every woman Abinaya takes the blame, to save her husband's respect in society. But her own reputation in society is constrained, she was not respected by her relatives and also no one invited her for any special occasions like marriage, Valikappu etc. This same thing happens with Ponna and Kali when they were invited by Chellama for her daughter's puberty. There was a custom to spin red balls of rice in large circle around the girl's body and toss them away, it was basically done by uncle's wife as Kali is like younger brother for Chellama she was asked to do it, but Chellama's brother's wife dragged her aside stating that she was inauspicious, implying that if she take part in this ritual it would make the girl barren.

Abinaya did not reveal her husband's health issue to anyone in their family as it depends on his virility, after few treatments Abinaya finally conceives through the process of Artificial insemination. AI is an assisted reproductive technology, in which the sperm will be injected into the womb of women to treat infertility. But after few months Abinaya commits suicide, but on the funeral day everyone comes to know that she asked fifty lakhs rupees to her father.

Even if a woman is unable to conceive through her husband's sperm, they could opt for sperm from sperm bank, which is legal procedure but not every husband or family accepts this method of getting pregnant through other men sperm. This AI treatment helps the people who are lesbians and also single parent who is legal, but in *Kutram 23* movie it is misused by two people, firstly Jessica, who was the wife of the director from famous leading TV channel. With a help of few people she manages to get sperm of her favorite cricket player, then she undergoes AI using that sperm. Eventually she conceives on other had she is abducted while confessing her sins to the church father, where he is killed. One of the famous politicians daughter in law slits her waist and kills herself on the day of her baby shower, when she comes to know that the sperm injected into her womb was her father in laws sperm according to his own plan, as his son was infertile. Later it is revealed that most of the women treated in that particular fertility center was treated with others sperm than their partners in case of male infertility under the name operation 23. In all these above case money plays the larger role in the fertility centre. In abroad among 70 percent 50 percent people have no issues in undergoing AI treatment with others sperm. But when it comes to idea the concept of my becomes important in my child because of our culture and tradition. Only 10 people among 100 people will accept to do AI with others sperm in India. But it's almost like treatment, so it's hard to make money so in order to gain money the doctors hides the fact about the original sperm which is injected into female.

Gaurav and John Mathew replaces all the sperm from the sperm bank and they also collect the information of patients through lab assistant and start to blackmail them claiming sum of money. In similar manner doctor inseminates Abinaya with the sperm of donor, instead of her husband's sperm later she is blackmailed by John Mathew for fifty lakhs rupees or else he will bring the truth to limelight. But when Abinaya comes to know the truth, she goes to her doctor to get abortion, when the blackmailers, find they murder her and make it look like suicide.

Entire human race lives with full of expectations, one can also say that life in this world is encircled with expectations. So when a married couple fails to meet up with the societies expectation to conceive a child, people around them start questioning. As everyone lives in a particular society, the rules and structure of it bounds everyone even when they feel it as unnecessary, but it depends on one how one takes it. When it comes to treatment girls parents were supposed to spent entire money and the girl is treated submissive in her own family which makes her feel more inferior. Males also have hard time among his friends and family as they are humiliated as impotent one as it puts their virility into question. But they also comes up with second marriage which shatters the life of first wife, few even create affairs with other women as the wife remains barren. Few people start trusting God and receives mercy, others accept infertility as gods will for them and the rest loses faith in God. All these issues were concentrated in the paper with the assistance of *One Part Women and Kuttram23* movie. Both works were set in different backgrounds for example. Despite of the era women were seen as a child bearing machine and the importance of bearing a heir for the family is seen as a big issue rather their interest or wish of the women doesn't matters.

*Kuttram23* movie is set up in Chennai city around 2011 which deals with medical crime which takes place in fertility centers. The developing technologies helps human in many ways especially for infertile couple who dreams of having their own baby, the technology like IVF, ICI, and Test tube baby is seen as blessing by couples. So in the movie Abinaya gets pregnant through artificial insemination but the doctor hides the fact that her husband is impotent and uses another man's sperm in AI just to make money. But a gang finds it out and black miles her to give them fifty lakhs to hide the truth from her family and friends in order to save her reputation in society. But Jessica and politician used their money and power to misuse this technology. So in all three cases money plays crucial part than ones emotion and feeling. Being mother is something more than money, it's an emotion, feeling and attachment.

## Conclusion

The novel *One Part Women* is set in Kongu region in Tamil Nadu around 1940 and *Kuttram 23* movie, deals with different set of people, region and era but it shows that the attitude of people towards feracity remains the same. Either the infertile

couple is loving couple from village background or the middle class couple from city in modern era were put in same pressure which makes them physically, emotionally and mentally weak. Through the entire analysis of two works with center on fertility shows that the culture, society and religion influences them either directly or indirectly. When it comes to fertility centres, it would be better if the quest for having child is not treated with marketing and business attitude but further research on the fertility centres might shed more light on medical crimes which take place for money.

## Reference

*Kuttram 23*. Directed by Arivazhagan Venkatachalm, performance by Arun Vijay, Redhan The Cinema people, 2017.

MURUGAN, PERUMAL. *ONE PART WOMAN*. PUSHKIN Press, 2019.

Sheoran, Poonam, and Jyoti Sarin. "Infertility in India: Social, Religion and Cultural Influence." *International Journal of Reproduction, Contraception, Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 2015, pp. 1783–1788., doi:10.18203/2320-1770.ijrcog20150947.