

Women in Prism: A Psychoanalysis of Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns

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Abstract

The research paper explores multifaceted, multifarious, and bifurcated images of women characters in Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007) in the light of Maslow's theory of "Hierarchy of Needs". The west Asian Afghan-American writer, Khaled Hosseini's characterization of women characters and depiction of their problems vie attention of the readers widely. In the novel, two Afghan women Laila and Mariam showcase a strong bond of love, and find themselves connected with each other as if they cannot live in isolation; consequently they are dependent on each other. Abraham Maslow's theory of "Hierarchy of Needs" argues that people's behavior is provoked by the five basic principles of needs - physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization. All these five principles of need are inherent in the linguistic devices employed by the novelist; particularly use of signs, images, emblems, symbols, and tokens helps readers to unfold different aspects of woman's personality. The relationships between Mariam and her father; Jalil, Mariam and Rasheed, and Laila and Mariam portray women's problems. The relationship between Mariam and Laila showcases the prism of unselfish attachment and with the passage of time the antagonistic relation shapes mother-daughter relationship and fulfillment of womanhood by further provoking Mariam to indulge herself in a heroic deed beyond the social norms.

Keywords: Culture, Needs, Psychology, Relationship, Womanhood

1. Introduction

Psychologists study human psyche to understand reasons behind the course of action and classify them accordingly. Abraham Maslow is one of the psychologists whose psychoanalytic theory "Hierarchy of Needs" helps readers to understand human psyche. Abraham Maslow propounded the theory of "Hierarchy of Needs" in his paper titled "A Theory of Human Motivation", published in *Psychological Review* in 1943 with an extended idea of his observations of humans' behaviour. It deliberates on how humans basically participate in behavioural motivation and examines how motivation and course of action are correlated in human behaviour. Moreover, Mulwa's statement reinforces Abraham Maslow's notion of hierarchy of needs which is built on the premise that human behaviour is motivated by the desire to meet specific human needs in the society. The theory considers specific human needs as more basic and critical needs than some other needs in the society. (Mulwa, as cited in Aruma, p. 19)

Maslow's contemporary, Sigmund Freud attempts to extend study of human behaviour in his book *Psychoanalytic Theory of Motivation*. Freud recognizes two fundamental motivating forces: the constructive force which he calls *eros* or life urges and the destructive which he calls *Thanatos* or the death urges. Freud signifies *eros* through "ego drive" and "sex drive". *Nirvana* principle is expressed in "death drive". Freud's study primarily focuses on the neurotic people whereas Maslow's study deliberates on understanding positive mental health which makes him a distinct psychologist from Freud and others.

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Maslow believes that self-actualizing individuals focus on their internal growth instead of meeting their external needs. In his opinion, self-actualization is a desire “to become everything one is capable of becoming” (p. 64). To examine and analyze his theory Maslow required individuals who did not struggle to meet their basic needs. He asserts that when a human being has nothing else except bread; he lives on bread alone. When the basic need for bread is satisfied, other needs step forward and control the individuals. When these needs are satisfied, new needs emerge. Maslow propounded his theory after realizing that the basic human needs are structured into a hierarchy of relative prepotency. Maslow classifies the hierarchy of needs into five phases:

- **Physiological Needs:** food, water, shelter, air, sleep, sex, warmth
- **Safety Needs:** protection, stability, law, freedom from fear, order
- **Social Needs:** affection and love, belongingness, romantic relationships
- **Esteem Needs:** independence, self-respect and prestige
- **Self-Actualization Needs:** realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment.

Maslow considers physiological, safety, and social needs as deficiency needs which are required to be satisfied before progressing to meet desired growth of “self-actualization”.

In *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2013), Khaled Hosseini pictures that masculine authority accomplishes their needs by exploiting women. The female representative characters of the novel Mariam and Laila portray the reasons that motivate them to put up with violence and their oppression in a patriarchal society. Khaled Hosseini writes:

I wanted to write about the inner lives of two struggling Afghan women . . . I chose this one because, both as a writer and an Afghan, I couldn't think of a more riveting or important or compelling story than the struggle of women in my country. (p. 409)

Observing Mariam, the illegitimate daughter of Jalil and Nana through the prism of Maslow's theory, readers get an insight that is quite significant to understand her suppressed psyche and turbulent mind. Nana is deprived of basic and safety needs even when she is about to give birth to a child. Years after, Nana reveals the pain to Mariam that she endured at the time of her delivery “Almost two days you made me lay on that cold, hard floor. I didn't eat or sleep” (p. 11) and when she was born Nana sighs “I cut the cord between us myself” (p. 11). In her childhood, instead of being provided with the social and esteem needs that a daughter requires, Mariam is always called “a little clumsy *harami*” (p. 4) by her mother. Later, she realized that “a *harami* was an unwanted thing; that she, Mariam, was an illegitimate person who would never have legitimate claim to the things other people had, things such as love, family, home, acceptance” (p. 4). Being an illegitimate, Mariam had to live with her mother in suburban areas where there was no chance to realize want of needs for her own growth. Although on every Thursday Jalil used to visit Mariam but Nana named these visits “his idea of penance” (p. 11). When Mariam insists on Jalil to go to cinema with him, she is prevented by her parents. Jalil not only wants to protect his status and dignity in the society but also the fulfillment of Jalil's esteem needs overpowers social needs of Mariam although “it is the creators of the *harami* who are culpable, not the *harami*, whose only sin is being born” (p. 4). Jalil and Nana did not fulfill Mariam's safety and esteem needs of providing her altruistic love, stability and opportunities for education.

Hosseini portrays that in Afghan culture marriage is not associated with true love, but with feasibility. Marriage is only the compulsion and convention in patriarchy. He states, “for centuries women there have been told when they will marry, who they will marry, and, incidentally, for how much” (p. 410). Mariam is not an exceptional case because she is compelled to marry Rasheed, a thick bellied ruddy faced man, much older than Mariam. As soon as she sees Rasheed all her thoughts of her blissful married life shattered and that compels her to think, “this is the face of my husband” (p. 53) and again fulfillment of her physiological and safety needs are in doubt. Anees Jung (2000) in *Unveiling India* states, “Marriage in the life of every woman, and, is importantly in the life of a community, is a maturing. It signifies the flowering of life” (p. 64). Jung further asserts, “In the Koran woman is described as a *fitna*, one who tempts man and brings trouble. She should stay where she belongs, within the walls of her home” (p. 30). The condition of Mariam become worse in Rasheed's house because there she is not allowed to go out without her husband and has to wear *burqa* because he believes, “a woman's face is her husband's business only” (p. 69). Rasheed torments her brutally but she has to fulfill her wifely duties to make her husband happy. “Mariam wondered how so many women could suffer the same miserable luck, to have married...or was this a wifely game?” (p. 65)

Hosseini opines that lack of education creates ideological gaps among people. He writes, “There has always been an ideological gap between liberal reformist Kabul and rural Afghanistan” (p. 409). Kabul is a hub of “female autonomy” and Afghan women have “subterranean lives of obedience and service”. Education, which is one of the most important weapons for acquiring self-esteem and dignity, is not provided to Mariam by her parents because for woman like Mariam only one skill is required “And it's this: *tahamul*. Endure” (p. 18).

Nelson Mandela (2003) asserts, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world" ("Lighting your way to a better future"). As a woman belonging to the lower social class, Mariam identifies dissimilarity between her destiny with modern women during her visit to Kocheh-Morgha. Mariam meets women who are apparently like her but their behaviour and freedom of choice perplexed her. They were highly fashionable without *burqa* and had applied red lipstick which was prohibited to Mariam. On the contrary, Mariam is ill-fated to live a subservient and shoddy life without choices which "made her aware of her own lowliness, her plain looks, her lack of aspirations, her ignorance of so many things" (p.74). Hosseini vividly pictures the value of education. He thinks that women who are educated can raise their voice against injustice, while women like Mariam could not get equal opportunity to receive education therefore; she has to bear lack of security, endure slavery and could not overcome sufferings.

M. K. Gandhi (1913) opines, "All fear is of the nature of a moral weakness and so long as we are subject to it, we shall always have to face such misfortunes" (p. 93). Mariam's fear of Rasheed is one of the reasons that she could not conquer and that has suppressed her courage to fight for her rights as a wife. For Mariam, "It wasn't easy tolerating him talking this way to her, to bear his scorn, his ridicule, his insult, his walking past her like she was nothing but a house cat" (p. 97). She does not have courage to refute Rasheed's patriarchal discipline and rules projected against her. She could not aspire for safety needs because she knew well that she was dependent on Rasheed for the fulfillment of her physiological needs. For it, she had to bear physical insult and torture:

Even after four years of marriage, Mariam saw clearly how much a woman could tolerate when she was afraid. And Mariam was afraid. She lived in fear of his shifting moods, his volatile temperament, his insistence on steering even mundane exchanges down a confrontational path that, on occasion, he would resolve with punches, slaps, kicks, and sometimes try to make amend for with polluted apologies and sometimes not. (p. 98)

Jasodhara Bagchi (2017) says, "It is as a mother that a woman gains some agency" (p. x). A ray of hope for happiness spreads in the nerve-racking house of Rasheed when Mariam comes to know that she is pregnant and with the "... thought of this baby, her heart swelled inside of her. It swelled and swelled until all the loss, all the grief, all the loneliness and self-abasement of her life washed away" (p. 88). It is a significant phase of her life when she gets love and affection of her husband along with basic needs. Rasheed showed her a shower of attachment "And she felt for the first time a kinship with her husband. She told herself that they would make good companions after all" (p. 84). Whenever, Rasheed showed his dominance and control over her, she didn't mind "In truth, she was even flattered. . . .She felt prized by his protectiveness. Treasured and significant" (p. 80). Sudhir Kakar (1980) in *The Inner World* rightly points out:

Imminent motherhood is not only the fulfillment of an old wish and the biological consummation of a lifelong promise, but an event in which the culture confirms her status as a renewer of the race, and extends to her a respect and consideration which were not accorded to her as a mere wife... The unborn child is perceived as her saviour, instrumental in winning for its mother the love and acceptance of those around her. (p. 90)

Similarly, Rasheed who lost his son from his first wife, hopes that he would enjoy the bliss of fatherhood by getting a son. Anees Jung (2000) in *Unveiling India* points out the desire of male dominated society for a male heir. She states, "Hymns pray for sons and grandsons, for male offspring, for male issue, for male descendants" (p. 70). In a male dominated society, having son means immortality because he is the source to carry on the family name and an incubator in the patriarchal society. The pregnancy of Mariam filled the heart of Rasheed with happiness. Likewise Mariam thought of "a home of her own, a husband of her own, heading toward one final, cherished province: Motherhood. How delectable it was to think of this baby, her baby, their baby. How glorious it was to know that her love for it already dwarfed anything she had ever felt as a human being" (p. 87). For Mariam, blessed with child means to satisfy her deficiency needs while for Rasheed it satisfies his social needs. In Mariam's life this happiness was short lived because she faced miscarriage of her child not only once but for seven times, and she had to face Rasheed's physical and mental torture. Once she suffered from a series of miscarriages, Mariam's marriage became a prison. She was left with no other choice except she had to readily accept the male authority, her subjugation and ill-treatment as her destiny. Instead of getting sympathy of Rasheed these miscarriages bring her infinite sufferings. Mariam's suffering can easily be identified as universal in nature which Hornby (1995) defines as "an ability to suffer patiently for something that is painful or uncomfortable even to tolerate something that one does not like" (p. 381).

Another rejection of the self-esteem of Mariam is encountered by the readers when Rasheed marries Laila who is fifteen years old girl while Rasheed is around sixty years old. During attack on Afghanistan, Laila loses her parents. Rasheed brings her to his house where Mariam tenderly looks after her. Rasheed makes up his mind to take the advantage of Laila's helplessness and adverse condition and shows his desire to marry her and satisfy his physical and sexual desires and familial and social needs as well. To justify his intention he tries to convince

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Mariam, "We need to legitimize this situation. People will talk. It looks dishonorable, an unmarried young woman living here. It's bad for my reputation. And hers. And yours, I might add" (p. 208). Mariam protests Rasheed's proposal reminding him that there is a huge gap in age. She does not give approval of his incestuous desires and in order to protect her dignity and position as his wife she refuses her acquiescence. To this Rasheed says, "It's not your decision. It's hers and mine" (p. 208). He also plays with the softness of Mariam's heart and threatens her by saying, "She can leave. I won't stand in her way. But I suspect she won't get far. No food, no water, not a rupiah in her pockets" (p. 209). Moreover, he says that by marrying Laila "I'm giving you help around the house and her a sanctuary. A home and a husband" (p. 209). Rasheed is determined to grab this opportunity and decides to marry Laila with the hope that if she bears a son, he will have an heir who will meet his expectations for future generations. Thus, cultural, social and economic factors bestow upon the trend that a son is regarded as a future breadwinner and caretaker. Laila, on the other hand, requires the fulfillment of her basic needs like food and shelter and her esteem in the society keeping in mind that she is pregnant with the child of Tariq, her lover, while she is unmarried. Therefore, she seeks a man who can marry her and fulfill her deficiency needs. When she is asked to marry, she says, "My answer is yes" (p. 210). She readily agrees with Rasheed because she wants to give her child a legitimate name. She knows that it is, "Dishonorable, disingenuous, and shameful. And spectacularly unfair to Mariam" (p. 213). Thus, both Mariam and Laila become prey of the basic, physiological, and deficiency needs in hands of a cruel, male chauvinist, Rasheed.

Mariam, an illegitimate girl gets legitimized status of a wife by undergoing utmost mental, physical and sexual violence. She demands of nothing and expects nothing from a male chauvinist society. She gives up her social and esteem needs and finds herself on the same crossroad even after her sacrifice to fulfill male expectations. Mariam left no stone unturned to satisfy Rasheed's physical, sexual, and social expectations but ultimately she failed ". . . no matter how thoroughly she submitted to his wants and demands, it wasn't enough. She could not give him his son back. In this most essential way, seven times she had failed him and now she was nothing but a burden to him" (p. 98). She questions to herself, ". . . where do I belong? What am I going to do now?" (p. 40) Thus, the question mark on her own existence and independent living remains unresolved.

Jalil's mental trauma and Rasheed's physical torture on Mariam multiplied her sorrow and sufferings and shook her "self". She was ". . . a face of grievances unspoken, burdens gone unprotected, a destiny submitted to and endured" (p. 243). Perhaps, a *sautan* in her life shattered her dreams and made the rest of her life fragile. Rasheed's decision to marry Laila made Mariam realize the value of her identity as a wife. She told Laila that she would not have served her if "I'd known you were going to turn around and steal my husband" (p. 219). Rasheed's ambivalent attitude towards both his wives harasses Mariam mentally although she knows that his passionate behaviour to Laila was "the staged delivery. Like a performance. An attempt on his part, both sly and pathetic, to impress. To charm" (p. 207). She was rather worried about her identity as Rasheed's first wife and moreover her self-respect. Abraham Joshua Heschel (1972) in *Man is Not Alone* states "Self-respect is the root of discipline: The sense of dignity grows with the ability to say no to oneself" (p. 228). The similar interpretation reflects in Mariam's words when she says to Laila:

I won't be your servant, I won't. . . . You may be the palace Malika and me a dehati, but I won't take orders from you. You can complain to him and he can slit my throat, but I won't do it. Do you hear me? I won't be your servant. (p. 219)

Joan Didion (1961) in *Self-respect* writes, "Self-respect is the ability to discriminate, to love and to remain indifferent. To lack it is to be locked within oneself, paradoxically incapable of either love or indifference" (p. 67). Laila's entry into Mariam's life made her realize that she has an individual identity and she wants the fulfillment of her esteem needs.

Brene Brown (2017) states "A deep sense of love and belonging is an irreducible need of all people. We are biologically, cognitively, physically and spiritually wired to love, to be loved and to belong" ("The Power of Vulnerability"). Initially Laila's entry into Mariam's life multiplied Mariam's pains. But with the passage of time Rasheed unmasks himself as a villain and forgets his promise of generosity towards Laila and starts torturing her toothat paved the path for unselfish bond between both the victims. Khushwant Singh (2005) rightly states "I think the sense of belonging does give you a certain amount of mental satisfaction" (*Reader's Digest*) and first time the sense of satisfaction is enjoyed by Mariam when she gets connected with Laila.

In *Violent Men*, Hans Toch (1969) states, "Violence ironically creates harmony among otherwise warring elements" (p. 33). Laila comes closer to Mariam and becomes her charioteer while "Mariam, slowly grew accustomed to this tentative but pleasant companionship" (p. 245). Mariam offers Laila some clothes that she purchased for her own child who died due to miscarriage. In turn, Laila shows her reverence and belongingness to Mariam. Jasodhara Bagchi (2017) states:

Mothers are women who inhabit or perform the role of bearing children or raising children, who may or may not be their biological offspring. Thus women may earn the entitlement of being considered 'mother' by virtue of giving birth, by raising children, by supplying ovum for fertilizing an embryo. (p. xi)

Due to gradual bond of Laila and Mariam the antagonistic relationship of *sautan* takes the form of mother-daughter bond. The hope of affection or solidarity is left with each other. They not only survive physically but they are also tied emotionally by having their faith in each other. Mariam's motherly love and affection towards Aziza are experienced by Laila "Mariam had never before been wanted like this. Love had never been declared to her so guilelessly, so unreservedly" (p. 246). The regard of mother to Mariam extends "a respect and consideration which were not accorded to her as a mere wife" (Jung, p. 69). In an overwhelming momentum Laila reveals the secret of Aziza's being the daughter of Tariq. Mariam feels a strong bond and fulfillment of her esteem desires. Hosseini pens down the heart of Mariam when he depicts, "Laila and Aziza-a *harami* like herself, as it turned out-had become extension of her, and now, without them, the life Mariam had tolerated for so long suddenly seemed intolerable" (p. 250). In *'Tis Herself*, Maurene O'Hara and [John Nicoletti](#) (2005) arguably state "A sense of belongingness is a sine qua non of healthy Psychological functioning everywhere. Such a sense, beginning in infancy and continuing throughout life, comes about by experiencing mutual empathy; by sensing oneself as a part of a whole" (p. 24). Mariam who has suffered the detachment of her dear ones does not want Aziza to face the same. So she showers extreme love and passion to Aziza. Francis Bacon (1908) in "Of Love" states, "There is in man's nature a secret inclination and motion towards love of others, which if it be not spent upon someone or a few, does naturally spread itself towards many" (p. 45). The compassionate and selfless love and respect of Laila and Aziza towards Mariam give her a thought that she is not an unwanted being. She is loved, cared, wanted and longed for. When Tariq returns to Afghanistan and visits Laila, she is flogged by Rasheed that exposes "The patriarchal ideology of male dominance and female subordination in a traditional society allows Rasheed to be even more of a villain" (Karthic and Immanuel, 2018, p. 378). Extreme brutality gives way to the possibilities of opposition and resistance. Boswell and Dixon (1993) assert, "Rebellion is a revolt action of resisting authority or control; a part of revolution which is uncommon action to overthrow the state (the oppressor) and transform the social structure" (p. 682). Consequently Mariam resisted and raised a shovel to hit Rasheed ". . . this was the first time that she was deciding the course of her own life" (p. 341). Mariam's demands of the deficiency needs were fulfilled while she was living with Rasheed, but she was simply lagging the fourth level of needs which were love, belongingness and self-respect. This phase of need was fulfilled by the altruistic affection that she got from Laila and Aziza that paved the way for the fulfillment of the last phase of the hierarchy of needs.

Self-actualized people are honest, motivated by personal values, ethics and responsibilities, ability to form and sustain deep and meaningful relationships and are guided by their unique purpose. Kamala Das, the Indian poetess reflects on the binary opposition of the inner and outer beauty of one's world. She writes, "One's real world is not what is outside him. It is the immeasurable world inside him that is real. Only the one, who has decided to travel inwards, will realize that his route has no end" (1977, p.103). Similarly, Mariam peeps into her inner world, reviews her values and realizes the purpose of her own life when she is confronted with Rasheed.

Herbert Marcuse (1989) says "Freedom would become the environment of the organism which is no longer adaptable to the competitive performances required for well-being under domination, no longer capable of tolerating the aggressiveness, brutality, and ugliness of the established way of life" (p. 236). Mariam asks herself:

Had she been a deceitful wife? A complacent wife? A dishonorable woman? Discreditable? Vulgar? What harmful thing had she willfully done to this man to warrant his malice, his continual assaults, the relish with which tormented her? Had she not given this man her youth? Had she ever justly deserved his meanness? (p. 339)

This straight question on the social patriarchal norms on one side and the selfless love, satisfaction and delight provided by Laila and Aziza on the other side give her self-actualization which creates self confidence in Mariam and she decides to kill Rasheed. One of the characteristics of Maslow's self-actualized person is sacrifice for others. Self-actualized people can risk their lives for the sake of humanity and Mariam did it fearlessly. She does not hesitate to kill him because ". . . she saw murder for them both. . . . Had Mariam been certain that he would be satisfied with shooting only her, that there was a chance he would spare Laila, she might have dropped the shovel" (p. 340). Mariam's patience to bear Rasheed's violence and injustice crosses all limitations, ultimately the doomsday of sufferings comes when:

She kills Rasheed and selflessly takes the rap for the crime so that Laila can live on. She never dreams for a better life. But she wants to be free from all the brutality. Mariam can become what she thought a *harami* like

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her could never be: a mother, a friend, and a hero. She breaks all the shackles and comes out a real, true hero. (Philip, 2016, p. 794)

Although Mariam knew that she would be caught, she kills Rasheed having in mind the hope that after his death Laila and Tariq would “make new lives for themselves- peaceful, solitary lives . . . and they would be deserving of all the happiness and simple prosperity they would find” (p. 346).

“As she closes her eyes, it was not regret any longer but a sensation of abundant peace that washed over her” (p. 361). Mariam sacrifices her precious life to bring peace, harmony and freedom in others' lives. Gandhi (1930) writes:

To call woman the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to woman. If by strength is meant brute strength, then, indeed, is woman less brute than man. If by strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man's superior. Has she not greater intuition, is she not more self-sacrificing, has she not greater courage? Without her, man could not be. If nonviolence is the law of our being, the future is with woman. Who can make a more effective appeal to the heart than woman? (“To the Woman of India” *Young India*)

The author gives a forceful portrait of women's dependence on patriarchy to acquire an accepted social status. Mariam had to sacrifice her life to fulfill the selfless mother-daughter relationship so that the next generations can live in a haven where they can experience a significant life.

Mariam's action is heroic, but, as the narrative suggests, she is doing what mothers have always done and continue to do for the sake of their families and children. She has chosen death so that Laila and the children, together with Tariq, can find a sanctuary where they will thrive in peace and security. (Stuhr, 2013, p.62)

Tagore (2006) in *Home and the World* says:

Providence leaves our life moulded in the rough,-its object being that we ourselves should put the finishing touches, shaping it into its final form to our taste. There has always been the hankering within me to express some great idea in the process of giving shape to my life on the lines suggested by the Creator. (p. 210)

Hosseini's depiction of Mariam's character with its symbolical and mythological significance justifies her feat and dauntless behaviour. Mariam is an Arabic name for a girl means “star of the sea” journeyed from Arabic to Hebrew, Persian and Malayalam. The connotation varied as “rebellion”, “bitter sea” or “wished for child”. Besides passing through geographically and culturally, the name has a prominent meaning in the different regions with their belief and religion. Mother Mary, the mother of Jesus, has roots with Mariam and provides this world a messiah who serves humanity selflessly and paves the path of love and belongingness which became the axis of the ephemeral world. It portrays the characteristics of purity, worship and devotion. Being an illegitimate girl, Hosseini's Mariam is considered a “bitter sea” who has her own independent existence yet it is not accepted, “wished for child” as she could never become a biological mother and a “rebellion” because she breaks the patriarchal norms of considering her husband her *devta*. Hosseini's attempt to use the name for his protagonist justifies that:

A woman is a being. She is not an appendage of man. A woman is not the other. She is not an addition to man. She is an autonomous being, capable of, through trial and error, finding her own way to salvation. (Ramamoorthy, 1991, p. 115)

The novel replicates the issues of identification of women and the philosophy of life through the view point of Abraham Maslow which is powerfully pictured in the character of Mariam that “hierarchy of needs range from the basic human needs of physiological needs for food, clothing, shelter, water, comfort, procreation among others to the highest level of aesthetic needs for people to enjoy and promote the beauty of human environment” (Aruma, 2017, p.26). Mariam showcases Maslow's theory of needs that in her childhood and married life she was fulfilled with basic needs but was lacking esteem and respect. When this want was fulfilled by Laila and Aziza with their unselfish affection she realised her worth as a woman and lastly in a crucial situation she realised herself as a human and to give a happy life to four persons she crossed the social norms and even sacrificed her life; but not as an illegitimate daughter but as a legitimate mother. “This is the mother, who is an individual with ethical integrity, for whom the experience of motherhood was a momentous personal choice of inclusivity that enabled her to embrace humanity, irrespective of religion, race, caste and class” (Bagchi, 2017, p. 39).

Studying Maslow with keeping in mind the institution of Marriage it can undoubtedly be said that all the stages of hierarchy of needs can be fulfilled only if the marriage has a balanced relationship because:

Marriage is a commitment to life, the best that two can find and bring out in each other . . . Marriage deepens and enriches every facet of life . . . When two people pledge their love and care for each other in marriage, they

create a spirit unique unto themselves which binds them closer than any spoken or written words. Marriage is a promise, a potential made in the hearts of two people who love each other and takes a lifetime to fulfill. (O'Neil, 2019, "Marriage Joins Two People in the Circle of Its Love")

Marriage is regarded a bond between two people who have equal partnership. Marriage is a rule which saves many relationships. It is a balancing act in which:

After marriage, a man and a woman are not two separate beings. They meet and complement each other. They become one like two hands- a *namaskar*... There can be no greeting without the coming together of the two hands, no oneness without the togetherness they suggest. Both are necessary, both equally important. Man and woman, like the two wheels of a cart, have to move in a unison. (Jung, 2000, p. 62)

Maslow's theory is quite significant in present situations where society is becoming more individualistic, ready to step on the wishes and emotions on others because in family as well as in society their needs are not satisfied. It is important to fulfill the needs to make a balanced and happy society. Fulfillment is only available in bond – significant and mutual bond. To accept individual responsibilities is a substantial attachment between two complementary beings – Man and woman. A happy married couple not only fulfills their needs but also create a happy family; where its members are provided their physiological and esteem needs that lead them to achieve their self-actualization which will help for a pleased and prosperous society.

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