

This research paper is an attempt to project the patriarchal domination of Indian society and its resistance through female bonding. Pinki Virani has selected the real-life story of a nurse Aruna Shanbaug in order to show how patriarchy treats women in society and how women's bonding and their collective resistance plays a great role to challenge the patriarchy and their domination. Moreover, through this non-fictional text, this research paper talks from Third World feminists' perspectives and brings marginalized issue at the center. To accomplish the task, the researcher takes theoretical insight primarily from third world feminists' texts such as Ketu H. Katrak's Politics of the Female Body, Chandra Talpade Mohanty's Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory Practicing Solidarity, Miranda Davies' Third World Second Sex. In this research paper, the researcher finds how women can resist patriarchy via different sources using their voices politically and how collective resistance of women helps to minimize the existing biases among men and women in society. The sudden unification and collective voice of nurses provide the possibility to change the present situation of third world women. Hence, by projecting the political significance of the collective effort of women to resist patriarchy, this research paper attempts to expand the alternatives of maintaining gender equality in a third world society.

Keywords: Rape, Domination, Women Bonding, Collective Resistance

This research paper is an analytical inquiry into Pinki Virani's *Aruna's Story* from a feministic perspective. This text is a biography of a nurse Aruna Shanbaug, where author Pinki Virani has tried to raise an issue regarding women violence in the workplace. Virani, being an Indian female author picked a real-life story of Aruna Shanbaug to provide her a female agency, to give a voice to the voiceless. Aruna was assaulted sexually and left to die in the pool of blood. In that dreadful incident, she lost her sight, her voice, the brain was partially dead and went into

a persistent vegetative state (a condition in which a medical patient is completely unresponsive to psychological and physical stimuli and displays no sign of higher brain function, being kept alive only by medical intervention). In this respect, the researcher attempts to excavate the patriarchal ideologies that influence men to subordinate, exploit women mentally and physically and how women's resistance plays a vital role in order to thwart patriarchy. In this regard, the researcher tries to highlight the significance of women's unity and how their persistent effort to oppose patriarchy plays a political role to bring women's case into a central discussion and bring certain changes up to the registration level of government.

Generally, in Indian society, most of the women have become the prey of male's domination and violence. Women have an extremely miserable situation in almost every society of India. They are far away from most of the socio-political rights. Men treat women as a mere object; a toy which can be used and thrown away anywhere they desire. They even do not have freedom of expression. If someone dares to express their views then they have to face the rage of their male counterparts. They are even isolated from their own physique; men control, exploit women's body. Women are not even counted as human beings. In simple words, women are harassed, exploited, ignored and cornered by patriarchy. They are being raped in their surroundings. Thus, this research paper here deals with the issue that how Indian patriarchal ideologies (like; men as brave, strong, rational, leader and women as emotional, weak, follower, fragile, submissive and so on.) are responsible for perpetual oppression and violation of women in most of the societies of India. That is why resistance is essential in this society.

Indeed, researcher's claim primarily meditates on women's position in contemporary society of India; how they are treated by men and how their unified voice has become a great source for minimizing patriarchal practices. In other words, researcher's main argument is how

solidarity among women assists to bring social change in male dominant society.

Pinki Virani is an author, journalist and social activist, born in Mumbai, India. She was grown up with her Muslim parents; her father was a businessman and her mother a teacher. She studied in different places in India like Mumbai, Pune, Mussoorie. She achieved her master's degree from the American University of Colombia in Journalism. She worked at The Sunday Times in the United States as a reporter where she used to report on riots of Britain. She, after completing her master degree, returned back to her birthplace and started working in “Mid Day” as an editor. She is recently recognized by the Indian government for her work in the field of women empowerment and social development. She has won several national awards for her books, especially for *Aruna's Story*.

To deal with, the researcher has brought theoretical insight from a third world feminist Ketu H. Katrak's *Politics of the Female Body* as a primary text, where she has used a term 'internalized exile' and explains that how women's body feels disconnected with itself. This means that women surrender themselves to be dominated in society; as a result they get minimal space. To cope with, Katrak has further presented a way to transcend exile through resistance. Women should resist patriarchal domination and attempt to reconnect with their female bodies via speech, silence, starvation or illness. Being a Third World feminist, in her book, she has raised different women's issues like rape, violence, widow immolation and so on. From her text, *Politics of the Female Body*, the researcher mainly will research on how Ketu H. Katrak has presented patriarchal ideologies which have deliberately imposed on the female's body and how they control women's body through their hierarchically constructed knowledge and colonize them within their body. They set biased rules for women's roles in society. In her *Politics of the Female Body*, theorist Ketu H. Katrak gives emphasis for resistance against the oppression of

those imposed patriarchal values through women's unified speech, silence, starvation, illness or strike. Through the help of this theoretical framework, the researcher will be able to show the domination of Indian patriarchal society and significance of Aruna Shanbaug's and her co-worker's endless resistance to oppose the oppression of patriarchal society which eventually assists to get justice not only to Aruna but also to the whole women who reside in India.

Moreover, to show the active political involvement of women in Aruna's case, the researcher has used Chandra Talpade Mohanty's *Feminism without Borders* as a secondary theoretical tool. Her *Feminism without Borders* deals with the issue of Third World feminism where she has developed an antiracist feminist framework in order to make connections between many levels of social reality that women experience in their lives. She insists feminists' solidarity should have a political as well as ethical goal. By the help of this tool, the researcher will be able to show the political significance of women's bonding and their persistence struggle for their rights.

Furthermore, in order to make the researcher's argument more precise and vivid, the researcher has borrowed some of the concepts from other feminists' text like Miranda Davies' *Third World and Second Sex* and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's *In Other Worlds*.

There are a plenty amount of researches carried out and different reviews also have been made by different analysts, critics, social activist, and scholars. They have presented their opinion regarding the story of Aruna Shanbaug.

In the Zee news interview of Pinki Virani, after the death of Aruna Shanbaug, She states:

I say that, when in any country people talk about Aruna, they should remember that she was a woman who gave us a precious gift a great law of passive euthanasia . . . I always think about your bravery you take your steps ahead leaving your small village behind, to

pursue your dream to become a nurse around the time of the 1960s. At that time there was no woman in India who had this kind of bravery and confidence. (Virani)

Pinki Virani tries to give emphasis on Aruna's every struggle and effort in her life which can become a great source of inspiration for women. Women can take Aruna as their role model because of her brave decision of getting an education in Bombay without her parents' and brothers' permission. She talks about how Aruna's life was filled with challenges and how she tackled with those obstacles. She admires every action of Aruna full heartedly. She explains about the life of Aruna Shanbaug. She talks about the life and struggle of Aruna; how she fights with her parents in order to get desired education and how she manages to live in Bombay without her parents' financial as well as emotional support. She praises Aruna for her bravery and her contribution establishing new law 'passive euthanasia' (is a condition where there is withdrawal of medical treatment with the deliberate intention to hasten the death of terminally-ill patient) in India.

In the telegraph news, Dean Nelson has written about the rape of Aruna and associates this case with Delhi gang-rape case of a student Nirbhaya, who was badly attacked, penetrated violently with an iron rod in her vagina. He denounces these rape cases in his article. He states that "her rape and the terrible injuries she suffered caused widespread outrage and a national debate about the protection of women almost 40 years before the gang rape and murder of a Delhi student on a city bus provoked a similar outcry" (42). He shows his great disappointment with these kinds of hideous incidents that take place in the major cities of India. His reviews focus on how these incidents become a major issue for national debate in different places of the Indian government. He badly denounces the physical injuries and physical pain of Aruna Shanbaug and a gang rape case of a girl who was attacked brutally like Aruna.

Furthermore, Roop Gursahani, in an Indian Journal of Medical Ethics, reviews on the Aruna Shanbaug's case, entitled with "Life and Death after Aruna Shanbaug". Gursahani reviews:

In 1998, journalist-activist Pinki Virani chronicled the tale in Aruna's story. As with the nurses, she too seems to have been drawn into a personal involvement in this tragedy. In 2009, Virani filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court. Speaking as "Aruna's friend" her prayer was that the respondents be directed to stop feeding Aruna and let her die peacefully. Since Aruna has required nasogastric feeding after September 2010. This would have meant euthanasia by pulling out the Ryle's tube and starving her to death.

(68)

In the review, basically, he talks about the court decision of establishing a new law called 'passive euthanasia' and also presented his views regarding Pinki Virani who has registered a case in the Supreme Court to demand a legal death of Aruna Shanbaug. He tries to pinpoint some lapses of *Aruna's Story* by showing Virani's extreme personal attachment with Aruna. He indirectly wants to say that Aruna's Story might have been exaggerated by Virani because of her personal involvement. As a writer of biography, she has to maintain a certain emotional distance from the person on whom she is studying. She has to investigate into factual incidents rather being too emotional.

Similarly, another reviewer Rakesh Shukla, a practitioner of law and member of the Indian Association of Family Therapy, in his article "Is the Next friend, the Best Friend" makes a review:

The Supreme Court's ruling in the Aruna Shanbaug euthanasia case seems to be solely based on the views of the nursing staff of the Mumbai hospital who have been looking

after her. It totally ignores the patient's interests and turns on the legal concept of "next friend". This concept is in the context of a person who is unable to maintain a suit on her own behalf due to disability and is akin to a "guardian" legally representing a "minor".

The Court considered the nursing staff to be Shanbaug's "next friend" . . . (10)

Shukla mostly focuses on the decision of the Supreme Court for giving legal permission of passive euthanasia and the concept of next friend. Here, he tries to justify the concept of next friend. As he said in his review, Aruna spent 42 years in hospital laying down on bed. There are nurses who have been contributing their time and care to the patient Aruna who is in the persistent vegetative state. Here, after several efforts of Virani and staff nurses of King Edward Memorial Hospital, the new concept of next friend becomes useful for establishing new law 'passive euthanasia'. He simply shows his opinion regarding this new law and the condition of Aruna Shanbaug.

Additionally, Ph. D Scholar of Jammu University Rajinder Singh has made a critical review of Virani's *Aruna's Story*:

National award-winning writer and social campaigner, Pinki Virani's *Aruna's Story* urge today's women to liberate themselves from such conventions of patriarchal agenda that function in complicity to exploit them and also leave them mute forever. Mindful of the personal dangers faced by any young working woman who wants to make her mark, Pinki Virani has written a cautionary tale, reconstructed with logical extensions and extrapolations and resuscitated with intuition and imagination. In India, a woman like Aruna Shanbaug represents an invisible population and their condition is deplorable, hence such study becomes pertinent in today's context and needs to be taken up by not only writers but also by the feminist and the human right activists. The subject matter of

Aruna's Story which draws its inspiration from the real-life situations bring into focus those aspects of women's life which were hitherto ignored to a wider hearing and thus become instrumental in bringing transformation in the social condition of the women.

(74)

This review on Aruna's Story attempts to analyze this text through the lens of feminism. His reviews explain how Pinki Virani, being an Indian journalist and social activist, tries to unravel the true story of Aruna Shanbaug who represents the underprivileged group. Pinki, through the life writing of Aruna, brings Aruna's ignored case among the public discussion which becomes helpful to liberate women from different conventions of patriarchy.

This story of Aruna Shanbaug becomes a source of inspiration for women who are exploited and ignored by the patriarchy. In another word, this assists to spread awareness in the minds of women and provides hope in the eyes of women who are deprived of their rights. This literature review of Rajinder mainly revolves around Virani's purpose of writing *Aruna's Story* and her contribution for bringing social change in Indian society.

Roshni Mulchandani, a renowned critic has made a review on *Aruna's Story* which is posted in Brown Girl Magazine. In her review she states:

Aruna was a hardworking, independent, and headstrong woman who gained the respect and admiration of many by serving as a top-ranked nurse at her hospital. She was happily ready to get married to a doctor at KEM hospital all the while giving it her all at the job she loved. One could say her job was all she had. Aruna's family never really stayed in touch but Aruna did not seem to mind and never brought it up. Everything seemed to be going her way until one night in 1973, she was raped and assaulted by a coworker with a dog chain at her own hospital leaving her in a persistent vegetative

state. Her attacker served a few years in prison but was never convicted of rape but instead attempt to murder because any mention of rape in addition to all that has happened would put KEM in jeopardy. He walked a free man, as Aruna lay in her bed at KEM, blind, but with perfectly healthy eyes, with severe irreversible brain damage, unable to survive without machines, medication, and constant care. (7)

Her analytical review on *Aruna's Story* is precious. She praises nurse Aruna for her persistent hard work and a spirit to be an independent woman who used to get abundant love and respect from her senior and co-staffs. She admires for Aruna's own decision for getting married to the one with whom she is in love. Throughout her life, she does not seek even her parents' support. Roshni Mulchandani then moves her review towards the incident of 1973 when Aruna lost her beautiful life in the basement of KEM (King Edward Memorial) hospital, she was raped brutally. She further denounces KEM hospital for saving Sohanlal from the accusation of rape in order to save KEM hospital's reputation. Here, Mulchandani generally, explains the life of Aruna Shanbaug. She appreciates Aruna for her bravery and hard work and eventually projects her deep sympathy for Aruna and resentment to the rapist Sohanlal and to the head of KEM hospital who tries to sideline Aruna's case.

Primarily, most of the aforementioned reviews are confined to the rape incident of Aruna Shanbaug and Supreme Court's permission for 'passive euthanasia'. Some of the reviews like Roop Gursahani, Rakesh Shukla seem to be limited up to the Aruna's rape case incident and Virani's step to file a petition to the Supreme Court for giving permission of mercy killing to Aruna Shanbaug. On the other contrary, other reviewers like Dean Nelson, Pinki Virani, Rajinder Singh, and Roshni Mulchandani have intensively focused on rape incident and its aftermath. They have reviewed on how the case of Aruna becomes a central debate of that time.

These reviews on *Aruna's Story* particularly, focus on the rape case, pain and suffering of Aruna Shanbaug. However, Rajinder, in some part of his review has attempted to bring feminists' insight to *Aruna's Story* but he fails to specify the issues that are embedded in the life story of Aruna. He does not present any political connection between women's unified involvement in the case of Aruna. Their reviews, therefore, seem to be circumscribed up to the subject matter of rape, suffering, and struggle of Aruna. They have reflected their sympathy in their reviews. They full-heartedly support Aruna Shanbaug and give the whole contribution to Aruna for bringing new law passive euthanasia in India.

However, the reviewers have not analyzed *Aruna's Story* through the feminists' perspective. They do not attempt to explore the main cause behind the rape of Aruna and forget to show the importance of persistent resistance of women who have contributed a great role to change women's condition. Their reviews mostly circulate on emotional aspect; they project sympathy and pity for Aruna and ignore other socio-political aspects of this case. The researcher, in this research paper, is attempting to deal this text through the lens of third world feminism showing women's political involvement and significance of collective voice of women in the case of Aruna and tries to debunk Western feminists' perspectives regarding Third World women.

To describe briefly, Third World feminism refers to the movement of the 1980s in different developing countries of Third World (Asian, African and Latin American) which has developed as a response to First World feminism focusing solely on the experience of women in Western cultures. Third World feminists have criticized Western feminism for universalizing and misrepresenting Third World women in their work. They categorize Third World women on the basis of colonial discourses. Thus, Chandra Talpade Mohanty in her *Feminism without Borders*

says: "Clearly, neither Western feminist discourse nor western feminist political practice is singular or homogenous in its goal, interests, or analysis" (17). She clearly discards the universal concept of feminism of Western feminists. Furthermore, in the same book, she again shows her position and writes "I am attempting to draw attention to the similar effects of various textual strategies used by writers that codify others as non-Western and hence themselves as (implicitly) Western" (17). She tries to justify how Western feminists isolate themselves from Non-Western women referring to them as others. Third World feminism rejects this very notion of First world feminists and blames that western feminism has tried to universalize the definition of 'woman' on the basis of gender ignoring social, economic, racial and geographical factors.

Third World feminists believe that Third World women have different social, economic and historical background. As a result, they cannot understand the real problem of Third World women. Therefore, their hegemonic concept regarding Third World women is problematic and unjustified. Third World feminism represents women from the different middle as well as working-class women and strongly believes in women's solidarity. They deal with different issues like rape, domestic violence, dowry system and other gender biases including every case of women who belong from various backgrounds. Thus, to break and redefine this outdated notion regarding Third World women, the researcher has brought theoretical insight from Third World women's texts in order to deal with the genuine issue of Aruna Shanbaug.

Pinki Virani has crafted this text in order to show how women are becoming the subject of domination, violence and how this society is overshadowing such shameful act of male (ward boy Sohanlal). Even KEM (King Edward Memorial) hospital, the same hospital where Aruna was an employee and where she was assaulted sexually injured severely, tries to sideline the incident of Aruna Shanbaug's rape case to save the popularity of hospital. They charged

Sohanlal for robbery and attempt to murder case. The rape case was dismissed. Though they were well known about injuries in her anus, in her lips and wounds all over her body they hide the fact in the medical report for their benefit, “Contusion on the neck. Contusion the right knee. Abrasion right hand dorsum. Injury with teeth marks lower lip with oedema of lip. Contusion right side of neck, front of neck and left side of neck” (17). This shows how violence regarding women is sidetracked by the people who seem to be influenced by patriarchal values. They consider women as a trivial thing and if something wrong happens to women then they take those incidents as a mere matter. These incidents do not affect the males rather they promote the oppression and violence of women in the society. Thus, in this text, Pinki has tried to deconstruct these kinds of patriarchal values through the real-life incident of Aruna and insists for change in the society.

While defining ‘patriarchy’, patriarchy is a social system where men occupy a higher position and subordinate women. Sylvia Walby, in her article “Theorizing Patriarchy”, defines “patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women” (214). Similarly, Merriam – Webster Dictionary has defined patriarchy as a social institution controlled by men of a disproportionately large share of power and rules according to their principles. In general, patriarchy is a powerful social organization where men take power and exploit women according to their will. Patriarchy develops patriarchal ideologies in the society where they set certain codes and conduct for women such as they are not supposed to express their ideas in a society; they are not allowed to be a leader rather they have to follow men’s order. They always have to stay calm and serene and spend their lives in domestic household works. These patriarchal gender roles restrict women to go forward. Hence, they cannot able to get an opportunity to prove themselves in the public domain. Patriarchy compels

them to live in their respective boundaries; a life like a frog who stays into the deep well and could not able to experience the color of the outer world. As a result, they could not able to identify the domination of men and surrender themselves to become a slave in their own family and take these restrictions as their fate and responsibility. They take all these rules for granted. To come out of all these restrictions, women should resist against patriarchy. They should come to front as wolves pack to raise voice against the atrocities of men. Therefore, resistance is essential for women who are excluded from their inborn rights.

Aruna's Story evokes women's violence in patriarchal society. The life story of Aruna Shanbaug explicitly shows how women in patriarchal societies face violence and domination. The main cause behind the rape is patriarchy. In patriarchy, men are allowed to misuse their privileges. They do the things without caring about its ramifications. They think themselves as a master and behave accordingly. Aruna is one of those who become the prey of patriarchy. Udayvir Channaram Walmiki, sweeper of King Edward Memorial Hospital, when he was on his duty in the dog's lab, on 27th November 2073 at around 7:00 a.m., when Aruna was raped Sohanlal had said: "he would spend one month's salary to sleep with staff nurse Aruna Shanbaug" (35). Sohanlal, on the same day raped Aruna just to extinguish his masculine ego. Before Aruna was raped, she had scolded him for stealing dog's food from the lab; she threatened him for doing so and complained to the seniors for his disloyalty and arrogance. Being physically strong man, he could not digest the order and warnings from a female. This eventually led him to conspire plan to prove his masculinity by raping her. One of the workers of KEM (King Edward Memorial) hospital named Inder Gulamashi states:

A few months back the attendant in the dog's lab, Laxman, went on leave. Sister Aruna Shanbaug told Sohanlal to do Laxman's work. He resented it. She reported him. He told

me he would take revenge by molesting her. I never took it seriously. Later when another altercation took place Sohanlal again repeated his threat of molesting her. (34)

This extract presents how patriarchal ideologies manipulate men to commit different crimes. Sohanlal is one of them; who is heavily influenced by patriarchal values. In his thought, women are subject to be violated, dominated, exploited, suppressed and so forth. Women are not given any authority to command men whether they are in a higher or lower position. Though he is a sweeper, he dares to assault the nurse sexually. For him, this source of power comes from patriarchal ideology and these ideologies reside in most of the men's attitude. The people who follow patriarchy justify every act of men. The same thing happens in the case of Aruna Shanbaug when everyone refuses to register a rape case against the accuser. The lines state: "None. No one has come forward—not one doctor, or relative—to add an attempt to rape or even outraging of modesty. Sohanlal Bhartha Walmiki is formally arrested for Attempt to Commit Murder and Robbery" (39). Nobody stands there to speak against that injustice except those nurses who raise a voice in front of the hospital. Those people who have the power to give justice to Aruna remain silent and let Sohanlal be free from the heinous crime of rape. This is pathetic. Instead of blaming Sohanlal for that crime, they accuse Aruna of changing her clothes in her workplace. Being a girl, she has to be cautious about everything. She should not have talked to Sohanlal in that way. She has to maintain her femininity. Therefore, by opposing these kinds of patriarchal ideologies women's unified voice has become a great source to modify the conservative patriarchal mindset of most of the people who follow patriarchy.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, a renowned Third World feminist, in her *Feminism without Borders* says:

The homogeneity of women as a group is produced not on the basis of biological

essentials but rather on the basis of secondary social and anthropological universal. This for instants in any given piece of feminism analysis women are characterized as a singular group on the basis of shared oppression. What binds women together is a social sameness of their oppression. (22)

For Mohanty, women are generalized and oppressed not only on the basis of biological differences, but they are exploited because of patriarchal values which reside in almost every person who belongs from a patriarchal society. They treat women as a secondary subject in society as a result they do not get first priority and compel to live under the suppression of males. This traditional and biased notion is generated and operated by patriarchy. Therefore, Mohanty urges for women's unity in the third world; women should unite together to raise voice against these kinds of social practices. Almost every third world women have suffered from the same types of social problems like rape, molestation, domestic violence, unequal excess to education and so on. To deal with these kinds of common problems, third world women should come collectively in order to defeat patriarchy and maintain peace and security for women in their home, workplace, and society where they live. Thus, here Mohanty focuses on women's unity by showing the sameness among women who have suffered from the same source (patriarchy). Then she presents a possible solution to fight against patriarchal oppression and that is unity and solidarity among third world women.

Pinki Virani, throughout her text *Aruna's Story*, tries to show how women bonding can play a significant role to threaten the society and compel it to bring changes. When Aruna is raped, and the news spreads like wildfire, nurses of King Edward Memorial Hospital collect together and there is collective anger of nurses because they are not informed by the hospital properly. One of the nurses of KEM hospital says: ". . . she has been raped, hasn't she? . . . They

will not tell us even if she has, they will hide it. Yes, they will cover it up" (19). There is no one to support her except her co-workers. Even KEM seems to be ignorant towards her case. Instead of giving justice to her, they try to sideline her. In a patriarchal society, women's violence is not counted as a crime. They do not care about women's condition rather they encourage perpetrators for their crimes. This side of the patriarchal injustice can be vividly seen even in the mind of well-educated people who are in a higher position of KEM hospital. The response of people who are honored with a higher position is really heartbreaking. They instead of focusing on giving justice to Aruna, they are discussing the response of other nurses and the consequences of that very incident. Simply, they are here trying to hide this incident in order to save the hospital's reputation. Here, by explaining this particular incident, the researcher is attempting to show how patriarchy treats women less than an object. A hospital is an institute made by some males who hold authority, instead of giving their focus and importance to Aruna's condition; they are worried and played the game to save their hospital from nasty criticism.

Moreover, Mohanty, in *Feminism without Borders* states: "male violence must be theorized and interpreted within specific societies in order both to understand it better and to organize effectively to change it" (23). Mohanty raises her voice against male violence and she demands the right direction to establish different theories on women's violence in society. She believes that through the theories regarding women's issues, society can be aware of the different injustices of patriarchy and this eventually will be fruitful to make people understand about the genuine problems of women and assists to bring some kind of positive change among the people in a society. Therefore, by addressing women violence in the theories can be a helpful source to bring changes in society.

Women raise voice to challenge the authority and demand for the security of nurses in the

hospital. Nurses with collective voice state: “No one has listened to us. We should all unite and go on a strike to teach them a lesson” (20). They stand there strongly to raise voice against the women’s violence. Even after passing many hours (around 21 hours), doctors and other head officers seem ignorant. Nurses again come together with a bit more rage and yield for a strike: “[W]e should immediately go on strike . . . ‘yes, let us go on strike. Let the authorities understand how serious this entire situation has become’ . . . Yes, let us go on strike. We need to press for security for ourselves” (28). This step of women is very admirable. To make Aruna’s voice heard and bring her case into a discussion, they unite together by ignoring their personal issues. They dare to take a step ahead to threaten patriarchy, who ignores the horrendous situation of Aruna Shanbaug and demand their security in their workplace.

Nurses from other hospitals also started to join protest with the KEM nurses. By forgetting their individual differences, they come together in order to take a stand for Aruna Shanbaug: “Nurses from other hospitals are scheduled to join them for a token half-day’s strike in expression of their solidarity” (32). Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, post-colonial theorist, in her *In Other Worlds*, she has coined a term ‘strategic essentialism’ which refers to a sort of temporary solidarity for the purpose of social action. This kind of unification can be observed in Aruna’s case as well. The involvement of nurses in strike from various background explicitly shows an effective strategy of women where they unite together undermining their personal differences in order to achieve certain goals.

Moreover, Ketu H. Katrak in her *Politics of the Female Body* has talked about the internalized exile of the female body and how this exile can transcend through various sources. She presents a way to resist patriarchy. She explains:

Female protagonists undergo what I term ‘internalized exile’ where the body feels

disconnected from itself, as though it does not belong to it and has no agency . . . The experience of internalized exile unfolds as a process that includes the female protagonists' complicated levels of consent and collusion to domination. The unfolding, indeed the process of the body being exiled, brings female protagonists to a 'liminal' state of consciousness . . . I interpret liminality as a space for the female protagonist to cope with, and at times to transcend exile. They resist domination and attempt to reconnect with their bodies and communities. In resisting exile they often use their female bodies via speech, silence, starvation, or illness. (2)

While analyzing the view of Katrak closely, she tries to show how women feel disconnected from their own bodies because of the excessive domination of patriarchy and how they can regain their body by using methods like a strike, starvation, illness and so on. When an agent of patriarchy dominates, violates women in different ways at that time women realize about the injustices of patriarchy. They became aware of the different atrocities that they experience in their daily lives. When they get their consciousness, they try to revolt covertly or overtly as we can see in the case of Aruna. When Aruna was assaulted by a member of patriarchy, there we find a collective voice of women. This voice comes after the sexual assault of Aruna Shanbaug. Here, the researcher wants to justify how that very incident contributes to spreading awareness among different women in society and provides a way to get transcend from different dominations that they suffer in their lives. Their strike for several days not only helps them to transcend from patriarchy but also to those women who get awareness after the daring steps of nurses. They get a chance to speak for themselves. This helps them to reclaim their security right in society.

Furthermore, when we try to examine the life of Aruna after that incident, she turns into a

living corpse. Though, she is in the persistent vegetative state, her sudden outbursts of tears, her silence, her sightless eyes, and even her whole body protests strongly. On Aruna's forty-ninth birthday Sister Bhakti Kubal enters into the room with another nurse to bath Aruna she explains "if I take male assistance to lift her onto a stretcher for her bath, she screams . . . if she hears any voice in this room which is unfamiliar she moans" (231). Her sudden outcry on unfamiliar male appearance troubles her. In spite of her illness, injuries in her whole body, she does not give up. Her sudden cry, laugh, anger and silence symbolize her spirit of resistance. Whenever she faces male doctors, visitors or strangers she yells loudly and sometimes she completely turns into mute. This shows how resistance can be done even in the bed of the hospital. Her sometimes silent, sometimes angry face and sometimes childlike innocent face demands justice. Her passively laying body helps to inspire women to fight against the patriarchy. Her body in a very silencing way is protesting patriarchy as Katrak talks about different ways to oppose patriarchy.

The collective rage of women is really strong. They have shaken mass media, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) office, hospital and news comes from every corner of the world. Nurses from other hospitals also join that strike in order to raise voice on the behalf of Aruna. The situation turns so chaotic and forceful:

There has been a total strike by the nurses in KEM protesting against the rape of their colleague. The BMC reporters inform the crime reporters and everyone is on the phone checking it out. They speak with doctors, nurses, unions, other BMC managed hospitals, the BMC commissioner, the chief minister's secretary . . . (32)

Nurses come together with their strong voice. They stand there and revolt against the injustice of men. This effort gives power to women. The case which was tried to sideline comes in the front page of the newspaper: "the picture which emerges is printed the next morning in the English

and language papers . . . at the bottom of their front page, some lead with it on their City page” (32). This case gets attention from everywhere. This becomes possible only after the involvement of nurses and other women from different places. This unified step has contributed a lot not only to give justice to Aruna but also they have candled a ray of hope in the hearts of women for their bright future. Sister Shashikala Vaaran imagining her future says: “Everything changes after this. Nurses henceforth will stop thinking of their jobs as anything beyond their shifts” (29). This shows women can now dream for their better future and they can feel secure in their workplace. They would not be worried about night and day shifts. This strike brings inner assurance in the hearts of nurses for their security.

Women unification and their active participation on the strike have always have carried political significance. In Indian society, patriarchal practices are so deeply rooted that it is very hard to change their conventional mindset of people. Projection of the Indian patriarchal ideology can be seen in some of the nurses of KEM hospital. They accuse Aruna and her fate. One of the nurses Mehta says “I told her not to change there. Nurses should not change anywhere and everywhere. You want respect as a nurse you have to keep your dignity as a nurse” (47). Similarly, another nurse from KEM hospital says:

In English words are man and woman, this does not symbolically signify the difference as much as our Hindi words do, nar aur nari. The woman has that extra letter because she has to that extra precaution. I know it will sound old-fashioned to you. It sounded very out-of-date to Aruna when I told her she should not change in the CVTC basement. You young girls don’t want to take advice from elder . . . some things do not change, in fact men becomes more bestial as women become more like them. (202)

This shows how culture and religion influence women to continue different kinds of patriarchal

practices. Some nurses of KEM hospital present their patriarchal thoughts which they have received from their tradition, culture, and religion. These thoughts are the outcome of excessive practices of patriarchy in a social system. However, Nurse Christine opposes crinkling her eyebrows and questions senior nurses: “Sorry Sister I did not understand. Are you saying there should be no progress for women?” (202), to minimize the effect of conventional roles, other educated nurses who have participated actively reject these thoughts of some older nurses and dare to challenge the conventional gender role of the senior nurse. The nurses have contributed their time and efforts to speak against women violence helps to change the mindset of people. Through their active involvement, they present a political agenda to Aruna’s case to give justice to her and also to speak on the behalf of several women who are victimizing every day and advocate the security right of women.

Ketu H. Katrak, in her *Politics of the Female Body*, has presented that how tradition has influenced the patriarchy. In her book, she states that:

[T]raditions are often to control the female body are mystified as being faithful to tradition . . . Both within the family and outside, tradition designates female roles within patriarchal frames and parameters: a woman as wife and mother is valorized . . . women's subordination is supported by family and perpetuated both in the private and public realms – whether it is unequal wages or gender discrimination in the family and the workplace. (157)

This shows how tradition has promoted patriarchal values perpetually in society. Because of the traditional gender roles, women cannot get liberty. They are forced to live their lives within a certain social boundary. If they dare to cross that boundary then they have to face great humiliation throughout their lives. Patriarchy punishes those women who refuse to follow

patriarchy. In *Aruna's Story* too, we can notice similar kinds of situations. Aruna refuses to follow the order and thus, she gets punished accordingly. Sister Pai, reflecting her traditional thoughts on gender roles, says: "That her sin was that she disobeyed orders. And that her punishment- I suppose you also think that this is from God- for that sin was the attack and the rape" (48). This kind of thought is developed by our culture and religion which is highly partial and influenced by patriarchy. Even, women are also guided by this very notion regarding gender roles like Sister Pie (senior nurse of KEM) blames Aruna's past deeds for the main cause of her rape ignoring Sohanlal's shameful act.

This proves how patriarchy is deep-rooted in the minds of people. Even after this incident, some women are following and talking about the conventional role of women. Instead of resisting patriarchal domination, they abuse Aruna's for changing her dress in the closed room. This is really terrific. Most of the women of India are naturalized with the norms and values of patriarchy. They themselves follow the patriarchal values as their primal responsibility. Unless women consciously understand the deep roots of patriarchy, they cannot get equality in society. Therefore, the resistance of nurses contributes to making women aware of the domination of patriarchy.

In the *Third World and Second Sex*, Miranda Davies has collected several interviews and articles by women from third world countries. In one of the interviews of a woman in Orissa (India) says:

Each of us in the group is there to fight against our own oppression as well as to fight against the oppression of women in general . . . It is only through the painful struggle in our personal lives that we will emerge strong enough to fight oppression at a wider level. Male power and male-dominated institutions oppress all. We are all victims of patriarchy.

Let us unite as women to eradicate all forms of male control over our bodies and our minds. (210)

Miranda, through the help of this interview, tries to reveal the importance of women unification to address women's problems. She explicitly says that to fight against male atrocities and to get rid of different violence women have to come together in the single voice in order to protest male's domination as nurses have done in Aruna's case. In addition, Miranda urges for revolt against oppression and violence in the society. Women should not be silent; they should take a stand against the atrocities of patriarchy. If women come together, joining their hands, raising their voices with strong determination then they can get rid of every type of oppression and can get equal access to society.

Furthermore, Katrak shows a prominent role of women writers who can unravel the traditional patriarchal ideology. The lines explain: "women writers demystify them and reveal that many traditional controls of feminine body/sexuality are located within the family and personal parameters that then radiate outward into larger society" (157). Through the help of their writing, they can explicitly show how tradition controls women's bodies through its biased gender norms and values. In today's time, life writing has got wider space in writing culture. It has presented a platform to the women who are marginalized in the society.

A female writer, Pinki Virani has picked an issue from Aruna's life to excavate every small incident of her life to show her spirit of resistance to patriarchy. She becomes the voice of Aruna, who is neglected, rejected by her family and society and left her alone in the hospital. In fact, she has contributed her time and energy to compose this biography, to expose the patriarchal injustices in front of the world. The main purpose of her text is to make women aware of the domination of patriarchy and to present them a viable solution and that is resistance to

patriarchy. Furthermore, Katrak's *Politics of the Female Body* again tries to emphasise the role of the writer. She claims that writer can play a significant role to oppose patriarchy by showing the various struggle of the protagonist; they can present real scenario to the public. She writes:

A politics of the body involves socialization involving layers and levels of ideological influences, sociocultural and religious, that impose knowledge or ignorance of female bodies and construct woman as gendered subject or object. Women writers present the struggles of protagonists to resist patriarchal objectification and definition as daughter, wife, and mother . . . (9)

Women's body is politicized in a patriarchal society. Their bodies have imposed certain roles in the name of culture and religion. They are compelled to live their lives under these restricted boundaries. To challenge these kinds of sociocultural practices, the author can play a significant role by showing the struggle of protagonists like Pinki Virani has done in *Aruna's Story*. Virani has written this text not only focusing on the rape incident and its aftermath but also she has presented the struggle of Aruna Shanbaug for making her career. She has investigated many things about her like her vivid vision for her future planning. One evening while Aruna was fixing oil lamp she said straightforwardly to her mother: "Amma I'm going to Bombay" (90). And when her mother tells her to wait for her brother Balakrishna's decision, Aruna sharply denies and further states: "what is there to decide further? I'm going to Bombay. I will work there" (90), she then again when her mother threatens her for getting married to a man near their village she spoke to herself: "I will be a burden to none. I will earn even while I learn and I will be staying in a hostel. I am becoming a nurse" (97). She shows her determinant attitude; how clear vision she has and how she wants to be independent. In fact, she denies taking a male's leadership in her life. She refuses to take assistance from her brother. Moreover, when her

mother shows her disagreement with the decision of her daughter and suggests Aruna to marry her: "you are so fair and beautiful. Why won't you marry like your two sisters? You have never been outside Haldipur and now you want to go directly to Bombay. No woman from this village has ever stepped outside for a job" (91). When her mother tries to interrupt her to make her realize about the role of women, she denies strongly. She suggests her to get married and start a new life as her other two daughters. However, Aruna disapproves with her mother Sitabai's opinion. In fact, she even opposes taking any kind of financial support from her parents as well. She sharply says: "Can't I also know what is best for me? And why must you make everything into a woman-women thing? I want to do good work, not serve idli-vadas in an Udipi, so how does this become a men-women business?" (91). This proves Aruna's straight-forward nature. Her wishes and dreams are beyond the reach of restricted rules of patriarchy. She questions the patriarchal values regarding women's role and tries to make her mother aware of these patriarchal practices which are intensely embedded with the Indian culture. In spite of her parents' disapproval, she does not put her steps back and goes forward in order to get an education and good work hoping for her hay days. Though Aruna does not get any kind of support from her family for her education, in fact, when she is in the hospital struggling between life and death, her parents refuse to sign in a paper for her operation: "The carotid angiography is canceled. It is never, ever, performed; no one appears to sign any papers at all" (56). Her brother Bala Krishna and her sister Shakuntala refuse to sign in the paper. They seem ignorant towards the situation of Aruna and blame Aruna for being stubborn and not following their advice.

In India during the 1960s, most of the women from different backgrounds have a dire situation in education and other types of professions. It is Aruna who dreams and dares to challenge the established role of women. Though she belongs from a working-class family, she

never gives up and continues to fight against her own family negating every role of patriarchal society. Virani intentionally tries to show Aruna's fighting and never defeating spirit in Aruna's life writing in order to persuade the reader that women's every effort is counted. In fact, even after that assault she attempts to tell about that incident: "she tries to speak, raises her head slightly, gasps with the effort" (15), when matron Belimal asks her for that incident: "she responds, again makes an attempt to speak, but only produces a low feral grunt" (15). This again clarifies her ability to speak against injustices. Despite her miserable situation, she attempts to explain the sexual assault of Sohanlal. This presents a positive vibe for the women to speak against violence. Definitely, this helps to bring positive changes in society. Through this life story, many people can be aware of different kinds of social pressure and they can get strength from the story of Aruna. Thus, Katrak highlights the importance of writers for spreading awareness in the society and giving agency to the people who are voiceless as Virani does to Aruna.

Moreover, when we scrutinize the case of Aruna Shanbaug, we see a strong female bonding in both Aruna Shanbaug and Pinki Virani as well. This bonding helps to make difference not only in the case of Aruna Shanbaug but also in the whole society. Virani shows her strong bond throughout her text. She takes stand for Aruna, raises her voice continuously for several years. She empathizes with Aruna's situation and takes a long journey in order to investigate and turn real pages of Aruna's life story which eventually becomes a great source of information and inspiration to the public. This deep involvement of Virani presents a political way to bring outdated Aruna's life in the discussion of people. Through her writing, she spreads awareness among women in society and she has also tried to show how women's never defeating spirit can do so many valuable things like Aruna did in her life. This helps to alter the perception

of those people who believe that third world women can do nothing.

Additionally, in order to present the political significance of third world women researcher has taken some theoretical insights from one of the prominent third world feminists Chandra Talpade Mohanty's *Feminism without Borders*. In her text, she says that western feminists define third world women as a traditional, uneducated, dependent, meek, coward, and fragile and ignorant in society. This very notion regarding third world women seems problematic. She shows her departure from the disbelief of western feminism. The Western feminist in the present time, attempt to homogenize third world women by their universal definition of feminism which is limited up to their First World countries' women. In *Feminism without Borders*, Mohanty states that:

[A] homogeneous notion of the oppression of women as a group is assumed, which, in turn, produces the image of an average Third World woman leads an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (read: sexually constrained) and her being "Third World" (read: ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family- oriented, victimized, etc.) . . . self- representation of Western women as educated, as modern, as having control over their own bodies, and sexualities and the freedom to make their own decisions. (25)

This clearly explains how western feminists believe about third world feminism. They take third world women as weak, poor, domestic which is constructed by colonial discourse. The colonial text defines third world countries as backward, dependent, barbaric, traditional and impoverished. This notion regarding the third world has developed the same impression in Western feminism as well. As a result, they start to categorize Third World women from the same socio-geographic arena positioning themselves in the powerful ranks and observe Third

World women from the distinct socio-geographical location. Through their distance observation, they try to define Third World women as a mere entity. Therefore, Mohanty criticizes this very notion regarding third world women of Western feminism and rejects this presupposition of First Worldviews. She further in her text insists for the bonding of women to resist this kind of false notion of western feminism.

Similarly, Evelyn C. Gedge a writer of *Women in Modern India* has stated in the first chapter of her book: "[I]t is a common belief in the west that women in India occupied a very inferior position . . ." (1). This statement shows how western people take third world women. This false impression of the west makes a derogative image of Third World women. To defend her argument, she brings the history of India before the colonization. She presents life real-life story of great women who have through their intellect and power bring different kinds of changes in the society like Rama Bai Ranade, Pandita Ramabai, Sarojini Naidu and Saraladevi Chaudhrani. They mainly focused on women's problems and attempt to spread the light of education among their sisters.

To support Mohanty and Evelyn's stand, the researcher connects *Aruna's Story* and Mohanty's argument together. *Aruna's Story* is a real-life narrative about Aruna Shanbaug who geographically and culturally belongs from the Third World. Her story represents Third World women who are directly or indirectly facing various kinds of biases in their lives and are becoming subject of domination and violence in their everyday lives by patriarchy. But it does not mean that they come under the same canopy of Western feminists' definition. In the case of Third World women, they are even though facing different kinds of atrocities but have not given up. They are defending themselves from patriarchy strongly as nurses have done during Aruna's sexual assault. This movement of nurses has projected a mirror to the Western women which

helps them to come out from their disbelief regarding Third World women.

Moreover, Aruna's own struggle and her life experiences can become stronger evidence to show loophole in the Western women's concept. Aruna does not fit into their definition of Third World woman because of her daring attitude. She challenges patriarchy by not letting herself limited into household work. Without any parental support even in her teenage, she comes out from her small town to pursue her dream. She never afraid of anything, she has even dared to challenge males. These incidents are sufficient to erase the misconceptions regarding Third World women. Nor are they circumscribed into domesticity works neither they seek their parental support. This means Third World women can advocate their rights on their own. They do not seek sympathy from others, rather they can fight for themselves as Nurses and Aruna have done in their lives. All these qualities can be seen in Aruna and other nurses who dare to threaten the authority. This is what Mohanty wants to show to the Western feminists.

Furthermore, Ketu H. Katrak also shows a departure from First World feminism. In her *Politics of the Female Body*, she clearly mentions: "the feminist movement in the west has 'restrict(ed) itself to a certain class', and often, has excluded working-class women" (17). Third World feminists reject this very notion of First World feminists' homogeneous concept of feminism. Katrak tries to show that how Western feminism cannot represent all the issues of women of this world because they are limited to a certain group. Basically, Western feminism is established by upper-class women who are highly educated and belong from an elite family. They have not experienced the life of working-class women. Their experience is completely different from Third World women; they have not faced colonial, racial and social prejudices in their lives. They enjoy every privilege in their society and exclude working-class women. Instead of maintaining equality in the society, they radically insist to subvert gender roles.

However, in the case of Third World feminism, women face different difficulties in their lives. They suffer from discrimination, extortion, and exploitation in their lives. They become a victim of double marginalization (exploited by their male counterparts and by society). Indeed, Third World feminists' main goal is: "to work toward the full participation and dignity of women along with men" (45). They do not try to subvert gender roles rather they demand equal participation and respect in society. They are liberal and able to represent the issues of women from different classes and raise voices together in order to get justice and maintain equality in society.

Furthermore, Mohanty in her *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* attempts to show the significance of women's struggle of Third World women. She glorifies the involvement of the middle class in the feminists' movement. She writes: "In India, the middle-class women's movement essentially attempted to modernize earlier patriarchal regulation of women and pave the way of middle-class women to enter the participate in political movements" (20). She tries to highlight how middle-class women's involvement in different feminists' movement help to bring change in the patriarchal society and how they play an active role to make women's issue political one. Through their regular struggle in movement, they advocate the rights of women and their demands help to give justice to several women who belong from the different socio-economic community. The same thing can be observed in the case of Aruna too. When she was sexually assaulted, the voice of nurses represents various voices of women from different societies. Most of the women are suffering from sexual abuses in society. Collective voice against rape and violence advocates on the behalf of million women who are facing these kinds of injustices in their daily lives. The strike of KEM (King Edward Memorial) hospital's nurses does not only advocate for Aruna rather they have also raised severe issues of several

women who are facing different types of sexual exploitation in their lives. Various women of Third World countries face these type hazards in their lives. The unified movement of nurses and their strong voice against rape and other injustices of patriarchy spread awareness among different people in society. Moreover, women become able to get their agency to talk in the front. They have got encouragement to raise voice against the atrocities of patriarchy. Therefore, middle- class movement is essential to change the condition of women in society same as the strike of Nurses brings various changes such as changes in rules and services of the hospital, the hospital takes full responsibility of Aruna to provide every service with free of costs.

To wrap up, *Aruna's Story* embarks real-life condition of Aruna which represents almost all females of Third World communities where women's sexual violence can find rampant in the society. It is promoted and nurtured by patriarchy. Basically, this text focuses on how women's bonding can play a significant role to break the patriarchal values of people and brings change by raising working-class female's case at the central debate among all over the world. In short, this research paper attempts to proof how women's unified step can challenge the patriarchy and brings noticeable change in the society. This text presents the message that women's violence is a serious problem of a patriarchal society which can be controlled only through the collective voice of women. To control this kind of inhumane act of men and to establish justice and equality in the society, the unified resistance of women is essential.

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