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S. T. HINDU COLLEGE, NAGERCOIL-2, Tamilnadu, India



Rationale Behind The Doldrums Of Disabled: A Study Of Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite*

Runner

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Disability is a physical and mental disablement, which can be related to any of the mental ability, intellectual capacity, mental development, physical or sensory problem or a combination of these. These disabilities may be affect from birth or occur at any time during the lifetime of a person due to any disease or accident. These disability affects the daily life of the disabled person. If it is a birth defect, it increases with the growth of the disabled person. On the other hand, the reasons behind the disability may be a disease, which affects a body part and it becomes dysfunctional or it may be caused by an accident, which makes a body part disabled. Society make limitations on the disabled people.

Disability studies tries to find out the nature of disability and its effect in the context of social, ethical, political and cultural factors. It takes into account the perspective and prejudice by normal people toward the people with disability. This study focuses on the physical and mental issues. Disability has many parallels to racism and sexism.

Khaled Hosseini is the first Afghan writer to represent through literature, the conflicts and crises through which his country has been going for decades. The country is looked upon elsewhere as a land of terrorists, fundamentalists and fanatics. Hosseini's goal is to lay bare the soul of his country, which is hitherto not ventured by any other writer. Through his novels, Hosseini shows the economic and political devastations created by the endless conflicts in his native country.

Khaled Hosseini works include *The Kite Runner* (2003), *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007), and *And the Mountain Echoed* (2013). Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* portrays a



number of events, from the fall of Afghanistan's monarchy through the Soviet military intervention, the exodus of refugees to Pakistan and United States, and the rise of the Taliban regime. This is a story of two friends named, Amir and Hassan. Hosseini portrays selfish Amir, and kind hearted Hassan in this novel. Hosseini exposes ethnic problems, religious problems and disability issues in this novel.

Ableism means the oppression of people with disabilities. In *The Kite Runner*, Hosseini portrays this through two main characters, named Ali and Hassan. Ali is Amir's father's Hazara servant. He is a kind, lovable and tolerate person, who passes through many harassments and abuses due to his physical disabilities and ethnicity. He has a withered right leg due to polio. He also has a congenital paralysis to his lower facial muscles, which makes his appearance unhappy. Hazara is the low class ethnic group in Afghanistan and Ali belongs to this ethnic group. People mock him and call him Babalu or Boogeyman. People make fun of him for his physical expression and consider him as an outcast. People see his disabilities first and not accept him as a normal person. But he never complains and does his duties perfectly.

Ali's disability gives him an unhappy married life. He marries his cousin, Sanaubar one of the most desirable women in the city. Ali's uncle arranges this marriage, in order to restore some honor to uncle's blemished name. Sanaubar hates Ali, because he is older than her and physically disabled. Happiness comes in Ali's mind when Sanaubar gives birth to a boy named, Hassan. Actually Hassan is the illegal child of Amir's father and Sanaubar. Sanaubar abandons her son, because he is also disabled. Hassan's biological father doesn't accept him, because of the fear of his reputation.

Hassan is very brave, kind hearted and loyal person. He has a cleft lip by birth. This birth defect leads to verbal abuses and seclusion from childhood. Hassan and Amir are of almost same age and they become friends. Hassan always helps Amir in troubles. People sexually harass disabled person, and Hassan also suffers from sexual harassment. In his childhood, a boy named Assef seduces Hassan, which makes a mental scar on Hassan. In his novel, Assef is the shows Afghan nationalism. In his eyes, Afghanistan are Pushtuns, and they



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are the pure afghans. The Hazaras are aliens and should be clear out of Afghanistan like garbage. Amir is the only witness of that sight and he becomes silent. He feels guilty because of his cowardice and can't confronts Hassan. So he plans some ideas to leave Hassan and he wins in that attempt. Amir betrays Hassan, because Amir is sure that nobody will help a disabled person. Hassan doesn't complain about Amir's treachery and framing, Hassan sacrifices himself to preserve narrow and selfish Amir, because he is bounded by the class and social ethics, which makes him willing to bear everything in his own ethics and class environment. Hosseini presents the problems of disabled persons through Ali and Hassan. This oppression is not only the case of Afghanistan, but also prevails in all over the world.

Prejudice towards disabled persons make assumptions like; they have unique personalities, different senses, and different tolerance level. These beliefs make disabled persons as outcast. This type of oppression makes them feel alienated, inferior, defective, and ugly. The oppression of disabled people is never address by society. Society has to be sensitive towards people with disabilities, whether the disability is visible or not. Disabilities include physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, intellectual impairment, mental illness, and various types of chronic diseases.

Work Cited

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