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### Voice of the Voiceless: An Anti-categorical Intersectional Study on Sudha Murty's *The Mother I Never Knew*

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#### Abstract

Sudha Murty, a contemporary writer and philanthropist, stands unique in the field of literature through her realistic writings. Her novella, *The Mother I Never Knew* holds the stories of Bhagirathi and Rupinder, who are victims in the societal structure which drains them using their multiple marginalized identities. This research paper highlights the deepest impact these characters hold because of their multiple marginalized identities, it also addresses how their struggles are normalized in the story, using anti-categorical

intersectionality approach. This research paper sheds light on the oversimplified concept of intersectional identity. It explains the reason behind Bhagirathi and Rupinder's silence in the story which was not accidental but was clearly structured and planned. This research paper questions the base of societal structure which rules and orders the life of many characters like Bhagirathi and Rupinder. It highlights how gender, class, lack of family and husband's support changes the life of a woman without her consent.

**Keywords:** Realistic Writing, Societal Structure, Marginalized Identity, Anti-Categorical Intersectionality, Clearly Structured, Oversimplified Concept

#### Introduction

Sudha Murty's novella, "The Mother I Never Knew", holds multiple marginalized identities which includes gender, class, and societal expectations that silences characters like Bhagirathi and Rupinder. This research paper uses an anti-categorical approach to intersectionality, which was developed by Leslie McCall, in order to understand the complex layers of oppression faced by the characters Bhagirathi and Rupinder from *The Mother I Never Knew* (McCall). This approach allows for an examination of how interconnected identities contribute to their voicelessness within a cruel societal structure, this approach moves beyond a singular axis of misery to present a clear understanding of these characters lived experiences (McCall; Crenshaw). This paper analyzes how Bhagirathi's struggles are framed by her gender, class, and lack of familial support, along with that it traces the result of her orphaned status and her exploitation within her uncle's house and her in-law's house. Similarly, Rupinder's story is analyzed to understand how her gender, class, and the absence of parental support get doubled along with an unsupportive husband and successfully change her as a voiceless person throughout her married life. By focusing on the combination of these identity markers, this research aims to show the systemic nature of the suffering of these characters by showing how societal structures and power dynamics maintains their voiceless position throughout the story (Kothari *et al.*; Javier). This analytical lens which is deeply explained by writers like Kimberle Crenshaw shows how the interlocking systems of oppression create a unique form of subjugation that cannot be understood by analysing gender or class in a separate manner (Crenshaw). This research integrates critical perspectives from Dalit feminist scholarship to underscore how caste, though not explicitly foregrounded, implicitly shapes the social stratification that impacts these characters' vulnerability and access to agency (Singh). This approach moves beyond simply analysing inequality, instead it recognizes the instability and contextual relevance of identity categories and their mutually constitutive nature in shaping the characters lived experiences (McCall). This research uses anti-categorical approach and gives a deeper understanding of strict identity classifications which focuses on the strong and instable ways in which power works in favour at the micro-level when it comes to individual perspectives

and the macro-level for societal structures (Winker and Degele). This refined perspective is important for understanding how characters like Bhagirathi and Rupinder are placed at the margins who experience deeper discrimination due to the systems ignorance and societal norms (Kothari *et al.*). This theoretical framework provides the methodological platform to understand dominant perspectives and highlights the complex experience of women who stand against the prescribed rules and face discrimination in the novel (Javier). It gives a clear analysis of how their submissiveness is not just a consequence of an individual's mistake but rather a product of deeply practiced societal hierarchies that deny both their voice and identity (Rege). By examining the particular discriminations arising from the intersection of their gender, class, and social separation, this research paper aims to reveal the process through which their voices are systematically silenced within the patriarchal and class-based societies which is clearly picturized in Sudha Murty's work (Talat and Singh). This intersectional analysis moves beyond a single focus from gender and recognizes that the experiences of women are not the same but it gets deeply shaped by their position in the complex social hierarchy which includes class as well even when it is unnoticed (Rege). Such an approach shows how the intersection of various marginalized identities, like gender, caste and class, often leads to a worse level of discrimination, where the impact is greater than the complete level of its parts (Kothari *et al.*). Indeed, these intersecting oppressions leads to a unique form of voicelessness, where the absence of a supportive social environment deepens the impact of gender and class-based discrimination. This paper aims to show the systemic factors that lead to the inability of the characters to voice out against their suffering or claim their rights within their social surrounding (McCall). To understand the systemic power, that act as the background force behind such subjugation requires an analytical framework that can reveal about the complex interconnectedness of social categories, rather than treating them as a separate or an added element (Crenshaw). This research highlights the intersectional point where the characters Bhagirathi and Rupinder suffer as voiceless beings in the story and sheds light on the in-depth impact they have in the novel. This perspective is important to understand the basic nature of their powerlessness, which highlights the combination of multiple forms of oppression that creates a unique and inescapable web of subjugation (Verma *et al.*). This anti-categorical approach clearly gives a deeper exploration of their identities, rather than being fixed categories those that are strongly shaped by the connection of these various forms of oppression, leading to a unique style of suffering and voicelessness (Cho *et al.*). This methodological approach allows for an investigation into the specific process through which Bhagirathi and Rupinder's identity are denied, highlighting the ways in which their widespread marginalization is maintained by both interpersonal dynamics and broader societal structures (Kothari *et al.*). Their experiences are not just a bunch of individual misery but rather a unique form of discrimination which arises from the complex interconnectedness of their marginalized identities (Kothari *et al.*). This framework is particularly important to understand how societal structures combine to create and maintain the intersectional inequalities which goes beyond individual characteristics to structural processes (Farnworth *et al.*). This analytical

approach moves beyond examining gender or class as a separate category and shows how the overlapping and interdependent systems of oppression works together to create unique vulnerabilities and silences both Bhagirathi and Rupinder (Crenshaw). This involves an in-depth analysis of how societal norms, forced by family's structures and economic inequalities that collectively works to reject any kind meaningful support which helps to reveal these characters experiences. Through this lens, the paper explores how their marginalized positions are not stable ones but which is continuously shaped, adapted and reflected all the specific contexts of their oppression (Walby *et al.*). This examination highlights how their lower social positions are further deepened by the unconscious belief that is rooted within societal organization and cultural practices (Crenshaw). This broad understanding of their helpless situation demands a strong approach of intersectional theory to reveal the complexities of their voicelessness, showing how their generalized marginalization is a product of interlocking systems of power and oppression rather than separate factors. Indeed, the usage of intersectionality theory, particularly its anti-categorical form, lies in its capacity to show how these overlapping oppressions: gender, class, and social separation, create a unique form of marginalization that deepens the experience of voicelessness in both Bhagirathi and Rupinder's life (Steinfeld and Holt).

### Literature Review

The critical perspective of this research is supported by the works of Leslie McCall on intersectionality, which paves way for an anti-categorical approach that rejects the ideology of focusing single identity groups and instead it focuses on the complex interconnectedness of various social divisions which shapes individual experiences on submissiveness (Crenshaw). Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality clearly shows how race, class, gender, and other characteristics gets combined to create unique experiences of discrimination, showing that these various forms of oppression are not just an added criteria but rather form a unique, interlocking system (Ranga and Prasad). This broad perspective is important for understanding how characters like Bhagirathi and Rupinder experience combined marginalization, where their gendered suffering is in separately linked to their social and economic positions (Kothari *et al.*). The analytical lens of intersectionality, particularly when applied to the Indian context, reveals how traditional power structures, including caste, class and patriarchal norms, combines to deepen the subjugation of women, often in the forms of punishment who stand against the rules and cross the social boundaries (Singh; Kothari *et al.*). This framework allows for a deeper understanding of how the lack of family and society's support in the life of Bhagirathi and Rupinder deepens their gendered oppression when joins with their low societal status, which changes them as voiceless in their own society (Thenmozhi). This approach moves beyond a singular focus on gender to reveal a deeper analysis about the systemic disadvantage which gets triggered by the interaction of various social classifications (Hussain). This is particularly needed for understanding how characters like Bhagirathi and Rupinder who was positioned at the lower levels of the social hierarchy experience intensified forms of subjugation ("Review of Disability Studies"). Though their perspectives are microlevels, it reflects the broader societal inequities

where intersectional vulnerabilities lead to the permanent rejection of their voice and identity (McCall). This theoretical framework is important to understand the characters' suffering when their social positions meet their gender and class, which gets even worse when they combine with supportless husband and supportless maternal family that creates a unique form of vulnerability which ultimately silences them (Walby *et al.*). The structural intersectionality framework which was proposed by Crenshaw, provides a strong methodology for understanding the multilayered forms of domination like gender and class, works together to suppress the voices of marginalized women like Bhagirathi and Rupinder (Crenshaw). This approach highlights the interconnected miseries they face which are not just an extra category but rather a deep and unique form of oppression which gradually prevents them from proving their existence (Sigle-Rushton and Lindström). It allows for an understanding of how their bodies become places for battle and control which reflects the societal inscription of power dynamics that directly affects their lived experiences (Winker and Degele). This refined perspective addresses the struggles of marginalized women who often gets placed in a position where overlapping systems of oppression makes their experiences unique which requires a specific analytical approach ("Intersecting Oppressions: The Lived Realities of Dom Women in Banaras, India"). Such an analytical lens is undoubtedly needed when societal norms regarding female purity and obedience which is often guarded by religious or cultural order gets worsened when combines with economic vulnerability which leads to limit their support against injustice (Kothari *et al.*; Thenmozhi). The intersectional framework is essential for understanding how these women characters lack social support, economic independence along with patriarchal ideologies leads to their profound voicelessness which ultimately changes them as powerless beings to challenge their oppressive situation (Sinha and Nayak). The framework provides a strong method for analysing the intersection of gender, class, and social marginalization that creates a specific form of violence and subjugation, which might remain as unaddressed when it is analysed as single categories of identity (Crenshaw).

### Methodology

"The Mother I Never Knew" by Sudha Murty is analysed in a close textual analysis by drawing critical discourse analysis techniques, it reveals the realistic narrative strategies that clearly picturize the lived experiences and discrimination of these voiceless characters (Ranga and Prasad). This methodology aims in identifying the linguistic and narrative process through which Bhagirathi and Rupinder's voicelessness is developed and practiced throughout the story, even in the absence of direct dialogues. The investigation particularly studies how their interactions with other characters and their internal monologues, reveals the widespread impact of intersecting oppressions on their identity and self-expression. This qualitative analysis explores how marginalization is not just a product of an individual's situation but which is deeply rooted within broader societal structures, as suggested by the anti-categorical approach to intersectionality (McCall). This involves a careful examination of the story where the characters' reaction and silences often speak volumes about the forced realities of women in patriarchal societies (Crenshaw). The methodology clearly analyses the portrayal

of social hierarchy within the story; particularly how male characters and societal institutions play a major role in silencing the characters like Bhagirathi and Rupinder (Crenshaw). The aim of the research paper is to showcase how these characters face denial of opportunities when it comes to self-representation and voicing out, which mirrors their real-life suffering, when gender combines with class and social isolation (McCall; Winker and Degele). The anti-categorical approach challenges fixed rules of identity categories which allows a more fluid and context-based understanding of how power plays a major role in silencing these characters (Winker and Degele). It stresses that categories like "gender" and "class" are not stable but are dynamically shaped by their interrelations and by specific social, economic, and cultural contexts (Winker and Degele; Banerjee and Ghosh). This research highlights the fluid and strong interconnected relationship between these categories which shapes the experience of these voiceless characters, rather than treating them as stable and independent categories (Winker and Degele). By examining the specific process, it shows how the identities of these characters are continuously ignored and rejected throughout the story, the study shows the multidimensional nature of this oppression. This analytical approach allows for a detailed examination, of how societal expectations, economic inequalities, and patriarchal control combines to remove the freedom and deciding ability from these women characters, in order to keep them as voiceless and invisible beings (Latha *et al.*). This approach helps to highlight how these women characters subjugation is not just a consequence of an individual's failing but is inseparably interconnected into the societal norms and power structures which assures their marginalized status (Sigle-Rushton and Lindstrom). This allows for a broader understanding about the process that changes them as voiceless beings, this approach moves beyond simplistic explanations to reveal the complex interconnectedness of forces that work behind (Cho *et al.*).

### Results

The analysis of "The Mother I Never Knew" shows that both Bhagirathi and Rupinder undergo the characteristics of voicelessness which is not an inborn characteristic, but is a direct consequence of the intersecting oppressions they endure which includes gender, class, and the absence of society's support (Kothari *et al.*). Their experiences are clearly explained by McCall's anti-categorical approach to intersectionality, where the complex interconnectedness of these categories creates a unique and intensified form of marginalization, that effectively silences these characters (McCall). This framework shows how their identities as women from lower backgrounds joins with their unsupportive family and community, suppress them and their voice in the story (Walby *et al.*). Bhagirathi's struggles are confirmed in the society by her status as an orphan and her dependence on unsupportive relatives, which restricts her freedom and her chances in escaping these exploitative situations when gets combined with her gender and low social standing. "Her parents drowned in a flood when she was a toddler and her maternal uncle Gopal Kulkarni offered to take responsibility of the orphaned girl. He was the village postman in Shurpali. Gopal's wife, Kaveramma, scolded her frequently, 'Your parents have given you an apt name - Bhagirathi. You keep playing in the river all day!'" (Murty *The Mother I Never Knew* 63). With no other

options, Bhagirathi accepted her fate and started to respond in silence, which continued even after her one month of marriage life. On the other hand, Rupinder's struggle showcases how patriarchal expectations and a lack of husband's support, when joins with her gendered discrimination, forces her into a silent process of injustice within her marital home ("Intersecting Oppressions: The Lived Realities of Dom Women in Banaras, India"). This helpless situation could be seen in the story of Rupinder, where she silently endures the tortures of her mother-in-law, who cruelly dominated her. "Her mother-in-law dominated her and Surinder just watched from the sidelines. Soon, she became very lonely. At least she had had freedom in her village back home. Here, she had lost even that" (Murty). Rupinder as a new bride in her marital home faced many struggles and chose to be silent, as she clearly knows she has no one to support her. Her marginalized identities clearly made her as an easy target to her discriminations. Their stories collectively highlight how the absence of an intersectional lens would fail to capture the in-depth walls of their struggles, as a singular focus on gender or class alone would hide the worst side of these intertwined oppressions (Scott). Indeed, their situations clearly shows how discrimination is not just layered but are inseparably connected and formed as a unique pattern of inequality for each woman who hold multiple marginalized identities (Zhao). This complex interconnectedness of categorical phases, as Crenshaw claims, changes their suffering as invisible within their societal framework which was designed to address discrimination as a result of single category, thereby deepening their voicelessness within broader societal organization (Crenshaw). Thus, an intersectional analysis is important for understanding how their position within these overlapping systems of power contribute to their helpless situation and to their inability to ask for their rights (Crenshaw). Their experiences powerfully stress the necessity of recognizing how multiple forms of discrimination combine to create unique patterns of oppression which reflect the struggles of other marginalized groups who face combined miseries (Zhesko and Petrukhin). Their stories clearly show that discrimination is not simply an additive category but produces a visible and unique experiences of oppression (Shekhar and Dwivedi). This analytical lens is important for understanding how individuals situated at the intersection of various marginalized identities face unique form of discrimination that are basically different from those experienced by individuals within single marginalized groups (Crenshaw; Hwang). This refined analysis is important for understanding the societal process that preserve their voicelessness and moves beyond normalized concept to expose the deeply rooted structures of power and privilege (Pinem). "The old woman came out limping and carrying breakfast for the two men, 'Why are you talking about that man? The rascal ruined Rupinder's life'... Rupinder was treated like a servant in that family. Her mother-in-law was horrible and her husband ill-treated her till the day he died" (Murty). Rupinder being a poor girl from a lower family background silently endures her suffering without disclosing it to anyone from her maternal family. Her multiple marginalized identities serve as a reason for her suffering, Rupinder was pictured as a helping and innocent girl at the beginning of the story, Sudha Murty clearly uses her realistic writing style to highlight how an innocent girl

changes into a silent woman under society's pressure and rules. Similar to Rupinder's story, Bhagirathi also suffers on the other hand. "Young and pregnant Bhagirathi collapsed in grief...Bhagirathi was waiting at home, desperately believing that Hanuma would somehow convince Setu. She had not eaten properly since the letter had come from Mumbai" (Murty). Bhagirathi could not even voice out against her mother-in-law's false accusation, instead she cries and waits for her brother to convince her husband. Her husband Setu, on the other hand, could not voice out for his wife, even after knowing that the unborn child is his own child. Setu lets his mother to write a letter to Bhagirathi, accusing her with ill-discipline. Thus, his role as a supportless husband in Bhagirathi's life shatters her further. Anti-categorical approach reveals that the discrimination of Bhagirathi and Rupinder is not simply a matter of individual's mistake but is systematically enforced through societal structures and rules that deny their identity and remains unbothered to their helpless situation, which is similar to the experiences of women of colour and lower caste who are often seen as invisible within the mainstream feminist, anti-casteist and anti-racist writings (Cho *et al.*; Crenshaw). This analytical lens, as developed by Crenshaw, to "demarginalize the intersections", recognizes that focusing solely on separate sources of discrimination overlooks the complex suffering of those multiply burdened (Vantin). This conceptualization clearly takes a shift from singular categorical analyses to a deeper framework that addresses the worsened nature of their oppression, and moves beyond a simple analysis of misery in order to understanding how these factors interact to create unique experiences of marginalization (Crenshaw). This analytical framework allows for a deeper and broader perspective on the structure of power in society, particularly for women like Bhagirathi and Rupinder who face "additive multiple discrimination" where various grounds of discrimination combine at the same time (Kothari *et al.*). This perspective is important for identifying how their lower positions across multiple social hierarchies like: gender, class, and family's support, do not just add up but rather interact to create a unique and deeper form of voicelessness within their society (Ivanov; Winker and Degele). This complex interconnectedness makes it evident, that, their inability to speak about their sufferings starts from a systemic rejection, rather than personal weakness, as their experiences are often not identified within traditional frameworks of discrimination (Crenshaw). Their helpless situation thus showcases how institutional structures and cultural rules combine to produce a specific form of marginalization that changes its individual parts as a whole, which effectively avoids their chances to ask help or to express their self (Chereches; Crenshaw). Fredman's concept of "structural intersectionality" is precisely related here that stresses the need to address the systemic disadvantages, illogical beliefs, and lack of voice that result from such combination of oppressive factors, which demands for a strong change on structures of discrimination rather than just highlighting differences (Kothari *et al.*). This highlights how their experiences of violence and oppression are unique from those of women who do not share about their specific racial, economic, or social positioning (Wang). This deeper understanding gives a broad criticism of how societal systems which is designed to address singular axis of oppression always fail to properly protect individuals who

live with multiple marginalized identities, changing their unique forms of discrimination as largely unaddressed (Gebruers).

### Discussion

The experiences of Bhagirathi and Rupinder thus serve as an essential case study for understanding how the “matrix of domination” operates, proving that their voicelessness is not just an individual’s inadequacy but a systemic outcome of their positions within overlapping structures of power and disadvantage (Sigle-Rushton and Lindström). This perspective gets combined with the arguments of writers and critics who claim that, when individuals live with various marginalized identities face unique forms of rejection, which could not be understood using single-axis analyses (“Intersecting Oppressions: The Lived Realities of Dom Women in Banaras, India”). Indeed, their stories stress the critical necessity of an intersectional approach to fully understand how their specific social locations when combined with gender, class, and lack of family support, works together to produce their unique experiences of marginalization which eventually silences them (Talat and Singh; Winker and Degele). When Bhagirathi was falsely accused by her mother-in-law, she responds in silence and scolds her unborn baby thinking it was the reason for her suffering. Bhagirathi thinks her marginalized status as a normal one and refuses to fight against the social hierarchy. Champakka (Bhagirathi’s Mother-in-law) easily writes a letter and destroys her daughter-in-law’s life which shows the control of power structure, as Champakka clearly knows the background of Bhagirathi and her character. Champakka uses Bhagirathi’s innocence and voiceless nature, as an easy tool to throw her out from her son’s life. Bhagirathi’s multiple marginalized identity serves as a strong reason behind the loss of her marital life. Similar story line could be seen in Rupinder’s life.

“When their shop closed, Parminder’s smart wife took her husband and the money from the sale to her parent’s village. Nothing remained with Rupinder. She had no money and no husband” (Murty). Rupinder being struck with her marginalized identities could not even voice for her own rights even after her husband’s death. She was additionally burdened with a new marginalized identity which was, “a widow”. Rupinder lived her complete life as a voiceless person, though she had points to talk she chose silence as her response. This analytical framework is essential for discovering the complex interconnectedness of social hierarchy that change certain individuals as voiceless beings, highlighting how structural inequalities combine to produce unique forms of oppression (Crenshaw). This approach allows for a refined understanding of how such interconnected oppressions play a major role in rejecting their freedom and identity, which extends in maintaining them as voiceless beings (Aploon-Zokufa). Their stories highlight that the suffering of women in such case cannot be viewed under single category, as the unique disadvantages faced by those characters who were at the lowest position of society due to intersecting oppressions like gender, caste, and class demands a refined approach to address their issues (“Review of Disability Studies”). Consequently, their helpless situation reveals the incapability of established law and the social actions that often showcase single forms of discrimination, thereby normalizing the combined vulnerabilities which is a result of multiple intersection of

marginalized identities (Kothari *et al.*). This is particularly common for women from marginalized communities, who often face a “triple deprivation” due to gender, poverty, and social separation, further deepening their voicelessness within broader societal organization (Emmadi). This perspective is important for understanding the stories of women like Bhagirathi and Rupinder, who face multiple disadvantages yet still gets rejected and ignored within mainstream feminist writings which is very much similar to how Dalit women’s experiences are frequently ignored from broader feminist movements (Pan). This social exclusion stresses the necessity of an intersectional approach that acknowledges the unique experiences and distinct identities of marginalized women as the approach challenges the mainstream feminist movements to broaden their scope. Such an intersectional lens clearly reveals how the experiences of women like Bhagirathi and Rupinder often gets changed as invisible within the legal and social frameworks that is designed in a model which addresses only singular forms of discrimination, thereby preserving their marginalization (Cho *et al.*). This invisibility is often maintained by systemic factors that reject the identity and voice of these women characters which forces them into a position where their struggles are not only normalized but actively suppressed (Talat and Singh). This active suppression often presents in societal norms, that planned legal frameworks in an order which fails to recognize the complex nature of their oppression, as seen in the discriminatory cases of marginalized women (Cho *et al.*; Hussain). This further strengthens the argument that the multidimensional forms of oppression experienced by these characters cannot be properly addressed without a framework that recognizes the interplay of gender, class, and social marginalization which creates unique vulnerabilities that demand specific inquiries (Gruener *et al.*; Crenshaw). This broad perspective is important for developing strategies that give needed solution which aims to explain the prolonged power structures that maintain such complex forms of disadvantage and silences women, especially who falls under socioeconomically deprived conditions (Gruener *et al.*). This could be clearly seen in the stories of Bhagirathi and Rupinder. “Kaveramma would openly curse her and talk about her to everybody who came home, ‘This girl has been an endless burden and a curse to our family. She killed her parents as soon as she was born, and then she killed her husband as soon as she was married’” (Murty). Bhagirathi’s dependent and helpless situation made her an easy target to multiple subjugations and vulnerabilities. She accepted the harsh words of her aunty and maintained her posture as a silent woman. It was clear that Bhagirathi’s multiple marginalized identities were the sole reason for her suffering and her submissive nature. Similar to Bhagirathi’s story, Rupinder also faced multiple marginalized identity, which made her to live as a voiceless person throughout her life time. Sudha Murty clearly picturizes the suffering and helpless situation of Rupinder in the story. “Rupinder was overcome with sorrow. She knew that when she went back to her husband, she would have to hear her mother-in-law’s sarcastic comments in addition to dealing with the loss of her baby, and being overworked. Surinder had never been a companion or shown her any form of kindness. He did not care about her at all” (Murty). Rupinder lacked proper family support and husband’s support which made her mentally weak, and dragged her to

an eternal separation from the society which recognized her as a voiceless person. The lack of proper support from family and society's structure, further deepens their subjugation, leaving them as an easy target to exploitative practices (Hussain). This vulnerability is deepened by the absence of a proper framework that recognizes and addresses the specific challenges faced by individuals who face multiple oppressions, as highlighted by discussions around the normalized patterns of intersectional perspectives in existing literature (Singh). This normalization preserves the cycles of marginalization which demands the necessity of an analytical framework that could properly capture the layered nature of these characters suffering and the systemic forces that maintain their voicelessness (Hassan and Brahma). These stories highlight how societal rules and structural inequalities often gets combined to silence marginalized women, preventing them from voicing out their experiences of oppression and it prevents them from seeking a refugee (Kumar and Bakshi; Crenshaw). This difficulty in identifying and addressing their widespread marginalization is precisely what Crenshaw highlights as the "frame of perception" problem, where the absence of a proper conceptual lens which could highlight the depths of intersecting oppressions leads to their unique suffering, which is often overlooked in both public communications and policies (Song *et al.*). The concept of intersectionality, thus, becomes not just an academic abstraction but an important tool for understanding how multiple structures of oppression combines to create specific and deeper forms of subjugation for characters like Bhagirathi and Rupinder (McCall). Their stories showcase how the intersection of gender, class, and the absence of family's support creates a meeting point of oppression that silences their voices and denies their identity within their respective societies which is similar to how caste and gender hierarchies in India contribute to the widespread discrimination for Dalit women (Kothari *et al.*). This highlights how the denial of their experience within their own society not only reflects individual struggles but also exposes systemic failures in acknowledging and addressing the lived realities of those who live at the margins of power (Crenshaw). Such an analysis is important for understanding the process that maintains their voicelessness which stresses the urgent need for a broad intersectional approach to social justice (Javier; Verma *et al.*). This approach acknowledges that the oppression faced by women like Bhagirathi and Rupinder is not simply an added category but a multiplicative one, where the combination of various miseries creates a unique form of marginalization that cannot be understood by examining each factor as separate ones (Mukti *et al.*). This theoretical lens provides a strong framework to understand the complex layers of marginalization and power dynamics that changes these characters as voiceless within their own community (Javier). The application of an anti-categorical approach within intersectionality clearly shows how fixed categories of identity fail to capture the changing and complex nature of their experiences which strongly maintains their marginalization (Gruener *et al.*).

## Conclusion

Ultimately, the voicelessness of Bhagirathi and Rupinder is a proof to the strong power of intersecting oppressions that silence marginalized individuals within a patriarchal and class-based society. Their experiences reflect a broader

societal failure to acknowledge and address the complex interconnectedness of gender, class, and the lack of social support thereby combines and collectively rejects their identity and preserves their marginalization (Walby *et al.*). This research, therefore, demands for a strong intersectional analysis to show the inseparable ways in which their identities as women along with their socioeconomic status and lack of societal support, changes them as particularly vulnerable to silence and reject them, showcasing the struggles of other marginalized groups such as Dalit women ("Intersecting Oppressions: The Lived Realities of Dom Women in Banaras, India"; Talat and Singh). This research paper gives a deeper understanding of their marginalized existence, which gives a broad examination of the societal power which belongs to a caste-based society, where their individual experiences often serve as an example for societal prejudice and historical injustices (Talat and Singh). Such an examination, developed by critical perspectives from writers like McCall and Crenshaw, highlights how the anti-categorical approach of intersectionality can effectively explain the multiple marginalized understanding of womanhood, revealing the heterogeneous experiences of oppression (Crenshaw). It highlights how structural inequalities, contribute to the discrimination of characters like Bhagirathi and Rupinder (Talat and Singh). This framework shows the systemic structure of their voicelessness and proves how society and its rules combine to reject their identity and voice (Cho *et al.*). This further stress the need to move beyond simply analysing gender inequality and to explain the more complex understanding of how various axes of oppression combine and connect with each other (Sigle-Rushton and Lindstrom; Crenshaw). This approach stresses the importance of analysing intersecting classes, understanding its unique construction which plays an important role in shaping multiple intersecting inequalities (Walby *et al.*). This is particularly important in stories where class holds a major impact when combines with gender and other social categories on an individual's misery and marginalization (Ferre). This broader analysis is important for understanding the effective interventions that does not only addresses the symptoms but also the root causes of their silenced existence (Walby *et al.*). This broader analysis, works in order to move beyond surface-level interpretations, and it delves into the deep sociological and economic underpinnings that contribute to the suppression of marginalized women's voices within the broader societal organization (Thenmozhi; Walby *et al.*). This refined examination, stresses a complete understanding of the process through which their identities are shaped by systemic oppression which extends beyond recognition and reaches to an active division of structures that preserve these characters subjugation (Javier). Added to that, it highlights how the anti-categorical approach, by explaining the fixed categories it allows for an understanding of how their identities are not just an added category but are visibly changed at the intersection of various oppressions (Crenshaw). This analytical lens shows how the specific challenges faced by Bhagirathi and Rupinder are not just a sum of their individual miseries but are produced through the strong connection between gender, class, and their social positions within a patriarchal society (McCall). This refined perspective combines with McCall's ideology on the "complexity of intersectionality", where no single dimension of inequality can fully describe the complex

structure of multiple, intersecting, and often confusing dimensions of misery (McCall). Such a framework showcases how their particular vulnerability arises not from a separate factor but from the mutual support of multiple axis of oppression which creates a unique form of marginalization (Cho *et al.*). This demands an exploration of how their societal roles and expectations which is shaped by patriarchal norms and economic limitations, actively contribute to their subjugation and the rejection of their individual identity (Lawton *et al.*). This analytical lens perfectly pictures the point when it considers how the absence of family and community's support worsens their dangerous positions in their in-law's house and changes them as easy targets to societal pressures and eternal silence (Ali *et al.*).

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