

Patriarchal Society as A Chief Cause for Gender Discrimination then Responsible for Patrick Batman's Misogynist Criminal Behaviour in Bret E. Ellis' American Psycho

Ujamasirin Shammi Khan¹, Dr. Vivek V. Joshi²

¹PGTD, Gondwana University, Gadchiroli(MH)

²Associate Professor & Head Dept. of English, PGTD Gondwana University, Gadchiroli

Abstract:

The present paper expands the theme of criminal behaviour resulting from a misogynist attitude made up under the impact of patriarchal society. The paper reflects the topic through the character of Patrick Batman, the protagonist in Bret E. Ellis' novel American Psycho. Throughout the novel, the character becomes a specimen of highlighting the negative impacts of patriarchal society especially in relation to women who have been given the secondary position all through. Most often, the subjugation turns into unjust treatment merely decreasing women as an object to be used by male dominated society as per their wishes and criteria. The situation is most appropriately sketched by Bret E. Ellis through his character of Patrick Batman.

Keywords: patriarchy, misogyny, social stereotypes, gender discrimination, domination, violence, criminal acts.

INTRODUCTION:

The importance of both the genders in the society can be perceived through the famous quote by Swami Vivekanand which reads as, "As it is impossible for a bird to fly on only one wing it is equally impossible to think about the welfare of the world, of the human society unless the condition of women is improved." Although some conventions and norms of the society leads one to mark a distinction between these two genders thus making an unfaithful discrimination. The result of these discrimination is sometimes come out in the most horrific ways.

The protagonist in Bret E. Ellis' American Psycho Patrick Batman throughout the novel reflects the attitude of misogyny which then given birth to multiple violent tendencies in his behaviour. It is during the course of the novel that one can mark Batman's inhuman treatment and violence against women is largely derived from the misconceived notions of patriarchal system in the society. The novel portrays a culture of capitalism, materialism and ultra-modernism where human life is defined by the amount of wealth he possesses. The environment has a deep connection with patriarchal system where women have been assigned to secondary position thus making women the marginalized one. The concept of secondary position and marginalization further makes way for the objectification of them.

The concept is related to patriarchy in a way that, it is in patriarchal system that women have been

subordinated. They have been put under the control of male authority in the society. Women are dominated by this male authorities in their society and women are compelled to yield to the system. This objectification of women in the hands of male community further becomes responsible in giving a thought of having the whole authority over female community. This view resulted from patriarchal norms equip male community with a feeling to subjugate women and use them as per their wish. The norm is wrongly ascertained by many of the men in society like the character of Patrick Batman who then goes on giving an arbitrary treatment to women with a thought of having domination over them.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The present paper aims to evaluate the individual mindset nurturing a misogynist attitude in respect to stereotypes of patriarchal society. It is with the character of Patrick Batman and his inhumane cruel acts of violence towards women, the topic is being analyzed.

1. To find out a link between one's internal behaviour and external influences of social concepts.
2. To analyze the novel American Psycho and find out the aspect of patriarchal society as a leading factor to cause a misogynistic attitude in individuals.
3. To make investigation up to what limit societal norms can impact the mindset of an individual.
4. To highlight the negative impact of patriarchal structure where women have been debased by many just in the name of authority and control.
5. Patriarchal system which makes a divide between male- female community most often leads to gender discrimination.
6. To figure out the arbitrary treatment of some of the male community to maintain their superiority which more easily gives birth to violence, tortures and assaults both mental and physical.

In short studying of the topic becomes important from the view to make a balance in both male female relationships along with the effort to establish a smooth and coordinating bond between the two in order to bring out the welfare in the society. Equally it will lead to curb violence and crimes related to females in the society.

METHODOLOGY:

In order to understand the misogynistic behaviour of Patrick Batman in the novel American Psycho and unravel the dynamics behind his mindset and attitude the following methodology becomes useful.

1. Review of literature:

Review of literature becomes of key importance in finding out the aspect of patriarchy as an influential factor in making one's attitude and thus establishing a close connection of patriarchy with individual misogynist attitude. It is through the research in various areas provides a great support in forming a base for the topic. Contextual understanding of the themes like negative impacts of patriarchy, masculinity, and gender discrimination become the guiding factor for the research.

Thematic research over the topic on the character of Patrick Batman in American Psycho and survey of the existing literature in the area proves to be remarkable in making a clear connection in forming the conclusion.

2. Textual analysis:

An intensive and detailed study of the novel itself helps in analyzing and identifying the circumstances of the characters along with the dilemmas he is made to face in his lives. A close examination to the attitude of the character provides guidelines for the research.

3. Thematic analysis:

Breaking out the themes and analyzing it systematically proves to be significant in the work. Working on individual themes like the role of patriarchy, masculinity, gender discrimination and its negative impacts on society and individuals helps in forming a clear idea which then leads towards the conclusion.

4. Theoretical framework:

Refereeing the relevant theories in the field works as a guiding point in suggesting the real dynamics of the situation in the novel. Various theories of gender critics, feminism, social theories, theories of criminal mindset and child development becomes helpful in unravelling the concept.

PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY AS A CATALYST FOR MISOGYNY AND VIOLENCE

Patrick Batman the central character in the novel exhibits the characteristics of misogynist attitude in his behaviour. The acts of violence and extreme cruelty against women in his surrounding is sufficient to understand the misconceived notions that he holds within him about women. All the cruelties that he commits in respect to women is not at all having any personal affiliation rather the impact of the deep seated hatred and contempt towards all the women community. Moreover it is in the influence of materialistic society that women have been considered as merely an object of commodity. The subordinate status given to women in patriarchal system is what then gives birth to the feeling of objectification of women which ultimately ends up in the acts of cruelties and violence towards women community.

In David Jones' famous work *Understanding Criminal Behaviour*, he elucidates the concept through the lines of Susan Brownmill remarking about rape as "it is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear." The similar situation is seen in the behaviour and mindset of Patrick Batman throughout the novel. He feels a sense of authority over women and so doesn't feel embarrassed to objectify women. The mindset provides him motivation in reinforcing the same concept of superiority complex over women community. It is out of the reason that he finds no hesitation in inflicting cruelties and violence over women as the notions that he receives in patriarchal system help him considering women as his own property to be used and managed in any way as per their own desire. The eccentric behaviour of Patrick especially towards women is one of the examples in understanding his distorted views and concepts about society. A strong feeling of masculinity runs through the mind of Patrick which makes him adapt the hardcore ways under which he goes for cruelties and violence including serious crimes as well.

Batman's misogynist attitude is prevalent throughout all the novel. He is an example of alpha-male with a trait of hyper-masculinity in him. He is more prone to incline towards the traditional norms of patriarchal system with a quest of authority, dominance and power in his hands. It is through the assertion of power and control over women, he achieves a feeling of completeness. The norm equips men with an attitude to see women merely as an object to be ruled over where men gets the sole authority over their lives. In Batman's case also we get to see the similar outlook developed by him, where he considers women not merely like objects to be used and distorted as per his desire to achieve his own pleasure. Batman's inhumane acts of cruelties against women throughout the novel signify a feeling of deep contempt and hatred that he has cultivated in his mind. His acts of horrible sexual violence including severe tortures, assaults, and murders are the examples of his inner furies along with the diminished status of women in his eyes where he finds it non-offensive and non-regrettable to inflict harm to them. He considers women as his sole property to be used in any way without having any consideration for their individual lives.

Another negatively taken aspect of patriarchal influence can be traced in his attitude of gaining supremacy

and power in society. For the purpose using women is of no wonder as women have been considered to be already weak and asserting power and control over them is easy to handle. It is through the trick he equips himself with a feeling to assert his masculinity and achieve power in the society easily.

CONCLUSION:

From the above presented discussion, it becomes evident that there is certainly a part of patriarchal system if taken in a negative way. The relationship of social norms and individual development of the person is found to be clear. The negative factors of patriarchy which includes male supremacy over female community directly stresses on the idea of subordinating women and asserting control over them which in turn sometimes leads to disastrous ways.

REFERENCES

1. Birje, Sudhir. Criminal Psychology and Criminal Sociology. 3. Pune: Ajit prakashan, 2019.
2. chancer, lynne s. sadomasochism in everyday life. new jersey: rutgers university press, 1992.
3. davies, douglas. child development: a practitioner's guide. Ed. nancy boyd webb. third. new york, london: guilford press, n.d. 2023.
4. Eisenberg, Nancy, ed. Handbook of Child Psychology. 6. Vols. volume three: social, emotional and personality development. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., n.d. 2022.
5. Ellis, Bret Easton. American Psycho. New York: Vintage Contemporaries, 1991.
6. Fewster, Helen, ed. The Crime Book: Big Ideas Simply Explained. London: Dorling Kindersley Ltd, 2017.
7. johanssen, jacob. fantasy, online misogyny and the manosphere. Oxon: routledge, 2022.
8. Lock, John. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding . 1690.
9. moore, megan. "psychological theories of crime and delinquency." journal of human behaviour in the social environment (2011). 2024.
10. usborne, margaret l. arnot and cornelie, ed. gender and crime in modern europe. UK: UCL press, 1999.
11. Birje, Sudhir. Criminal Psychology and Criminal Sociology. 3. Pune: Ajit prakashan, 2019.