
Feminist Analysis of Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* Establishing Identity of Women

Yemshree Tayeng

PhD, Research Scholar

Guide: Dr Ashwini Joshi

Ram Krishna Dharmarth Foundation University, Bhopal

ABSTRACT:

*The status of woman in society has always been differed from culture to culture, from country to country and from ages to ages. Woman was always under patriarchal societies; excluded from all powers and responsibilities and in other side man have been always given a higher status. An increasing awareness of the injustice done with woman gave feminist movement. The concepts of feminism have changed the social and cultural in the modern age. They focused about woman and their problems faced by oppressions in patriarchal society, sexual colonialism, sexual politics and her marginalization, loss of identity, her freedom and suppression of her view and want. Feminism have not only influenced in real life and culture but also in creative literature, literary theory and criticism. This research paper is a feminist analysis of Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1879). Through this paper it will show the untrue system of marriage norms, stressing fighting for individual identity and their freedom, in addition protesting to all restrictions in society.*

Keywords: *Loss Identity, Humanity, Freedom, Individuality, Masculine Society, Feminism Role, Patriarchal Society.*

INTRODUCTION

The research study is taken from the play *A Doll's House* written by Henrik Ibsen, a major 19th Norwegian playwright and an author. He is well known as a realist, socialist and feminist. He always tries to represent depth knowledge of human nature and relationship in his writing which is always true to life. Feminism is filled with large collection of social theories, moral philosophies, economical issues and political movements in concerned with women experiences. Many feminists in today's times discuss and argue that feminism is a way which helps to come across every problems based on social class, religion, culture, and race. Feminists do not work only for the sake of justice and development towards women; they come out with reasons to fight against the social issues and developments of women. Feminist literature is based on the principles and ideologies of feminism and relates any literary work that keep woman at the centre and struggle for their equality, right and to be accepted as a human being before discriminating them into gender stereotype. Only through such media woman believed their change living in shackles and restraints society. In literature of feminist women's nature are always featured as the main protagonist; they do not accept readily the traditional role of women

decided by the society, they are ready to make their decision, ready to express out their feelings and ready to deal with the consequences of their actions, choices and decisions. The identity of female characters in literature is not identified by the relationships, roles or stereotypes; it is the identity that is defined by their choices and their beliefs.

STUDY AREA

The purpose of study is to make a feminist analysis of selected play 'A Doll's House. It will depict the real social issues and analyze in bringing justice and equality towards women's voices which has been suppressed searching their own identity. *A Doll's House* is a realist play which represents the social conflicts of 19th century marriage norms. It shows how the societies transform women situation and family life. Ibsen has brought out the protagonist Nora Helmer who lives in male dominated society where wife is treated as a doll in her own house. Finally Nora makes a decision to step out of the house leaving her husband and kids in search of her identity in the society and to become independent after knowing her husband value only about his reputation and work then his wife. Feminist literature has played great role in bringing changes toward the development of women status in the field of social, cultural, religious, political and economic situation. Though lots have changed in today times, there is still to battle for the justice and equality for women.

INTERPRETATIONS OF HENRIK IBSEN'S PLAY *A DOLL'S HOUSE* IN FEMINIST ANALYSIS

The presence of educated women in society gives a topic to discuss whether can a woman participate actively toward society and family? In other side there is no need of discussion about men, they are always the superior part representing both positive and neutral. Thus, humanity is male and men define women not as themselves but they for the sake of men. The result is that our traditional cultural beliefs have bought a gap between masculine and feminine, where masculine gender rule over feminine in name of traits like intelligence, ambition, determination etc and feminine as weak, dull etc. *A Doll's House* play awakens woman as an individual human being in society. Every characters of female in the play are attractive and focused with much attention in establishing their self identity. Still today woman are under patriarchal laws within the countries where they faced same circumstances as protagonist "Nora" in the play. Despite their entire social, political, career advancement, economic and etc yet there are many women living in neglected, bitter past memories, no reason to live their life, and crippled as their destinies are tied under the system of patriarchal society. The play *A Doll's House* is signified under the marriage norms in a true feminist, depicting the real events. It is relevant with the society for its truth about the conjugal life. The main focus given in this play is that man always find hard to accept the fact woman are equal to men within the family and social life. The explanation shown in the play by Henrik is not only clarity in support of women for their identity but as a problem of whole humanity. Like Nora, many women fights daily with problem and suffering in their married life but they never reveal their suffering and pain because of the fear that their crying voice will be suppressed in this male society. The problem still exists in today's developing countries, including our own therefore liberation and emancipation is beyond doubt. But there is much progress and improvement toward women development by many feminists and

their theories. We see women are in better positions in today times. In fact women have gained much awareness against the norms of society and masculine power. They are strong and can move beyond immanence, they can take responsibilities for individual and the world, where she can choose her happiness. It gives a message toward society that if a woman is not allowed to get her own identity and develop her own individuality, she could not really be happy. Thou there's far way for woman to establish individual identity in this cruel world of masculine but for sure there will be development for better future. Woman will be called as a human being.

MAIN FINDINGS

- 1) The researcher has tried to find out the problems behind why conjugal life of couples does not make peace relationship? Why should a wife be subordinate to her husband? Why should a woman be always servile to her husband? It always happened with many of couples because of husband's excessive rule with their wife which employs her to come out from such situations.
- 2) It is observed that Henrik Ibsen had question the marital society in favor of woman status in relation to her husband. Ibsen had shown great social conscience and to awaken individual conscious toward woman for their rights.
- 3) Also researcher has discovered woman is an individual person, she has full authority on her life, her desires, and her rights. She no longer accepts what the society has to tell her and question her, what religion and morality has to teach her. She is all independent and can lived life according to her choice and wish. Ibsen had shown great social conscience and to awaken individual conscious toward woman for their rights.
- 4) Through this research paper researcher tries to show the feminine sensibility within woman's desire to know herself not only in term of her relationship with the family but also in term of her individual identity, self respect and its relationship with the world.

CONCLUSION

After careful study of the play it is noted that the issues and problems of women are contributed through the lens of literary writings. In today's time it is needed to bring out and discussed these issues and problems in a special reference with women contact. The present research is a humble attempt to analyze the play by Henrik Ibsen in a feminist view. It will not only justify bringing a radical transformation toward men- women relationship also it will bring realization in people that love making and domesticity are not rooted in concern with women; they are equally capable and intelligent like man..

BIBLOGRAPHY

- i. Ibsen, Henrik. *A Doll's House*, 1879
- ii. Khan, Sultana Begum. *Encounter with Patriarchy: A study of Feminist Perspective on the selected novels of Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Arundhati Roy, Shobha De*; Phd Thesis, IASE, 2009.

- iii. Hawke worth, Mary. *SIGNS: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 2004.
- iv. Hemmer, Bjorn. "Ibsen and the realistic problem drama." *The Cambridge Companion to Ibsen*. Ed. James McFarlane. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- v. Brooks, A. *Post feminisms: feminism, cultural theory and cultural forms*. London and New York: Rout ledge, 1997.
- vi. Lerner, Gerda. *The Creation of Patriarchy*. New York: Oxford University Press. 1986.
- vii. Flax, Jane. *Thinking Fragments, Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and Postmodernism in the contemporary*, west Berkeley, 1990.
- viii. Marker, Frederick. *Ibsen's Lively Art*. New York: Cambridge University, 1989.

INTERNET SOURCES

- i. www.iosrjournals.org
- ii. www.du.ac.in/fileadmin/du/academics/course-material
- iii. www.feminist.com
- iv. www.marxists.org/refference/subject/phylosophy/works.htm
- v. www.Education-portal.com/academy/lesson/sexism-and-patriarchy-definations-forms.html