



# NEO-RICH COUPLES IN THE NOVELS OF SUDHA MURTHY: A STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

This research has taken a short study of the theme 'neo-rich couples' in the novels of Sudha Murthy, one of well-known contemporary women writers in India, particularly Feminist writings in India. Her association with social service through Infosys Foundation is much appreciated. She has written novels, children stories and Novellas. Her works have been acclaimed and translated into many languages around the world. Her works are a wonderful blend of old Indian and new Indian culture. They also deal with impact of globalization on Indian economy and its impact on the family structure, particularly rural and urban middle class families. Her narration technique is simple and straightforward. Her major novels are Dollar Bahu, Mahashweta, Gently Falls the Bakula, and House of Cards. She has also written two novellas and a few children's stories. She covered the youth of modern India, particularly young couples. The issues of middle class Indian couples boldly revealed by the characters in the novels. The problems faced by these neo-rich couples in the society as well as in families well depicted and offered some solutions to the existing conditions. This study is limited to the exploration of neo-rich couples with reference to her novels.

**Keywords:** Domestic relations, Globalization, Opportunities, Individuality, Career, Economy.

**Introduction:** Women writers are playing vital role in modern Indian literature. Their writings depict sensitive issues of women and families in the society. They always try to represent and bring a positive change in the characters and give new dimensions in writings. The characters overcome the rigid customs of society. A newly married couple is always under the control of people around them. The majority of couples come from middle class families and face a lot of pressure from both inside and outside of families and some find solution to the problems as well. The decisions taken by them lead to a positive transformation in their lives. Sudha Murthy's novels also present bold and sensible characters. They motivate the readers to lead a life of their own. Both husband and wife play major roles in family and yet neglect the contribution of each other. They are caught between desires and responsibilities. They are courageous, yet vulnerable and face the problems and succeed to overcome them. This study is limited to the exploration of neo-rich couples with reference to their life. They deal with a lot of inner and external conflicts and reach the impression that life lacks meaning. Sudha Murthy stresses on confusion about their personal life who struggle to get their own identity in society. Of course the neo-rich couples also deal with anxiety and stress which disturbs one's regular life and direct impact on their marital life. Relationship of neo-rich couples can be dealt at different levels like marital life, bonding, emotional, trust, career and societal pressure.

**Analysis:**

Sudha Murthy deals with the disintegrating impact of liberalization and globalization on the domestic relations among neo-rich couples of India and their relations with the other members of family and society. Her themes came out of her own first-hand experience of the people working in the field of Information Technology. IT sector brought innumerable opportunities to the new generation, irrespective of any gender. So most of the couples, in her novels, had love marriage with the consent of their parents.

In the novel 'Dollar Bahu', Jamuna married to Chandru and settled in USA. Grouamma, mother-in-law, was very proud of Jamuna. She did not have good opinion about her second daughter-in-law in India, because she was from lower middle class and not highly educated. But Grouamma soon understood by her experience with Jamuna in USA. She was proud of Jamuna because she was earning in dollars. But she was disappointed very soon because she was not respected as a mother-in-law. Helpless Chandru could not say anything either to wife or mother. Unlike conditions in India where son normally would support mother, here he was helpless because his wife was educated, earning in dollars and believed in individual freedom. So the writer tries to bring out ill

impact of globalization and American dollar on human lives, particularly neo-rich Indian couples, who migrated to western countries. This novel is a story of how money influences new couples and eventually damaging relationships.

In the novel 'Gently Falls the Bakula' also, Shrikant and Shrimati got married despite opposition from both the families. They cared and respected each other and their life started very well. But once again money played a spoilsport here also. Once Shrikant got money and position, everything transformed rapidly. He is changed completely and becomes very selfish and arrogant. This lead to their separation. This shows how young couples took advantage of liberalizing atmosphere in India. Money can solve or create problems in families and its impact on couples is also very high.

In the novel 'House of Cards' also, Sanjay and Mridula get married as their wish without being unduly pressurized by the old fashioned members of their families. They were known for honest love and affection for each other. Mridula works as a school teacher and supports family economically also. But Dr. Sanjay, who once fought against rampant corruption in government hospitals, changes a lot and starts ill-treating her after starting to earn a lot money through unethical medical practices. As usual like other stories, this family also fell apart. Here also money plays a spoilsport.

In the novel Mahashweta, Anupama got married Dr. Anand. Unlike Anupama, Dr. Anand comes from rich family. Both got married despite opposition from their elders. Soon after marriage, Dr. Anand goes to England for higher education and Anupama lives in India only with her mother-in-law and sister-in-law. Anupama's fate turned evil against her when she developed an incurable leukoderma. This completely changes her life. Because of this skin disease, she was ill-treated everywhere. There was no support from her husband also. She has to fight for her existence. The desolateness tends to think of suicide also. The cause and effect of the disease made her life terrible. The problems around her increased day by day. But after thinking about her sister-in-law who has many affairs and still married a rich person, Anupama realises the hypocrisy of society. If an immoral person can lead such a happy life why cannot Anupama, who is morally right. This thought makes her courageous and decides to live life for her own. This brings a fresh life in her and proves her existence in the society. At the end of novel she becomes a symbol of new woman in modern India, who is ready to deny all restrictions like husband or children. Time is subject to change, so is condition. Of course thanks to

education and other modern changes including economic freedom which led to such transformation and destroyed family structure.

### **Conclusion:**

This study is limited to the couples who married despite initial opposition from elders and started happy life. But gradually they were caught in existential crisis they face in their life. The neo-rich couples deal with a lot of inner and external conflicts. Financial necessity kept them together at the initial stage of their married life. As the inflow of money increased, so is their attitude. The couples who were so possessive about each other, gradually drifted away. The promises that they had made to each other and vows that they had taken were forgotten by the Neo-rich couples. This work discusses the four novels of Sudha Murthy. She emphasizes on confusion about their personal life who struggle to get their own identity. In India for a long time, people believed in mutual cooperation and peaceful coexistence. Though globalization brought economic freedom to young generation of middleclass families in India, existential crisis of them remained, sometimes with different format. Social, cultural or economic factors impact their life to the maximum. Particularly the impact of globalization on the domestic relationships among modern educated couples in the new India is high. Majority of characters come from struggling middle class families. But despite all odds, they get education and well paid jobs. They take advantage of the global changes, get positions but their personal life collapses and had destructive effects on their marital life.

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