



Caste and Gender: *Kusumabale* as a Tale of Coexisting Oppression and Resistance

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Abstract

The politics of caste finds voice in literary narratives in numerous ways. Some of the usual trends are where there is a heart-wrenching tale of oppression, exploitation and a gruesome end. However, some narratives capture the struggle, rebellion, and claim of rights. Nevertheless, these stories conflict with the ground reality, which is always an entanglement of oppression and resistance. Oppressed people make a way for their humiliation or they are sometimes indifferent to the existing injustice in certain situations. On the contrary, the same people resist and raise their voices in certain other situations. In addition to it, the way some of them resist is by flouting the moral rules. The unconventional modes of resistance and oppressive acts that co-occur are the peculiarity of the novel *Kusumabale*. The writer captures reality in the garb of magical realism and challenges the traditional narratives of caste and gender. This paper aims to analyze the oppressive and resistive acts in the novel using the theories of Bourdieu and Foucault. It will be an attempt to discern power dynamics encapsulated in the novel.

Keywords: Oppression, Resistance, Habitus, Internalized Dispositions, Structural Crisis.