

**DIACHRONIC STUDY OF INDIAN VALUE  
SYSTEM: THE SUDHA MURTY PERSPECTIVE**

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UNDER THE FACULTY OF ARTS**

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**April, 2018**

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that thesis entitled **DIACHRONIC STUDY OF INDIAN VALUE SYSTEM: THE SUDHA MURTY PERSPECTIVE** submitted to Solapur University, Solapur for the award of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in English, is a record of original research work done by me under the supervision and guidance of Dr. Deepak C. Nanaware, Head, Department of English, D.A.V. Velankar College of Commerce, Solapur. It has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, Associateship, fellowship or other similar title of this or any other University or examining body.

Place:

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Date:

Research Student

## **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the thesis entitled **DIACHRONIC STUDY OF INDIAN VALUE SYSTEM: THE SUDHA MURTY PERSPECTIVE** Submitted to Solapur University, Solapur for the award of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in English is a result of original research work completed by **Ms. Rudramma S. Hiremath**, under my supervision and guidance and to the best of my knowledge and belief the work embodied in this thesis has not formed earlier the basis for the award of any Degree or similar title of this or any other University or examining body.

Place:

**Dr. Deepak C. Nanaware**

Date:

Research Guide

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**Ms. Rudramma S. Hiremath**

Research Student

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

- BWGW:** Bird with the Golden Wings: Stories of Wit and Magic (2009)
- DSDM:** The Day I Stopped Drinking Milk: Life Lessons from here and There (2012)
- DB:** Dollar Bahu (2007)
- GFB:** Gently Falls Bakula (2008)
- GBS:** Grandma's Bag of Stories (2015)
- MLT:** Magic of the Lost Temple (2015)
- MS:** Mahashweta (2007)
- MD:** The Magic Drum and other Favourite Stories (2006)
- WO:** Wise and Otherwise (2006)
- OMHG:** Old Man and His God: Discovering the Spirit of India (2006)
- TMGR:** How I Taught My Grandmother to Read and Other Stories (2004)

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## **1.1 Introduction:**

The contemporary Indian culture is a paradoxical tug of war between modernity and traditions wherein one cannot avoid the affects and repercussions of either of them. It is apparent that the present era is an amalgamation of tradition and modernity. Therefore, contemporary social structure is an escalation of these two forces, sometimes working opposite of other and sometimes working harmony with each other. Thus, India is in the period of transition and modernization is affecting value system at large. Indian value system has an ancient historical background and traditions. At present its traditions are being transformed very rapidly; wherein one could trace breeding a conflict between the modern and traditional values.

India, even in modern times, is known for its traditionality as she has a rich tradition of human values: an outcome of various world religions originated in India providing a background to its value system. Every religion whether Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Sufism, which have their origin in India have vigorously contributed in the advancement of Indian value system. The firm foundation of this value system has remained unmarred by the tempting forces of modernity. It is true that traditions cannot be totally replaced by the modernity. They could coexist, what is relevant in day to day life remain unchanged and easily adopted.

The present thesis entitled “Diachronic Study of Indian Value System: the Sudha Murty Perspective” intends to discuss the Indian values and changes occurred in it during the modern times and it underlines the importance of India’s value heritage in the modern times. She portrays the significance of traditional Indian values within the confines of socio-cultural and humanistic perspectives. The methodology of critical analysis is employed in the present research work; for this purpose the selected works of Sudha Murty are taken into consideration.

Sudha Murty’s writing is an proficient documentation of the Indian culture and traditions invoking pride in the Indian value heritage. She pens down the fascinating experiences of her life describing the lives of interesting people revealing the lessons she learnt in her life journey as a daughter, mother, wife, friend and philanthropist. Her writing underlines the Indian traditional value heritage as an imperishable reservoir and serves as a guiding pole to the modernised age facing many socio-cultural problems.

These narratives stand out as precepts for its readers and are path-showing. Her writings not only teach the author but the readers the lessons of life. Murty’s non-

fictional writings contain the episodes which she has artistically shaped from her experiences into words and depict life the way she experienced and help the readers to examine life and to consider their growth as a human being amidst incongruent and complex atmosphere in modern times. She also writes stories for children, she has rewritten some of them; and other she has recomposed, as she assumes inculcation of human values in children is necessary and the role of literature for children is significant. National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005) has also reinforced value education in school curriculum. In this respect study of value system becomes significant.

### **1.2 Thesis Statement:**

The present research study entitled “Diachronic Study of Indian Value System: The Sudha Murty Perspective” expresses, contemplates, construes, explores, ponders, inspects, analyses and examines Sudha Murty’s selected writings with the perspective of Indian Value System and significance of Indian Traditional Values with universal appeal in modern times and articulates that these values lead to the modern day problems such as corruption, materialism, intolerance and other malpractices as an outcome of modernization.

It tries to highlight how wisdom of age old Indian value tradition is a path-shower in modern era and underlines the significance of positive Indian values such as mutual understanding, trust, justice and respect in human relations to have a healthy social life.

### **1.3 Aims and Objectives:**

The present research work intends a systematic investigation and it tries to accomplish the specific aims and objectives i.e. to analyze study and explore the selected writings of Sudha Murty to underline the importance of Indian value heritage in modern world.

1. To find out the importance of values in the present social scenario and discuss the importance of human relationships in the individual’s life and to correlate these aspects in Sudha Murty’s writings.
2. Elucidate the repercussions of modernization, globalization in the modern Indian society.

3. To interpret the age old traditional and modern Indian values and also compare and contrast the traditional and modern Indian values and also reveal the clashes between the both in the modern times with reference to the writings of Sudha Murty.
4. To discuss the embedded micro concerns in the main themes.
5. To interpret Murty's writing in context with the value heritage of India.
6. To find out the relationship between the experiences and the wisdom gained through it.
7. To interpret the significance of Sudha Murty's contribution in children's literature.
8. To spot the importance of Sudha Murty's writings in the field of value education.
9. To comment on the status of women in the traditional Indian society.
10. To validate the importance of values either traditional or modern in the development of an individual and its contribution in the formation of the national character.
11. To analyze, interpret and evaluate the selected writings of Sudha Murty from the perspective of Indian value system and its changing form.

#### **1.4 Hypothesis:**

1. The upbringing, education and experiences compose the thought process of the author and it is reflected in Murty's writing.
2. Murty's writing comprises Indian traditional and moral values which could be traced back in her upbringing in the traditional yet highly educated Hindu-Brahmin upper middleclass family. These values have an universal appeal.
3. Her writing also brings forth a difference between the age-old values and the changes occurred in them in the modern times.
4. Woman characters in her writings are the archetype image of the traditional Hindu wife.
5. Murty's writing highlights the importance of and the positive aspects of human relationships.
6. Her work proposes the social responsibility of the individual.
7. Self-realization in the characters helps them to develop as human beings with positive human values.

8. Murty's writing could be used as motivational literature for children and could be applied as a tool for value education.

### **1.5 Data Collection:**

The essential data required for the present research study has been accumulated from primary and secondary sources which are as follows:

1. Primary Sources: Sudha Murty's selected works including three novels, three non-fiction and two books for children would contrive the primary sources of the study.
2. Secondary Sources: The Reviews, research articles, thesis, critical works based on Murty's writing published in journals,, magazines and books could help to build the secondary sources. The bibliographies, encyclopaedias and dictionaries are also to be referred as secondary sources.

### **1.6 Methodology:**

The investigation of selected works of Sudha Murty understanding the Indian value system in modern times is done with the analytical method. A thorough examination of the selected works has been made in general. The selected pieces of writing from the said works have been analyzed by taking into consideration the process of globalization and modernization of Indian value system.

The work has been carried out in the light of changing values, the eternity of traditional values and the need for modernization of some of the age old values. Every chapter has been designed to discuss, examine and study meticulously a single aspect of the topic under study. The present research work has been based on extensive reading, analysis, understanding; and a close study and interpretation of the selected works.

### **1.7 Review of Literature:**

Though there is lot of study done about the Indian woman writers, exploring various aspects of their writings, discussing various issues, there is least work done on Sudha Murty's writing with values perspective.

Recently Dr. Jyoti Ramesh Pai has been awarded Ph. D. in June 2015 for her research work entitled *A Study of Indian Values Reflected in the Selected Works of Sudha Murty and Ruskin Bond* submitted to Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune.

In this thesis she has tried to analyze these two author's selected writings as a storehouse of positive Indian values.

Dr. Purushottam P. Deshmukh has been awarded Ph. D. by University of Nagpur for his research entitled *A Study of Human Values in Nissim Ezekiel's Poetry* in 2008; although it explores the area of poetry it examines human values in Ezekiel's selected poems.

Many articles are published analyzing the works of Murty with different perspectives although the exploration of Indian value system in Murty's writing is done very rarely. One of them is by Dhanalaxmi A. entitled *Sudha Murty's Short Stories as a Motif of Values* published in 'Language in India' a peer reviewed online journal on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2011 wherein she discusses the value motifs in Murty's non-fiction *How I Taught my Grandmother to Read and Other Stories*. Dr Jyothi Pai has published an article entitled *Empowerment Through Values in Selected Works of Sudha Murty* in *Langlit*- an international peer reviewed open access journal in which she discusses Murty's selected works and emphasises how human values play a vital role in empowerment.

The above review of research shows that although study is done on Murty with different angles, exploring Murty's writing with value perspective in total is untouched area which needs to be done extensively.

### **1.8 Justification:**

The present time is plagued with anxieties, issues and facing various youth related problems mainly related to cultural juvenile harmonies. The Indian value system comprises of the socio-cultural harmony which is an essential factor in retaining peace in a pluralistic society like India. It also provides a unique identity to the Indians- their Indianness.

In the socio-cultural changes bred by the process of modernization and globalization has brought to the Indian society the vast spread of Information Technology and Communication Technology deeply affecting the Indian socio-cultural value system. It also has deeply corroded the Indian value system to its innermost core that it has definitely attacked the contemporary culture and traditions.

Thus it becomes important to empower the value heritage of India which is omni-relevant in every age. It is generally said that traditional Indian culture is not compatible with the modern technological society. The present research is initiated

with the conviction that the Indian value system is attuned and adaptable in the modern world too.

Thus the systematic study of values that is axiology is becomes significant. The twin menaces of the modernization-globalization and tremendous growth in the communication technology have wrecked the inherent fabric of the Indian socio-cultural system. Murty in her preface to *The Magic Drum and Other Favourite Stories* aptly opines,

*“India has a rich tradition of storytelling. Texts like the Kathasaritsagara, Panchatantra and Jataka are a rich storehouse of tales which have been enjoyed by several generations of readers and listeners. These stories, full of humour and morals, are the ideal means to introduce the right values to young people.”*

(Murty MD xi)

Terrorism, drug addiction, violence, inactiveness, poverty, hopelessness, confusion, low self-esteem, etc. are the problems modern youth faces today and which prove to be hindrance in peace and harmony. The comprehensive study of Indian value system with the perspective of selected writings of Sudha Murty concentrates on various aspects of human life i.e. social relationship and social values, human relationship and human values, importance of experiences in human life to gain wisdom to lead life with positive values. Murty reflects upon all these sensitive aspects in her writings. The answer to these problems could be the awareness and enforcement of values through various modalities. Literature is one such emphatic medium which does it with effectiveness.

Therefore, the present thesis takes into consideration the issue of changing values in modern times, advantages and disadvantages of the process of modernization of value system in general by understanding the selected works of Sudha Murty. As Sudha Murty is least explored writer today and also the Indian value system is also least studied area in Indian English Writing which would encourage the researchers to explore various themes related to it.

### **1.9 Significance of the Study:**

The present methodical analysis endeavours the comprehension and appreciation of the selected works of Sudha Murty and careful exploration of Indian Value System. It is a courageous attempt to analyze the enormous region of Indian

value system which is expanded from the ancient times of Aryans to the modern time; it will definitely add a new linkage and connection in the area of literary research.

It also will help the upcoming researchers to examine the least unexplored area of Indian Value system in relation with literature in particular.

The thorough study of changing value system, the traditional values, need to sustain them, importance of children's literature in value orientation is a dire need of not only India but the modern world encircled with the various problems such as drug addiction, terrorism, corruption, etc. the Indian value system would act as a path-shower to these perilous problems.

This might contribute in the understanding of these modern day problems and seeking the solutions with value orientation to eradicate these social problems hazardous to the whole mankind. Such research work could also sensitize the readers towards the dire need of inculcation and scrupulous study of values lead a harmonious and peaceful life.

### **1.10 The Scope and Limitation:**

The present research work aspires to focus on the detailed study of selected works of Sudha Murty at the backdrop of Indian value system; however, it has its own limitations as not any such work could be complete due to the ever growing nature of the literary canon and the vast subject area of Indian value tradition.

It is also not probably impossible that all the traditional human values would be found in Murty's writing and at the same time some of the traditional Indian values might have lost its relevance today; therefore, they could be untraced in the present work. It is also possible that Murty in her course of writing would have focussed on some of positive modern values in practice today. To include all of them would be a massive and time taking task and so that be possibly not covered in the present research work.

The following works by Sudha Murty are to be analyzed and studied closely to understand the Indian value system.

#### **Fiction:**

##### **I. Novels:**

*Dollar Bahu (2007)*

*Gently Falls the Bakula (2008)*

*Mahashweta (2007)*

## **II. Short Stories (Children's Literature):**

*The Bird with Golden Wings: Stories of Wit and Magic (2009)*

*The Magic Drum and Other Favourite Stories (2006)*

### **Non- Fiction:**

*Wise and Otherwise: a Salute to Life (2006)*

*The Old Man and His God: Discovering the Spirit of India (2006)*

*How I Taught My Grandmother to Read and Other Stories (2004)*

The subject of the thesis could be inexhaustible and the values could be categorised differently focussing the different aspects; however, the line of distinction between them is faint. Therefore, it is limited to the analysis of the selected works of Sudha Murty and the limited area of selected Indian human values which could be traced in her selected writings.

These selected works might be studied with different viewpoints regarding the human values namely the importance of children literature in value education, culture studies, different human values, etc. Some of them could be excluded from the present research work due to the multiplicity and the vastness of the themes. It is also possible that not all the human values could be traced in the selected writings of the author under scrutiny.

### **1.11 The Chapter Scheme:**

The present research work is divided in six chapters for the systematic and compendious understanding of the chosen research area which is also convenient for logical organization of the investigation.

#### **Chapter- I: Introduction**

The first chapter is dedicated to the introduction, the survey and review of the research work. It tries to explain the Indian value system from ancient to modern, the Indian culture and civilization, the changes occurred into it due to modernization and globalization. It also includes the brief introduction of life and works of Sudha Murty. The present chapter is a development of argument behind the choice of research area.

#### **Chapter- II: Social and Traditional Values Highlighted in Sudha Murty's Writings**

The second chapter is dedicated to the comprehensive study of Socio-cultural and Spiritual-Religious Values in Sudha Murty's Selected Writing; it is entitled as

Social and Traditional Values Highlighted in Sudha Murty's Writings. The chapter tries to analyse the extracts from the texts under study which underline the socio-cultural traditional values which are very essential in modern life to live a happy peaceful and harmonious life. This chapter intends to highlight the significance of value system in modern times. It is a deep study of Murty's writing as a contribution in value based literature, socio-cultural traditional values the reader comes across in her writing.

### **Chapter- III: Tradition Vs Modernity**

The third chapter includes the systematic investigation of Reflections of Changing Values in the Process of Modernization and Globalization in the Selected Writings of Sudha Murty; it is entitled as Tradition Vs Modernity. The chapter tries to find the reasons for value deterioration, how it is affecting our value choices, how in modern times the traditional values are replaced by the modern values. The chapter also seeks to underline the importance of retaining traditional values in modern times to live a peaceful and harmonious life by analysing the extracts from the selected works of Murty.

### **Chapter- IV: Human Relations**

The fourth chapter explores human relationships in context with the Indian Value system. The modernity is affecting the human relations at large. This chapter is an attempt to understand that if human relations are based on positive human values it will definitely make life happier, peaceful and simpler. It also tries to understand Murty's interpersonal relationships and how it helped her to grow as a person through her non-fictions, it also analyses the relationships in her fictions.

### **Chapter- V: Wisdom and Experience**

The fifth chapter is entitled as 'Wisdom and Experiences' as the literature is an outcome a author's understanding of life, which mainly depends on the experiences one come across. The present chapter is to understand how Murty's experiences and wisdom helped her to be what she is now. What Murty learnt as a woman, daughter, mother, wife, colleague; how her experiences taught her life lessons and how her personality is shaped by these experiences is to be understood through this chapter.

## **Chapter- IV: Conclusion**

The sixth chapter concludes the outcomes of the research work. It will help to sum up the researcher's views on traditional and modern values and how it is important to preserve the traditional values in modern times to have a check on the degeneration of humanity, threat of terrorism, violence and so many other issues related to youth. This includes a general summary of research experience focusing on the findings of research.

The proposed research work endeavours to study, recognize, categorize, examine, consider and understand the significance of age old Indian traditional values with universal appeal as a guide towards a solution to the modern day problems with Sudha Murty perspective. It is an honest attempt to revise and revive the traditional values of India through the analysis of Murty's selected writings. Her creative genius is a genuine manoeuvre to instil human values as her life is an example itself.

She tries to balance between the tradition and modern and seeks answer to the modern problems with the help of values transmitted by her grandparents and parents. She doesn't totally forbid the modernity although she accepts it if it suits to her traditional outlook without harming the Indian cultural heritage which is she proud about.

Murty's writing expertise lies in her simple, straight and lucid language which connects her to the readers very easily with a direct appeal to the heart. Her writing is a vehicle to express her honest thoughts about her experiences, her meditations and thinking about life today. Her writing carries the values she inherited through her parents, teachers and elders which she tries to imbibe into her readers. Her writing is full of compassion, love, justice, tolerance and togetherness. Murty is one of the most popular writers with the children today. Many of her writings are part of various school curriculums from KG to PG which is her success as an honest writer.

### **1.12 Literature as a Medium of Socio-Cultural Value Transmission:**

The Indian culture basically consists a good combination of Indian Languages, literature, religions, philosophy, customs, cuisine, dance and music and unique value system; literature is the best embodiment and manifestation of these characteristics. It is considered as a reflection of values, myths, culture, customs, traditions, etc. India has a rich heritage of "Wisdom Literature" of the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Aranyakas*, *Puranas*, which not only carry wisdom of the ancient India but also carry the history,

tradition, culture, social norms and myths which form a background of a nation's literature.

Therefore, the literature is a carrier of "wisdom and experiences" of the society it belongs to; a documentation of the society, its culture and traditions. Murty writes in *Gently Falls the Bakula* as follows:

*"The ancient Kannada poet Pampa wrote:  
This land is so pious and sacred, that  
If I am not reborn as a human being in this land,  
God, then please make me a singing cuckoo or a humming bee at  
least!"*

(Murty *GFB* 4)

Murty rightly glorifies the Indian culture and its vast literary tradition. Literature whether oral or written acts as medium for the value transformation from one generation to the next generation in "Author's Note" in her recent non-fiction *Grandma's Bag of Stories*. She writes,

*"She (grandmother, Krishtakka) gave us any sermons but the values of life through her stories. Those stories and values remain with me even now... When my grandmother Krishna was born, she elevated me to the position of grandmother. I realized more than ever the importance of stories and how much they help children."*

(Murty *GBS* i)

Literature is an integral part of the culture and traditions, binding the nation together and strengthens the sense of identity and a sense of belongingness. The Ramayana and Mahabharata are the rich storehouses of the Indian mythology. The values in the modern times could be traced in these epics and rich wisdom literature as it is main constituent in of the Indian values-system.

Without indigenous literature, the people would remain indifferent and oblivion to their own culture, history and traditions making the existence baseless. Every civilization, whether ancient or modern developed or undeveloped has its own literature; oral or written; helps to develop a sense of identity, togetherness and belongingness working as a binding force. It is prominently evident in India where one could witness "Unity in Diversity".

India could be defined as a blend of people belonging to different religions, castes, customs and people speaking with different languages, having diverse food

habits, diverse traditions; however, one could trace unity in these diversities, as the “wisdom literature” of ancient India forms a base on which today’s modern India stands erect. What Abdoulaye Saine discusses about the culture and customs of Gambia could aptly be applied to the Indian culture too; comments,

*“Storytelling, fables, creation, myths, proverbs, songs and poetry- in sum literature-continue to be important vehicles in the transmission of culture to succeeding generations... Storytelling is a medium through which communally cherished values- honesty, bravery and respect- are transmitted.”*

(Saine 60)

Thus, the art of storytelling which could also be considered as literature plays an instrumental role nurturing the traditions and cultural aspects and also transmitting them to the future generations as it is a rich storehouse of socio-cultural values. Written as well as oral Literature carries the culture, human history, norms and value system of society. It would be considered as wheels to proceed the civilization further.

Literature is popularly considered as a ‘mirror held up to the society’; a tool to understand the socio-cultural aspects of the civilization it represents. In other words it is a record of the development of a civilization, a documentation of experiences and thought processes, etc. As it is an expression of life at large; therefore, there is an ultimate connection between literature and civilization, being a record of socio-cultural realities of its time, transcending it to project the realm of future possibilities. It not only creates the aesthetic pleasures but a repository of socio-cultural values. Culture could also be understood as:

*“social system that represents an accumulation of beliefs, attitudes, habits, values and practices that serve as a filter through which a group of people view and respond to the world in which they live.”*

(Shade, Kelley and Oberg 12)

The views of Abdoulaye Saine regarding the function of literature as a means of values transmitting from one generation to another could be applied to any culture irrespective of the society it represents. The responses of an individual to the world outside are conditioned by the values they follow. Abdoulaye underlines the importance of literature as a tool of transmission of the values-system in the following words:

*“...Stories about the cunning hare and the greedy hyena, as well as stories about two girls, both named Kumba- one orphaned at birth and poorly treated by her stepmother and the other treated as a princess- continue to teach and instil among the young cherished societal values that include forbearance. These values and virtues have provided stability, continuity and change in the senegambian societies for centuries.”*

(Saine 60)

Though Abdoulaye gives example from Gambian fairytales, this could also be generalised and applied to any literature oral or written, today. India has a rich heritage of literature from the ancient times which dates back to approximately around 5000 years from the time of the *Vedas* and *Upanishadas* which could be compiled as ‘Wisdom Literature’ of ancient India forming a base and background to the modern literature. *Hitopdesh*, *Kathasaritsagar*, *Panchtantra*, stories of *Akbar and Birbal*, *Tenalirama*, stories from *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, stories from regional history like stories of Chatrapati Shivaji or Rani Channamma of Kittur, abundant folk tale and fairy tales, stories from Indian Freedom Struggle, etc.

Children’s fiction includes all the forms of literature from oral to written, from folktale, fairytales to the epics and other genres of literature today. Literature is an integral part of the culture; India’s rich and varied cultural traditions binding the nation together. For instance, one could trace the history and development of Indian civilization and culture through the through study of the *Vedas*, *Aranyakas* and *Upanishdas* as they form a firm base to the Indian philosophy, religion, spiritualism and social system of not only the ancient times but the present also. In culturally plural Indian society, literature cultivates universal and eternal values, oriented towards the unity and integration of the Indians.

Without indigenous literature, people can remain indifferent to their own culture and traditions. Every civilization ancient or modern, developed or undeveloped has its own literature: oral or written; which develops a sense of identity helping to develop the sense of togetherness, a sense of confidence, humility and strengths accelerating the process of civilization providing a tool to understand a society in a better way by carrying its reflections of Past as well as Present and directing the future. It makes to understand a culture, being a record of the development of a civilization.

Literature is in a way a documentation of the experiences, thought processes, the socio-cultural aspects, etc. In short, it is an expression of Life at large through the medium of Language. It is apparent that there is an ultimate connection between Literature and human civilization being a record of socio-cultural reality of its time, transcending it to project the realm of future possibilities. It creates the world of aesthetic pleasure also.

Therefore, Literature is a record of the socio-cultural, political, historical, economic and the other aspects of human life. Human values are conveyed through the works of literature as the author expresses one's thought process which is mainly based on value system of the society he or she belongs to. His/ Her writing is an expression of the cherished, intimate and deeper social-cultural awareness of the society one is born, the environment one are close with.

Literature is actually an allegory of the history, civilization, process of socialization- the record of human evolution in total. Dr. C. R. Reddy rightly pointed out in the preface of K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar's book entitled "Indo-Anglian Literature" published in 1943:

*"Indo-Anglian Literature is not essentially different in kind from Indian Literature. It is a part of it, a modern facet of that glory which, commencing from the Vedas, has continued o spread its mellow light, now with greater and now with lesser brilliance under the inexorable vicissitudes of time and history, ever increasingly up to the present time of Tagore, Iqbal and Aurobindo Ghosh and bids air to expand with our and humanity's expanding future."*

(qtd. in Iyengar ii)

It could also be applied to the writers of post independence era and the literature of the modern times. As the present research intends to focus on the methodical study of the traditional and modern values conveyed in the selected writings of Sudha Murty, the above thinking could be applied as a guiding principle for the further research. Abiding by the views of Abdoulaye Saine the researcher intends to discover the socio-cultural values in the selected writings of Sudha Murty. Her writing could be understood and analysed with these views in mind that literature is a medium of values transmission.

Value-system of a particular society provides a foundation of the experiences of the author which one translates into one's writings; as the literature emerges from the day to day experiences. These experiences are entangled with thought processes of its author; which are mainly based on the values one cherishes and nurtures. The author's work is an expression of the cherished, intimate and deeper socio-cultural awareness of the society one is born into, the environment one is well acquainted with. Therefore, literature is a record of socio-cultural, historical, economic and other aspects of human life.

Literature is an allegory of the history and evolution in total which includes value system it represents. One could trace the history and development of Indian civilization and culture through the careful study of the *Vedas*, *Aranyakas* and *Upanishadas* as they are the foundation stones of Indian philosophy, religion, social system and value system of not only ancient time but the literature of today. Eventually, a brief survey of Indian English Literature becomes essential.

### **1.13 Indian English Literary Canon- A Brief Outline:**

Today one can witness an abundant output of Indian English Literature and its elevated status it has achieved by winning several prestigious awards towards the end of the twentieth century. This is indicative of the widespread national and international recognition it has accomplished over the period of time. It has achieved worldwide a widespread as well as rigorous recommendation, merit and prominent position in the world map.

The reputed international literary awards are won by Indian novelists; which indicate that they have been appreciated and approved even by the Western critics and readers. Now, it is acknowledged that Indian English literature is not only part of Commonwealth literature, but also occupies a great significance in the World literature. In the modern times, the Indian English Literature moreover has now been widely acclaimed all over the world, as it has been successfully figured its own niche not only in the world of 'Commonwealth Literature' but also in the world literature.

The Indian English Literature is originated from the introduction of British literature during the British Raj in India. However, in the recent times Indian English literature has emerged as an outcome of its own story telling tradition in India. India, according to M. K. Naik is a 'Fountainhead of story'.

The English Language is no more foreign to the Indians; it has become little more than a Second language and a little less than a First language of the educated Indians today; actually it is an instrument of expressing deeper emotions. Therefore, Indian English Literature cannot be alien to today's literate Indians; it has become a very much part of educated Indians as any other regional literature in recent times. Though English Literature and Language was introduced in India by the British Rule to colonize the Indian mind and sentiments; which is evidently apparent in Lord Macaulay's "Minute to Indian Education", now has become an essential part of Indian literary canon.

*"It has been widely accepted as the most appropriate form for the exploration of experiences and ideas in today's world. Indian English Fiction has acquired extensive commendation, distinction and prestigious position in recent times. The international literary awards like the Booker, the Pulitzer, the Sinclair won by the Indian novelists exemplify that they have been appreciated even by the Western critics."*

(Mongia 213)

Indian English Literature is as Indian as any other regional literature in India today as it is engrossed in Indian myths, history, culture, traditions and value system. Literature is a medium to convey these unique cultural aspects from not only one generation to another; but for the readers from the other countries with different socio-cultural backgrounds. Literature carries the culture, the human history and development of civilization, norms and value system of the society it belongs to. It is a tool to understand the society better as it is the reflection of the society, its past, present as well as future. Thus, if one wants to understand any society better its literature whether oral or written could serve as a medium and record of the development of a civilization.

Literature preserves the experiences, the thought processes and cultural aspects, etc. basically, it is an expression of life through the medium of language, as there is an intimate relationship between literature, art and society. It is a record of socio-cultural realities, anxieties, problems, etc. of contemporary society and also transcends it to project the realm of future possibilities. It creates the world of aesthetics and human values as a reflection of author's imagination and efforts to

express one's inner realities. One's writing is the expression of the most intimate social awareness of the society wherein one is born.

Fiction might be a documentation of the history of the civilization; the record of human evolution. For example, one could trace the history of Indian civilization, through the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Aranyakas*, etc. which also form base of philosophy, religion, spiritualism, social system, etc. Thus, literature becomes a record of political, cultural, social, historical, economic aspects of life. With the advent of modernism in India in the nineteenth century; British and Indian social codes and value systems began to clash and mutually affect each other.

Particularly, the translation of some progressive British social codes and cultural values of the European culture into Indian terms entailed something like new codes and norms, within which rigorous English writers in India thoroughly started fabricating their writing with a critical standpoint. The present research work intends to study the Indian Value System from traditional and modern times by analysing the selected writings of Sudha Murty; one could trace that Indian English Writing has become an integral part of Indian sensibility.

India enjoys enriched traditions and rich heritage of various literary genres from the ancient times; drama and poetry are a part of ancient Indian literary tradition. Fiction and non-fiction also have a special place in this great literary tradition. Kathasaritsagara and Panchtantra have gained unique place in children's literature even in the modern age of technology, though Indian literature as many other literatures undergone many changes in the process of modernization, colonization and globalization; it also means Indian literature is witnessing the emergence of new traditions which are prominent, conspicuous and unique. It becomes necessary to understand the growth of Indian English literary canon here.

In the beginning of the first stage of Indian English writing, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Toru Dutt, Romesh Chander Dutt, B.R. Rajam, T. Ramakrishna and others contributed to the genre bringing it a certain stature and space. Gandhiji's philosophy gave rise to a new humanism and new morality based on human values. In the post World War period one could trace the emergence of the great 'trio'- Dr. Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan and Raja Rao. Mulk Raj Anand depicts the degradation of social values by commenting on the practice of 'Untouchability' in Indian culture; R. K. Narayan brings forth the middle class moral values of his time in his novels as well as the short stories; Raja Rao uses Indian mythology to bring forth the Indian

sensibilities and the traditional values by reviving the ancient tradition of Epics and Puranas of India.

Ananthanarayanan, U. R. Ananthmurty, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Manohar Malgonkar, G.V. Desani, Sudhin Ghosh, Khushwant Singh, Ruth Pawar Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, Kamala Markandaya and Anita Desai, etc tried to bring forth the repercussions of the post partition era, the social values of the time. Most of the literature of this time indicates the degradation in the social values of the time.

The writings of Arun Joshi, Anita Desai, Amitav Ghosh, Bharati Mukherjee, Chaman Nahal, Shashi Deshpande, Shashi Tharoor, G. V. Desani, Girish Karnad and Salman Rushdie, Kamala Markandeya, Rohinton Mistry, Vikram Seth, mainly underline the psychological disorders, loss of moral values agonized existence of modern man. In the present times, Rama Mehta, Amitav Ghose, Amit Choudhary, Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, Upamanyu Chatterjee, Arvind Adiga and others are enriching the Indian literary canon by new traditions; also underlining the traverse modern value system in India.

Presently, Zumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai and Hari Kanzru, etc. are the few Indian names who have left their mark on the world map of literature as they deal with the issues of global concerns today- sense of displacement and dislocation not only in geographical but socio-cultural sense dealing with the problems of immigrants, refugees and the exiles in general underlining the sense of footlessness and nothingness; which could be considered as the post modern values.

Indian English Literature has also a great legacy of Bilingual writers such as Rabindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu, Mahatma Gandhi, etc. The present Indian author under study Sudha Murty is also a bilingual writer who fluently writes in English as well as in Kannada, her native tongue. Translation of Literature also plays a key role in promoting the culture, traditions, history and value system, etc. with different societies, whether it is within India or the foreign cultures. Translation within Indian regional literature and other non-Indian literatures especially English becomes a medium to connect with the Indian culture at large.

In older days, Indians were well aware of the form of short stories in the form of the didactic short stories like 'Hitopadesh', 'Jatakkathas' and 'Panchtantra' and the narratives like 'Deshkumar Charita' and 'Kadambari' long before the introduction of the Western literature especially the British Literature. The primary motive of these stories is to interpret life by values and to make the readers perceive the same.

The expression of historical sense of social relationship of man which has been the characteristic feature of the Western novel has never been found in Indian short stories. The focus of these short stories is always on the human values and the value education through literature. In short, the literature has followed the march of human civilization and has become one of the cultural means of expression.

### **1.13.1 Indian Children's Literature:**

Indian Children's Literature has a long tradition and rich heritage which could be actually dated back to the fifth century B.C. which mainly existed in the oral tradition initially and handed down from one generation to another orally. Indian Children's Literature has a rich heritage of classic tales of *Panchatantra*, the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Jatak kathas*, *Hitopdesha*, *Kathasaritsagara*, *Vetalpanchvishi*, *Vikram Vetala*, stories of *Akbar* and *Birbala* in Northern parts of India and the stories of *Tenalirama* in the South India. There is a rich store house of folk-tales and fairy tales in almost every language of every region in India. As from the ancient times the stories not only fascinated the children but also the adults. These stories helped to answer the curiosities of the young minds and orient them towards the traditional Indian value system.

Indian Children's Literature is a tool to pass the dreams of one generation to the next, helps to enrich the imagination of the young minds. It also helps to hand down value system of the society it represents. It plays a huge role in solidifying the socio-cultural values of the society it belongs to; these include the stories from mythology, history, fairy tales, folk tales, biographical and auto-biographical stories, science fiction, fables and fantasies, etc. oral tradition is rich with variety of stories.

These stories preach, persuade, orient, motivate, please, entertain and inspire the young minds and strengthen the linguistic skills, create awareness towards the world, teach the science and other realities of Nature, inform about the socio-cultural aspects of a society, transmit the values of the society, entertaining, preaching and didacticize the youth. The things learnt from the young age make the base for the individual's thought process; shape one's personality and character for the lifetime. Didacticism is an important facet reading fiction especially for the young children.

At the early stage of life, human values learnt through literature provide a foundation in the process of character building and helps to solidify the value heritage of the society. The present research work tries to understand how the values are transmitted through the children's fiction, with special reference to Sudha Murty's

selected writing for children. In her preface to her non-fiction writing *The Magic Drum and the Other Favourite Stories*, Murty underlines the significant role of Children's Fiction in transmitting the values to the next generation.

While telling the children the stories about the spiritual leaders, historical heroes, gods and goddesses, animal stories and fairy tales; we also pass on the values to the future generation thus securing the cultural traditions of the society. The messages for children are actually for the providing framework to their personality to make them good human beings and constructing the healthy mind. This plays a crucial and fundamental role on the larger scale as it helps in building character and identity of the whole society.

Certain values are universal and unchanging, but certain values change with the changing time which is the characteristic of the development and the growth of value system and it is unavoidable at certain stage and one has to accept them and adjust accordingly. Children's Literature as the other forms of literature reflects this. It reflects the value heritage of the society. Apart from sheer pleasure and entertainment value education is the prime focus of Children's Literature. This offers a fine opportunity to inculcate the set of values and preserve the Socio-cultural heritage of our society.

Ravindranath Tagore, Satyajee Ray, Anant Pai, Mahashwetadevi, R.K. Narayan, Ruskin Bond and many others contributed in the Indian English Children's Literature in modern India. Tagore has written many poems, plays, novels, travelogues and short stories for children which mainly underline Indian cultural and traditional values. Some of the significant stories such as *Kabuliwalla* in his collection of short stories for children named *Galpaguchchha* (Bunch of Stories) are based on the importance of human relationships in Indian traditional society. Satyajee Ray's stories of "Feluda" are full of fantasy, romance and nature invoking amongst the children the significance of friendship, commitment and such other positive values. These stories also help to cope up with the real world outside.

Anant Pai is mainly recognised for his *Amar Chitr Katha*, the collection of retold stories from Indian mythology, folk tales and biographies bringing forth the Indian traditional values such as universal brotherhood, hospitality, friendship, justice, truth, *aparigraha* and respecting elders, etc.

The Indian Children's Fiction is also rich with the regional languages, the translated works from English to regional languages and the vice versa which has

actually opened up an possibility to the reading class to get acquainted with the classics of the world; it is also a learning with fun and pleasure through stories with little complexity and didactic elements and also rich with emotions.

The conventions, traditions and the values are handed down to the young generation through these simple and didactic stories; which help children to add to their knowledge, its understanding of its own cultural heritage; and also respecting the different aspects of other cultures in the world around. In the present research, the second chapter is dedicated to the significance of value inculcation in younger generation in context with the selected writings of Sudha Murty.

Sudha Murty's stories are the colourful tales of common men and women, extraordinary people, people from every strata, age and nation and also about the magical creatures, birds and animals, kings and queens, princes and princesses, trees and demons also. Her non-fiction writing contains her day to day experiences as a daughter, grand-daughter, mother, wife, sister, teacher and more importantly as a philanthropist while working as a chairperson of the Infosys Foundation.

Murty's writing illuminates readers' personal understanding of our own culture and value heritage in a simple and direct language. It also encourages the children to read and enjoy; Murty's books are actually a blend of thought provoking themes. They contain almost every aspect of human nature. Murty, though, doesn't underestimate the goodness in modern values; she underlines how some of the modern values popularly practiced today are anti-humanitarian.

#### **1.14 Understanding Diachronic Study:**

The present research intends to understand the changes occurred in the Indian value system with the perspective of Sudha Murty's selected writings. The researcher intends to apply the linguistic term 'Diachronic' in context with the systematic study of value system from traditional to modern. Nothing remains the same in this changing world. The same is true about the Indian value system as one could trace the tremendous changes in the traditional values due to the various factors. However, some values are universal and therefore, eternal viz. Peace, Harmony, Truth, Non-violence, etc. and they are eternal.

Ferdinand de Saussure coined the term 'Diachronic' to understand language in historical context. The word 'chronic' is derived from the Greek 'chronos' which means time. 'Dia' in Greek means through. Diachronic study is thus mainly

concerned with the time i.e. historical development in simple words. It deals with the development of a particular aspect of study; it also means the study of ‘changes’ occurred in the period of time.

*“Diachronic- change extending through time.”*

(Merriam-Webster 344)

*“A binary pair introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure to define the two available temporal axes for the analysis of language, which can logically be extended to encompass.”*

(Buchanan 462)

*“Diachronic having to do with changes over the time. Thus a diachronic account of a language deals with its history, a diachronic theory deals with the nature of historical change in general and so on.”*

(Matthews 102)

*“A term coined by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913). A diachronic approach to the study of language (or languages) involves an examination of its origins, development, history and change.”*

(Cuddon 217)

*“Diachronic (adj.) one of the two main temporal dimensions of Linguistic investigation introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure, the other being synchronic. In Diachronic Linguistics, languages are studied from the point of view of their historical development, for example the changes which have taken place between old and modern English could be described in phonological, grammatical and semantic terms.”*

(Crystal 142)

Diachronic study is a scientific approach of studying the changing aspects. The present research work focuses on the meticulous study of Indian values and the changes occurred in the modern times the term ‘Diachronic’ fits well. It is about understanding the changes over the period of time occurred in the Indian value system in context with Sudha Murty’s selected fiction and non-fiction writing. Basically, it focuses on the changes occurred in a specific span of time.

### 1.15 Connotations of Values and the Value System:

Value system is a unique feature of the society it represents; which helps human beings to live a better life. The value system aims at the betterment of the 'Self'. It develops with the development of the civilization with the choices human beings make to grow and develop as a civilized human being. Though Indians cherish human values the most and try to inculcate values in younger generation through one's life; Indians have never studied values as a discipline. The concept of values is mainly western as Plato is believed to originate the study of values; however, at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century it was disciplined as 'Axiology.' Aparna Mathur puts this process in exact words as follows.

*“What distinguishes man, as a rational being among all other living being is his capability to differentiate something from everything or all the things depending on his requirements, taste, choice and will. This capability inherent in his original nature develops gradually transforming itself in a sense of value. Thus, promotes man from a mere living individual into a moral, social and finally cultural being, capable of fulfilling all his likes, wants and needs and making all his moves and actions meaningful.”*

(Mathur 20)

The process of development of value system is very interesting and at the same time, it gives us an insight into the development of civilization. Mathur aptly asserts the development of value system; he links it with man's sensibilities and capability of understanding. Values have a strong influence on man's behaviour, understanding and responses and reflect human perceptions, desires, likings and interests. M. N. Shrinivas meditates about Indian values and value system in total; for him for human existence development of value system is very important. He believes:

*“Values are a difficult subject to discuss with respect to any people but the difficulty increases enormously when dealing with a country as vast, diverse, stratified and complex as India. Values vary from one section of the people to another on the basis of region, language, religion, sect, caste, class and ethnicity. There are also significant differences between the villagers and city-dwellers. Indeed the complexity is so great that one is tempted to*

*abandon the task as hopeless but then valour is sometimes, though very rarely, better than discretion.”*

(Shrinivas 172)

Shrinivas points out values can differ from person to person, society to society. It is a very complex notion to understand and too difficult to put it in words. However, he tries to catch the notion of values in following simple yet meaningful words; he observes,

*“those ideals of conduct the practice of which is admired by the people. Implicit in such admiration is a recognition that the ideals are difficult to practise and that those who succeed in doing so are regarded as exceptional individuals, providing models for others to emulate.”*

(Shrinivas 172)

Some are universal values, never changing throughout the ages such as truth, justice, freedom, reason; but some values could be recognized in a particular society only. In India, respecting elders, putting the family interests before one's self, respecting the *Guru* (the teacher), *atithi devo bhava* are some of the values which are given more importance in an individual's character building. It shapes the personality of an individual as well as a society. Oxford dictionary of English defines 'Values' in the following words:

*“...principles or standards of behaviour; one's judgement of what is important in life; they internalize their parents' rules and values.”*

(Stevenson 1963)

Society is recognized by its value system; basically eastern countries are recognised as traditional. Therefore, values are at once individual as well as general; personal as well as social. Life becomes complete by embracing human values; which could also be integrated, shared and generalized. The value system of a society is a mainly group of values which are shared and generalized values of individuals. The morality is always connected with pursuit of positive values. The human life is structured around values they follow.

Moral values engender the dignity regulating the individual's behaviour in the society at deeper levels. In the modern age, one could easily observe the conflict of values: modern and traditional depending upon the choices of the individuals in the

changing time. Day by day, one's convictions get stronger and stronger; and also help the continuous process of self-assessment; which is a source of worth and self-respect. The values make life more relevant and meaningful. Every society is different from the other because of its historical and cultural background shaping to the value system.

Every civilization whether ancient or modern, is shaped by its distinctive and unique values developed in the process of structuring of the civilization; it gets its identification through it. The value system serves as vertebrae of any civilized society. A practice of these human values make human beings to ideal persons; in India one could point Ram as an ideal personality as he never let the ancient Indian values down, followed every Human value, therefore, he is considered as a perfect personality, the incarnation of God. Williams rightly pinpoints,

*“Values are not the same as norms or conduct... Values are standards of desirability that are more nearly independent of specific situations... Values as standards (criteria) for establishing what should be regarded as desirable provide the grounds for accepting or rejecting particular norms.”*

(Williams 283)

The problems arise when there is corrosion of these values; in modern times one could witness the deterioration of the traditional Indian values which were cherished and appreciated at any cost. Values provide a strong foundation for the existence of Humanity at large; which leads to peace and prosperity. Values in any civilization remain unchanged if they have a universal appeal; they are the universal values, for example attainment of peace and harmony, brotherhood, truth, etc.

Values are socially accepted and hugely appreciated norms. Values are the guide of human conduct at social and personal level. Setting the standards they determine choices, actions and attitudes towards objects as well as situations, in fact, they are the guiding star in life's journey; and provide a scale for the self evaluation. Values add in the human quest for the meaningful life and beyond life. It is actually a system developed by the society to recommend the appropriate and inappropriate; and what is the right way to live this life. They would encourage values such as integration of India's common cultural heritage, egalitarianism, family values, etc. Ahuja exactly puts this in following words,

*“Value system is an organised pattern of values of a society in which individual values are so interrelated as to reinforce each other and form a coherent whole. A value system provides a framework for the analysis of social norms, ideals and behaviour patterns.”*

(Ahuja 283)

Values are those ideals of conduct and human social behaviour, which is admired by the society, the person who practices them in one's daily life becomes the point of reference for others and demands admiration; the wealth and money becomes superfluous ascent in comparison to the conduct of values and are decisive in day to day behaviour. Critical situations in life in fact require the value based actions as they are the standards of behaviour; values are regarded as desirable, important and held in the high esteem by the society. India: a country vast, diverse, stratified, multifarious and complex has a set of values which helped to shape the philosophy, the thought process and eventually the behaviour of an individual. Mathur aptly describes this process in following words,

*“It is from this original or initial point that the journey of human culture begins and after crossing the primary stages of its development establishes its identity and individuality in a specific manner on the basis of its different value-system. All cultural developments are, therefore, the development of the value system and meaningfulness of a value lies in the satisfaction of the urge, want and need of a person or a human being.”*

(Mathur 20)

The process of Modernization and industrialization has brought the devastating changes in the value preferences, which has brought a remarkable change in individual's behaviour, in the thinking as well as in the social conduct as the large number of youth is involved the effect is on deeper levels. The unavoidable outcome of this Modernization process has affected the family values at large. The Values: Moral, Spiritual, Familial, etc. have always traditionally been the guard of the young minds which imbibed the sense of belonging; the core of Indianness.

Family maintained the social boundaries, norms and social behaviour of the Indian culture and traditions by solidifying the value system. The interdependence, respect and trust in the relationships, respecting the elders and family responsibilities

were important. Indian culture treasured the cohesion in family system and the family honour was placed at the highest. Now, Indian society is going through a period of transition; it is trying to assimilate the new values and the way of life without disturbing the traditional pattern of the society.

Values are set of principles through which the human conduct is directed and regulated providing life a solid foundation and firm direction, meaning, depth, wisdom, insight and profundity; consciousness toward what is wrong by shaping the inner what is correct. Thus, it helps in the formation of attitudes. Values are related to person's behaviour, choices, conduct, activities and needs, etc. human values are attached with the conduct through which lifestyle and therefore, character of a person has been affected.

The culture and traditions are the definitive sources of human values. Change in value choices are related to the process of modernization and it changes from time to time, however, the eternal values are constant, they have a universal appeal, like Truth, compassion, non-violence, justice, honesty, integrity, etc. A person adopts these values through his learning, experiences and the surrounding environment; which give a concrete shape to one's personality. This helps him/her to develop an attitude towards the appropriate and correct and right as the values provide a base to these acceptances and denials.

A person follows some principles with convictions according to the experiences one gains in the life's journey, eventually these principles become the philosophy for likes and dislikes; and these are converted in personal values. Every society has its own beliefs, behavioural norms, ideals, social codes of conduct and principles, etc. and every person has to adapt to the sets for the survival in society.

Therefore, when a person tries to follow them they become one's own values which control and direct one's conduct which are ultimately converted into sanskaras, the hereditary traits of the society. The educational background, family atmosphere, history, culture, religion, philosophy, art and literature, etc play a enormous role in the formation of value system.

### **1.16 Development of Ancient Indian Civilization and Culture: The Foundation of Indian Value System:**

To understand value system, it is very important to understand the development of culture and civilization as it is an integral part and one cannot separate one from the other. According to S. Abid Husain,

*"...culture is a sense of ultimate values possessed by a particular society as expressed in its collective institutions, by its individual members in their dispositions, feelings, attitudes and manners as well as in significant forms which they give to material objects."*

(Husain 3)

Indian tradition and culture of thousand years has a strong base of unity with boundless multiplicity and diversity, to which various sects and religious thoughts contributed, which made India stronger and sustainable. Various religious, spiritual consciousnesses, beliefs and conducts, rite, traits and ceremonies, dogmas and authorities appended their colour to the Indian culture providing a complete liberty to everyone to practice and to believe one's faith.

Therefore, the striking feature of Indian civilization is 'Unity in Diversity'. This dynamism of Indian culture and civilization is derived from mixing together of people of diverse cultural environments and traditions and religious beliefs and it is mainly a synthesis of divers thought processes. The *Webster New World Dictionary* describes "culture" as:

*"The development, improvement and refinement of the mind, emotions, interests, manners, tastes, as well as: the arts, ideas, customs and skills of a given people in a given period."*

(Agnes 162).

The oxford English Dictionary illustrates 'culture' as follows:

*"...the idea, custom sand social behaviour of a particular people or society."*

(Stevenson 425)

Indian culture is the confluence of traditions and modernity, values, ideas; and all the religious beliefs, every sect in the world present today; although in total contrast in ideologies to each other. It is a fusion of other cultures and traditions, making it richer and better. Therefore, the unique feature of Indian culture and civilization is "unity in diversity".

Indian civilization is supposed to be around 5,000 years old and one of the most ancient civilizations of the world. The Indus valley civilization (around 3250-2000 BC) is considered as the beginning of the Indian civilization. The Bronze Age of this civilization was much advanced and developed at that age. The rigorous study of the Indus valley civilization divulges all the likely features of Indian civilization from ancient to the modern times as they could be traced in the day to day life of many Indians even today. One can trace mainly impact of *Yajur Veda* and *Atharv Veda* on the Indus valley civilization. Though this civilization didn't directly contribute to the Indian culture, it has definitely left its mark and influenced in the larger sense that shaped the Indian value system in the initial stage. How culture provides a base and background to the values could be traced in the following definition in *Dictionary of Theological Interpretation of the Bible*

*"A culture shows its values in what must be passed on to its children."*

(Vanhoozer, Bartholomew and Treier 260)

*"The culture is the complex system of values, customs, beliefs and social norms that regulate activities within the community that has the culture and the community is the group of people involved."*

((Vanhoozer, Bartholomew and Treier 498)

It is also interesting to note that S. Abid Husain's definition civilization in the context of its value system

*"...civilization is that stage I cultural development of people when they begin to live in large habitations called cities, which represent a higher standard of living. But a higher standard of material life has a cultural context only when it is imbued with, or serves as a means of attaining some ultimate moral values... Culture is a sense of ultimate values possessed by a particular society as expressed in its collective institutions, by its individual members in their dispositions, feelings attitudes and manners as well as in significant forms which they give to material objects."*

(Husain 3)

Husain defines the development of any culture in the context of moral values, as they provide a base and shape the character of the culture. He further comments on value system as a shaping stone, a foundation to a culture. He underlines interlinks

between the development of civilization, culture and value system. According to him, value system of a society provides it a unique identity. Though values are universal, every human culture gains its distinguishing uniqueness and certain characteristics through its distinctive value system developed throughout the ages. Values regiment the human behaviour, conduct and the thought process at much deeper levels and control the conduct of an individual and therefore, the whole society shaping the culture of a nation at large; it works actually as a binding force. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan rightly points out,

*“...a unity of spirit binding different expressions and linking up the different periods of its (Indian) history into one organic whole ... (Hinduism) is a museum of beliefs, a medley of rites or a mere map, a geographical expression... (It) has steadily absorbed the customs and ideas of people with whom it has come into contact... ”*

(Radhakrishnan 1)

Throughout the ages, India has become home to various races; some of them were invaders like Aryans and Muslims, but they settled down in India and became one with the Indian culture making it more versatile and richer. They came to conquer India but became Indians. They have completely assimilated in Indian culture. They also contributed in setting the base of Indian value system. India is abounded with the examples of hospitality, generosity, tolerance and piety as India is a home not only to Hindus but also to the Christians, Jews and Parsees, Sikhs, Negros, Mangols, Dravidians, etc. Mr. Vincent Smith observes,

*“India beyond all doubt possesses a deep underlying fundamental unity, far more profound than that produced either by geographical isolation or by political superiority. That unity transcends the innumerable diversities of blood, colour, language, dress, manners and sects.”*

(Smith x)

Almost every religion existing in the world could be traced in India. This is a rare example of religious tolerance which is a core value of Indian culture. It has accepted the positivities of other cultures, respected every faith and belief, sometimes synthesized them in newer and better forms, made Indian cultural heritage richer. India is the manifestation of diversity i.e. religious, cultural, culinary, regional,

geographical, linguistic, diversity in every walk of life; however, Indian culture is the balanced system of “Unity in Diversity”. According to Abid Husain,

*“India’s cultural history of several thousand years shows that the subtle strong thread of unity which runs through the infinite multiplicity of life, was not woven by stress or pressure of power groups but the vision of seers, the vigil of saints, the speculation of philosophers and the imagination of poets and artists and that these are the only means which can be used to make this national unity wider, stronger and more lasting...”*

(Husain vii)

Husain divides the culture as either materialistic or idealistic; Indians have the idealistic bend of mind though as per Dr. Husain it should be a fine balance of both. The subtle balancing of them gives an ideal structure and pattern to any human civilization. According to him Indian values have dualistic feature- spiritual or transcendental and material; they are beautifully balanced in day to day ordinary life.

A quintessential feature of Indian value system is religious tolerance as discussed above. It has accommodated each and every religion, sect and faith existing in the world open-mindedly. While accepting the new cults and faiths the Indian civilization has made certain changes in them, remoulded and reshaped them according to the need of changing time; made it more practical in certain ways; and also adjusted itself accordingly.

Indian civilization has a distinct capacity to respond ingeniously to the modern day challenges; this astonishing attribute is truly a key to its persistence down through the elongated, complex and convoluted corridors of history. Despite many challenges, incursion and turmoil that would have shattered many civilizations, however, Indian civilization maintains to preserve its vitality, dynamism and vigour, as it has the wherewithal to answer resourcefully to challenges.

The total panorama of Indian History of 5000 years may be looked upon as a progression of creative responses to new challenges. It has all the capacity to cope with the modern day challenges of globalization. In simple words, one could state that India has developed an immune system to contest the challenges, whether ancient or modern; and this is possible only because of the firm foundation of its value system providing a base and solid structure to the Indian civilization and culture. In Indian culture, absolute values are a part of day to day life help to shape and balance life.

Swami Tyagananda in his *Introduction* to the book *Values: The Key to Meaningful Life* explains in very simple words how value system is formed and developed,

*“One value serves and is served by another and with them forms a system of values, a total life.”*

(Tyagananda 5)

There is a chain of values which is integrated, shared and then generalized to form value system of the society. Indian Culture’s unique feature is ‘Unity in diversity, the simplicity is combined with the inner complexity. This idea of unity in diversity is quite ancient in India; which derived from many the same elements and it is time difficult as well as easy to understand the binaries of simplicity and complexity in Indian culture and the concept of unity in diversity. One could understand this feature by understanding certain elements, cultural, political, religious, social, historical, philosophical and mythical, etc. elements.

Universalism is a key value of *Vasudhaiva Kudumbakam* and *Jagat Mangalam* are the key aspects of Indian tradition. Our scriptures advocate that *Iswar* or the Divine Spirit resides in all living beings; it leads to the belief of oneness of all living beings. The concept of co-existence is not limited to the geographical boundaries as India has a universal outlook. It has been promoting the message of peace and harmony in the entire world.

As mentioned earlier, India has become a home to almost every religion in the world; there are differences in religious practices, there are differences the way the religions preach the ultimate Truth. What they preach is a belief in the purity and values of life, faith in the invisible power, truth, compassion, benevolence, piety, honesty and liberality, etc.

Indian culture is basically religious signifying the performance of rites and rituals and the Spirituality. Dharma-Religion is placed above all other aims in life; binding the Indians together a perfect balance of materialism and spiritualism are perfectly blended. Sri Aurobindo has rightly pointed that Spirituality is the key to Indian mind. It is the spirituality which adds meaning to the Indian life and afterlife. Everything has the tinge and touch of religion and philosophy in India.

Religious Tolerance plays a key role in formation of Unity in Diversity, as every religious belief has equal importance. Many Indian religions disseminate the value of Non-violence, it is prominently be seen in the Gandhian philosophy also. A quintessential feature of Indian Freedom Movement in the early Twentieth Century.

Indian philosophers and religious thinkers rejoice the differences and valued the similarities of these religious teachings comprehending the unity in religions and synthesized religious philosophies. The process of synthesization in the Indian culture is the integral part of Indianness- the ability of adapting to the changing situations- a key to the endurance of Indian culture. Various social, political and religious upheavals from the ancient times failed to blotch the very sense of Indianness. Jawaharlal Nehru, in his famous book *The Discovery of India*, points out how the philosophy and religion were and are the part of daily life of common Indians.

*“It must be remembered that the business of philosophy in India was not confined to a few philosophers or highbrows. Philosophy was an essential part of the religion of the masses; it percolated to them in some attenuated form and created that philosophic outlook which became nearly as common in India as it is in China. ”*

(Nehru 86)

Indians also emphasize a fine balancing between *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, allowing an individual to live according to one’s own conceptions and values, as one has a right of personal development in material as well as spiritual sense without being a hindrance in the fulfilment of the ultimate rights and duties. Rajendra K. Sharma underlines the importance of the Varna System for the social harmony and in the personal life and how it could be achieved through a balance between *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*:

*“Whatever may be the discussion about the nature of man, one thing has been generally accepted, that man is not simple unit but a complex whole consisting several constituents. Social harmony demands that each of these constituents should get its due. Thus, all should act in harmony. In Indian terminology, there should be a balance between ‘Sattva’, ‘Rajas’ and ‘Tamas’ elements within the man. Social justice, therefore, is based upon a harmony between rights and duties.”*

(Sharma 12)

Another aspect of the ancient value system is the *Ahrama* System, which is again based on the social duties, as the word *ashrama* is derived from the word *shrama* which means to exert or to labour which could lead to the final aim of life, i.e.

Liberation (Salvation) or *Moksha*. Every individual has to go through these stages in the long journey of life, insists on the systematic development.

This *ashrama* system, therefore, provides the actual functioning of the social institutions and proposes a principle of order and harmony. Along with this system of four *Ashramas* four *Rinas* or debts are also underlined in individual's day to day activities; those are to God, to Seers, to ancestors and to fellow beings. The *Moksha* is possible only after rightly performing these *Rinas*, as the idea of *Rinas* convey the lesson of unselfish fulfilment of duties and responsibilities.

Therefore, the ancient Indian value system maintains a proper balance between the individual and the society, the betterment of this life and the next, through the perfect fulfilment of rights and duties. Indian philosophy has touched all the aspects of human life on earth and beyond it, which helps to achieve harmony, assimilation, balance and integrity. *Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha* is a finely balanced amalgamation of materialism and spiritualism shaping the basic structure of Indian value system. The spirit of harmony is basic to Indian value system besides truth, non-violence and religious tolerance as every Indian has a freedom to choose any philosophical thought or religion to follow.

### **1.17 Changing Indian Family System:**

The Family system is an important characteristic of any human society, as it helps to shape the societal life. Indian family system has passed through many stages of development; but many of its primary characteristics remained unchanged even in the modern times. The most important and apparent characteristic of Indian Family System is that it is basically a joint family system and though in modern times it is extended it is internally connected; due to professional and educational needs the nuclear families are increasing, however, the bond between the families remains strong. The emphasis is laid on duties more than the rights of an individual, the performance and fulfilment of *Rinas* as are prescribed by the scriptures is given importance; i.e. *Dev Rina, Pitru Rina, Guru Rina* and *Atithi Rina* which could be only fulfilled completely within the family system.

Due to the Western influence in the modern times, Globalization, through modern education, the impact of communication technology and the electronic media, one could trace the changes in the ideals of the Indian family system and eventually the family values; however, more stress is laid on the physical and psychological

satisfaction, thus the ideals are gradually becoming westernized. As the family has an important role in religious sacrament, the essential core of the Indian family is still maintained in most parts. N. Sharda Iyer in her book, entitled *Musings on Indian Writing in English*, comments:

*“India had a glorious cultural heritage that date much earlier to the Vedic period. But the impact of the Western World, through nearly three centuries of British colonisation as well as Portuguese, French, Dutch brought forth new patterns of cultural behavioural value system which has generated tension in the society. Tension arising from tradition Vs modernity, Indian Vs Western, dwindling of the conventional value system, marital discord, collapse of joint family system and ambivalent cultural response to the West, socio-economic disparities, Colonial consciousness as a hangover of British Rule.”*

(Iyer 69)

The tension could be traced in the family system today. Iyer appropriately reports reasons behind the changes occurring in the families in modern times. An important aspect of social value system is family which is directly affected by modernity. In a modern society, the liberty of an individual is given prime importance than the whole family and individuality is promoted; in traditional value system, the family honour and the opinion of elders in the family is always observed.

Today, the philosophy of materialism is increasing and everyone is becoming self-centred which is a direct consequence of the decline in the influence of religion in the urban life which is also fast affecting the rural India, due to the vast spread in communication technology. The tendency of professionalization, selfish individualism and commercialization is increasing. One could trace the drastic changes in the moral values and the eventual loss of moral autonomy. One could trace a revolutionary change in moral thinking and moral values. Spirit of tolerance which was once a quintessential feature of Indian culture is now evaporating. Yogendra Singh rightly comments in his article “Social Change” in the book *Culture Change in India: Identity and Globalization*:

*“But change in the core values of the culture which belong to the independent and categorical structure of values of a society and*

*constitute cultural identities of people, do not undergo total transformation. It changes slowly as it adapts to new values”*

(Singh 121)

The change is natural to any society; one could trace the philosophical, social, ideological, religious and spiritual changes in any society. Number of factors such as cultural, technical, biological, economic, geographical, psychological and ideological, are operating for the gradual changes in the society. The change in value system is very fast and it is affecting the basic structure of Indian value system. Values: moral, familial, social, etc. are mainly the goals set in any culture; which an individual or the institution tries to accomplish. In modern times as the impact of *Dharma* is declining one could witness a tremendous change in moral, spiritual, religious and other such values. A widespread influence of the western culture has lead to many changes today.

Yogendra Singh comments on the process of Globalization in his article “Is Globalization a Threat to Regional and Local Identities?” in the book *Culture Change in India: Identity and Globalization* in the following words:

*“The process of Globalization does usher in many technological, economic and social changes in society which affect the traditional cultural styles, forms and ideologies.”*

(Singh 103)

The means of social control have also gone through the gradual changes. Due to the process of Modernization and Globalization the materialist and self-cantered individualistic approach of the West has also intensified the profound changes in the thinking of modern Indians. The new modern values such as utilitarianism, pragmatism, individualism, are now prevalent in Indian family system today.

### **1.18 Need of Harmonization of Traditional and Modern Values:**

Indian Tradition is a social heritage with three levels of value system i.e. *Purusharthas*, *Rinas* and the *ashrama* System as discussed. This is considered as the eternal truths and the expressions of ancient wisdom. Although the eternal values remain unchanged, some values have retained their presence; however, the preference of values is changing. Tradition and modernity are a system of ideas, a system of values and a system of institutions. For a healthy, harmonious and peaceful society, a

fine balance between tradition and modernity is to be maintained. Singh rightly proclaims the importance of traditions for a society in following words,

*“Tradition is a cumulative heritage of a society which permeates through all levels of social organization, for example, the value system, the social structure and the structure of personality, etc.”*

(Singh 52)

Certain aspects of value system remain the same. The concept of Modernity is mainly based on the influence of social structure existing in the highly Western societies; westernization, rapid urbanization, the spread of communication technology; growth of self consciousness, materialism are the main aspects of modernity which are actually the consequences of the process of modernization and eventually globalization.

The traditional outlook on life is to be revised and the values of rational culture of the modern age are also to be imbibed. The process of modernization in India is not only affecting the outward appearance and mannerisms in India but also the basic structure. There are some elements in the Indian tradition which have universal approach and they are important to maintain the very sense of Indianness. Therefore, the best way is to reconcile the eternal traditional values with the unavoidable modern values, maintaining the social development and the upliftment of every human being. The movement from tradition to modernity is an incessant process and there is always a period of transition.

The traditional values in the Indian society are not hostile to the modern values and those could be retained without posing any impediment to the progress of humanity. However, it is generally seen that the modern values come into conflict with the traditional values of joint family system in India.

The combination of the goodness of tradition and modernity is essential to have a healthy, progressive, harmonious and peaceful society. Change is inevitable and one cannot run away from the changing situations, so combining the two avoids conflict. However, it doesn't mean that one needs to forget the goodness in one's roots. Yogendra Singh defines the importance of amalgamation of Modernization and tradition in his article 'Social Change' in the book *Culture Change in India: Identity and Globalization* in the following words:

*“...the part of our tradition which has become obsolete or which militates against the spirit of humanism needs to be dropped and*

*all that is noble in it must be integrated in the modernization paradigm of the society. Their notion of tradition was not merely textual. It encompassed, on the contrary, the entire range of the living tradition of the Indian people.”*

(Singh 107)

The new values in the Indian society are quite modernised; what is required is the coexistence of modernity and tradition for peace and harmony in a balanced society. For a modern society, the traditional value of religious tolerance helps to accommodate and reverence for all the other religions and others' point of views.

### **1.19 Significance of the Study of Values:**

Indian Traditional values and the way of life still play a strong role in India's social fabric and would seem to continue to do so, despite the advent of global media and technology which have become all invasive. Society strives for these changes for the betterment. As Mathur suggests,

*“Values take us towards the development of soul and self-realization.”*

(Mathur 20)

The deep rooted values cannot be affected by the modernity. From the ancient times., India is flexible and accommodating new changes by synthesizing many cultures. Indian society has become strong and sustainable; Absorbing and assimilating of new elements help the society to survive through any conflicts. Ethical and spiritual values help to transmit the various dimensions of human existence.

Modern society has been facing problems such as decreasing religious values, declining moral regulations by family, crime, suicide, anxiety, depression, alcoholism, drug addiction and terrorism, etc. as the science and technology have oriented the society almost fully to the materialistic view of lifestyle resulting in a intolerant and unhealthy social atmosphere.

India is basically known for its mystical experiences, religious tolerance, peace, harmony, non-violence, compassion and reconciliation. Relevance of the study of values in the modern times has increased. World has witnessed the horror of 9/11 attacks on the Twin Towers, World Trade Centre, the U.S.A.; 26/11 terrorist attacks on Taj Hotel in Mumbai, Talibani attacks in Afghanistan, recent attacks in various part of the world by ISIS. Terrorism is posing threats to humanity.

Therefore it becomes important to understand the significance of Indian traditional value heritage and the changes occurred in it during the period of time from the ancient age to the contemporary era by exploring the selected writings of Sudha Murty. The research, therefore, would be concentrated on the various aspects of Indian values system viz. socio-cultural, religious and spiritual values, though the every aspect cannot be covered here due to certain limitations.

*“Values came to be inculcated in every society to preserve order, establish justice, to foster fellow-feeling, preserve human freedom and dignity and provide checks and balances in respect of the authority and institutions of state and society. No society can exist without moral and spiritual values and self-discipline. That is why, it is necessary to consider the role of education as an instrument of establishing, advancing and safeguarding moral values.”*

(Singhvi 32)

Indian society mainly relies on many conventional values and it mainly has a strong base of Indian traditions. Ancient Indian philosophers always gave importance to value inculcation through daily mundane and routine activities. Reviving and ingraining the goodness of Indian traditional values has become important as modern society is inclining towards violence, intolerance, fanaticism, self-centeredness and fatalism. Sudha Murty prominently underlines the significance of revival of India’s rich value heritage as an answer to these modern day problems. The main focus is on understanding its importance in the changing situations and at the same time accepting the new positive changes occurred during the course of the time.

### **1.20 Sudha Murty’s Life and Works:**

Indian literary canon has a long tradition of woman writers. Most of them mainly focus on the woman issues, creating a new world with a wide range of characters and a variety of existences. Writers like Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, Zumpa Lahiri, Arundhati Roy, Rama Mehta, Attiya Husain, Ruth Zabrawala, etc. have an international recognition and have won many national and reputed international awards including the most prestigious Booker Prize. The cultural alienation in a multicultural society, loss of identity, the suppression of women, self actualization, quest for identity are the most prominent themes of the Indian woman writers today.

Sudha Murty includes all these themes in her writing, but the predominant theme in her writing basically the non-fiction and the writing for children has the value-motif in it. She highlights the goodness and positivities of ancient Indian culture and traditions. Her writing basically consists of the wisdom she has gathered during her travelling expeditions in and across India and the world around. The experiences, she gathered as a philanthropist while serving the poor and the downtrodden through the Infosys Foundation, play a vital role in her non-fiction literature.

Sudha Murty was born on 19<sup>th</sup> August 1950 in Shiggaon in North Karnataka. She is a gold medallist and M. Tech. in Computer Science from Indian Institute of Sciences- the then Tata Institute of Sciences, Bangalore. She was the only girl in her batch and she was the first woman to work on the floor of TELCO, a pioneer in her own way. She contributed in forming the Infosys with her savings of just ten thousand rupees which proved to be instrumental for the Infosys company which now has turned into a software giant in Indian industry with turnover of about eight hundred billion dollars. Her father was a famous surgeon who was very close to her and she inherited many of her life values from him.

Murty with her siblings was raised by her parents and the grandparents and with the eternal Indian values which imbibed from her very childhood. These childhood experiences form the basis for her writing. As an extrovert, Murty loves to express her thoughts and feelings directly. Writing is her hobby and fashion; and not a profession. She writes about her own experiences.

Murty's writing mainly aims at logical, philosophic and unified treatment of the human existence; and the complex values and value experiences she comes across. She also writes about the experiences of the common man while dealing with the day to day situations, struggling for survival and fulfilling the daily needs.

These experiences are notable and distinguished at their successive dimensions, orders and stages of development of human society. She is deeply rooted in Indian traditional value system; and it is the origin cause of her inner satisfaction. She believes that the individual may come across innumerable repulsive moments; she has also come across them many times in her life which she admits in her narratives. She thinks these moments do not have any strength to take one away from the basic ideological values inculcated during her upbringing.

She derives her vigour from her love for humanity; she wants to see 'a smile of hope' on a downtrodden's face by acknowledging their potential. She feels

compassionate towards the poor and the underprivileged; she works through her Foundation for their betterment.

Murty is mainly concerned with the roots as well as the flowering of the Indian traditional value system; she also believes in the divinity of human nature and feels profound affinity with the great Indian culture and heritage. Although she is an ardent proponent of the traditional value system she is open to accept the positive aspects of modernity. Murty believes that it is human who select their hierarchy of goals and values; and act accordingly. ‘Simplicity is the essence of beauty’ is her belief; simplicity and friendliness is an integral part of her personality. One can witness it in her style of writing too.

Murty as a person is selfless, hardworking and transparent and insists on values. Her main interests are computer science, ancient and modern literature, history, culture, traditions, philosophy, human values and Indian heritage. Murty is a visionary and is deeply concerned with the upliftment of the poor. She is a versatile genius as she has brilliantly contributed in the field of education as well as philanthropy. She has also contributed in building of the software giant ‘Infosys’ as free software programmer. She is a prolific writer who writes in Kannada, her mother tongue as well as in English. Most of her writings are translated in almost all the leading regional languages.

She was a columnist in ‘The week’. T.J.S. George, editor advisor of The Indian Express aptly appreciates Murty in his preface to her book *Wise and Otherwise*,

*“Sudha Murty was not meant to hide her light under a housewife’s bushel. She was born with teacher’s blood in her veins and teaching, she learned early, was a vocation that could help shape the world... the instincts of the teacher and the socialist combined to take them (Sudha and Narayan Murthy) into an orbit of public service for public good. While remaining a teacher, wife, mother and very much the woman next door, Sudha Murty turned into an institution.”*

(George viii-ix)

She is interested in every aspect of life which makes her a creative genius. Writing gives her pleasure and inner satisfaction. Murty enjoys her writing to express her simple but enlightened thoughts and observations while teaching, travelling and

her on field experiences during the philanthropic expeditions. Her writing is a receptacle of her philosophical wisdom. She wrote her first novel in Kannada in 1979; *Mahahweta* which is later translated in English and many Indian regional languages.

Philanthropy is accentuated through her writing. It is, for her, a tool for the betterment of the society; she has undertaken charity as a means for bridging the gap between the affluent and the underprivileged. She is passionate about her selfless service to the society. Murty is an incarnation of *corporate championship of social amelioration programme on the one hand and intellectual creativity on the other*. It is done out of sheer love towards India and the Indians; it has become her way of life. She shares these lifetime experiences, her thought processes and her learning in her writing. Her simple and straight stories are based on her life experiences and her observations retaining the flavour of the soil.

Therefore, her writing appeals to reader deeply. Murty aims at logical, philosophical and incorporated treatment of human beings' complex values and value experiences they come across while living in society. Many of her stories centre around the common lives and her views on donation, friendship, patriotism, integrity, human values, love, humanity, positivism, respecting elders, realization, compassion, generosity, human relationship, social responsibility, faith in mankind, etc. This is to be witnessed through her writings giving valuable lessons in simple and direct language touching the cord of the reader's heart providing an insight.

This implies her deep love for humanity and an undaunted faith in humanity. She is keen to focus on the positive aspects of human nature. Her life itself is an ideal example of simplicity, traditional is harmonized with the modernity and compassion for the fellow beings. Her husband, a mentor in the world of Indian software industry, N. R. Narayan Murthy laid a mark on the world map. India as a software hub with their company, Infosys which could be rightly called as the manifestation of their belief in human values. Murty rightly says about the companionship with her husband N. Narayana Murthy. Both of them have totally different personalities, however, they have a very healthy and long lasting relationship as they share same set of core value which binds them.

Murty underlines the significance of values in her life as they are the fundamentals of her being. Bonding with her grandparents, parents, siblings, son and daughter, her husband, colleagues, students and fellow beings could be easily observed in her narratives. Her respect for the Indian cultural heritage is easily evident

in her writing. She has deep respect for her grandparents, parents, teachers, friends and family members as they have introduced her with the various aspects of human existence, at the same time she has a deep reverence for the traditional values conveyed by her grandparents and parents' life examples.

Murty is popularly known as Chairperson of the Infosys Foundation and her joint venture in the area of health Melinda Gates of the Bill Gates Foundation. The Infosys Foundation mainly contributes in the area of healthcare and rural development primarily rendering books and computers to the government schools in rural areas, infrastructural help, etc. Her active involvement in the field of social development initiatives through the Foundation forms the raw material for her writing.

Though Murty propagates the traditional values she is a modern to the core. She has a great pride of her middle class upbringing. She abides by the values enrooted by her family. Murty lives with her own selfless terms and obeys her own convictions. She is sensitive towards the sorrows of the poor and underprivileged for whom she is sympathetic and compassionate. She has treated these themes with great sensitivity and sensibility in her writing. She takes themes from Indian soil without many complexities and has portrayed contemporary society with competence. Her narratives could be called as the documentation of her experiences of philanthropy, travelling and teaching.

Sudha Murty is the recipient of one of the highest civilian awards by the government of India, the Padma Shri in 2006. A dedicated philanthropist has done a great job for the victims of the natural calamities such as earthquake and Tsunami. Her main focus is on the interiors of Orissa, where the least development facilities have reached. She has also contributed in various disasters stricken remote parts of the interiors of India. She has visited these disastrous areas, the interiors of Orissa and Gujarat; a devoted activist against the poverty and backwardness. She has also received the prestigious R. K. Narayan Award for Literature, the Attimambe Award from the Government of Karnataka for the excellence in the Kannada Literature in 2011.

In 2004, Sudha Murty was conferred with the Rani Laxmi Award 'in recognition of her outstanding contribution to social work' by the Raja- Laxmi Foundatin in Chennai. She has also received the honorary doctorate for her contribution in the field of social work, philanthropy, health and education. In 2011 Sudha Murty was conferred with the L.L.D. for her contribution in promoting formal

legal education and scholarship in India. The Infosys Foundation endowed two prestigious Institutions of higher education, the H.R. Kadim Diwan Building at the Computer Science and Engineering Department at Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur and the Narayanrao Melgiri Memorial National Law Library at NLSIU.

The extensive range of Sudha Murty's social work covers the sectors of healthcare, education, empowerment of women, public hygiene, art, culture and poverty mitigation at the grassroots levels. She enjoys writing to express her simple but enlightened and free thoughts and observations. While teaching Computer Science to the PG students and she travels a lot for her philanthropic field work which is a receptacle of her experiential wisdom.

Sudha Murty's contribution derives undoubtedly for her dedication and commitment towards the social cause. Her narratives such as *Wise and Otherwise*, *The Old Man and His God*, *Grandma's Bag of Stories*, *How I taught My Grandmother to Read* are the documentation of her experiences of philanthropy, her travelling, her interaction with the all sort of people from almost every strata of the society. Her writing is mainly based on her philanthropic experiences which spans closely to one and a half decade and her lifetime experiences in the form of stories and narratives. Her writing sustains the basic ideology implying love for humanity and the positivities in Indian traditions. She is an ardent lover of India and believes that it is a holy land of age old value system; it is a cradle of spirituality and the birth place of various religious faiths.

The present research intends to study in detail the selected works by Sudha Murty with a specific perspective of Indian values. Sudha Murty's creative writing is selfless, honest, simple, direct and transparent which is lead by her personal example; she insists on the eternal values for the fast changing society, a visionary. She aims at a logical philosophical and unified treatment of complex values and value experience that are distinguished at their successive dimensions and stages of human development.

### **1.21 Infosys Foundation: A Resource to Murty's Writing:**

While understanding the works of Sudha Murty it becomes consequential and significant to comprehend the considerable impact of Infosys Foundation on her as a person as she has written that Infosys Foundation has been a mother to her in all these years of togetherness. She has dedicated her works to the Infosys Foundation. The

Principle of Infosys Foundation is “*Bahujan Hitay, Bahujan Sukhay*” working in the area of culture, destitute care, education, healthcare and rural development.

Over the years, Murty has organized several programmes for the construction of school buildings, public toilets, healthcare facilities and homes for orphan and destitute children. Under her guidance and support, the Infosys Foundation has helped needy meritorious students by providing scholarships; donating books to educational institutions and public libraries and training the teachers; conducting disaster relief operations; providing technical education to the youth; setting up self-employment centres for women in rural areas; helping war widows and artistes fallen in hard times and reviving some of our most traditional yet endangered arts and crafts.

Some of the major projects taken up by the Infosys Foundation under Sudha Murty’s active leadership are the leprosy rehabilitation camp at Gulbarga, air-conditioning of the entire burns ward at Victoria Hospital in Bangalore, relief work in the flood-hit districts of north Karnataka and drought-hit areas of Andhra Pradesh and the building of veterinary hospitals in the tribal, rural and backward areas of Karnataka.

The Foundation has built around 10,000 public toilets in the rural areas of Karnataka and a chain of hundred toilets in the city of Bangalore. The setting up of 50,000 libraries is a result of Murty’s vision of a library for each school facilitating the donation of over several thousand computers to rural schools in Karnataka as she firmly believes that computers are the tools for the future. The Foundation has helped to build 2,300 houses in the flood affected areas and has handled national natural disasters like tsunami in Tamil Nadu and Andaman, earthquake in Kutch - Gujarat, hurricane and floods in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh and drought in Karnataka and Maharashtra.

## **1.22 Brief Introduction to the Works under Study:**

The present research intends to analyse Sudha Murty’s works in perspective of Indian value system. Therefore, following fictional and non-fictional works by Murty are selected for study.

### **1.22.1 *Wise and Otherwise: A Salute to life:***

It is one of the most popular books by Murty published in 2002 by East West Books, Madras; and is being reprinted consistently. It has been translated in almost all the major regional languages; it is to note that it is also translated into Sanskrit. As the

subtitle of the book suggests, it is a panorama of Indian life and people where we meet a whole range of people belonging to almost every strata of society. It is a collection of 51 narratives written which are sardonic and wry with a native touch.

The book portrays friendship, simplicity, generosity, honesty, humility, happiness, patriotism, content, satisfaction, perseverance, positivity, peace and ageless wisdom; and also contains mean and cruel aspects of human side with the modern day insensitivity index. It is a documentation of her experiences during her travel for philanthropy and a fine description of the places as well as the people she encounters in her daily routine as a teacher, mother or philanthropist.

*Wise and Otherwise* gives readers the lessons for the lifetime; helps to change the outlook. It is written in simple language without any glamour or profligacy. It is so easy that can be understood by everyone; it is appreciated by all generations, age, gender and nationality as they reflect her humanitarian outlook towards the needy, downtrodden and poor but honest and simple people, the real life experiences.

This book is an authentic portrayal of Real India; emphasizing the importance of Indian traditional values making the readers to look back at life and analyse one's growth as a human amidst incongruent atmosphere. She leaves it to them to choose good or bad, without any pretensions or verdict and with no heavy spells of morality or criticism. Many of the narratives are included in school curriculum.

### **1.22.2 *How I Taught My Grandmother to Read and Other Favourite Stories:***

*How I Taught My Grandmother To Read and other Stories* is a collection of 23 heart touching and eye opening narratives by Sudha Murty was published in 2004 by penguin India; which are her real life incidents, her experiences and the narrations of her interactions with the world around. It is translated in all the major Indian regional languages.

Some of the narratives are Sudha Murty's articles written for some of the leading newspapers. These are appreciated by the young and the old as they are written in a lucid, simple, clear and direct manner. These are the stories underlining the age old wisdom of Indian traditional values and heritage. She writes in the preface:

*"In this collection, I have tried to recreate some stories from my experiences, all of which have taught me something."*

(Murty, *TMGR* x)

As her earlier book *Wise and Otherwise* this too talks about Indian values we seem to have forgotten in modern times- like honesty, generosity, tolerance, peaceful coexistence, affection, charity, friendship, justice, patriotism, etc. These stories also talk about great people whom Sudha met in her life's journey; it is the strength of the character, wisdom that impressed and inspired her, like JRD Tata and Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.

She also talks about the simple and common people from whom she learnt the lessons of life. Her characters like Gauramma, Balu have flavour of soil. It is a documentation of human relationships as she also talks about her relationship with her grand-mother, grand-father, daughter, son, teacher, student, colleagues from which the reader can know more about Sudha Murty as a person. She believes,

*“In the course of my work for the Infosys Foundation and as a teacher, I meet many people young and old, each of whom has enriched my life in some way.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* x)

These real life narratives enrich the readers too, enlightening them towards the inculcation of human values. The book revolves around the daily life of many people she has met or has heard of from all over the country. She recounts them in the book and help us to understand ourselves better and also guides us how not to live life.

These tales are about simple things that happen all around us and each one of us has experienced most of the events and emotions in these stories; they are about the common incidents that could happen to anyone. Murty takes these incidents and converts them into the moral lessons for the readers; a document which could vouch for its sincerity is a rich treasure of Indian value heritage.

### **1.22.3 *The Old Man and His God: Discovering the Spirit of India:***

Sudha Murty's *The old Man and His God: Discovering the Spirit of India* is a collection of 25 stories *real life experiences*, published by Penguin, India in 2006. As her other two books, this is also translated into various Indian regional languages. She acknowledges the true spirit of India.

The stories itself are so strong that even without a grand narrative style and technique, the book leaves an ineffaceable and unforgettable mark on the reader's mind. They are written in a simple, direct and lucid style, these are incidents and stories that Sudha Murty experiences in her journey through the length and breadth of

the country while doing the philanthropic work as a chairperson of the Infosys Foundation. Sudha Murty explains in the preface to the book:

*“People often ask me how it is that so many interesting things happen only to me. To them I reply that in life’s journey we all meet strange people and undergo many experiences that touch us and sometimes even change us. If you have a sensitive mind and record your observations regularly, you will see your life too is a vast storehouse of stories.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* ix)

As she conducts her daily job of working with the villagers, slum dwellers, diseased the common men and women Sudha Murty listens to them and depicts their thinking and way of living. Their accounts of the struggles and hardships are collected. The situations they have overcome and besieged by are depicted by Murty.

The characters in the book are generous, unselfish and just; she has ever met. They teach her lessons of age old Indian values such as social togetherness, aparigraha, tolerance, simplicity, empathy, compassion, philanthropy, universal responsibility, humanity, sacrifice, hospitality, sharing, sense of belonging, patience, courage, family values, peace and harmony. She also writes about the insensitivity and inhumanity of people in modern times. It is also a documentation of human relations based on traditional values.

#### **1.22.4 *The Magic Drum and Other Favourite Stories:***

It is the collection of 37 fairy tales published in 2006 by Penguin India and has been translated into many Indian regional languages and comprises the stories of a prince and princess, a shepherd with a bag of words, the magic drum, the Supermen, the White Crow, Kings and misers, princes and paupers, wise men and foolish boys, the funniest and oddest men and women come alive in this sparkling collection of stories.

Sudha Murty's grandparents told her some of the stories when she was a child; some of them she heard from her friends from around the world and some stories she have read and rewritten with her own perspective to convey the right values. These delightful and timeless folktales have been her favourites for years and she has narrated them many times over to the young people. In the beginning of the preface she writes the motif behind writing these stories,

*“India has a rich tradition of story-telling. Texts like the Kathasaritsagara, Panchtantra and Jataka are a rich storehouse of tales which have been enjoyed by several generations of readers and listeners. These stories full of humour and morals are the ideal means to introduce the right values to young people.”*

(Murty, MD xi)

These moral stories help to transmit the traditional values from one generation to the other. Murty's sincere, down-to-earth, practical writing style and the sheer simplicity of characters, stories and incidents portrayed in this book are apparent in every single page, every single line that she has written inspiring everyone. The stories have an inherent lesson or moral. The selflessness and selfishness, compassion and cruelty, knowledge and ignorance, generosity and misery all are shown distinctly by the author in simple, lucid and direct language.

#### **1.22.5 *Bird with the Golden Wings: Stories of Wit and Magic:***

*The Bird with Golden Wings: Stories of Wit and Magic* which contains 21 stories was published by Penguin India in 2009. It is a priceless gift to the children by Sudha Murty as it conveys life lessons in a readable and relatable manner. These are age old fables showcased in a new garb in a witty manner. One of the greatest flaws in human character which is not easy to overcome is that of greed and a couple of stories highlight this folly. Trust is the binding material for any relationship and the lack of this precious ingredient can break the relationship which is beautifully portrayed in one of the stories when the banana lady leaves her husband after finding out that he did not respect her only condition of trust. Thus they portray Indian values.

In one story, the wittiness and presence of mind of an ordinary person can even outsmart Goddess Lakshmi. In another story, because of his wit, Shekhar could make the royal King savour plain boiled rice with salt as the best dish in the world. Respecting elders, sincerely working hard towards the goal and not looking for any shortcuts, importance of kindness in life, sharing, justice, simplicity, honesty, social togetherness, equality, helping each other and daanam are some of the other values which have been projected through interesting short stories in a lucid, simple and direct language. These fairytales are the messages from different sources and different situations which always help in making the values firmer in the impressionable minds of the children. Sudha Murty's stories are definitely very helpful as a step towards that goal.

### **1.22.6 Dollar Bahu:**

*Dollar Bahu* is a novel by Sudha Murty which was originally written in Kannada. It is a story about how money corrupts the human relationships and how family is tore apart in fulfilling the greed of some of its members. Originally Murty has written *Dollar Bahu* in Kannada with the title *Dollar Sose* in 2001. It was first published by Amey Inspiring books, Pune in 2006. *Dollar Bahu*, is about the greed of dollar and how it affects peace, happiness, health in a middle class Indian family. It is set between Dharwad, Bangalore and the USA. Gouramma and Shamanna live in a small house with their children; the eldest son, Chandru, has big dreams of settling in the USA while the younger one, Girish, is happy and content with his job as a bank clerk and their daughter, Surabhi, is a selfish and happy-go-lucky person. Shamanna has been a school teacher all his life who is simple, honest, generous and down to earth.

Gauramma settles her hopes on Chandru who settles in the USA and helps his family to be financially stable. He marries Jamuna, a only child of a rich man. Girish marries Vinuta, poor and orphan from the small town of Dharwad. Jamuna becomes Gauramma's favourite for her husband's earning in dollars as well as for her wealthy and affluent background. Gauramma's greed surpasses the submissive Vinuta's devotion, services, goodness of heart, sacrifices, her simplicity and humility. Gowamma is in full praise of the dollar bahu , Jamuna who never cares for their goodness. Her only contribution is a monthly cheque by her husband. Jamuna is mean, selfish, shrewd, self-centred, practical and smart. Gauramma's perceptions about Jamuna, her beloved 'dollar bahu' are met with sheer disappointment when she visits them in the USA. Gradually, Gauramma realizes that America is not her home. She wants to be in India which is her true home and with her family.

Murty makes the readers think whether money defines the human relationships, life; the way of thinking and a person in total with a simple plot and language. It revolves around a middle class family and depicts how the temptation of the Dollar affects relationships within that family. Gouramma learns the importance of a good heart that comes before money. The story tries to revive the significance of human values and human relationships in individual's life.

Murty hopes that this story will be a path shower to some families that love and affection are more important than money. She proves the point that one cannot have the best of both worlds and has left it to the reader to ponder and choose what is

good or bad. It explores India and its simple but cultured people and underlines the significance of Indian traditional values. The book also discusses on globalization and modern day problems.

### **1.22.7 Mahashweta:**

The novel, *Mahashweta*, starts with dedication “*To all those women in our country who suppress their emotions and suffer silently because they have leukoderma. May they be imbued with hope and courage*” It is a story of Dr. Anand and Anupama, has been first published in 2005, originally written in Kannada. It is a story of skin deep love, marriage not meant to be the commitment of a lifetime. Anupama, a poor but talented and immensely beautiful girl marries Dr. Anand who is *blessed by both saraswati and Laxmi*. Anand who is madly in love with her beauty, leaves for England for further studies. His mother Radhakka who is shrewd, mean and practical, half-heartedly agrees to the wedding.

Anu stays back in India to join him after Laxmi Puja during Diwali. However, Anu’s happiness is short-lived as she discovers to her horror a small white patch of leukoderma which turns her life upside down. Anupama, an unbelievably beautiful woman who is an brilliant actress, a scholar in Sanskrit literature especially drama and directs plays to raise money for the underprivileged, studies on scholarships although born into a poor family consisting of father, a step mother and two step sisters survives the all odds and stands on her own.

The present novel is no exception that Murty’s writing has unfailingly incorporated historical and ancient Indian mythological anecdotes; where Anupama is a student of History and an ardent lover of Sanskrit Literature, especially the dramas and in the afterlife she becomes a Sanskrit Professor in a college in Mumbai and also directs the Sanskrit dramas. The title of the book, *Mahasheta* has a strong mythological relevance; taken from one of Bana Bhatta’s earliest Sanskrit novel *Kadambari*, the story of Mahashweta – the extremely beautiful Gandhara princess.

It is a significant piece of art expressed in a very simple but an impressive manner with engaging characters, proficiently penned and very applicable. The simple and straight storyline portrays a very socially relevant issue of leukoderma asking the basic question whether as a society we have become broad minded enough to appreciate the inner beauty over the physical one. Anupama points out while talking to Dr. Satya.

*"My Experience has taught me this. I have come to realize that courage and confidence are the real wealth in life. Education can improve your chances of success, but ultimately you have to face life all alone. I don't depend on any guru, nor do I read any philosophy. My conscience is my guru and it guides me well."*

(Murty MS 116)

Anupama is a survivor who is an inspiration to the others suffering like her to live a life of dignity and self respect with unwavering self belief despite all odds, she emerges as a woman of her own right; standing tall and independent. It is an inspiring story of courage, resilience, decorum, politeness, modesty, friendship, correctness, justice demureness in a world marred by illusions, unfaithfulness, perfidy, duplicity, infidelity, duplicity and betrayal and also offers hope, solace and consolation to the victims of the prejudices that govern society even today.

#### **1.22.8 Gently Falls the Bakula:**

*Gently Falls the Bakula* a novel by Murty first published by Penguin Books, India in 2008 which was originally written in Kannada, her mother tongue and is translated into English. Murty dedicates the book to “*all those women who allowed family commitments and responsibilities to overpower their own aspirations*”.

It is a story of Shrimati and Shrikant who are neighbours; Shrikant is peculiarly fascinated by Shrimati, a plain-looking yet charming person, who is more talented and intelligent. Shrimati too falls in love with the cordial, amiable and handsome Shrikant and get married. Shrikant joins an IT company and rapidly climbs the corporate ladder; he works persistently and reaches the pinnacle of his company as MD, while Shrimati abandons her academic aspirations and becomes his uncomplaining shadow, silently fulfilling her duties as a corporate leader's wife.

But gradually she realizes emptiness in her life. *Gently Falls the Bakula* is the story of a marriage that loses its way as the modern values such as ambition, self-centredness and self-interest take their toll. It is astonishingly applicable in its enquiry of modern values and work ethics. In *Gently Falls the Bakula* the style of writing is simple, direct, lucid and neat. However, India's changing modern values and culture play a huge role in the story. Thus the story unveils the meaningless and worthlessness of the modern life with cut throat competition. Murty evaluates the changing values through the character of Shrikant.

### **1.23 Summary:**

The present chapter is a roadmap of the present research work. It takes an overview of Indian culture, civilization and tradition. It touches upon highlighting points of Indian culture and traditions especially Indian Value System in brief. It illustrates the changing values in modern times and helps to understand the significance of literature as a medium of value transmission. It summarises Murty's selected works for present study.

With the help of selected writings of Murty, the present research work intends to understand the changing value system in the modern times, its repercussions and shortcomings. Murty retains the significance of age old traditional values which provide base and meaning to the human existence with apt examples from her own life as well as from her characters. The present study focuses on certain aspects of Indian socio-cultural values found in Sudha Murty's selected works to understand the significance of traditional human values in modern times.

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## 2.1 Introduction:

The present chapter aims to study and understand Indian traditional value system and how it has a deeper impact on the inheritance of rich culture. It attempts to understand the significance of Indian traditional, social and cultural values in modern times and it mainly focuses on these values in the selected writings of Murty. Therefore, it becomes essential to understand Murty's journey as a writer with value convictions especially the Indian heritage and the value system by locating Indian 'traditional socio-cultural values' and 'moral and spiritual values' in her selected writings. Swami Tyagananda rightly states how the social values come into shape in his introductory note to a collection of articles on "Human Values" in *Values: The Key to Meaningful Life*:

*"Societies in different part of the world have acquired distinct identities, because each society thrives in a different milieu with its own historical and cultural baggage"*

(Tyagananda 10)

The present chapter intends to locate these 'different milieu' in Indian values context in Sudha Murty's writings which broadly correspond to the major aspects of Indian life; and definitely have a universal appeal. These values have a common ground and their aim is also the same i.e. for the betterment of the humanity in total Indian traditions and its value system are the vertebrae of the ancient Indian culture which is constant and has remained unchanged, however, with few noticeable overt changes without harming its fundamental structure and basic patterns of traditions and social values. The most significant contribution of Indian value system to the world is the concept commonly known as *Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam*: whole world is one family and therefore, everyone is a part of that larger family; Swami Tyagananda proclaims,

*"Ancient India always promoted a theory and practice of living together called 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam' which was value based one world family."*

(Tyagananda 6)

Ancient Indian culture is mainly structured upon Vedic literature which constitutes a deep relationship between human beings, nature and the universe at large. It is manifested in beliefs, morals, ethics and doctrines which are shaped to establish human values and help to continue social system. T.J.S. George in his

foreword “The Mission is the Message” describes the exact nature of Indian traditional culture in the following words:

*“We are heirs to the tradition of seeing human quality as Sattwa, Rajas, Tamas. This is a beautiful Indian way of expressing a metaphysical concept familiar to other civilizations as well: of God’s creations, man alone has a choice between good and evil, and he reaps his reward according to his choices. ”*

(George viii)

The Indian traditions and the values incorporated in it are a complex concept to comprehend. India, from time immemorial has been a home to the inter-racial, inter-religious and inter-philosophical confrontations as well as conflicts and has successfully accommodated two opposing views and sometimes synthesized them harmoniously. Philosophy and religion are doubtlessly two important aspects of Indian life. It is rightly stated in the foreword by Faith Foundation to a very thought provoking book by D. K. Dewan and M. L. Madanlal, *The Human Values: a Voyage from I to We*. They state,

*“Today’s generation is the torch bearer of its past generations, who has to pass it to the next generation the light more enriched with its own positive energy. The positive energy comes from enriched ‘moral values’ which combine truth, moral behaviour, the right action, peace, love and non-violence. It’s the ‘moral values’ which lay foundation to the human personality its various aspects such as mental, physical, intellectual, emotional, psychic, and spiritual.”*

(Dewan and Madanlal 2)

Values are transferred from one generation to the other and have a substantial impression on an individual as well as family in both a positive as well as a negative way. However, counterbalancing the negative values with positive ones is an essential step towards the betterment of the human society. These positive values are abundant in traditional Indian culture; which cherish and nurture the goodness in a human being. Swami Tyagananda aptly says in his introductory note to a collection of articles on Human Values in ‘Values: The Key to Meaningful Life’:

*“Without values community life would be a chaos and individual life meaningless. A ‘value’-less life is a valueless life.”*

(Tyagananda 1)

Values are very essential to live a happy, peaceful and harmonious life. Today one could witness that the ill minded goals have eclipsed the conviction and weakened the fellowship of virtues. One could also find the positive as well as negative values exist in society. Positive values, such as love, compassion, trust, justice, respect, sharing, sense of togetherness, and trust help to avoid troubles and help the family cope up with fundamental developmental difficulties.

Negative values mainly violence or racism are injurious and detrimental to the youth who are easily influenced and often carry on a life of chauvinism, intolerance, violence, prejudices and hate for the fellow beings. The positive influence of values, as well as the negative, is evident in daily life at large. Murty's views on values inculcation are worth to be considered here. She assimilates to her students after telling them a story of two kings,

*"I am teaching you Computer Science today, but you will learn more in real life. Technology changes every day and good books are always there in the market. What I am teaching is also how to be a good human being. These values have not been prescribed in any syllabus nor will they appear in any examination. But these are the essential qualities you need, to do well in life. When you become older you should remember that there was a teacher who taught you the values of life along with your first knowledge of computer science. You must then teach your children these same values with as much love and affection."*

(Murty, *TGMR* 133)

People who are primarily influenced by positive family values are respected and adored and are adjusting with the differences and comfortable with their place in the world, they also seem to be more successful in life. People with negative values often have reckless relationships and struggle to find a respectable position in the society and satisfaction in life.

The supreme socio-cultural traditional Indian values are mainly, religious tolerance, peace and harmony in the Indian social life. It is the strength of Indian cultural heritage as it has helped to accommodate all the external and peripheral elements and they became one with the Indian soil. The Indian culture absorbed the new elements without much outward tensions, interference and disturbances in the

mundane daily life; it is actually an Indian dexterity to deal with the more aggressive cultures which attacked India from time to time. It ranges from Aryans of Vedic period to the French, Portuguese, Dutch, and English; however, they failed to disturb the indigenous patterns of Indian daily life.

In the modern times, where there are challenges to the peace and harmony of the Indian culture; the ancient traditional value of tolerance helped to keep the Indian culture intact. Indians are known for their art of co-existence to cherish humanism. The exclusive feature of Indian culture is 'Unity in Diversity', which is an outcome of the Indian tendency to live a harmonious peaceful life of coexistence. The process of mutual harmonization leads to the peace process and helps to maintain the integrity in the society.

## **2.2 Traditional Social and Cultural Values:**

Indian Socio-cultural values have a strong foundation of *Dharmai*, which is a part of mundane social system. Every individual is bound by the social responsibilities imposed by *Dharma*. Murty quotes the words inscribed on the stone edicts of Devanampiya Piyadassi Ashoka, which are the summation of great Indian traditions and value heritage. Murty inscribes,

*"All are my children...  
I am like their father.  
Like any father wishes for his child,  
Happiness and comfort,  
I wish that for all human beings;  
Eternal joy.  
Wherever I am,  
Whether attending to matters of secrecy, or inspecting  
The cattle pens,  
Whether on a journey or resting in my garden,  
Informers must bring me the news of my subjects.  
Whenever I am I will work relentlessly to benefit my people.  
Sacred of all duties is the path of dharma.  
A man who is not conscious cannot follow dharma.  
Dharma should flourish; not perish  
Let people strive for its growth,*

*And not wish its destruction!”*

(Murty, *GFB* 2)

Whether an Emperor or a layman, everyone is responsible towards sustaining dharma and fulfilling social responsibilities. Individual and the society have a deep interdependence affecting the both at equal measures. Social values are crucial and necessary for the human existence. It is generally considered that individual's values must be consistent with the society he/she belongs to, governing his/her behaviour according to the expectations of the society. This defines and controls the behaviour of an individual. These values are essentially always supported by the traditions. Society and the individuals constantly interact with each other, in fact, it could be considered as the two sides of a coin. Mills and Bullard precisely define this interdependence,

*“Individuals contribute to the values of the community and the community, in turn, should encourage the adherence of commonly held values from individuals.”*

(Mills and Bullard 173)

Social Values consist of peace, justice, freedom, equality and generosity lead to the peaceful, harmonious and tolerant society. In this way, the traditional Indian society is ideal. It contains the religious and philosophical confrontations. Leonard Broom and Philip Selznick define cultural value in their book *Principles of Sociology* as follows:

*“A cultural value may be defined as a widely held belief or sentiment that some activities, relationships, feelings or goals are important to the community's identity or well-being.”*

(Broom and Selznick 54)

Social values could be numerous and varied; the present study limits them to the values which are all pervasive; the research is confined to the positive social values in selected works by Sudha Murty. For the sake of convenience it would concentrate on the positive social values to limit its study area. His Holiness the Dalai Lama rightly points out the significance of social values as a foundation of peaceful life,

*“Human beings are social creatures and concern for each other is the very basis of our life together.”*

(Dalai Lama 36-37)

The Indian society in particular is shaped by many ethnic groups which enriched the fabric of Indian value system. The Indian social value system is unique due to its *unity in diversity*. As Indian society is an amalgamation of various religious, linguistic and ethnic groups. His Holiness the Dalai Lama aptly glorifies the ancient Indian Traditions in the following words:

*“My ideas about universal responsibility have evolved from the ancient traditions of India. As a Buddhist monk my entire training has its roots in the culture of this great country. Emotionally too I feel close to this country. In ancient times India produced many great thinkers whose insights contributed to much to humanity’s spiritual evolution. Even today, India is an inspiration, for in the face great odds, democracy thrives.”*

(Dalai Lama 34)

These ancient traditional Values are emerged out of the great Indian philosophies. They are the integral part of society which are important to draw a socio-cultural structure and play a vital role in the development and existence of the society. The significance of traditional social values could be stated as follows:

- Socio-cultural values help to develop an indigenous identity of the society.
- Socio-cultural values bind the individuals with the fellow beings as well as with the society at large.
- Socio-cultural Values promote the integration amongst the individuals and strengthening the notion of coexistence.
- Socio-cultural values legitimate and control the behaviour of the individuals and guide them to choose right, just, desirable and correct.
- Socio-cultural value provides a base to the interpersonal relationships.
- Socio-cultural value like tolerance and equality provide security to every individual.
- Socio-cultural values help to hold the society together in difficult times.
- Socio-cultural values make the society a homogenous and consistent entity.
- Socio-cultural Values accumulate and accommodate different religious thoughts.

- Socio-cultural Values help to overcome the social weaknesses by strengthening the belief in positive values.
- Indian Traditional Social values help to promote the sense of universal responsibility which has been deeply rooted in the ancient traditions and culture in India.

The great Indian philosophers and thinkers have contributed in the evolution of Indian society. It is known that human beings cannot survive without society, therefore, concern for each other is a key towards meaningful and peaceful harmonious life. The whole of human existence is structured by values providing the meaning and right direction to the human life. Swami Tyagananda in his introductory note to a collection of articles on “Human Values” in *Values: The Key to Meaningful Life* states the significant role of socio-cultural values in an individual’s life in the following words:

*“The simple truth is that the society in which I live plays a great role in shaping my interests and consequently, influencing my value system.”*

(Tyagananda 10)

Without social values one cannot think of peaceful and harmonious coexistence in any society. Following are the values highlighted in the selected writing of Sudha Murty.

### **2.2.1 Values of Peace, Harmony and Tolerance:**

Tolerance is a core value in Indian culture, it also comprises peaceful coexistence for harmonious society. It is essential as India is multicultural and pluralistic society; these values provide a binding force to the multilingual and multireligious Indians. Murty explains tolerance in the simplest words; they are as follows,

*“The world is full of difficulties and unfulfilled desires just as the earth is full of dust and mud. If you want to keep your feet clean I this muddy world, there are only two solutions. Either cover the entire earth or wear a pair of sandals.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 82)

Indians from time immemorial are tolerant by nature. In India, people follow various religious faiths and live in harmony and peace. These are the fundamental

values and immersed in its traditions and culture that promote integration among different communities. Tolerance for others' views, opinions and the practices, while practicing one's own without taking the path of violence is an Indian traditional socio-cultural value which existed since the Vedic Age; that continues in Indian sentiment to live a harmonious peaceful life with the others.

Murty in her recent book 'The Day I Stopped Drinking Milk' depicts this traditional Indian value of tolerance. She once visits Rehman and there she meets his Hindu mother and sister, then Rehman says her,

*"You must be wondering why my mother and sister are Hindus and I am a Muslim. I remember comment to me; we can't choose the community or religion that we are born into- so we should never think that our community is our identity."*

(Murty SDM 18)

It shows Murty's firm belief in the age old traditional value of tolerance which helps India to stand apart from the rest of the world where religious chauvinism is abundant and discrimination based on race, religion, colour and class is evident. Murty inherited the value of tolerance through her grandmother Amba Bai or Ambakka Aai who belongs to the upper caste Brahmin community. She helps everyone in the village especially the pregnant women during their pregnancy as well as during the delivery of the baby. She used to advise them about the diet and also provided them with the recipes. Murty remembers,

*'she would help others during their delivery irrespective of caste and community.'*

(Murty OMHG 124)

Ambakka Aai never takes into consideration about their religions, but helps anyone who approached her. It is evident when she says,

*"I have been praying for her (Peerambi's) safe delivery to our family deity Kalloli Venkatesha and also at the Peer Saab Darga in Bijapur."*

(Murty OMHG 126)

Nothing is more evident of Indian tolerance and an inner urge for peace and harmony as one could see a Brahmin Abmakka praying for a Muslim Peerambi's safe delivery to a Hindu as well as a Muslim deities! As India is a pluralistic society, the value of tolerance becomes very important for the harmonious co-existence. This is

further strengthened for the wider interests of the society. Thus, tolerance is the central socio-cultural value. Murty's writing could be a perfect description of Indian pluralistic yet peaceful and tolerant society:

*“When you eat a meal, do you eat only chapattis or rice? No, you also need a vegetable, a dal and some curd. The tastes of the dishes vary, but only when they are put together do you get a wholesome meal. Similarly different communities need to live together in harmony and build a strong country...”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 122)

It is in every Indian's veins to respect the differences of the others as Murty describes this sense of tolerance in Indians. A deep sense of tolerance and respecting the differences and peaceful coexistence is described in following words:

*“In those days there was no communal divide in the village. People from different communities lived together in peace. Many would come to our house to ask for alms. There were Muslim fakirs, Hindu Dasaias who roamed the countryside singing devotional songs, Yellamma, Jogathis who appeared holding the image of Goddess Yellamma over their heads, poor students and invalid people.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 28)

India has this great tradition of tolerance and everyone abided this without making any fuss. It is a graceful acceptance of others' differences and also respecting these differences by bridging the gap with love and peace. Every village and town is the role model of tolerance and peaceful coexistence as mentioned above by Murty.

### **2.2.2 Universal Responsibility:**

Indians are not confined to the geographical boundaries. Indian philosophers always meditated about the betterment of the whole humanity; this sense of universal responsibility is extended towards the smallest creature in Nature, insects, saplings and tree. The sense of universal responsibility is a quintessential feature of Indian traditional value system which is much needed in today's world. His Holiness The Dalai Lama considers India as a pioneer in a sense of universal responsibility. He expresses a deep gratitude towards Indian culture:

*“True expression on nonviolence is compassion...True compassion is universal in scope it is accompanied by a feeling of*

*responsibility. To act altruistically, concerned only for the welfare of the others, with no selfish or ulterior motive, is to attain a sense of universal responsibility.”*

(Dalai Lama 35)

Murty writes about it in her narrative “India the Holy Land” where she mentions a Tibetan refugee camp near Mundugod, near Hubli in north Karnataka. Maya is a Tibetan and teaches Tibetan language to the children in the camp, so they would not forget their roots. Murty’s father is a doctor who used to visit these camps. Maya is his patient and whenever she used to come to Hubli for the routine check up she met Murty and her sisters, chat with them and taught knitting. Murty writes:

*“she succeeded in awakening within me a curiosity about Tibet and a great respect for Buddhism.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 109)

When Murty visited Tibet she met an old lady who thanked her for sheltering His Holiness the Dalai Lama who is a living God of Tibetans. The old lady expresses,

*“I am an old lady and don’t know how long I will live. If I don’t thank you before I die, I will never attain peace. Let anyone punish me for this, it does not matter. It is a gift that I met an Indian today and was able to thank you for sheltering our Dalai Lama. Yours is truly a compassionate land.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 111)

Though Murty is in no way connected with the sheltering of His holiness the Dalai lama, old Tibetan lady expresses her deep sense of gratitude towards her as Murty is an Indian and for the old lady India is holy land. Universal responsibility is also taken as a responsibility for the fellow human beings and is simply performed by helping the people around. “Horegallu” underlines this with simple anecdotes. Her grandfather, a retired schoolteacher used to sit under a banyan tree. He used to listen to the day to day problems of the villagers passing by which helped them to get recharged. Murty asks him why does he listen to the problems of every passer-by; he answers,

*“We all carry our burdens according to our situations and capacities. But every once in a while we need to stop, put that burden and rest. Only then can we be refreshed enough to pick up the load once again.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 12)

Thus, her grandfather helps the villagers by listening to their difficulties and to regain their strengths and face them afresh. Murty narrates another incident from her office, her colleague also tries to help others by listening to their problems and difficulties without betraying them. Murty aptly states about these persons,

*“Perhaps, in their small ways, without access to great wealth, both these people were doing some tremendous social service. No one thought of acknowledging their work or rewarding them for it, but they continued to do so, as these small acts of kindness gave them joy... I remember them and wish there many more of them in this world.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 14)

Another example of this sense of ‘Universal responsibility’ is Sharanamma, a simple village woman who cooked delicious food for Murty in Veerappa’s house. When Murty wishes her to give something as a token of her gratitude, Sharanamma doesn’t ask anything for her own benefit, instead she asks Murty,

*“Amma, I have heard you do a lot of work for poor people. If possible can you build some public toilets for women of this village? Life is very difficult for us.”*

(Murty *OMHG* 16)

Murty accepts her request and not only builds toilets in villages but also in a city like Bengaluru. Murty thus salutes Sharanamma’s sense of responsibility towards society. Murty’s grandparents also have this sense of responsibility towards fellow beings. They have never gave anything secondary to the needy ones; in fact, they have always given the best. Murty writes the roots of her sense of ‘Social Responsibility’ are in her upbringing in a small village.

Sudha Murty used to spend most of her holidays with her grandparents. They are not so rich but still fulfilled their duties towards the society by giving away the food to the needy or whoever came to ask for it; be they the students or the fakirs or jogathis. All are supplied the best quality rice which is stored in the front granary. Murty remembers,

*“We never had much cash in the house and the only help my grandfather could give these people was in the form of rice... My grandfather looked happy after giving them alms.*

(Murty, *TMGR* 28-29)

Murty is also inspired by Mr. JRD Tata, the giant industrialist for whom Murty used to work before starting the Infosys Company. When she informs him that she is leaving TELCO to start Infosys, JRD asks her what she will do after becoming successful. She is not confident about the success of this new business venture by her husband. JRD gave her the view for lifetime,

*“Never start with diffidence. Start with confidence. When you are successful, you must give back to society. Society gives you so much, we must return it. I wish you all the best.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 49)

Murty has kept JRD’s photograph as a source of inspiration of ‘social responsibility’ in her Foundation’s office. She gives all the credit of her success as the Chairperson of the Infosys foundation to JRD’s advice,

*“Help people without expecting anything in return.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 54)

Murty has passed this sense of social responsibility in her next generation as well. She writes about her daughter Akshata’s sense of social responsibility,

*“On her own, she started reading for blind children at Ramana maharshi Academy for the blind at Bangalore. She was a scribe too.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 60)

Akshata used to take Mary, a blind girl from school to Lalbagh. She used to write papers for a blind student Anand Sharma who is poor but very bright and wishes to study at St. Stephens in Delhi. Akshata wants Murty to sponsor him and when Murty is not keen to listen to her suggestion, she tried to pursue her for the social work she is doing now. Akshata says to Murty,

*“Amma, when an educated person like you, well-travelled, well-read and without love for money does not help poor people, then don’t expect anyone else to do. Is it not your duty to give back to those unfortunate people? What are you looking for in life? Are you looking for glamour and fame? You are the daughter of a doctor, granddaughter of a school teacher and come from a distinguished teaching family. If you cannot help poor people then don’t expect anyone else to do it.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 63)

Akshata is reminding Murty her '*duty towards society*'. She is asking Murty to return what she received from the society. Murty calls Akshata as her 'guru' in philanthropy who has showed her the right path. Murty writes,

*"I am very grateful to Akshata for helping bring this happiness and satisfaction in my work and life. It means more to me than the good ranks I got in school, and my wealth. When I see hope in the eyes of a destitute, see the warm smile on the faces of once helpless people, I feel so satisfied. They tell me that I am making a difference."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 64)

Murty writes about her experiences during the philanthropic work with Infosys foundation. Once she met Mr. Aithappa, a chairman of schools she visited. She speaks to his mother Kuttamma, who is an embodiment of universal responsibility. They both have gone through many hardships due to extreme poverty still Aithappa has managed to create a chain of hotels in Bombay with his sincere hard work. After gaining wealth, he wishes to give his mother lot of jewellery. However, she denies any luxuries of the metropolitan city and wants to settle in her village and she wishes her son to build as many schools possible for him in the villages. Because Kuttamma thinks,

*"...everything will perish over a period of time---flowers, beauty, food. No person looks beautiful forever. But education brings confidence to your face and that is the real beauty."*

(Murty, *TGMR* 35)

Murty says there is no wonder that the literacy rates are high in the South Canara district in Karnataka which Aithappa and Kuttamma belong to. Kuttamma and Aithappa sacrificed pleasures for the betterment of the society. Murty inscribes

*"Women like Kuttamma has not studied but they has understood the importance of good education."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 35-36)

### **2.2.3 Family values:**

Indian culture has family-bound traditions and customs. The families are closely connected with grandparents, parents, children and grandchildren. They share the same spirit, values, tradition and property. Indians regard family as an institution or a link, which continues for the rest of their lives. Family values are held to

be traditionally learned or reinforced within a family, such as those of high moral standards and discipline.

Nivedita Bhide in her article “Values in Family” underlines the significance of family values in shaping the character of an individual. She opines,

*“This discussion about the need for values in our life invariably takes us to the values in the family, because our life can be shaped in an environment that a family with values provides. In the Indian social system the unit of society is not an individual but a family. Traditionally, every person’s life is divided into four stages. In the second stage called Grihasthashrama, a person takes to family life and is expected to serve society.”*

(Bhide 62-63)

Indian traditional family system is to be understood as a medium to fulfil the *Purusharthas*, especially *Dharma*, *Kama* by fulfilling the three duties or *Rinas* viz, *Dev Rina*, *Pitru Rina* and *Atithi Rina* during the second stage of life i.e. *Grihasthashrama*, fulfilment of which is called as *Grihasthdharma*.

Every *Grihastha* is supposed to perform the five ‘*Yadhnyas*’ i.e. ‘*Brahm-yadhnya*’, ‘*Dev-yadhnya*’, ‘*Atithi-yadhnya*’, ‘*Pitri-yadhnya*’ and ‘*Dev-yadhnya*’. *Dev-yadhnya* is controlling the sense organs, and worshipping the duties determined by nature. It is to show respect towards nature.

*Pitri-yadhnya* is the salient feature of Indian value system which has remained unchanged even in the modern times. It underlines the importance of respecting the elders in the family as well as in the society. *Pitri-yadhnya* embodies the respect given to the wisdom of the experiences of the elders around.

When a family is aware of the good that accrues of good things, values become the integral part of one’s life. It is only possible when the family is deeply rooted in the traditional value system passed down through the generations endowed with the knowledge of great *rishis* and saints of ancient India.

Indian scriptural texts and hymns enchanted daily in the Indian households transmit these values to the younger generations. These chants and hymns play a great role in sustaining the traditional values. They not only help to nurture and boost positive about the whole humanity but about every living creature in the world. It is a good combination of philosophy and worldliness.

The Indian society basically gives importance to the joint family system. Traditionally, family's betterment and importance are put before that of the individuals. The distant relatives are also often considered to be the family members; Indians consider many more individuals to be relatives; family relationships are given importance in the society. However, the youth in modern times is far more individualistic and never focus on the betterment of the family; they mainly focus on their own development.

### **2.2.3. i Respecting and Obeying the Elders:**

The quintessential feature of Indian family system is respecting elders in family as well as society. In India, elders are always respected for their wisdom and experience. Murty rightly articulates,

*“It was important to listen to one's elders. A sense of fairness and respect for elders were fundamental values in those times.”*

(Murty, *WO* 88-89)

One of Murty's friends constructed a house and named it 'Shyam Kamal' which is a combination of names who not only sheltered him but also helped him to continue his education and because of them Murty's friend is standing on his own feet. He named the house after them. He explained to Murty's query about the unique name of the house,

*“It was my father's suggestion... My father said this house should be named after the people who played such an important part in my education.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 65)

Murty's friend obeys his father's wish without thinking twice which Murty appreciates. The prominent feature of an Indian family is respecting and obeying the elders, touching the feet of the elders which are not easily seen in the Western societies. Children are expected to listen, respect and obey their parents. Experience of the elders in the family is considered to bring knowledge; so the elders are revered. Murty affirms,

*“We have always touched the feet of God, elders and teachers. We consider that as a mark of respect. It is a great tradition.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 5)

The elders in India are generally obeyed, revered, considered to be fountains of knowledge and wisdom and are treated with the dignity and respect not only by the

family members but also the community. Because the old age is considered to be the time of retirement and the older members are expected to relax, to pray and enjoy solitude and retirement. They are also expected to spend maximum time with their grand children; it provides an ideal situation to transmit the wisdom of their experiences to the younger generation. Murty explains,

*“The village elders were all well-respected and everyone knew they were impartial. Their decisions were final and no one went to court against them.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 81)

Murty further writes which is an evidence of Indian’s reverence towards elders,

*“That’s the way elders have taught us lessons. Experience is the best teacher in life. Elders have seen many ups and downs in their lives and interacted with many people. During the process they have acquired knowledge which can’t be taught in a school or college. It has to be learnt over a period of time. Now it is left to you people to make the decision.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 81)

Murty respects her mother’s advice and obeys her mother. The giant company Infosys, with the millions of turn over came into existence as Murty followed her mother’s advice,

*“In life we never know when a rainy day will come and you might fall short of money. In order to be prepared for such a situation, you should always save some money from your salary, and if you are not earning, then from your husband’s salary... When you are young, you want to spend money and buy many things but remember, when you are in difficulty only few things will come to your help. Your courage, your ability to adjust to new situations and the money which you have saved. Nobody will come and help you.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 86-87)

Murty always listens to her mother and started saving from the first day of her marriage. When Narayan Murthy wishes to start a company named Infosys, Murty

gives her saving for the rainy days which is around ten thousand rupees. Murty affirms,

*“When I look back now, I realize that our lives changed completely because I has listened to my mother’s valuable lesson.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 90)

Obedience has helped Murty to be successful in life. She believes that not only the elders from the family are respected but the elders in the neighbourhood are also respected and revered. Gouramma, a character in Murty’s novel *Dollar Bahu* remembers that children from neighbourhood used to touch her feet to show their reverence towards her,

*“When those children grew up and passed their examinations, they would come and take their blessings. Their proud mothers would say, ‘you have bathed him in his infancy. He is an officer now.’ Gouramma beamed with pride and joy on such occasions.”*

(Murty, *DB* 88)

Murty tells us a story which conveys the repercussions of not obeying one’s elders. One has to face a lot of difficulties in life, so it is essential to obey the elders and respect the advice by the older generation in the family. She tells us a story of a rich but stupid boy, who suffers a lot because he doesn’t obey his father and turns deaf to his father’s words of wisdom. Fataher’s words are the outcome of his worldly experiences. When Anil, the son insists to go to the market place and sell the cow all alone; Manjunath, his father advises him,

*“You have never done business before. Why don’t you accompany me this time and watch how I go about it, and then you can start doing it on your own?”*

(Murty, *BWGW* 55)

The arrogant Anil doesn’t pay any heed and decides to go all alone. His father again advises him,

*“When you go to do business, it’s best not to show how rich you already are...”*

(Murty, *BWGW* 56)

Anil is reluctant and feels shame in obeying his father’s advice. He does exactly opposite of his father’s guidance. His arrogance and adamant nature misguide

him. This time too he ignores him again and wears the best clothes, and jewelleryes, rides on the most splendid horse. Murty describes,

*“With an arrogant toss of his head he took one end of the cow’s rope and trotted off on his grand horse.”*

(Murty, *BWGW* 56)

On the way to the market he is looted by three men, they steal his cow, horse, jewels and clothes also. Murty writes at end,

*“Poor Anil has to walk home in his underwear and the entire village laughed at his stupidity.”*

(Murty, *BWGW* 59)

Anil has to pay a big price for not listening to his father’s worldly advice. It underlines the significance of listening to elders and obeying their advices to avoid difficulties in life. Until and unless one abides by the wish of elders, one cannot be successful in life as elders have a storehouse of wisdom gained through the experiences.

### **2.2.3. ii Fulfilment of Three Rinas:**

Fulfilment of ‘Three Rina’ is very important in *Grihasthdharma* which accomplishes one towards highest riches including the *Moksha* and these Three Rinas are *Matru Rina*- one’s responsibility towards mother, *Pitru Rina*- one’s responsibility towards father and *Hrishi* or *Dev Rina*- one’s responsibility towards teacher or *Guru* who is knowledgeable.

Mr. Aithappa, whom she meets in a village in South Canara in Karnataka is an ideal son in real sense who has fulfilled his duty as a son towards his mother. While talking to his mother, Kuttamma Murty recites an old *Sanskrit shloka* from *Ramayana*,

*“Janani janmabhumischa  
Swargadami Gariyasi”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 34)

It means mother and the motherland is always a heaven. Aithappa’s mother Kuttamma tells Murty her life story. She is a widow and her son is very young when she lost her husband and it is a great struggle for existence; her son does not disappoint her. He works as a hotel boy and studied at night in a school; and becomes a clerk. Then, gradually he starts a small hotel and expands in chains of hotels and earns a lot of money with hard work and sincerity. He wants to buy lots of jewelleryes

for his mother. But his mother's wish is very different, as for her real jewellery is education. Kuttamma states,

*"I have crossed the age to wear jewelleries. If you respect my wishes, build as many free schools as possible in as many villages in South Canara. My son understood my feelings."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 35)

Aithappa not only leaves Bombay but settles himself in his small village without giving it a second thought to fulfil his mother's wish and starts ten schools in the villages. He fulfils his duty towards his mother and motherland; and leaves all the luxuries in Bombay behind and joins his mother in a small village to make her dream come true.

A beautiful example of the fulfilment of *Dev-Rina* is illustrated in *The Magic of the Lost Temple* by Murty. *Dev-Rina* means fulfilling the responsibility towards nature, its creatures, trees, animals and small insects. In this novel, Aiji gives Mahadeva two bags containing rice and sugar, rice for squirrels and other small animals; and sugar for ants as while he and other children go for outing. Nooni gets surprised by this, Mahaseva explains her,

*"It is Aiji's idea. Later, I will also keeo a handful of rice under some big trees. That's for squirrels. Aiji says that when she built their house, many squirrels and ants that lived on her land were displaced from their home. Since then, she likes to feed ants, squirrels and birds. It is a noble thought."*

(Murty, *MLT* 118)

In India, one not only fulfils their duty towards mother, father, teacher, elders in family and society but also towards nature. There are so many festivals to show the reverence towards nature such as, Nagpanchami, Narali Purnima, Vatpurnima, Baisakhi, Bail Pola, etc. worshipping nature and the creatures and insect is not new in Indian culture, the tradition continues from the ages.

### **2.2.3. iii Hospitality (*Atithi Devo Bhava*):**

The value of *Atithi Devo Bhava* means hospitality; however, Indian sense of hospitality is quite wider. Murty rightly underlines the value of *Atithi Devo Bhava* and its importance in every household in the following words:

*"In India, a guest is supposed to be treated as like god. Traditionally, the best of everything is put aside for the guest."*

*People will go out of their way to make the guest happy. I have noticed this is evident in small towns and villages.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 84)

In the same narration, Murty explains what hospitality meant to her in the following words,

*“Hospitality means making a person feel at home, allowing her to relax and sharing whatever we have without making anyone uncomfortable.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 86)

Murty defines hospitality in a very simple and straight way. She states very first manifestation of hospitality is preparing the best food for the guests. Murty describes the hospitality she has received at a village headman’s house when she went there for a philanthropic work. She describes,

*“He was a wealthy man and has arranged an elaborate dinner for me, with many courses including a few different types of sweets.”*

(Murty, *OMHG*15)

Sudha Murty is impressed by the tasty food served there which is prepared by an old lady called Sharanamma; she insists Sharanamma to ask for something as a token of Murty’s appreciation of her cooking. Murty narrates her experiences of Indian hospitality in traditional Indian households, especially in rural areas. When once she visited a village in South Canara district in Karnataka, she is invited to the house of Mr. Aithappa, the chairman of the school she visited for a project of Infosys foundation ‘A Library for Every School’. She writes,

*“As soon as I entered, the lady of the house came with a warm smile...Her smile put me at ease....Plantain leaves were laid on the floor and the cook was serving. There were innumerable food items and I did not know where to start. The old lady of the house was very gracious.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 33)

*Atithi Devo Bhava* is all about respecting the guests as gods. They are revered and are provided the best. *Atithi* is respected and always received with warmth and privileged treatment. Despite one’s caste, community, gender, colour, one is showered with all the care, affection, veneration and love. Murty correctly points out:

*“In India, a guest is always treated with a lot of love, affection and respect. An old Sanskrit saying is ‘Atithi Devo Bhava’, meaning God comes in the form of guest. I have felt this to be true, especially during my stay in villages. The poorest of the poor have treated me with so much love and affection. They have given me the best hospitality possible without knowing who I am or expecting anything in return.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 32)

Any guest despite his caste, community, age, gender colour is an incarnation of god and who has to be satisfied at any cost.

### **2.2.3. iv Unity and a Sense of Togetherness:**

Indians believe in sharing happiness and spreading a sense of togetherness. Unity is very important in Indian society. Yellamma and Madha are the perfect embodiment of ‘sense of togetherness’. During her visit to a village, Murty meets Yellamma and Madha, the beggars; who are embodiment of sense of togetherness. Yellamma explains Murty,

*“We don’t have any problems. We do everything together, dividing the work between us. We usually ask each other’s opinion. We always tell what is on our minds and if one is wrong the other does not hesitate to correct. We believe that in this journey of life, we should be together in everything.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 60)

A sense of togetherness and unity is clearly witnessed in a story, “The Wishing Tree”, in which Murty describes two step-brothers’ unity,

*“Ram and Laksman were brothers. They lived with their mother, Geeta... the two boys were very fond of each other and ram, the elder one, always watched out for his younger brother, Lakshman.”*

(Murty, *BWGW* 97)

Once Geeta orders Ram to fill the huge drum and provides him a small bucket with a hole in the bottom from a distant river. Ram is unable to fill the drum and is very scared of his mother’s wrath. Lakshman comes as a helping hand both brothers work together to fill the drum.

*“Next day she called Ram and said, ‘Bring a cartload of wood from the forest.’ Again with Lakshman’s help, ram completed the work.”*

(Murty, BWGW 98)

The next day, she takes Lakshman with her to the market and orders Ram to bring the fresh green grass from the other side of the river. It is full of wolves; Ram not only comes back safely but with the secret given by the shepherd but healthier, mightier and more handsome, as he eats the golden apple. Ram honestly tells her the secret; Geeta plans to send her son, Lakshman to the other side of the river to bring the greener grass. When Ram comes to know about this, he runs to the jungle to escape his brother from the clutches of wild wolves. Laksman wishes while holding the last apple in his hand that his mother Geeta should love Ram too instead of wishing a safe return. Murty writes,

*“Geeta learnt a lesson from her two young children-to love without looking for a reason. And though they never knew whether it was because of the wishing apple or if their mother has changed seeing their love for each other, ram and Lakshman lived happily together, sharing Geeta’s love.”*

(Murty, BWGW 103)

Indian family is an incarnation of the sense of belonging and unity. Even the distant relative is treated with the same reverence and respect as someone closely related. Every family itself is considered as a unit. Even today, two to three generations live together under the same roof in many parts of India. This bond gets stronger even though a person stays away from the family.

### **2.2.3. v Sense of Belonging and Sharing Responsibilities (Interdependence):**

Sense of belonging and sharing responsibilities strengthen the bond between the older and newer generations. It helps to bridge the gap between the traditionality and modernity and also encourages the interactions between both the generations. Sense of belonging helps to develop an opportunity for healthy interactions. The joint family system in India provides the support to everyone in the family. In a joint family system, the younger generation is expected to fulfill their duties towards the older generations and at the same time repay the debt they owe to their parents; as the parents have made many a sacrifices to bring them up. The younger generation also supports the elders in the family. Murty brings forth this sense of belonging and

sharing responsibilities with the example of Yellamma and Madha; Yellamma tells Murty,

*“We believe that in this journey of life, we should be together in everything. Whatever it is some special alms or only a pot of water, we share whatever we earn.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 60)

A significant feature of Hindu family system is the inter-dependence between elder and younger generations.

### **2.2.3. vi Standing Together in the Time of Hardships:**

During the time of hardship comforting the family members become utmost important; family members act as a support system during the period of hardship and discomforts. Yellamma and Madha are husband and wife, who stand together and support each other during difficulties. Murty describes their ideal life,

*“They has to beg for their meals every day. Yellamma was quite sick and when I (Murty) reached their hut, she was lying down, while Madha was massaging her feet and singing. . . “We spend the day begging in different parts of the village but are always glad to be with each other at night. We trust each other and are happy with our lives, full of hardships though it is.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 60)

Madha is helping, supporting and caring for his wife when she desperately needed it. Murty describes a strange experience in “Wedding to Remember”, Murty writes about a couple, which is an apt example of ‘standing together in time of hardships’. She is invited for the wedding of unknown persons where she meets groom’s father. Murty learns that Malati, the bride develops leukoderma after her engagement and his son denies the marriage. Every member of Malati’s family as well as the groom’s family backed her. The groom’s father also tried to make his son understand what he would have done if Malati has developed leukoderma after marriage; but he doesn’t listen to his father. Finally, everyone gets happy when he accepts Malati after reading Murty’s novel *Mahashweta*. The groom’s father tells Murty,

*“It seems he read this novel at least ten times and understood the plight of the girl. He took a month and decided he did not want to*

*be like the man in your novel, who shed his responsibilities only to regret it later.”*

(Murty, WO 108)

The groom does not run away from his responsibilities towards Malati and accepts her though she is suffering from leukoderma.

Vinuta, a leading character in *Dollar Bahu*, is an orphan. Bheemanna is her ‘distant uncle’ moved into the house of Vinuta with his family to take care of her. Bheemanna took care of her and her education though his own income is not sufficient. There is also an old lady, a distant relative of Bheemanna is living with them and is dependent on him. Such arrangement of supporting the orphans and dependents in a family is a normal practice in Indian social system.

Vinuta in *Dollar Bahu* takes a day’s leave when Gowramma, her mother-in-law finds a lump in her breast. She takes her to the doctor and when doctor wants to do the further checkups, she promptly applies for another days leave and takes her to the hospital and stays with her and takes good care of her as if she is her own mother. Surabhi, Gouramma’s daughter, wants to live with Girish, her elder brother in America. Gouramma supports her idea as,

*“She remembered how she has stayed with her brother’s family for two years when Shamanna has been transferred to some godforsaken village. She has always felt that it was the right of a sister to stay in her brother’s house.”*

(Murty, DB 85)

Shrikant in *Gently falls Bakula* is blessed with a wife who helps in his difficult times and stands by him to provide him support and help, when Shrikant mentions about his loans taken for his education. Shrimati goes to every extent to help him and back him at the time of difficulties. When Shrikant’s mother asks him to pay back the loan take for his education Shrimati replies with a smile,

*“When you are mine, your loan is also mine. It comes as a package. I cannot say I want only my husband. His joys and difficulties are also acceptable to me.”*

(Murty, GFB 77)

There is no question of any differences, Shrimati pays all the loan by working as a clerk and giving away her aspirations to complete the Ph. D.

### 2.2.3. vii Sacrifice:

Family is important as compared to an individual; an individual sacrifices one's desires for the betterment of other family member's happiness and betterment. It is natural to Indians that parents sacrifice for the betterment of their children. Leela, a poor sweeper in the Infosys Foundation's office one day brings her sole asset i.e. her gold bangles to mortgage to provide fees for her daughter Girija. She explains,

*"These are the only assets I have. I will do anything to see my daughter studies further."*

(Murty, *OMHG* 101)

A mother is ready to go to any extreme of sacrifice to make her daughter's life better. It is parent's duty towards their children to provide the happier life. Parents sacrifice their happiness for the betterment of their children is commonly seen in india. Murty mentions her grandparents' sacrifice. They always gave away the best quality rice to the beggars, fakirs and the students irrespective of their caste, gender or religion.

For this, they stored the white small sized rice in the front granary so giving could be easy. And they themselves ate the second rate red and thick which is 'inferior quality' is stored in the back granary which is eaten by the family members at night. Murty learns the lesson of sacrifice as they actually sacrificed the pleasure of eating best quality rice for the sake of poor and needy people. Murty used to ask when she is a small kid,

*"Why should we eat the red rice always at night when it is not good, and give those people the better quality rice?"*

(Murty, *TMGR* 29)

When she is grown up and is able to understand life, she understands the importance of giving away the best with you for the sake of betterment of others. She remembers her grandmother's advice,

*"Child, whenever you want to give something to somebody, give the best in you, never the second best. That is what I have learned from life. God is not there in the temple, mosque or church. He is with the people. If you serve them with whatever you have, you have served God."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 29)

Murty narrates about her teacher Gowamma, who is childless but loved Murty as her own child. She sacrifices her life and her savings for her husband. She is deserted by her husband because she is barren and marries again, however, his sons are full of debts and that brings him bankruptcy. She gives away all her hard earned money to clear the debts. Gauramma helps him with her savings.

Shrimati, the protagonist of *Gently Falls the Bakula* is an personification of sacrifices a wife does for the betterment of her family and her husband without expecting anything back not even love and respect from her in-laws and later in life from her husband. In spite of their love marriage, she is the only one who is sacrificing everything for the sake of her family; her career and her pleasures. Shrimati is more intelligent than her husband Shrikant; however, as her husband wants pursue his career they shift to Bombay though she doesn't want to leave Hubli, their hometown.

Murty adjusts herself to the life in Bombay without expecting any pleasures any young bride enjoys her life in the mega city. Shrimati's life is hectic and her husband is totally immersed in his work, he couldn't even spend Sundays with his wife. She accepts it without any fuss as she loves her husband she doesn't want to be a hurdle, a cause of disturbance for him. He doesn't even spare weekends for her.

*“At times, Shrikant would feel bad that his intelligent wife was whiling away her time in Bombay.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 75)

Shrimati decides to pursue her Ph. D. in Bombay University, however, she drops the idea as her mother-in-law Gangakka wants one lakh rupees, she lies that she has mortgaged this from her brother Sheenappa; Shrikant has to repay the debt. Shrimati takes the lead and decides to take a job for a year and pay for the debt taken for her husband's education. She drops the idea of further studies. When Shrikant dislikes the idea, Shrimati replies with a smile,

*“When you are mine, your loan is also mine. It comes as a package. I cannot say I want only my husband. His joys and difficulties are also acceptable to me.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 77)

Shrimati sacrifices her youth and intelligence for the betterment of her husband and his family. When Shrimati tries to pursue for her Ph. D. Again, Shrikant gets transferred to Delhi for a year, and then to Los Angeles, and Shrikant gets again

the GM post in Bombay, so he leaves back her in LA as “*he knew she is capable of handling them on her own.*” Every time she decides to pursue her Ph. D. she has to forfeit the idea for Shrikant’s career plans. At the end, she sinks to a position of a personal secretary of a successful husband. She learns computer and accounts to manage her husband’s work. Murty illustrates,

*“Shrimati soon became the extremely efficient personal secretary that Shrikant Deshpande has wanted at home...It was the obedient, understanding and helpful nature of Shrimati that has made Shrikant hand over such grave responsibilities to her.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 100)

Murty compares her with Bhamati, an extremely devoted wife of an ancient scholar and sage who dedicated his life to write a commentary on *Dharmashastra*, and never cared about worldly things. Bhamati devotionally took care of her husband expecting nothing not even a word of thanks. Shrimati also dedicates her life to her husband and doesn’t expect anything in return. It is her selfless service to him that made him successful and he achieved everything he dreamt for. Murty comments,

*“She has done everything for Shrikant but he has not noticed her sincerity; he did not value her sacrifices for him.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 152)

However, Shrikant denies her devotional contribution to his success. He starts taking her for granted. She loses her identity, her happiness and her interests. When once Mike Collins visits India Shrimati accompanies him and they visit the historical places, however, when Srikant returns to India she leaves her tour halfway to entertain his guests instead of enjoying her trip. Shrimati is a true embodiment of sacrifice. Sacrificing for the betterment of husband and family is very common in Indian society.

#### **2.2.4 Trust:**

Trust is a key value in Indian culture. For any Indian, faith and trust are very important in any activity whether small or great. Trust helps to retain healthy relationships. If one trusts someone, one goes to any extent to help the person even at the cost of one’s own loss. Murty rightly states,

*“You can afford to lose your own money, but if you are a trustee of any organization then your responsibilities are a thousand times*

*greater. Trust is one of the most precious qualities you can find in this world.”*

(Murty, *WO* 202)

Murty places trust before the wealth. Wealth can be regained but once the trust is breached nothing can recover it. She tells us a story of a “Banana Tree Princess” who is an extraordinarily beautiful and belongs to a different world. The prince is fond of gardening and plants a unique mango tree which contains very sweet and tasty mangoes. The girl with the golden pot in her hand uses to steal them and goes back in a banana tree. She is the most beautiful woman the prince has ever seen, so he insists her to marry him. She put a condition before him that he should never open the pot in her hand, the day he opens it she will immediately disappear. The prince agrees without giving it a second thought.

They live a very happy life and princess is in deep love with him, so he thinks even if he opens the pot she won’t leave him. He opens the pot which is totally empty; he doesn’t see anything in it. While leaving him forever the princess expresses her deep sorrow,

*“To you the pot may look empty, but when you promised never to open it, it began to contain trust, as well as my dreams of leading a happy life with you. Trust is what makes any relationship successful. By breaking your promise, you have destroyed the faith that kept us together. And without trust and dreams, life has no meaning.”*

(Murty, *BWGW* 26)

In another narrative, Murty underlines the importance of Trust in every relationship as well as in everyone’s life; in “Horegallu” Murty narrates about a social service provided by her grandfather as well as Ratna, her colleague in Bombay. She is a senior clerk ‘went about her repetitive, mundane work with an infectious cheerfulness.’ She used to listen to the troubles of her colleague and sharing their difficulties. She understands, when a person in trouble or under a lot of strain finds an outlet for his worries, it relieves half his burden. Murty wonders what will happen if their secrets are out. Ratna answers,

*“I consider that to be the worst kind of betrayal. I don’t think there is a greater sin than betraying someone’s confidence. They tell me*

*their worries because they know I will never talk about it or gossip about it to another person.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 13-14)

### **2.2.5 Importance to Hard Work:**

Murty learns from Javed a simple fisher boy,

*“It is better to be worn out than to be rusted”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 14)

Murty retells this sentence to Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam who admires and adores Javed who works hard from morning five to eleven in night just to earn meager five rupees. He admires and adores Javed’s hard work. Indians always give importance to the success gained through hard work rather than gained with the shortcuts. Success with shortcuts is never appreciated, on the other hand, success gained through the perseverance and hard work is always adored.

A story “A Bottle of Dew” underlines the significance of hard work over the shortcut to the success. It is a story of lazy Ramanatha who wants to get a magic potion which can turn everything in gold. He can use it and earn money without doing any hard work. Ramanatha, a son of rich landlord instead of working hard in the fields spends his time and money to search a magic potion which could convert everything into gold; therefore, he stops working in his fields. Once he meets Mahipati, a sage who promises him to provide the potion if he fulfils his condition of collecting morning dew drops in a bottle. This makes him wake up in the morning and collect it from the banana plantation which he nurtured in the process. At the end Madhumati, his wife brings a box full of gold coins. Ramanatha is astonished by this, the sage explains,

*“There is no magic potion that can turn things into gold. You worked hard on your land and created this plantation. While you looked after the trees, your wife sold the fruits in the market. That’s how you got this money. It was your hard work that created this magic and not magic.”*

(Murty, *MD* 50)

Hardwork is always awarded and there is no shortcut to success. Murty writes about the former President of India and a great space scientist, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam’s hard working nature. When she goes with him on a tour of Bihar, Murty describes,

*“There I saw another face of Kalam. He would work more than all of us. His schedule would start at 6.30 or 7 a.m. and end at 10.30 or 11 p.m. at seventy-one years he was tireless and the most enthusiastic person in the team all of whom were much younger to him.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 17)

Dr. Kalam, even in his old age, is more active than people younger than him. Murty mentions the repercussions of shortcuts and laziness. Her student Hassan though bright is lethargic. He never works hard and studies. He wastes all his time by listening to music whole night and sleeping the whole morning. Therefore, he gets with a first class without proper knowledge of the course. He is thrown out of job where he continues this lazy attitude and laughs at the hard workers as *nerds*. Murty advises him,

*“Excellence does not come by accidents but by practice.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 25)

The story “The Precious Rupees” underlines the importance of hard work in every one’s life, whether rich or poor. Murty starts the story as follows,

*“Ramanath was a rich merchant. He has started off poor in life, but through sheer hard work and intelligence, he was now the richest man in the city.”*

(Murty, *BWGW* 31)

However, he is not happy as he has a very lazy and impractical son, Ashok. Every time Ramanath lent him the money he wasted it and finished with the bankruptcy. Once again he asks for the money to start a new business, this time his father puts a condition before him, Ashok has to give him a rupee daily until the day he stops asking for the rupee. Ashok agrees without thinking much.

From next day, Ashok starts giving his father a rupee from the money his father has given him. Ramanath takes the rupee and throws it in the well at the back yard, this routine continues until Ashok is finished with the money his father has given him. Then, he borrows money from his mother, sisters and friends. Ashok is careless about his father throwing the money in the well as it is not at all hard earned. He has to continue giving a rupee to his father, so he has to do something on his own to earn a rupee. He starts working in the fields to get the wages. On the third day, he stops his father from throwing it into the well. Ramanath says with a smile,

*“My son, finally you have realized how hard it is to earn even the smallest sum. Now you know the effort one has to put in to bring home an honest day’s wage... Never forget the virtues of hard work and honesty.”*

(Murty, BWGW 34)

Murty states that everyone should follow these values to be successful as Ramanath. Until and unless one works hard one cannot be successful in life. Murty’s life is an embodiment of hard work. Her success has not been a matter of a day. Right-ability, self-discipline and value orientation are the key ingredients for ultimate success.

### **2.2.6 Acharya devo Bhava (Respecting Teacher/ Guru):**

Indian culture mainly gives importance to knowledge instead of any material gain, therefore, a teacher (*Guru*) is more respected as he/she is considered as a store house of knowledge. He is considered as equal to god, in fact, god is considered as secondary. This respect is not only limited to the period of early education but is continued throughout life. Scriptures in India say that if Guru and God come before you first touch the feet of Guru as he has showed us the right path towards God. Indians consider Guru as an incarnation of god himself. Guru also shows us the path towards *Moksha*, the highest value in human life. Murty rightly inscribes,

*“Acharya devo bhava, say our ancestors, implying that the guru or the teacher is equal to God.”*

(Murty, WO 148)

As Murty belongs to teacher’s family, she respects teachers more than anything, her writings are full of evidences showing her deep respect towards teachers. She illustrates,

*“Once upon a time a teacher was more powerful than a ruler. He loved his students immensely and punished them when they were wrong. They would stay with him for ten or twelve years, helping him in all his work. He treated them like his own children. When these children grew up, they would remember the teacher and his wife and respect them throughout life. There was an unwritten rule that they have to give back to their teachers a part of their earnings later in life. The teacher felt proud of his students’ progress. He never amassed wealth; his wealth was his students.”*

*Every teacher used to pray to God that his own students should overtake him in acquiring knowledge. That would be the greatest joy to him. 'Shishyad ichchet parajayam'---the student should be better than the teacher. That system was known as Gurukula."*

(Murty, WO 181)

The above anecdote itself is an substantiation of Guru's importance in Indian life. Indians consider teacher as the most respectable in society. Murty rightly points out:

*"That is the reason we Indians place the teacher in the third-highest position in the social-hierarchy, after the mother and the father."*

(Murty, WO 181)

Guru is always positioned above everyone as he is the one who shows path to knowledge. Murty writes about a king who is asked, why do you respect your poor teacher so much, he clarifies,

*"What a fool you are! My teacher is one of the richest men. The land that you talk about can be gained or lost in a war. The magic of an emperor lasts only as long as he is young and healthy. The money he has can be spent, looted or destroyed. In no was an emperor is a great man. Look at the teacher. He has knowledge, and every year, he gives it to his students. The more he gives, the more he prospers. Nobody can loot his wisdom or his knowledge. No one can take it away by force or violence. He flourishes every year with more and more knowledge. Is he not a great man? All his students are like his own children and when children prosper, is not the father a wealthy man?"*

(Murty, WO 182)

Murty makes it clear that a *Guru* is revered and respected to a great extent in India. The tradition continues even in modern times as teachers from school and college are respected, and the relationship among teacher student is never only at a professional level. The deep affection is found among a teacher and a student.

### **2.2.7 Importance to Knowledge:**

Indians respect knowledge as knowledge itself is considered more than wealth. Material wealth is considered secondary as it is perishable as well as anyone can

possess material wealth. However, knowledge is achieved with much difficulty, is a rare jewel, so it is admired and revered. Murty underlines the significance of books as containers of knowledge. Indians never touch books with feet and are worshipped on festivals like *Dassara*. She elucidates:

*“I come from a middle-class teacher’s family. In my family, as with many other families of teachers, books and knowledge were considered to be more important than money.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 7)

Material gain and material success are less significant to Indians as it could be destroyed but the knowledge doesn’t perish and cannot be destroyed. Murty rightly points out:

*“In this life everything perishes over a period of time. Whether it be diamond, beauty, gold or even land. Only one thing withstands this destruction. It is knowledge. The more you give the more you get.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 8)

Further she adds,

*“A teacher gives knowledge to students and I consider him the richest person. That is the reason a teacher is respected; not for his riches but because he is the source of knowledge.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 8)

Murty’s story “Books for the Cook” underlines the importance of knowledge. She writes:

*“Aditya was a scholarly king. He was well versed in all forms of learning and held scholars in the highest regard. He believed scholars should be provided with all the help they may need so that they could pursue their studies without worrying about money. He identified some learned people in his kingdom and gave them quite a lot of money, and they spent all their time reading and learning.”*

(Murty, *BWGW* 73)

Indians also worship books on holy festival as they are considered source of knowledge and never touched with legs. Teachers are also respected to a great scale as they are the embodiment of knowledge itself.

### **2.3 Moral- Religious Values:**

Moral and spiritual values in India have a common source i.e. religions and religious philosophy emerged out of them during the long period of time. India has a vast and chequered history of religions, India is the birth place of the greatest religions of the world such as Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and Hinduism; and at the same time, it is a shelter of many other great religions of the world like Zoroastrianism. It is also a home to Islamism, Judaism and Christianity, thus it is an amalgamation of various world religions. Sometimes one could witness a perfect synthesis of these religions as in Sufism.

In the course of time, many faiths and cults have emerged on the Indian map. Indian culture has been successful in assimilating them absolutely. The dominance of Hinduism could be witnessed everywhere and on every sphere of life as it is the quintessentially Indian. Hinduism has often been termed "a way of life" and in India spirituality is evident wherever one turns. Even the predominant social structure – often considered a mundane concern – is derived from religious sources.

#### **Moral Values:**

As stated above, India sheltered many religions and philosophies which have become integral part of Indian identity. Moral values are actually the outcome of these religious philosophies of the world. On the whole, moral values cannot stand alone and they cannot be identified without religious values in context with the Indian culture.

The tradition is continued in the modern times under the colonial rule of British wherein they tended to distinguish between the absolute religious values and the moral values. Every individual is bound to follow the moral values for the well being of the society where he/she may or may not follow any religious philosophy; a fine balance could be established between the two.

Though religion plays a vital role in any individual's life, it becomes secondary on the social scenario as whole otherwise it will lead to disharmony and conflict in a multi-religious society like India. It refers to the social aspect of any individual's life, which contributes in the development of the social life.

Moral values could be individual's values what he/she thinks right or wrong. Swami Tyagananda underlines the importance of moral values as core values in his introductory note to a collection of articles on "Human Values" in *Values: The Key to Meaningful Life* in the following words:

*“It is not difficult to understand why there is a tendency to reduce all values to moral ones. Moral values regulate human conduct at much deeper levels of our personality than most other values do.”*

(Tyagananda 7)

Moral values provide a foundation to make choices and take the decisions. It totally depends on the individual's personal convictions and his/her sets of beliefs, which actually come from the learnings, education and the experiences. Honesty, trustworthiness, patience, courage, being responsible depend on the individual's choices. Moral values basically emerged out of religious philosophies. Every individual in the society has moral obligations as a dutiful member of the society.

### **2.3.1 Honesty and Righteousness:**

It is the most cherished traditional moral value which is esteemed in every society whether eastern or western. Indians specially signify it with a good character. Murty herself estimates this value the most. Every leading character of her novels is honest, just and righteous. Murty while extending her helping hand through the Infosys Foundation tries to help those needy who are honest and deserving. In the narrative “Salaam Namaste” she describes the honesty of Sheikh Mohammad and his sister Zubeida. She calls it a ‘positive attitude’ and admires them as enriched human beings. She aptly writes her views on honesty as follows:

*“Experience has taught me that honesty is not the mark of any particular class nor is it related to education or wealth. It cannot be taught at any university. In most people it naturally springs from heart.”*

(Murty, WO 5)

In a narrative “Honesty comes from Heart” in her most famous book *Wise and Otherwise* Murty glorifies the honesty of a simple village boy Hanumanthappa, a first ranker in SSLC exam of Karnataka state. It is a sheer outcome of his hard work and perseverance, despite all odds in his life. He is a coolie's son from a tribal group without any support or assistance proved his intelligence. Murty is eager to help this simple village boy for any course he chooses, but he chooses simple Teacher training course as it will help him to start immediate earning necessary to fulfil his filial responsibilities as he has four siblings to take care of. When Murty assures him the financial assistance for the course and asks for the expenses, he writes a meagre sum of Rs. 300 a month as he cuts all the expenses and chose to live a simple life cooking

on his own to have minimum expenditure. Murty starts sending him money twice in a year. She sends him a draft of Rs. 1800; however, she receives Rs. 300 back which are sent by Hanumanthappa who has saved due to the vacations. Murty writes:

*“I was taken aback. Such poverty and yet such honesty. Hanumanthappa knew i expected no account of money sent to him for his monthly expenses, yet he has made it a point to return the balance money. Unbelievable but true!.... I did not know how to react to this simple school boy’s honesty. I just prayed that God would continue to bestow the best on Hanumanthappa and his family.”*

(Murty, *WO* 4-5)

Murty writes about how a young student’s honesty is benefited in “*A for Honesty*”. Murty’s son is studying in the USA. He is given ‘A’ grade in the exam though he does the wrong calculations by mistake. When he receives the answer sheet, he is given ‘A’ grade, though his friends insist him not to bring it to the notice of the professor, Rohan promptly informs about the mistaken ‘A’ as his answer is wrong, but he follows his heart’s call his honesty is awarded. Murty writes,

*“To some people it may seem to be stupidity. But I am sure the good values they have learnt will help them in crisis.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 118)

Murty’s son is honest and mails the professor about the mistake. His honesty is the outcome of Murty’s insistence on value inculcation in the children from the very beginning. Rohan tells Murty about an incident when he is young, she sends him to a shopkeeper’s and he gives extra money in change. Though young Rohan is reluctant, his mother, Murty warns him if he doesn’t return he won’t get dinner that night. This is his first lesson in honesty which has helped him throughout his life.

The story “The Bird with the Golden Wings” highlights the values of honesty and simplicity through a story of a very poor yet honest and simple girl Varsha, whose mother worked as a cook so that they could get a handful of rice. Murty writes, about Varsha and her mother who live happily enough, satisfied with what they has. Once Varsha’s mother gets extra rice and asks Varsha to spread on the roof; generous Varsha gives rice to a sparrow, a crow and at last a bird with the shining golden wings which eats all the remaining rice. When she is shocked and worried the bird asks her to sit on his wings and fly to his home in a big banyan tree.

Every time it gives her option of golden things or the ordinary ones; she chooses the ordinary one: a bamboo ladder, a banana leaf to eat delicious food, etc. Impressed with her generosity, simplicity and honesty the bird offers her three boxes, she chooses the smallest one as it will be easier for her to carry home back. She goes back home and to her surprise she and her mother found precious stones in it. Murty, thus underlines that honesty and generosity are duly paid.

### **2.3.2 Humility and Modesty:**

Indians always prefer humility and modesty over arrogance. Submission is considered as a positive value as compared to the western cultures where aggression is considered as a quality to survive. Murty narrates one such incident from her experience as a philanthropist, which she calls as “In Sahyadri Hills, A Lesson in Humility”. She once visits a tribal area in Sahyadri Hills in Karnataka to survey the schools in the area and provide help for the improvements and tries to know their difficulties and help accordingly.

Sudha Murty interacts with the village headman, Thandappa and she decides to return with some umbrellas and clothes for school children to overcome at least some of their difficulties. When she hands over them to him her gifts, he hesitantly accepts them. Thandappa gifts her a bottle of healthy fruit drink. Murty writes,

*“I was embarrassed. How could I accept a gift from these poor people? They themselves did not seem to have enough to eat and drink. Moreover, I has gone on a mission to give and not to take.”*

(Murty, WO 15)

Therefore, she denies accepting the gift by him. Thandappa adds if she doesn't accept the gift he will also not accept her gifts. This attitude of Thandappa is shocking to Murty as she always expects gratitude while accepting the gifts and not the return gift. His modesty and humility appeal the author as well as the readers. These are the essential values and most respected in Indian society as Indians believe in ‘simple living and high thinking’. Murty meditates,

*“I have taken all this in my stride, finding fulfilment in the giving, not in the responses...Here in Sahyadri forest was an old man, a tribal with no schooling, practising a highly principled philosophy of life--- give when you; do not take without giving. This was culture at its best.”*

(Murty, WO 16)

Murty humbly accepts the gift and appreciates the age old Indian culture cherished and nurtured in the deep forests of Sahyadri which has remained unchanged even during the process of modernization that makes it more charming and revered. Murty aptly comments,

*“The Thandappa rose even further in my esteem when he remarked with a twinkle, “There is grace in accepting also.”*

(Murty, WO 16)

Murty has travelled much and met many kind of people in her travels for philanthropy and in her life’s journey, she write from her experiences:

*“Gratitude is the highest form of education...”*

(Murty, TMGR 125)

Murty adores Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, former president of India in her narrative ‘Salaam Abdul Kalam’ for his modesty and simplicity. For her Kalam is the personification of these values which she wants her son to imbibe. Once she is called by Dr. Kalam, who at that time was principal scientific secretary to the Govt. of India; to congratulate and complement her column writing. Though he is on a highest position in his field, he is modest and humble to call her first. Murty is astonished by this gesture,

*“Of course I started wondering why a person of his stature would want to talk to an ordinary person like me...It would be like a meeting between a Himalayan peak and the peak of Unkal Hill, which is in the small town of Hubli in North Karnataka.”*

(Murty, TMGR 12)

Once Murty goes to meet him in his office, and a man without prior appointment wants to meet him. The security persons tries to stop him from disturbing Dr. Kalam, but Kalam allows that unknown intruder to come as he says he might have come from a long way to meet Dr. Kalam. The man invites him for a programme for children but Dr. Kalam humbly denies due to his tight schedule. He requests Kalam to have a photograph and offeres him a pink-coloured shawl and after taking the photograph he takes the shawl back. Dr. Kalam doesn’t take it notice. Dr. Kalam thank him and continues the conversation with Murty again. When Murty brings it into his notice, he smiles and casually says,

*“It does not matter. I don’t need any of them. Probably he needs it.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 14)

When Murty plans visit Rameshwaram with her friends he is very eager to go with them as it is his birth place. Another example of his modesty is his swearing in ceremony. Murty is invited along with many children, teachers, his family members, odd people like Murty, Father George, his research student, students, ordinary middle-class people, Mrinalini Sarabhai and his opponent Captain Laxmi Sehegal! Murty describes,

*“It was a most unusual oath-taking ceremony... Normally such ceremonies are attended by industrialists, politicians, and other VIPs.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 15)

Kalam has invited people really close to him, who loved and adored him. When Murty insists her son to meet him, as she wants him to learn these great qualities from him, he denies as he thinks Kalam is the President and a learned and well respected scientist, a busy man. “what will he talk to a person like me?” is her son’s genuine question. Murty answers,

*“I knew him before he became the President and I have met him after he became the President. There is absolutely no change.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 16)

When Kalam and Murty’s son meet *they hijack the entire conversation*. Murty and her husband become mere listeners. What her son says when Dr. Kalam left underlines Dr. Kalam’s simplicity and modesty. He says,

*“Amma I never felt that I was talking to the President of India. Rather, it was like talking to my grandfather whom I loved so much and lost four years back.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 16-17)

Murty praises Kalam’s modesty, humility, simplicity and kindness in the following words,

*“He reminded me of a loving schoolteacher or a doting grandfather or an excellent friend to these children irrespective of the difference in age.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 17)

Murty invites him for the inauguration of a Paediatric Hospital in Orissa. He keeps his promise even though he is extremely busy as The President of India. Thus Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam is an embodiment of human values of simplicity, compassion, generosity and modesty.

### **2.3.3 Generosity and Kindness:**

“The Lucky Purse” is a story which depicts how Mallika’s act of generosity and kindness helps her in the time of hardships and helps to come out of difficulties. Mallika, daughter of a rich widow gets married to a rich landlord. She receives a lavish wedding with various wedding gifts including silk clothes and gold and diamond jewellery. Her mother also hands her a bag full of diamonds and gold coins. On the way to her in-laws house; she meets a poor girl in a deserted temple, she learns that that poor girl is also got married on the same day but she didn’t have any gifts to take to her in-laws house; therefore, she is sad and sobbing. Mallika without thinking twice hands over the bag to that poor girl. It is a sheer act of generosity and kindness.

And due to a severe earthquake Mallika loses all, her family and the riches as well. But she is full of kindness, and compassion. Though she is almost starved gives away the food she receives to an old woman. Mallika is offered job in a rich man’s house to take care of their boy. Once she discovers that the rich couple worship the purse offered to them. They say,

*“We became rich with your gift but never forgot how you helped a poor orphan girl in her time of need. We kept the bag in the prayer room and used it to remind us every day of your generosity and kindness. That is why we decided to help others when we were no longer poor.”*

(Murty, *MD* 94)

They help Mallika to find her lost family and also share their wealth with her. Thus her generosity, kindness and compassion are awarded.

### **2.3.4 Simplicity:**

Indians always adore simplicity in daily life. Murty writes in her novel what she believes about simplicity.

*“They (Professor Collins and Dorothy) are so knowledgeable and yet humble. Education should bring simplicity and modesty.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 124)

Murty shows her reverence towards her husband N. Narayana Murty, a successful giant in software industry in following words, a pioneer of India software industry. The man who is driven by the powerful motto, Powered by intellect and driven by values, succeeded in his life through his sheer hard work dedication and vision. His life has made him an icon and she proudly refers her husband as,

*“...an icon of simplicity, uncompromising quality and fairness, apart from being a philanthropist”.*

(Murty, *TMGR* 85)

For Murty, simplicity is a virtue to be revered and respected. She adores her billionaire husband for his utmost simplicity and humility. She underlines the simplicity as a value; when she states about her husband as follows,

*“Obviously money or fame has not robbed him of his honesty and simplicity”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 39)

She writes about a candidate at a interview who actually is a son of a famous doctor but

*“He was ordinarily dressed and seemed to be on the quieter side”.*

(Murty, *OMHG* 38)

The candidate’s simplicity wins over Murty’s appreciation. Simplicity is the first thing she notices and gets impressed by it. When she describes Infosys foundation’s office and interior one gets impressions about its plainness and simplicity. The office is abstemious, ascetic and sober when she writes,

*“Although Infosys, the company, has already made a name for itself in the field of business, the Foundation was housed in two small rooms on the third floor of Infosys Towers; and it still is, even today. Our obscurity was heightened by the fact that there wasn’t a single plaque announcing our presence. The security men would confront our staff frequently. Any decent establishment connected to Infosys should have a large signboard with brass lettering, if not a stately banner, they would say.”*

(Murty, *WO* 48)

Her writing itself explains the simplicity of the office which she is proud of. Even the Infosys Foundation provides books ‘Simple, illustrated and interesting’ for the village libraries. In the same narration she writes about a salesman of educational

books who mistakes her for an employee of the Foundation and not a Chairperson. He asks her “*Are you one of the staff members of the Foundation?*” She just nods her head, he gets confused and puzzled.

*“Perhaps he has expected to see a fancy office with a fancy receptionist. And here was I, wearing the sort of simple sari that did nothing to disclose her identity... a dishevelled person in a tiny cabin amid a maze of papers and piles of books was clearly not his idea of the Infosys Foundation he has come to visit.”*

(Murty, WO 50)

She writes her veneration and respect for the simple village life in her childhood. She is uneasy with the modern complexities. She writes,

*“I was born and brought up in a village in northern Karnataka. Things were very simple in those days. If you didn’t like a person, you could just tell him to his face why you were upset with him. If somebody helped you, you could show your gratitude without reservation. If somebody did wrong, we asked for justice. There was no hide and seek when it came to feelings. Maybe it was not civilized or polished behaviour, but it was definitely a straightforward society and a simple life.”*

(Murty, WO 87)

Murty appreciates Girija, her mother’s cook. She is poor and has many difficulties still very happy and contented who is simple yet attractive. Her simplicity itself makes her attractive. Murty illustrates her simplicity in following words:

*“She was always cheerful and neatly dressed in a cotton sari and wore flowers in her well-combed hair. She looked smart and contented.*

(Murty, WO 121)

Murty meets Yellamma and Madha on her visit to a village school. They are a beggar couple; still Murty finds her beautiful. There are no ornaments, or rich beautiful saree or any other adornments. She describes Yellamma’s beauty which is not enhanced with any cosmetics or make-up. Murty writes,

*“Yellamma was around thirty-five, healthy and cheerful. Her well-oiled hair was tied in a knot and a thick black-bead mangalsutra rested on her neck. She also wore heavy gold ear studs, a big nose*

*ring and more than a dozen green glass bangles on each wrist. No cosmetics and no pretence her pleasant smile added radiance to her glowing reddish brown complexion.”*

(Murty, *WO* 128)

Once a flower and fruits vendor takes Murty as a poor middle class woman unable to afford to buy mangoes as she is nearly drenched in sweat and her cotton sari is crumpled as compared to her assistant who is revered as he is wearing a T-shirt with the company logo and his employee card dangled around his neck. This meant he worked for an IT company and richer than Murty! She adores simplicity in the persons she comes across. She writes about Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, former President of India and a famous space scientist,

*“I had heard from many people that he is extremely simple, wears only white and blue shirt and slippers. Soon I got to know that this was not an exaggeration. After our talk on the phone I met him several times. Till today, the more I meet him, the more I am convinced about the essential simplicity of the man. Any interaction with him is a joy and I always look forward to that.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 12-13)

Murty writes about the simple humble village life of her grandparents with least complexities of modern life. Yet they practised the best human values in their lives. Murty’s every leading character adores and admires the Gandhian principle ‘Simple living and high thinking’. Her protagonist in *Gently Falls the Bakula*, Shrimati is an embodiment of this value. Murty describes her,

*“He (Shrikant) could see Shrimati, dressed as usual in a cotton saree, a string of bakula flowers tucked in her long plait her only adornment.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 22)

Even their marriage ceremony is a very simple affair. It is of course Shrimati’s wish to marry in a simple and plain way without any sort of lavishness. Their wedding garland is also made of ‘bakula flowers’, no roses and no raganigandhas which is an usual practise. It takes at a place in Someshwara Temple with only few friends and family. Murty describes the bride, Shrimati as

*“Shrimati looked her usual self, only, she was wearing a new cotton saris, green glass bangles and lots of bakula strings in her*

*plait. She has the same enchanting smile that has captivated Shrikant.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 69)

In India, ‘grand wedding’ is considered very important, and it is celebrated with grandeur and lavishness. Srimati prefers a very simple and humble wedding with very few dear friends and family members. Murty’s almost every leading character in novels is thus simple and humble. Indians mainly prefer avoiding any show off of material progress. In Indian society, the person who is rich yet simple is appreciated more as compared to the one who exhibits his riches unnecessarily. Murty, a billionaire, herself lives a very simple life; her convictions are reflected in her writing.

### **2.3.5 Satisfaction with what One has:**

In a narration, “Think Positive, and Be Happy” Murty writes about her mother’s cook Girija. Though her husband has abandoned her, she is never gloomy, depressed or grumbling. When Murty asks, whether she is worried about the situation she is facing all alone with no support. She replies,

*“Why should I worry? Can worrying solve any problem? Your mother has given us a quarter to stay. I work sincerely... if I need anything, I can always ask you people. For the matter, demands are never-ending. When my son grows up, he will not be like his father, because he has seen me suffer. Amma I have not learnt much in school, but life has taught me one thing: always look at life in a positive way.”*

(Murty, *WO* 123)

Another experience Murty shares in “Bahut Kuch Hota Hai”. It is about a small boy, Javed, whom she meets at seashore of Chandipur in Orissa. Javed used to wake at five in the morning and collect the crabs on the shore, assist his mother to sell them in the market, go back home and help his mother in the kitchen. Then, he used to go to school and again in the evening he used to collect the crabs when sea goes back. The whole day’s hard work brings him only five rupees. When Murty astonishes at the amount of hard work to earn just five rupees a day, he replies,

*“Madam, is five rupees not a big sum compared to nothing? Panch rupay se bahut kuch hota hai! We can buy salt; we can buy chillies.”*

(Murty, WO 180)

Javed’s answer underlines that he is satisfied with whatever little amount he gets. Indians are mostly satisfied with what they have and never aspire for more as material gain is considered secondary.

### **Spiritual/ Religious Values:**

Spiritual and religious are not the synonymous terms, however, both have some similarities and spirituality can be understood in the context of religious philosophy. Religious values have a socio-cultural context, thus the spiritual values have a personal context, it totally depends on the choice of the individual person, but both have a deep impact on the character building process of the individual; Mahatma Gandhi always advocated and promoted through his own example the importance of self-suffering, search for Truth and non-violence which are the outcome of his religious philosophy.

According to Tarakeshwar, religion is a very important aspect of culture and a crucial factor for analysing culture and predicting people’s behaviour for them, it seems that religion has a crucial importance for their values. Religion plays a vital role in terms of forming cohesive bonds in the society, in a family and between individuals.

### **2.3.6 Daanam (Charity):**

In traditional Indian sense, the concept of ‘*Daanam*’ has much reverence and respect. The concept simply means helping the needy or the one who is dependent. Murty understands that one should develop a natural sense to give which includes a sense of balance and responsibility towards the society. However, this should be for the right person but making them self sufficient and comfortable in the disasters fulfilling their basic needs. The concept of traditional Indian value *Daanam* is closely related to the modern concept of philanthropy. Not only Murty but her family too practices the values of *Daanam*. She describes her husband’s sense for charity in following words,

*“The money was good, and whatever remained after sending back home to fulfil his various family obligations, he donated to organizations working for the development of our country.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 24)

The sense for daanam is a well rooted concept in the Indians. And the Murty's family is a true embodiment of it. Murty's students also contribute to the betterment of the society by donating through their earnings. Murty mentions Shanti as:

*“She was also very conscious of her social responsibilities, and I know has contributed a portion of her salary to charity from the time she started working.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 30-31)

Murty tells a story ‘Nine Questions for a Princess’ wherein Shashishekhar asks *“Which person has hands, yet is considered handless?”* And Suryaprabha answers: *“A rich man who does not share his wealth.”* Murty salutes a man with vision Sri Hiralal Jain, who is the embodiment of concept of ‘Daanam’ in true sense. He requests Murty to accept his help. He explains,

*“I want to give you some basic medicines that you can distribute to the poor people. You can appoint a doctor to help you with your work in slums, I will pay his salary and also provides the medicines free.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 40-41)

He has imbibed a true value of Daanam when he asks Murty,

*“Nobody must come to know of my association with this work. I don't want my name or my company's name to appear anywhere. I want to savour the joy of giving without the publicity. I will remain an unknown donor.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 41)

Though Hiralal Jain donates the costly medicines, he has never asked her to mention them. Murty once receives a letter and a cheque of four lakh rupees from an unknown person, who denies to disclose his/her identity as he/she doesn't wish to know others about one's *daanam* and it is without any expectations or demands or favours in return. Murty writes,

*“I bow to this unknown donor from Chennai with great respect. I remembered the poem about Abu Ben Adam and prayed, ‘May his tribe increase’.”*

(Murty, WO 198)

*Daanam* in real sense without expecting anything in return, and by remaining in the background Mr. Jain wants to donate for the benefit of the others. Murty write her views about the philanthropic works she performs through the Foundation. She states,

*“I have decided to help only people. They are my relatives. I work for them, regardless of their caste, community, gender, language or political affiliation, provided that we have funds. I don’t expect anything from them, not even a bouquet of flowers. The happiness in their eyes is the real award.”*

(Murty, WO 117)

According to Murty,

*“Great philanthropists are introverted. They don’t wish the whole world to know about their deeds. On the contrary, they believe that dana given by the right hand should not be known to the left hand.*

(Murty, WO 135)

Therefore, ‘*daanam*’ not only providing the financial assistance but also helping in small ways, Murty meditates,

*“In my younger days, I have come across many families who would look after students who were economically backward but otherwise bright. They used to help them with their fees or clothing and often with their food as well. In those days most colleges were located in larger towns. Many poor students who came to study in these towns used to stay with these families and would be treated as part of the family. The woman of the house considered this a good deed and helped the poor students wholeheartedly.”*

(Murty, WO 214)

Murty believes in this traditional value of India and works accordingly; which also reflected in many narratives by her. She does it out of compassion towards the downtrodden. She is determined to do it for the larger good. At the same time, Murty is keen not to give anything without introspecting the merited cause as she has gone

through some bad experiences when she helped financially with total required amount. So she says,

*“Sometimes it is better to let a person struggle. It provides an incentive to strive harder. Anything given away for free loses value and I not treated with the respect t deserves.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 97)

Murty confesses that she has learnt the value of *Daanam* through the life of her grandparents who always donated the best quality rice and ate the second rate rice at home. Since her childhood Murty is inspired for the acts of philanthropy by her grandparents. Murty says her grandparents who are not highly educated have taught her primary lessons in the field of philanthropy. She has learnt the concept of *Daanam* not through scriptures or the philosophic books but by the simple acts of her grandparents, who taught her by their own example. To save the best for those who have the least, even at the cost of one’s own discomfort and pain to oneself a times.

Indian culture emphasizes a great deal of community service – any selfless service which helps to balance life, otherwise considered to be full of selfish pursuits. It is also named as *Daanam* which is nearer to the concept of charity in the Western communities. It should be done within the family, especially. One learns at a young age to contribute their time and money for the betterment of the society.

In the narrative “Red Rice Garnary”, Murty narrates her personal experiences while doing the philanthropic work in Orissa and Gujarat. The incident lays a foundation for the great philanthropic work Murty is selflessly performing as the Infosys Foundation Chairperson. She is thankful for her upbringing in a small village called Shiggaon in North Karnataka by her grandparents who are simple, honest and hardworking. She says,

*“They lived like a flowers with fragrance in the forest, enchanting everyone around them, but hardly noticed by the outside world.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 28)

Murty has inculcated such great traditional Indian value of *Daanam* since childhood. The seeds of latent and potential magnanimity are now matured in a great tree of the Infosys Foundation. According to Murty, one lives beyond the confines of the self, and help others who truly need one’s charity. In the world fraught with dissension, greed and selfishness, it is only

the nobility and magnanimity of human heart that can save humanity from its seeming extinction of the human values in the modern times.

*“Our ancestors have taught us in the Vedas that one should,*

*Donate with kind words.*

*Donate with happiness.*

*Donate with sincerity.*

*Donate only to the needy.*

*Donate without expectation because it is not a gift. It is a duty.*

*Donate with your wife’s consent.*

*Donate to other people without making your dependent helpless.*

*Donate without caring for caste, creed and religion.*

*Donate so that receiver prospers.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 30)

The above lesson of ‘Daanam’ is taught to Murty by her grandparents which they taught through their examples and not by sermons. And this lesson Murty followed throughout her life.

### **2.3.7 Satya/Truth:**

*Satya* (Truth) is the most cherished religious-spiritual value which leads to *Moksha*. Swami Tyagananda states the inter-relationship of orientation for truth and the Value-orientation in his introductory note to a collection of articles on “Human Values” in *Values: The Key to Meaningful Life* in the following words:

*“This insight into the ultimate meaning and purpose of life has always provided Indian culture its main thrust. From very ancient times orientation to the ultimate Reality has provided the basic discipline to the best minds in India.”*

(Tyagananda 22)

Swami Tyagananda indicates the ultimate Truth. The story ‘The Seed of Truth’ underlines the importance of truth. The truth triumphs and is rewarded. When the king Vidyadhara decides to choose the heir he chooses Pingala for his honesty and his belief in truth. He says,

*“Here is the crown prince! I has given everyone roasted seeds, which would never grow, just to see which child was the most honest one and would admit he or she has not been able to grow anything. Only this boy told the truth. I am sure he will rule this kingdom one day with truth and honesty.”*

(Murty, MD 11)

Thus Murty underlines the importance of truth and honesty and how it is rewarded at the end of all the odds and hardships. Murty tells a story about king Aditya and a cook called Dhirendra. King Aditya decides to test the scholars in his kingdom, whom he is providing the fund for learning. He asks, what is permanent’ the cook, Dhirendra in a disguise of a scholar tell the answer,

*“And the only thing that does not change is Truth. It does not change with time. It is not always easy to tell the truth and the person telling it and the person hearing it should be courageous.”*

(Murty, BWGW 76)

Dhirendra removes the garb of a scholar and appears in front of the king as a simple cook and confesses before the king that he cheated the king and is ready to undergo any punishment for it,

*“Your Majesty, I spoke about the importance of Truth, so I have to make a confession. I am not a scholar or a teacher. I am a humble cook working in the kitchens of this school. Our head scholar did not know the answers to the questions and was afraid to appear before you. So I offered to come in his place and give you the answers, to save the school. I tried to dupe you. I am ready to face any punishment that you may decide to give me.”*

(Murty, BWGW 76)

Though the King wants to make him, the head, Dhirendra humbly denies it and suggests the king to provide less money so that the scholars won’t be lazy and understand the value of knowledge and money. Dhirendra underlines the importance of trust and is ready to undergo any hardships to retain it.

### **2.3.8 Aparigraha (Non-Possessiveness and Non-Greediness):**

*Aparigraha* means not collecting wealth and other things unnecessarily. In *Aparigraha*, excess materialistic comforts, food or wealth is denied. *Aparigraha* brings a life of much simplicity, composure, equability and satisfaction. Murty

appreciates the cultivation of *Aparigraha* with a sense of gratitude towards the creator and conscious actions based on noble love and most importantly Vairagya, ‘dispassionate detachment’. Once Murty visits a small ‘Shiva’ Temple in a tiny village in Tanjavur District of Tamil Nadu. The ‘pujari’ of the temple is blind and very aged who lived with his wife. Murty wants to help the couple so after his performance of ‘Puja’ for Murty, she gives him hundred rupees instead of ten rupees which is expected. To her immense surprise the old man returns her the hundred rupee note and refuses to accept any further help.

He also denies the financial help Murty offers through Infosys Foundation, a pension scheme. He and his wife are not at all interested in this ‘extra money’. Such an act for Murty is unprecedented, surprising and unexpected, as she has seen many people who felt slighted at not getting enough which they deserve. Murty always comes across the people with unending greed for wealth and luxuries. Their greed cannot be answered. Murty describes,

*“Perhaps this world with its many stresses and strains has much to learn from an old couple in a forgettable corner of India.*

(Murty, *OMHG* 4)

The greediness exists in majority, however, the old man in front of Murty is different, and the old man represents the traditional Indian value of *Aparigraha*. Murty is stunned by his deed of refusing the excess money; his wife also supports his views. He not only refuses the excess money but also the help has been offered by Murty, a large sum of money which could help them to live a comfortable life without doing any work in their old age. The old man answers her curiosity for not taking the hundred rupee note offered to them by the act of sheer compassion. Murty is impressed by the old man’s life’s philosophy and his wife is also endorses his views without a bit hesitance. He explains,

*“Why do I need money in this great old age? Lord Shiva is also known as Vaidyanathan. He is the maha vaidya or the great doctor. This village we live in has many kind people. I perform the pooja; they give me rice in return. If either of us is unwell, the local doctor gives us medicines. Our wants are very few. Why would I accept from an unknown person?”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 3)

He The old man doesn't want anything which might mar his satisfaction and contentment. According to him, he never needs anything extra not even the money as that could threaten their peaceful life and attract the thieves instead he wanted to rely on the god, Lord Shiva whom he serves with devotion. Murty is amazed by his sense of 'Aparigraha', simplicity and contentedness. He finds himself totally detached by the material things, which he finds useless for him and his wife. Murty writes,

*"I could clearly see the peace and happiness on their faces. They were the first people, I met who refused help in spite of their obvious need... it was clear to me that his contentment has brought him peace."*

(Murty, *OMHG* 4)

For Murty, this incident is a lesson that one should draw a line based on the contentment and peace of mind; which symbolizes the traditional Indian value of *Aparigraha*. The old man's wisdom has opened to Murty the new experiences; though she believes such attitude could be proved as an hurdle in the material development, this attitude is a must in certain period of life where one must know where need is superordinated to greed, the *Aparigraha*. Traditionally Indian mind denies greed as it knows desire for obtaining something doesn't lead to the satisfaction rather it will bring grief and sorrows, however, it is designed to get something higher the Divine Truth.

### **2.3.9 Compassion (*Karuna*), Empathy, Love and Affection:**

The notion of compassion leads to the peace and harmony in society. Compassion (*Karuna*) is an important contribution of Buddhism to the Indian values system. The values of love, compassion, empathy, generosity and tolerance help to serve the humanity in a better way. These are the basic necessities for the survival of the humanity strengthening the peace and harmony in the world. John Makransky a scholar of Indian and Tibetan Buddhism says,

*"Compassion is also characterized as a mental capacity that, when cultivated and strengthened, empowers all positive states of mind as we awaken to our fullest human potential."*

(<http://www.johnmakransky.org>)

According to Buddhist psychology, It is a form of empathy where one senses others' suffering as one's own and wish to eradicate it if possible. A compassionate person understands the others' sorrow trying to heal it with the means one have.

Murty follows the path showed by these great Indian religious thinkers in her contribution to the philanthropic works. Murty has cultivated a sense of compassion, love, empathy towards the downtroddens through the family environment. T.J.S. George, Editorial Advisor of “The New Indian Express” writes about Murty in his foreword to *Wise and Otherwise*:

*“She has not built no edifices. No public announcements accompany her work. No statues or tablets or archways proclaim her presenc. She goes into tribal forests, into hamlets ravaged by poverty, into communities devastated by disease. She discovers the deserving on her own. The assistance she supplies meets the demand she sees.”*

(George xi)

It shows how sincerely Murty follows her conscience which is full of love, empathy and compassion towards the less privileged ones. In “Wretched of the Earth” she writes about the sorrows and pathetic disgraceful condition of the people suffering from leprosy. Through the Infosys Foundation, Murty helps ‘people suffering from leprosy’ by rehabilitating them economically. As she thinks ‘acceptance by society and a reasonable measure of economic independence can change the lives of these people.’ Therefore, she visits their colony once to understand their difficulties. There she meets Veeramma who is ‘just a skeleton covered with the skin’, she is so poor that she is unable to ‘afford’ a pair of saree, thus she is totally naked. Murty puts her heart in her work which resonates her true compassion, love and empathy towards the wretched ones, their ‘dehumanizing poverty’ shocks her:

*“An old woman could not cover her body. Still she has no complaints about anything. I felt guilty wearing a six-yard sari. For a minute, I felt too ashamed to talk. The shock of what I saw made me forget our policy of simply not handing out the money or the material. This was a situation that cried out for immediate remedy. I sent my driver to get 100 saris to be given to all the women in that colony. Whether they are rehabilitated or not, the minimum need of covering a woman’s body could not wait... Those of us who have a generous share of god’s blessings must do what we can to help the poorest of the poor who are wretched through no fault of theirs.”*

(Murty, WO 99)

Murty tells a story ‘Nine Questions for a Princess’ wherein Shashishekhar asks “*Who has eyes but is still blind?*” And Suryaprabha answers:

*“A man without compassion, who does not see the suffering that exists in this world.”*

(Murty, MD 26)

This states that without compassion human being cannot survive in world, in fact, s/he is a person without heart and vision. One cannot live and survive without the notion of love, empathy, and compassion.

*“We should not think of compassion as being only the preserve of the sacred and religious. It is one of our basic human qualities. Human nature is essentially loving and gentle... From the moment of our birth we require love and affection. This is true of us all, right up to the day we die. Without love we could not survive.”*

(Dalai Lama 36)

Murty writes in a narrative ‘Insensitivity Index’ which underlines her sense of compassion, love and empathy:

*“It has been hardly a week since the Gujarat earthquake and almost all the T.V. channels has been telecasting the latest information. Although i did not know the victims personally, just the thought of their plight sent a shiver through my body and tears welled up in my eyes. All this was on my mind constantly.”*

(Murty, WO 110)

It shows her connectedness with the sufferers, she has a sense of compassion. She has a heart full of love and empathy for the victims and she tries to eradicate their sorrow in whatever possible way. Another incident underlines how compassionate Murty is inclined towards the sufferers. In “Light as Many Candles as Possible” Murty talks about the *Devdasis* (commercial sex worker) with her there is a beautiful teenage girl who is to become a *Devdasi*, that she is supposed to be sex-worker in future whose life is at stake. She is unaware about her future misfortunes. Murty is upset with this trade hierarchy of *Devdasis* where an elderly *Devdasi* uses the younger one and Murty pities the innocent girl. Murty expresses,

*“What a pity-the girl was not aware of where she was heading. Tears filled my eyes and suddenly I started sobbing uncontrollably. People standing around stared at me, wondering what has gone*

*wrong. They probably thought that I has lost something. For the first time in life, words failed to express my feelings.”* (Murty, WO 125)

Murty is truly following the path of Karuna the compassion shown by Indian religious philosophies. In this context, it is important to observe what His Holiness The Dalai Lama states about genuine compassion:

*“To experience genuine compassion is to develop a feeling of responsibility for their welfare. True compassion develops when we accept that other people are just like ourselves in wanting happiness and in not wanting suffering and that they have every right to pursue these...the true aim of cultivating compassion is to develop the courage to think of others and to do something for them.”*

(Dalai Lama 35)

Murty gives another example of empathy and love. Seetakka, a servant’s wife breast feeds her master’s one month old son as he is starving due to his mother’s death and he is allergic to the cow’s milk. Many relatives protested but she continued to feed him along with her son and she gave a new life to him. Seetakka is an emblem of compassion.

Murty’s passion for working for the destitute is doubled when she meets people like a security guard who is an example of a compassionate heart. When he comes to know Murty’s dedication towards helping others with all the odds she faces patiently and bravely. The guard expresses,

*“After you left yesterday I finished my duty and spent the night guarding the trunks. I did not take your permission for that but I has seen the care with which you has assembled them and how tirelessly you has worked.”*

(Murty, OMHG 50-51)

He also donates his day’s salary for her philanthropic work although he is a poor security guard. He is compassionate and also gives force to Murty’s work. There are abundant examples of compassion are seen in Murty’s writing. Murty summarises the novel ‘Kashiyatre’ which is her grandmother’s favourite. It also has an example of compassion of an old lady. She gives away all her money saved for her travel to Kashi to worship lord Vishweshara to a poor orphan girl to marry a groom of her choice as she thinks,

*“The happiness of this orphan girl is more important than worshipping Lord Vishweshwara at Kashi.”*

(Murty, *TMGR 2*)

Compassion for the fellow beings comes from pity for the sufferers. The privileged ones have a responsibility to take care of less privileged and make their lives comfortable and happy. Such act of compassion leads to the utmost inner satisfaction.

#### **2.4 Summary:**

Values, in simple words, are all that makes the human existence meaningful and beautiful. The range of consideration and comprehension of the values in Indian context, help in discovering the immense personal capabilities and in developing the character of the individual. Today’s generation is the torch bearer of its past generations.

The older generation has to pass it to the next generations with the light more enriched with its own blooming positive energy. The positive energy comes from the enriched traditional socio-cultural values which combine truth, moral behaviour, the right action, peace, love and non-violence, etc. It is the traditional values which lay the foundation to the human personality its various aspects such as social, cultural, moral, religious and philosophical, etc.

Present chapter takes into consideration the Indian socio-cultural, traditional, moral, spiritual and religious values. However, Indian traditional value system is an vast entity. These values are divided into two major categories i.e. traditional socio-cultural and religious, spiritual and moral, for the sake of convenience. Murty’s writings are the documentation of Indian value heritage.

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### 3.1 Introduction:

Indian traditional values are consistent in the modern times; however, it needs some harmonization with the modernity. In the actual everyday life, the traditional values provide a definite structure- a suitable base for the peaceful social life. One has to wrestle with it, and adjust with it as there is no escape from modernity. Gusfield aptly states,

*“Tradition and Modernity are widely used as polar opposites in a linear theory of social change.”*

(Gusfield 351)

These two concepts are always considered as binary opposites; though to live a healthy and peaceful life one has to bring balance between the two. However, attempt is made to understand these concepts at the backdrop of the value system society follows. Abedi and Soltanzadehin one of their articles called “The Interaction between Tradition and Modernity in Contemporary Architecture of Persian Gulf States: Case Study of United Arab Emirates” rightly defines tradition as follows,

*“Tradition is that part of culture that is transmitted from one generation to the next one. To some extent, a society’s identity is based on its traditional heritage. This is the reason for which many societies place a great value on heritage.”*

(Abedi and Soltanzadeh 24 )

India, which is mainly considered as a traditional society, through the long course of her history, has been the stage of inter-racial, inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-philosophical altercations and conflicts. Tradition is always at the the backdrop of modernity and one cannot totally deny the existence of traditions.

As Swami Bhajanananda aptly puts in his introductory note to a collection of articles on Human Values in *Values: The Key to Meaningful Life*:

*“Science and technology have considerably altered modern man’s views on life and the universe. This has resulted in drastic changes in the systems of beliefs, but the value system has not responded adequately to these changes. This is the root cause of the ‘Indian values’ we see in all departments of modern life.”*

(Bhajanananda 16)

The basics of Indian Value System have remained unchanged; as discussed in the previous chapters, India has remained traditional to the core. Although in Indian

society one could trace conflict between the tradition and modernity. In the present times, the human being has to come up with the repercussions of the clash between the traditions and modernity, and it is also true with the value system of the society. It is evident that sometimes, they cross each other and sometimes they complement each other, leading to the synthesis of the both.

### **3.2 Indian Traditional Values:**

The term ‘tradition’ is comprehensive and broad including all social conventions, customs, norms, cultural practices, religious beliefs, familial and familiar relationships and religious philosophy, etc. Tradition is all pervasive and all inclusive; it provides a fundamental social structure. In such situations value system becomes important. Swami Tyagananda underlines the necessity of values,

*“Through values the world becomes meaningful and relevant. Without them the world would be a formless chaos, a place where any action would be arbitrary.”*

(Tyagananda 10)

Therefore, the preservation of Indian traditional values is accountability for all to sustain the peaceful coexistence and tolerant society in modern times. This leads to the ‘goodness’ in human heart giving meaning, worth, majestic and noble life worth living; civilizations are the output of such quest in human history, otherwise they may get diminished, no age and no nation could be exception to this process. It is true about Indian culture and civilization; India is one of the most ancient civilizations in modern times. Indian traditional gigantic idealism is elevated by the thoughts from stalwart Indian philosophers who fabricated socio-cultural and moral upsurge in value system. Tradition gives an historical sense. Traditions guide the modernity. A. N. Tripathi aptly says,

*“The magnificent cultural advancement of the ancient Indian civilization was based on the solid foundation of a refined value system created by its philosophers, sages and seers. The universal humanistic and life supporting components of its vast and varied ideas on values is a prized heritage for us Indians.”*

(Tripathi 26)

India has a great philosophic foundation and tradition of value system which has an universal appeal even in modern times. This great tradition is appreciated

worldwide. What Dr. Tripathi mentions as *the solid foundation* is the foundation confronted by the *Vedas, Upanishadas, Aranyakas* and all the religious and philosophic literature by the great thinkers in Hinduism, Sikhism, Sufism, Jainism and Buddhism, which helped *the magnificent cultural advancement*. It is interesting to see Sri Aurobindo's views on this *advancement*; he states,

*"...while the first value of a culture is its power to raise and enlarge the internal man, the mind, the soul, the spirit, its soundness is not complete unless it has shaped also his external existence and made of it a rhythm of advance towards high and great ideals. This is the true sense of progress..."*

(Aurobindo 323)

He believes the power of values could change a person internally as well as externally. Values not only help to strengthen the inner soul and *external existence* is also influenced, the way a person behaves with other human beings in society. What he learns internally should be evident through his external behaviour, a mind full of love and compassion should generate it into the deeds of that person. Thus, values strengthen traditions; and modernity could be seen as a continuation of the tradition though these two are always in conflict. However, strong base of tradition is always required. Gusfield underlines the interdependence of tradition and modernity in the following words:

*"The relations between the traditional and the modern do not necessarily weaken tradition. Both tradition and modernity form the bases of ideologies and movements in which the polar opposites are converted into aspirations, but traditional may supply support for, as well as against, change."*

(Gusfield 351)

Tradition accommodates these changes occurred due to modernity and colour them as a part of traditions. Disappointingly, the value based society could not be traced simply during modern times as it is considered to be outdated. In a hurry to be modernised concern for the deeper levels of moral, spiritual, religious and socio-cultural values are demoted in the society which is tending towards fast materialistic development.

Swami Bhajanananda catches the impact of modernity on any society in exact words, he explains,

*“As a result, the advanced industrial societies are faced not only with declining economic vitality, but also with a variety of manifestations of anomie, such as decreasing political unity, terrorism, crime, juvenile delinquency, suicide, anxiety and depression, alcoholism, drug addiction, the loss of the will to work, and sexual confusion.*

(Bhajananda 24)

If the society has to be modern it has to tackle with the *anomie* he mentions. This could be done with the revival of traditional values and motivating the individuals for these value choices. Individuals build their character with the value choices they make. This selection of values is generally made in the critical situations. Thus, every individual is deeply involved in forming the value system of the society; and he/she is considered as a rational being with individual thinking capabilities.

### **3.3 Impact of Modernization on Indian Value System:**

Once upon a time India was at her glorious heights as one of the most magnificent civilized cultures on earth. In modern times, it has been degraded to an horrendous gulf of corruption, terrorism, religious chauvinism, drug addiction, strife, inequality, poverty, immorality and all the other moral degradation at personal, social and professional levels. However, the traditional Indian values provide a strong and prevailing foundation to the social behaviour; moral principles guide it. Ramamurthy in his article Values in Medical Field rightly expresses the importance of traditional values in the following words:

*“Ethical and dharmic values are essential for the existence and for the progress of any society and have to be preserved and practised if human civilization has to progress.”*

(Ramamurthy 178)

The progress of any civilization relies on the strong foundation of its value system and as discussed in Chapter first, literature plays a vital role in this regard. The process of modernization in Indian society mainly began in the colonial era, otherwise India was considerably traditional without any sign of *modernity of western* cultures. Thus, process of modernization during the colonial era brought the fundamental changes in the basic Indian culture. It is generally accepted that ‘culture’ is not stagnant- it evolves relentlessly. Though in the beginning of the colonization the

changes at diverse levels occurred at a little slow pace occurring changes at diverse levels specifically social norms, value system, accepted ways of thoughts and behaviour, social institutions chiefly 'family' system, etc. Swami Bhajanananda aptly describes the Indian society today,

*“Modern India is a bundle of contradictions.”*

(Bhajanananda 32)

Indian culture has gone through the modernization which has made Indian culture more complex due to the coexistence of both the influences i.e. traditional as well as modern. Though the changes occurred slowly but steadily and repeatedly engrossing the new sets of norms without changing the basic structure of the society and brought changes in various social aspects. Therefore, the clash between the two was inevitable, and consequently the problems raised were unavoidable. Bhajananada mentions modern day problems in exact words.

With the widespread of communication technology and uncontrolled growth of information technology, these changes are manifested in the accelerated pace of time; posing threats to very base of Indian value system. The main reason behind the tremendous change is the process of globalization in the recent times which is a synchronization of various causes to these drastic changes. This phenomenal appearance of information technology and the eventual growth in all the other fields involved the 'youth' of the country, therefore, it affected at a deeper levels. Today, Indian society is modified to become modern at a very fast pace, and its impact could be seen in changing life styles and thus moving away from its own socio-cultural values. Chen Lai and Edmund Ryden in their preface to the book *Tradition and Modernity: A Humanistic View* state:

*“Since Tradition (here I refer always to the tradition of values) belongs to value rationality, it can be said to be rooted in intrinsic demands of human nature. Whilst many elements of modernity come within the category of means, yet improvements in the technology and the quality of material life, are surely also rooted in the demands of human nature.”*

(Lai and Ryden 8)

They underline that the process is inevitable and unavoidable. Values too are basically influenced by the changing philosophical ideologies, cultural and religious perspectives, socio-political and geographical conditions. Modern India is going

through a period of revolutionary changes in the field of values due to many factors in addition to the influence of industrialization, modernization, urbanization, and globalization. The process of modernization affects the value system at large. Martinussen's explanation of *modernization* process is interesting in this sense; it is thus a reason behind the vast changes occurring in every field. He meditates on modernization in following words,

*“Modernization is “concerned primarily with how traditional values, attitudes, practices, and social structures break down and are replaced with modern ones.”*

(Martinussen 56)

According to Martinussen, in the process of modernization whatever the traditional is mainly replaced with the modern. However, this cannot be universally true, as some traditional values of ancient India continue to exist in the modern times though with some minor alterations. This is a result of unnecessary overplaying of the importance of materialistic values consequently the necessary traditional values have been given less importance. Pavan Verma rightly warns,

*“For all the achievements of Indian state in the last fifty years, there is, for its middle and elite classes, a crippling ideological barrenness which threatens to convert India into vastly unethical and insensitive aggregation of wants.”*

(Verma xii)

Literature is a mirror to every socio-cultural changes, this *crippling ideological barrenness* too is caught in contemporary literature. It portrays the ever changing realities of human existence, evident in the literature from the past to the present. The reflection of changes occurring in the human values in modern times is no exception as the change is basic and fundamental nature of any society. The value system in the modern times is going through the rapid changes throughout the world; which also affect deeply the human relationships.

The present research is confined to understand it in the Indian situation by examining the selected writings of Sudha Murty. It also tries to understand the preservation and sustenance of Indian traditional values through the writings of Sudha Murty; and how could make a positive impact on modern inclination towards materialistic values and make a difference with orientation of traditional values with universal appeal. Murty's writings are vital in this regard. As her upbringing has made

a deeper impact on Murty's personality; it is reflected in her writing. Her life is an example in itself, she follows her heart. What Mulk raj Anand says in his article regarding the author's perspective on traditions could be applied to the writing of Murty. He opines,

*“Of course, the writer receives most of what he gives. He receives from heredity and he receives from education. But he cannot give what he receives unless he has absorbed the gifts of knowledge in himself as a human being and unless his imagination is highly charged and can transform what has been received. If he has received in this way, one can say that a writer does gain from didactic knowledge, or philosophical systems, or from science and other experiences, in the act of composition.”*

(Anand 49)

What he says further regarding the author's attempt at writing about his past experiences is more interesting:

*“... as the writer's concern is with the apprehension of intangibles like hatred, contempt, hunger, repulsion and love, he can only receive knowledge as wisdom from the recognition of quality in a mass of quantitative experiences.”*

(Anand 48)

The apprehension of modern values of self-centeredness, individualism, selfishness and materialistic culture are prominent and controlling the human side. Murty's narrative “Death Without Grief” is a true illustration of these modern day values which Murty strongly condemn.

A sensitive mind like hers observes it keenly and portrays it in her writing which records the changes in human life and social system reflecting the contemporary social conditions. Murty focuses on the conflicting forces of tradition and modernity. The attempt in this chapter is to see how the processes that are producing transformation are being refracted through the writings of Sudha Murty. Her writing contains the glimpses of great culture of ancient India and a genuine portrayal of the present conditions in the Indian society. These are vignettes of Indian life which tell their own stories of the changes occurring in the modern times. Murty rightly comments about the transformation from traditional to modernity,

*“Life and times have changed in truly revolutionary ways. Yet, we seldom feel the impact of change because we live right in the middle of it. Old ways have changed, our attitudes have changed, our norms, values and ideas have changed.”*

(Murty, WO 37)

Sudha Murty genuinely portrays these changes but never forgets to underline the grandeur, opulence and applicability of Indian traditional values. She also underlines the modern values such as democracy and humanism, she accepts the positive aspects of modern times as she never denies the positive modern values which have provided the equal opportunities to the less privileged ones, in fact, she appreciates some of the modern day values which are inevitable and advantageous for the total upliftment of the society.

### **3.4 Reconciliation of Traditional and Modern Values:**

The true gift of modern values of democracy and humanism teaches us to give secondary importance to individual's religious beliefs over the social welfare and it is chiefly incorporated from the west during the process of Modernization. Globalization has become a concept in the contemporary era because of which the world is changing day by day. It has affected the every part of human life.

India with its deep rooted traditions and age old culture has survived through; as Indian culture is basically an amalgamation of changing values. The reason behind the survival of this ancient culture is accepting these changes and Indianising them and making them a part of this great tradition. This process of synthesization is never ending; therefore, it also has gone through certain changes without affecting the base and foundations of ancient Indian culture. As Cohen points out:

*“India is an ancient state but a modern civilisation”*

(Cohen 36)

India with its ancient culture and traditions has survived the impact of Modernization and globalization because of its strong roots in the traditions, but the modern values are also being accepted. Due to the media and communication technology the exchange of ideas, exchange of cultural notions are vast and wide spread, no culture could keep itself aloof from these forces, otherwise it would be difficult for them to survive in this tsunami of developments in the field of technology.

Reconciliation of traditional and modern values is the answer for these fast changing situations. The world is not stagnant as it too has been influenced by the processes of modernity and the forces of globalization. Indian culture has been able to withstand these changes as it has a strong ability to adapt to the changing times during the process of modernity. Thus, India is an amazing blend of ancient and modern culture. As long as it keeps the basic structure of traditional value system alive, it will continue with its traditional values very strongly.

### **3.5 Traditional Indian Value System and the Family System:**

The family system and family values in India possess a crucial significance, wherein there must be a negotiation between the pulls of tradition and modernity. Today, there has been some change in the traditional absolute power of the eldest member of the family, in this regard, Gusfield's views could be taken into consideration, he states,

*“The conquests of foreign powers and the growth of social and cultural movements deeply influenced the character of family life, religious belief and practise, and social structure in India over many centuries.”*

(Gusfield 353)

Education and income of the younger generations also have changed the traditional views in the family today; which sometimes lessen the power of the eldest member. Modernity has changed the traditional views in the family today, which sometimes challenge the power of the elders in the family. Social changes are inevitable and the acceptance of the individual's independent behaviour, action and thinking s taken into account.

Individual's value choices are mostly directed by a family as it is a vital source of the positive values transmission from one generation to the next. However, in the process of modernization Indian family system is not untouched, the very foundation is affected by these changes; affecting the traditionality of Indian culture. Therefore, it becomes necessary to study the past and present to know the future.

Values can be understood as certain outlook, attitudes, ideas, beliefs and way of life that a person follows in his conduct and these are mainly transmitted by the family system in society. The family system comprises of all those beliefs and viewpoints that the parents pass on their next generation, they further pass it on to

their offspring and so, the legacy continues. In this way, the 'Indian Family Value System' influences individuals. In the Indian culture, there are certain rules and regulations that each and every child is taught effortlessly right from his childhood.

Indian family values are touching the feet of elders; not speaking in a high or rude tone to the elders; respecting elders, and teachers. Across India one finds similar kinds of values passed from generation to generation. Hospitality, peaceful coexistence, respecting others' rights, integrity, strong bondage in the family and the relatives, etc are the family values which help an individual to survive in the society. Family plays a vital role in nourishing the human values such as loyalty, unity and integrity which provide a traditional framework to the Indian value system.

Indian culture namely promotes collectivism. Vinuta, in *Dollar Bahu*, stands for orientation of collectivism, and sacrifice of individualism, fulfilling every family need without thinking about one's own happiness. Traditionally Indian family system is joint family system including at least three generations, grandparents, parents and children share the same value system, beliefs and faiths. However, joint family system is deteriorating due to the modern life style. These values are losing importance due to the growth of materialistic values in the process of modernization. But still joint family system is surviving in India. Self-centeredness is denied in joint family system as family orientation is key to the happiness. It emphasizes family integrity, family loyalty and family unity. C. Harry Hui and Harry C. Triandis defined collectivism which is exact opposite to the modern day individualism as,

*“a sense of harmony, interdependence and concern for others.”*

(Hui and Triandis 244)

To be precise collectivism is greater readiness to cooperate with the family and accommodating elder's opinions and suggestions in most aspects of life to maintain the values of peaceful coexistence, caring and sharing, understanding, helping in the time of crisis, and difficulties. Thus, family is an important unit of the society to sustain the traditional values.

### **3.6 Modern Values of Individualism and Materialism:**

Family is the most important institution that has survived the process of modernization. Besides, the western influence, coming through liberal education, forced new values and norms of life. Swami Tyagananda aptly comments,

*“...a phenomenal increase in international trade, tourism and satellite TV networks has ensured sufficient intermingling of cultures and social identities...As a result new interests are being created, and old interests are being abandoned. Western values are invading Eastern values and vice versa.”*

(Tyagananda 11)

Undoubtedly, family system plays a vital role in sustaining the traditional value system. Indian culture has a past glory, golden heritage, ancient history and cultural achievements which have not been continued to contemporary time due to various reasons. Indians hardly realize the present barrenness in modern times. Importance to the self is evident in family system today; this attitude is total opposite to the Indian notion of collectivism. Bhajanananda aptly underlines today's individual is self-centred and individualistic. He writes,

*“There is a universal concern with the self...with Self-fulfilment and more recently with self-esteem, slogans of a society incapable of generating a sense of civic obligation.”*

(Bhajanananda 15)

Today, India is getting modern by accepting these modern time values. Traditionally, Indians are never keen at the collection of many material possessions. In modern times, however, the scene is changing as the lifetime is often spent collecting material goods as in the modern times importance is given to “*possessions*”. The younger generation tend to embrace modern values and way of life which are chiefly materialistic. A. N. Tripathi rightly points out,

*“The sole aim of all the strivings at the individual level has become attainment of personal success. It is a worldly success, defined in purely materialistic terms as acquisition of money, power and prestige.”*

(Tripathi 3)

Socioeconomic development is associated with profound changes in the socio-cultural and moral life of a society. Modernity itself stands for change and it brings in to focus some subtle changes in lifestyle and the outlook of the society. Change in individuals' worldviews is evident. Swami Bhajanananda underlines the materialism as a modern day value in his introductory note to a collection of articles on Human Values in *Values: The Key to Meaningful Life* in the following words:

*“Science and technology have oriented the minds of people in the West almost wholly to the physical world, and Western culture has become thoroughly materialistic.”*

(Bhajananda 24)

Bhajananda speaks about the west could also be applied to the modern society as due to the widespread communication technology these western values are affecting the Indian value system at large. He gives an answer to the problems of modern times. According to him, Indian Value system has a great capacity to solve the modern day problems. The society, today, is getting more and more materialistic. One cannot deny the importance of wealth, development and materialistic progress, but there should be a limit to the desires and aspirations for progress. The rat-race is prevalent in every field where human aspects are given less importance. Indian traditions never approved such race in life as it always gives importance to the overall development of soul and body.

### **3.7 Modernization of Indian Value System:**

Younger generation, today, runs after the material success and for them the life values are secondary and unnecessary hurdle to lead a successful life. Monetary gains and professional development are more significant as compared to the humble yet peaceful life. One cannot deny completely that modern values are altogether bad. Swami Tyagananda comments,

*“All I need to do is to sift healthy, nourishing values from unhealthy, debilitating ones and integrate them into my value system. So instead of being a hindrance, multi-culturalism might prove to be blessing after all. Taking proper care of our own life and choosing the right values to guide it...this is something every one of us has the capacity to do.”*

(Tyagananda 11)

Modernity altogether cannot be denied; one has to accept the positive aspects of modern times. Today in modern India, we are facing many problems such as the moral degradation as discussed above. His Holiness the Dalai Lama in his article on “Values for a non-violent society” confers the responsibility on India as it is an ancient civilization and needs to guide the world which is much modern and this can

take place only if there is a good amalgamation of modernity and traditions. His Holiness the Dalai Lama opines,

*“Modern India is confronted by many problems...Because of its respected stature and ancient heritage, India has a responsibility not only to ensure future happiness of its own people, but also to provide leadership in the world.”*

(Dalai Lama 40)

This leadership is based on the ancient value system with the strong base of wisdom literature. Murty pertinently suggests in her preface to *Gently Falls the Bakula*,

*“I am aware that industrialization, technological progress and scientific advancement are necessary and bring prosperity to our country, but they have their own shortcomings. They create a whole set of problems, sociological and psychological.”*

(Murty, *GFB* i)

Sudha Murthy's first novel *Gently Falls the Bakula* is story of a marriage that loses its way as ambition and self-interest take their toll; it is astonishingly relevant in its scrutiny of modern values and work ethics. She discusses these issues in her major novel *Dollar Bahu* and searches the answers to these problems in the fabric of traditional family setting. She describes the problems of modern times mainly in her prominent novel *Dollar Bahu*, which is a delineation of modern America as contrasted to traditional India. In the novel, Jamuna represents modernity and Vinuta represents traditions at the end traditional wins over modern. Gauramma understands that *modernity* too has problems, as she was looking at America as an answer to the problems at home.

The present chapter discusses the importance and functional significance of traditional values. Traditional values share a place in India's cultural identity. On the one hand, Indians are known for strong traditional values associated with family, community, religion, spirituality; on the other hand, there is a strong inclination towards modern values as they are associated with wealth, independence, material growth, development, the societal changes and economic advancement in a global context. As it is opined by A. N. Tripathi,

*“All other life values which give meaning, worth and fullness to human existence, are seen as roadblocks and unnecessary diversions from the high road to material success.”*

(Tripathi 3)

Today, only material growth is considered important. The young minds are focussed for the material success; and the rat race directs them to the economic gains. It is necessary and suitable modifications. However, harmonization of tradition and modern and it is a bilateral process. As Swami Tyagananda aptly says in his introductory note to a collection of articles on Human Values in ‘Values: The Key to Meaningful Life’:

*“All I need to do is to sift healthy, nourishing values from unhealthy, debilitating ones and integrate them into my value system. So instead of being a hindrance, multi-culturalism might prove to be blessing, after all. Taking proper care of our own life and choosing the right values to guide it---this is something every one of us has the capacity to do.”*

(Tyagananda 11)

Murty brings forth the contradictions in traditional and modern mainly in *Dollar Bahu*. When Chandru sees America, his dreamland for the first time he compares it with India, the land of traditions. For him America is rich, healthy and vibrant like a spirited youth, bursting with life as compared to India a five-thousand-year-old civilization where great kings like Ashoka and Harshvardhana had ruled. The land that has been praised by poets and writers in the days of yore...

Chandru who is a person with modern outlook and gives more importance to materialistic progress and finds if one is sky (America), the other was the earth (India). Chandru forgets that he cannot progress without firm groundings of the earth and all the materialistic progress is useless until they are combined with the traditional cultural values which give meaning to life; this he learns later in his life. Shamanna rightly puts it,

*“Nothing comes for free, Vinu. And definitely not when it (Dollar) comes to financial help. This Dollar may have transformed the lifestyle of some families, taken them from poverty to wealth, but it has also broken up some families. It has created financial and social distinctions within families and destroyed peace of mind.”*

(Murty, DB 139)

It could also be understood as *Dollar* stands for modernity and the *Rupee* for tradition. Shamanna rightly brings forth the repercussions of materialistic values, how the prosperity is destroying the fabric of a family unity. Traditional family values basically helped to reconcile the differences amongst family members and bring harmony and peace; instead of conflict brought by the materialistic progress. It helps to cope up with the difficult situations in everyday life. Hedi and Nick Boesten depict how family values are important in an individual's life and how they help them to grow as a human,

*“...a process of mutual maturing begins: giving in, showing consideration, accepting the common fate, and giving up selfish desires.”*

(Hedi and Boesten 71)

These values have been evaporating with the heat of materialistic development making the individual's desires stronger than the family's; *Dollar Bahuis* is full of such examples. Vinuta's friend Shashi is engaged with Shekhar and marriage date is fixed, however Shekhar breaks his commitment to Shashi as,

*“One Indian family settled in the US came to India in search of a groom for their daughter... Shankar was selected... they offered him a green card through marriage and to support his PhD studies at any university in the US.”*

(Murty, DB 42)

Shashi would be compensated with the marriage expences by Shankar! There is no space for fulfilment of commitment and love, instead Shankar becomes opportunistic and accepts the offer of marriage proposal of an American Indian girl for better prospect. Murty notes down,

*“Shankar had loved Shashi, and their marriage had been fixed. For a green card he had broken the alliance. Surabhi had ditched Gopi because he did not have prospects of going to America. What kind of power was this?”*

(Murty, DB 137-38)

This is the power of gain and the materialistic progress where love and commitment do not matter. Practicality has become prominent value in the modern society; the person who loses such opportunities is looked down and he/she become unfit in the modern opportunistic society. Respectability for selfish individualism is

increasing taking the form of exclusive concern for individual achievements and gains without any contemplation for the betterment of the fellow human beings. A. N. Tripathi puts it right as he writes,

*“...the concept of a good life is one with unrestricted enjoyment of sensuous pleasures and fulfilment of unlimited desires. It is a consumeristic haven filled with all kinds of artifacts for comfort and luxury...The new economic policies of liberalization and globalization have further propelled this ever aggressive march of consumerism. The economy is being opened to all kinds of objects of desire because the ‘ability to consume them has become the index of progress’.”*

(Tripathi 3)

When Padma, an Indian American, is in labour and walks in the ambulance all alone Gauramma pities her and reflects,

*“No one had the time to go to accompany her. Everyone was just too busy with their own lives. Their dedication to their jobs was amazing. But, the flip side was that loneliness was growing, human bonds were weakening.”*

(Murty, DB 119)

Though Gauramma is uneducated and attracted towards the luxuries and prosperity of the west she has still that Indian sense of compassion and love towards fellow human beings and she regrets about the loosening bonds of humanities in modern times. Tripathi opines rightly,

*“No one is taking about the duties and responsibilities of individuals and groups, towards each other and towards the collective whole.”*

(Tripathi 5)

Gauramma is shocked by the loneliness in individual's life she herself experiences it during her stay in America. Chandru, her most adorable eldest son is successful in his life as he is well settled in America and according to Gauramma, he is leading a cosy and comfortable life opens his heart with Vinuta, his sister-in-law. Vinuta too has a same impression that Chandru must not have any problems in his life as he earns in dollars. He answers,

*“Just buying things, counting dollars, living in a big house, does not make everyone happy.”*

(Murty, *DB* 72)

Chandru experiences the land of milk and honey, now he is well aware of the realities of the promised land. He used to imagine about America as a land full of happiness with all the modern amenities and luxuries,

*“How wonderful this country is! he would tell himself a thousand times. How happy the people living here are...”*

(Murty, *DB* 24)

Chandru has an eye opening experience of materialistic practical life which is engulfed with the selfish individualism. Shantikumar Ghosh very rightly opines about the modern day problems in ‘Universal Values: As Reflected in Literature’:

*“A tide of world-weariness has come upon the Western world. Most of the cultured men and women there are already weary of the competition, the struggle, the brutality of their commercial civilization- the materialistic consumeristic culture. An acquisitive mind produced sick society.”*

(Ghosh 109)

Even though the man has progressed materially and financially; it doesn't lead to the content and inner satisfaction. Any human being whether in the east or West cannot be completely satisfied with it. Complete happiness lies in the humane aspect of the society propagated by the traditional values such as love, compassion and pity, etc. Moral degradation only leads to unhappiness; however, it is considered necessary to succeed in life. To gain prosperity, modernity compels man to follow the path of amoral.

Chandru enrolls for the computer classes to improve prospects, which is paid by his employers, with whom Chandru has signed bonds before joining his job in Florida to return to India and serve the parent company for a minimum of three years. However, when he gets his term completed in Florida he is reluctant to return to India so he plans to follow his seniors who simply skipped in spite of the penalty for the breach in bond. It was a fairly common trick amongst his colleagues. Chandru also cheats his company and joins another company in east coast at Nashville.

*“His conscience still pricked him for ‘skipping’. He had cheated on a company that had financed his trip and paid for his computer training. But he quickly scotched his inner voice.”*

(Murty, DB 47)

Breach of commitment, swindling, deceiving the one who has helped is acceptable as it leads to the material success. However, as Shantikumar Ghosh aptly points out,

*“In the midst of the technological triumphs of high industrialism, man finds himself afflicted with a sense of alienation and inner loneliness which increasingly give rise to frightful psychological maladies.”*

(Ghosh 109)

This is reflected by Gauramma when she comes to know the truth of American life and she is eager to leave it and go to her home in India. She accepts the undeveloped India, its problems and difficulties. She is ready to cope up with the difficulties such as power cut or water cut, pollution, noise and simple living but she will enjoy the peace of mind, happiness and selfless love of her family.

For any Indian, traditionally, family is at core; it is the most important aspect of life making it meaningful and worth living. Though Vinuta lost her parents, Bheemanna, her distant uncle lend a hand to come up with the difficulties and she gets shelter and support to continue the education. Thus family system is essential for the survival. Murty describes Bheemanna’s generosity in following words,

*“Seetakka, the elderly lady, was Bheemanna’s mother. Bheemanna himself had four children. Vinuta was his niece. Bheemanna had only a modest income and had to try hard to make both end meet, but he was a generous man...”*

(Murty, DB 12)

Bheemanna thinks it as his duty to help his orphaned niece. This traditional setting helps the human beings to support each other and survive. However, helping others is considered as impractical in modern society. Girish, Gauramma’s second son helps others in their time of need, he thinks, as a human being it is our duty to help everyone. In the beginning, Gauramma thinks this wrong and impractical, and she thinks because of this attitude Girish cannot succeed in life. She scolds her husband for this,

*“Bad enough that you are impractical, you have now spoilt him and given him wrong ideas. How will he ever be a successful man with this sort of approach to life and society?”*

(Murty, DB 20)

Chandru is well aware of her thinking and he follows her advice and leads a successful life. He is practical enough not to attend his brother’s wedding as it might be expensive.

*“He chose instead to send them a gift of five hundred dollars. Knowing his mother he was quite sure that the money would matter more than his presence.”*

(Murty, DB 37-38)

He thinks money can be equalled with his absence at the family function. The same he does when his mother is hospitalised. He sends a cheque of three hundred dollars to cover the expenses, however this time he understands that money cannot compensate the love, care and affection of the near and dear ones. Though he is converging towards modern values in the beginning of the story at the end he too understands the importance of genuine love, and the other Indian socio-cultural Indian values to live a happy, contented and meaningful life. He doesn’t abandon all the traditional values he inculcated when he was in India. He thinks,

*“Anyone can help in the form of money. But one should not forget the presence and care of people around you. Amma, you are very lucky that you have someone who looks after you so well.*

(Murty, DB 75)

Same feelings he conveys to Vinuta, when he goes to Dharwad to see his new born nephew Harsha. When he experiences the American way of life, which is modern compared to India, his dreamland; he understands the significance of Indian family values to lead a peaceful and harmonious life. He opens his heart before her,

*“You, Vinuta, are living among your own people, speaking the same language, sharing the same culture. Your child will grow up with his grandparents, with the same set of values. You are not compelled to live in another country with a different language and alien climatic conditions.”*

(Murty, DB 72)

Chandru regrets about not finding the love and warmth of family for his daughter Manasi who might not inherit the values he cherishes and live a different life in America. Thus, Murty's writing is structured around a traditional axis of Indian value system. In *Dollar Bahu*, Chandru and his mother Gauramma dream for the American life, he strives hard to settle there with the help and support of his mother; Gauramma too stays in America for one whole year and concludes that,

*"My place is in India and I feel comfortable there, in spite of all the difficulties."*

(Murty, *DB* 131)

Murty is well aware of the need of modern life, the significance of the development of science and technology to make human life more comfortable, however she propagates the traditional way of life with peace and harmony. Murty portrays today's modern generation which asserts independence, individuality, self-sufficient attitude, ambitious nature, materialistic way of life in her novel *Gently falls the Bakula*, Shrikant represents all the above mentioned modern values and his wife Shrimati sticks to the traditional values of interdependence, *aprigraha*, sacrifice, obedience, tolerance, togetherness, sharing and caring, modesty, simplicity, reverence, for elders. Her traditionality is contrasted with the opportunistic, individualistic, self-centered, self-oriented, selfish way of life of her husband, Shrikant.

In *Gently Falls the Bakula*, Shrikant is a practical and worldly person and belongs to the modern world; he follows the modern values. He is an achiever in his life, his dreams are practical and he makes them come true by hard work and shrewdness. He is sensible and realistic, however, he gives least importance to the callings of heart, feelings are far away from his domain, and he hates emotionality and sensitivities that might come as hindrance in his way to success. He looks at every aspect of his life from a practical point of view. He is a man with modern values. Shrimati cries when she comes to know that *she wouldn't experience motherhood*. But Shrikant is stable, he states,

*"This is not the end of our lives...if we have children and if they don't come up well, that will become a constant worry...If you are worried about who will perform our shraddha, then it is a foolish thought."*

(Murty, *GFB* 98)

Even he dismisses a thought of adoption. He argues on a practical ground and eventually his emotions are dried out while gaining success. He advises Shrimati,

*“in real life you should always decide with your head, not with your heart. If you do that it is disastrous.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 95)

Practicality and worldliness is the modern value which is highly esteemed as its path only leads to success and helps to climb the ladder of success at the cost of others' weaknesses. Shrimati is deeply in love with Shrikant. She is a dedicated wife. She leaves her career and her aspirations for the sake of Shrikant's success which she thinks is her own. She learns computer and accounts to manage Shrikant's official work and his correspondence; Murty describes,

*“(She) was smart, reliable and able to take responsibility and most importantly, intelligent and obedient. Shrimati soon became the extremely efficient personal secretary that Shrikant Deshpande wanted at home”*

(Murty, *GFB* 100)

Their relationship is totally encircled with Shrikant's office duties, and there is no emotional exchange between the two; which is an essential part in husband- wife relationship. However, Shrikant never shares or exchanges his inner feelings and emotions with his wife; he is more focussed and concerned about his achievements. He doesn't even acknowledge her sacrifices and compromises, and fails to understand her needs. He once advises her to have *practical dreams*. When his friend Malleish visits them with his family,

*“Shrimati noticed that though Malleish had once been a very close friend of his, Shrikant hardly spoke to Mallya in free and frank manner.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 101)

Emotions are fading from Shrikant's mind. When Ravi sends him a letter from the USA congratulating him for his achievements and praising his wife's talent and sensibility Shrikant just informs her to note it down. Murty illustrates,

*“Shrikant did read the letter and without any emotion, he said, ‘please enter the contact details in my personal dairy and our system.’ Shrimati was disappointed.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 103)

Even the old friends became useless as they are not the achievers like him and they couldn't help him to climb any further. Once Shrimati falls ill, still she insists Shrikant to go on a business tour. Vandana her old friend comes to her help when Shrimati needed her husband at her bedside.

*“Vandana looked at her dear friend lying there, almost unconscious. For the first time, she pitied Shrimati. A handsome young husband who was extremely ambitious, travelling through out the year.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 107)

Though Shrimati has money, she lacks love, care and affection in her life. She is dying to hear a single word of appreciation from her husband but it is in vain. The following paragraph emphasizes the extreme practicality and worldliness of Shrikant.

*“The love, affection and sharing of ideas and dreams had disappeared. He hardly talked to her about the company or other business matters. The only time he spoke to her was to assign a list of chores for her to do. For him she had undergone so much of opposition, criticism and nastiness from her in-laws. She had even given up her career, only because she really loved him. But Shrikant was not the same person she knew before their marriage. This Shrikant Deshpande was only interested in name, fame, position and status. In building up his business, he had forgotten his dear wife.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 117-18)

Modern values of individualism and materialism have dried out love, affection, compassion from Shrikant's life. A. N. Tripathi aptly meditates,

*“The modern value crisis is mainly due to the excessive overplaying of the importance of material values of life, and consequent down playing of other life values like the moral, aesthetic, and spiritual.”*

(Tripathi 3)

It becomes true about Shrikant, as he pursues his success without giving importance to 'life values' his life is shattered at the end. Shrikant is so engrossed in his own world of business that he forgets all the emotional bonds with his wife; which proves a death knell to their love marriage. Shrimati loves him unintentionally, unconditionally, but she only gets disappointment in return.

*“Having seen her incompatible parents and the kind of family life they led she was sure she would marry a person who would understand her feelings and have consideration for her.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 37)

Shrimati’s marriage too fails as she doesn’t get what she expects from it. Love, care, respecting each other, sharing, standing together in time of hardship, sacrificing for the betterment of the family are the base of Indian family values. However, Shrikant Deshpande’s family lacks it which leads to its breaking down. Nivedita Bhide in her article ‘Values in Family’ rightly opines,

*“In our tradition, the wife is called a sahadharmcarini, meaning, one who practices dharma along with her husband...If they(in-laws) want their family to prosper-if they want peace, happiness, and wealth for the family-they have to keep her happy. If she is unhappy, the whole household gets disturbed.”*

(Bhide 65)

Shrikant doesn’t understand this basic family value which shatters his family, so is the case with Dr.Anand in *Mahashweta*. Anupama is introduced as a brilliant actress, well-versed in Sanskrit literature and an outstanding student who has an unmatched beauty. Anupama an ideal traditional Indian woman stresses the need to uphold truthfulness, honesty and faithfulness in her relationship with Anand which has been bound in marriage. Traditionally in India the newly-wed bride has a restricted connotation, symbolizing modesty, subordination and the superiority of in-laws is acknowledged communally. Bhide points out,

*“Family is an institution. An institution can function effectively only if it follows the rule of continuity and change. The entry of a new wed bride into the house of her husband is an important landmark in any family.”*

(Bhide 65)

However, in Anupama’s case it doesn’t come true. Her dedication, faithfulness, obedience, versatility, honesty, truthfulness is never valued. Marriage should be solely based on sharing, caring, love and mutual understanding lacking in Anupama and Anand’s marriage. There is a submission to dishonesty and flattery in opposition to truth and reality. Anand is dishonest, unfaithful and unkind towards his

wife; he doesn't fulfil his owe taken in marriage. At the time of marriage, he promises her,

*'We shall always be together'. When she suffers for no fault of hers, "She thought of Anand; he was responsible for her suffering. He had abandoned her when she needed him most."*

(Murty, MS 89)

Anand forgets all his owes and promises taken in marriage and settles in London. When Anupama comes to Bombay, Sumi her old friend helps her and offers to stay with her. Sumi's husband Hari calls Anupama as his own sister, but secretly keeps an eye on her, and is seeking an opportunity to seduce her. Once he gets a chance, he tries his hand on her; when she denies, and scolds him,

*"You should be ashamed of yourself. You have called me your sister...will you behave with your sister like this?"*

(Murty, MS 88)

Hari shamelessly continues,

*"Just because I call you my sister you can't become my sister. I said that to misled Sumi...Anand will never come back to you, nor will anyone else want to marry you. Let us not waste our time arguing when we could find such pleasure in each other's company. No one will ever suspect us."*

(Murty, MS 88)

For Hari, bodily pleasures are more important than breach of trust in marriage. It seems normal for him. However, Anupama is in a state of shock as she always considered him as her brother. Murty describes,

*"She experienced the same sense of desolation and despair that she had felt when she first noticed the white patch on her body, and was assailed by fear and pain."*

(Murty, MS 89)

The moral degradation is evident and that made Hari to forget his owes taken in marriage as Anand forgets Anupama; crisis of conscience and values by their respective husbands is clearly seen. The evidence of such moral degradation could be seen in non-fiction writing of Murty. "A Bond Betrayed on Rakhi Day" narrates a woman's trauma and suffering. Murty comes across Tara during her social work. Murty narrates,

*“My work with Infosys Foundation has brought me face to face with many women who have suffered a great deal for no fault of theirs. Most of them are uneducated and victims of exploitation.”*

(Murty, WO 54)

Tara and her younger brother are orphaned when she is eleven years old, however, she works as coolie and takes care of her brother.

*“...when she only twelve years old and her brother was only eleven, he sold her to an agent in a red light area. He had taken her there on the pretext of visiting the village fair. That was on a Narali-Poornima day.”*

(Murty, WO 57)

Tara is sold by her own brother on the auspicious day which is dedicated to the lovely bond between brother and sister; just for few rupees a brother demolish the life his own sister! Murty narrates another incident where parents betray their girl child as she is partially blind and could not be cured. Once, they take their child near a bus stop, give her a packet of biscuits and make her wait for them; but they don't turn back, she waits for them for many days but it is in vain. Murty delineates,

*“...nobody came looking for her. The child waited for her mother for several years, till one day she gave up all hope...how could my mother leave me like that? She deceived me with a pack of biscuits. What happened to the motherhood?”*

(Murty, OMHG 116)

Mother's love and affection is evaporated when it comes to be a matter of money she needs for daughter's operation. Murty writes about Ramappa who encashes his son's disease and lives a life of luxury and gains property through it, although his son Somnath suffers and dies because of fatal illness. Money makes Ramappa to inflict pain and suffering to his own son, and helps Ramappa to live a better and comfortable life.

*“Somnath's disease came as a boon for Ramappa...he went around to donors and managed to raise 8 lakh. He used the money to build this new house and also started an auto business...In the end he used to carry him around when he went to collect the money. Poor Somnath suffered a lot and died at home.”*

(Murty, OMHG 106)

Once a girl holding a placard, mentioning about her cancer and the mother is holding a bowl to collect the money.

*“A greedy mother used her healthy child to pose as a cancer patient. She shaved the child’s head, starved her and dressed her shabbily so that anybody would feel the child was suffering from cancer.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 53)

It is another example which is an evidence that money overpowers the bondage between the child and parent. On the other hand, children too do not want any responsibilities of parents and they are lacking respect to the elders. Murty speaks about an unnecessary attraction of city life amongst the youngsters hurt their parents and children do not care about them as they are absorbed in fulfilling their own desires. Individualism has its own set of problems. Krishna Murty, a young graduate from Bangalore is adamant to return to his village where his father owns a large property and agriculture lands.

*“Krishna Murty on the other hand, was taken in completely by the charm of city life and was intent on staying in Bangalore rather than returning to his village as his father wanted.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 117)

Today, children are keener on fulfilling their own wish and will; however, they do not pay heed to the needs of their parents. “Sorry the Line is Busy” is again a story of two children from a very affluent family are engrossed in their own world. Tara’s two children are always either on telephone or using internet locking themselves in their separate rooms; Tara says rightly,

*“...I feel frustrated. Today’s children abuse the resources available to them. They do not know how to control their wants and desires.”*

(Murty, *WO* 166)

Children do not understand the anxieties of their parents. Sometimes it turns to be selfish. The elders in the family try to safeguard their children from the wrong attitude towards life. Generally, they have the wrong impression about their parents.

*“...after certain age children do not listen to their parents. Only life will teach them.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 21)

Their minds are ringed by hostile forces making them feel isolated and infuse a feeling of loneliness; which makes them adamant and resolute towards the family.

Mostly it is due to the exposure of various media and the sources of information give them wrong impression of life. Murty rightly opines,

*“...when elders say some thing they do so because they want you to lead a better life than them.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 25)

Whether it is Krishna Murty or the two children of Tara they are the product of modern values, mainly their individualistic attitude towards their lives, the arrogance and adamant nature. In the modern times, with the rise of individualism, nuclear families are becoming more and more common; particularly in urban areas. So the children get all the amenities easily; they don't have to face the same set of difficulties as faced by their parents and there are almost no struggle for them to live a comfortable life. There is very less responsibilities on them and have all the comforts of modernity, so they cannot easily understand the concern of the parents for their future. Social bonds too are getting looser so they are not bound to follow what they don't like.

Murty also writes about the changing values amongst students and teachers. Once she goes to see a movie with her friend on 5<sup>th</sup> September which is celebrated as Teachers' Day in India. When she asks some college students there, they replied,

*“Our school may be celebrating Teachers' Day but we don't want to go. We see the same teachers every day. Why see them even on a holiday?”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 38)

It shows the ignorance among the students and lack of respect towards their teachers. The following extract is very interesting to understand the young generation's unawareness towards the days of national importance. When Murty asks the girls why 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 15<sup>th</sup> August, and 26<sup>th</sup> January are celebrated on national scale in our country; she gets a shocking answer.

*“We know they are holidays but not sure for what.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 38)

One of them answers,

*“I know October 2<sup>nd</sup> is Gandhi's birthday...Because it is my birthday. My grandfather was a freedom fighter. He named me Mohini and he told me Gandhi's name was Mohandas...I don't like it*

(name).it is very old fashioned. It sounds like it belongs to someone living a century ago. I have changed my name to Monica.”

(Murty, TMGR 38)

Changing name from Mohini to Monica; it accentuates the tendency towards modernization. A girl tells Murty,

“I get confused with august 15<sup>th</sup> and January 26<sup>th</sup>. One of them is Independence Day and the other one is something connected with independence.”

(Murty, TMGR 39)

When she asks them about the date, few of them gives a funny logic, for them the date of independence was 1942 was correct as they had seen the movie *1942 A Love Story*. Thus, there is a less awareness about one’s country’s glorious past. She narrates one more experience which underlines the young generation’s ignorance about the India’s history and heritage. Murty mentions the experiences of her friend about the Independence Day celebrations,

“It happened to be a long weekend. Parents took their children away on holiday. Many students who stayed in Bangalore were seen at the theatres. Apparently, there was a heavy rush at video shops as well that day...At times, I feel we should just not have a holiday on 15<sup>th</sup> August or 26<sup>th</sup> January. We should have regular school and one or two periods can be used for function. Today, it has become a holiday only to make merry, not a day to remember the saga of our leaders.”

(Murty, WO 85-86)

Once she is travelling back from an award function by air, she was carrying a memento- a statue of Rani Laxmibai of Zansi. She meets,

“two teen agers, wearing expensive jeans, who cut their hair short, making them look similar...chewing gum and MP3 player kept them immersed in their own world. It was evident that they were from affluent family. It was evident that they were in no mood for conversation, even among themselves, let alone others.”

(Murty, WO 64)

When she starts conversing with them; girl asks,

“I saw that statue of a black horse and a woman riding on it. It is a nice toy, but is it not available in Bangalore?” When she says it

is an award, the boy inquires, *“Are you very fond of horses? May be you are fond of races. Is this award for a horse race? There is a lady on the back of that beautiful horse.”*

(Murty, WO 64)

Murty gets disturbed by this as she couldn't believe that both of them were associating Rani Laxmibai with the horse races! Murty asks them whether they know about the First War of Independence, they give even shocking answer,

*“‘Yes, it was in 1942, wasn't it.’ The boy answered vaguely. The girl added, ‘Of course, we've seen the movie 1942-A Love Story. The war between the Indians and the British. Manisha Koirala was just stunning in that.’”*

(Murty, WO 65)

The teenagers know who is Manisha Koirala, but they didn't have a single clue about the great martyr Rani Laxmibai,

*a fiery patriot, even her opponents were surprised by her leadership on the battlefield, a symbol of courage and an icon of the Indian people's love for freedom.*

(Murty, WO 66)

However, Murty finds it is not the sole fault of today's generation, the teachers and parents too have their responsibility which they do not perform loyally. The older generation has the sole responsibility of transmitting positive values to the next generation by setting the examples before the young minds. Murty rightly points out,

*“We give holidays to children but do not tell them the reason behind the holiday. Every year we prepare the same boring speech and deliver it to a handful of children. Most of us take the day off and do not make any effort so that children look forward to the day.”*

(Murty, TMGR 40)

Once, Murty met a headmaster who was travelling to Bangalore on 15<sup>th</sup> August at early morning. When she asked about the flag hoisting ceremony, he answered,

*“This is a ritual every year and a sheer waste of time. The same drill and the same patriotic songs. In my twenty years of service and ten*

*transfers, I have grown bored with these national holidays. We cannot close the school either. As per instructions from the higher education department, we have to conduct all these activities. I wish they would make it a complete holiday like Diwali or Christmas.”*

(Murty, WO 83-84)

When she asks who will conduct the today’s programme, he answered,

*“What is there in a function? I have told my assistant master to conduct this ritual. I prepared speeches for this day twenty years ago. Nothing has changed. So he can read the same speech. I have not even gone to school. The students are not interested in speeches or in these celebrations. There is a new film in the tent near our village. They would like to go there. Nobody is bothered about Independence Day.”*

(Murty, WO 84)

Insensitivity and coldness towards one’s parents suffering and distress is common in modern days where the property of the parents whether small or large matters much then the parents’ wish and wills and their happiness. Murty narrates two such incidents which could be taken as an empirical example of the modern day society’s selfishness. One is “Death without Grief”.

Once Murty visits a neighbourhood family to offer condolences at the death of his mother, however, the family atmosphere shows no signs of sorrow, sadness or grief. In fact, they are watching movie, the atmosphere in the house has a festive air, no trace of grief or mourning at all. The atmosphere looks like having family get-together, servant is serving snacks. They start usual chat about her work and start praising her husband. When Murty at last asks about the old lady’s death her daughter-in-law replied,

*“Actually we suffered a lot. Of late she was bedridden with a stroke. To look after such people in a place like Bangalore, one requires servants and you know how difficult and expensive it is to get a good servant. I was so tired of looking after her. It was good riddance.”*

(Murty, WO 21)

One morning, a middle aged man comes to Murty’s office with an old man; he introduces the old man as a stranger and also says that he has no one to look after. He

requests Murty to admit him in an old age home. Murty enquires and admits the old man to an old age home and pays for his expenses through the Infosys Foundation, however, the old man dies. The middle aged man comes claiming the belongings of the old man who is his father, when Murty asks him why he has cheated her, he shamelessly answers,

*“My wife never liked my father. She asked me to choose between her and him. At that time we read about your Foundation. We thought then that our problem could be solved without money.”*

(Murty, WO 35)

He has to obey her as he was living in her house. Murty asks,

*“Have our lives become so busy that grief has become proportionate to the usefulness of the loved one we have lost?”*

(Murty, WO 22)

Murty also comes across the *insensitivity index* of the affluent families. Once she goes for the house warming ceremony of her friend where she happens to listen to the conversation of the ladies sitting there. Murty finds that they have least idea about the Gujarat earthquake; they don't have any idea about the plight and suffering of the victims instead they are gossiping about the PM, Madhuri Dixit, Miss India, the best beauty parlours, the latest fashion, jewellery, the preparations of wedding, the kanchipuram saris, silverwares, the catering, etc. She is describing the grandeur and majestic preparations for the daughter's wedding. When it comes about catering the lady remarks insensitively,

*“We all love Gujarati sweets, but our cook has gone to Gujarat. He has lost his family. I wouldn't want him to come to the wedding because it is inauspicious.”*

(Murty, WO 111)

When someone asks her how much you pay for the relief fund for Gujarat earthquake, she promptly replies,

*“They were collecting money in my office. But I told them that I had given money elsewhere and did not participate. Our country is always facing one problem or another. There is no end to the problems. So why pay? Anyway, I don't have any relatives in that area.”*

(Murty, WO 111)

Murty talks about the insensitivity of the modern man during the Tsunami. She comments,

*“When the Tsunami hit our shores, while most people responded with bravery and generosity, there were plenty of stories of people using it as a publicity gimmick to further their own agendas.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 52)

There is a cut throat competition today, so no one leaves the opportunity to promote oneself at the cost of others' suffering and pain. Once her friend Rekha who used to call herself a social worker comes to visit her at the office and starts describing the horrors of tsunami seen on the TV, however, Murty has a firsthand experience of the suffering of the affected people as she is working for their relief. Rekha asks her to accept the donation collected by the youngsters of her colony. Murty is invited for a huge programme with astonishing elaborate programmes, a sound system, well decorated dais, marquee, photographer, a full-fledged function to donate the collected money. She is handed the purse with great ceremony.

When she opens the purse while going back home she finds, two pages and a ten rupee note. On one paper, there was collection amount Rs. 10,295 and on the other paper, there is a list of expenditure against marquee, video, photo coverage, sound system, decoration and taxi hire, etc. Murty describes,

*“A brand new ten rupees note fell into my hands from between the pages. That was their final contribution to the relief work!... The next morning there was a photo in the paper of a beaming Rekha handing over the purse to me (Murty).”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 54)

The Infosys Foundation once helps in building the Annexe of hospital which is to be inaugurated by the health minister of the state. The dais is decorated and lots of chairs are arranged, everything is on a grand scale. Though Murty is the chief contributor in building the annexe, she is given a corner seat. The plenty of speeches are delivered about the efficiency of the minister, his leadership, how he has helped the patients with building the hospital; Murty is totally ignored. She meditates,

*“This health minister had in no way contributed time, money or resources for building this annexe. He was not even aware that it was being built. But he saw to it that he was honoured and praised*

*like a hero. He was garlanded the most. Was it just politics or was it moral corruption.”*

(Murty, WO 94-95)

Murty comes across such type of ‘Business of Philanthropy’. Sri Hiralal Jain used to provide the essential medicines for the Foundation, he also assists with a team of doctors and facilitates with a van for the medical camp. He wants to do it out of his sense of responsibility towards society. He never wants his name to be displayed anywhere. He shows complete faith in Murty. His office too is very simple without any show off.

After his demise, his MBA son Saket takes over the business; he modernises the office and revises all the conditions of Sri Hiralal Jain. He expresses that he can’t continue to give the same medicines as his father, he will donate only excess medicines and won’t send the van with the medicines instead she has to arrange for the vehicle.

*“My father gave you enormous amount of money anonymously. I think that was a mistake and waste of money. I am willing to continue our association but on some new terms. Our company’s name and my name should appear prominently whenever you hold a camp...After all, philanthropy is key to business promotion.”*

(Murty, OMHG 43-44)

One more face of philanthropy Murty witnesses, when she delivers a lecture at a multinational company on corporate social responsibility. The people working in corporate houses are very much inspired by her speech and are aspired to donate for the victims and help them. Murty’s office is flooded with the bags for donations. Murty is shocked by what she receives as ‘help’, she describes,

*“The bags were brimming over with all kinds of junk! Piles of high heeled slippers (some of them without a pair), torn undergarments, unwashed shirts, transparent cheap saris, toys which had neither shape nor colour, unusable bedsheets, aluminium vessels, broken cassettes, were soon piled in front of us like a mountain. There were only a few good shirts, saris and usable materials.”*

(Murty, TMGR 27)

Murty is astonished to see the garbage sent as donation by the well educated, well off and well travelled people. Even at the relief place also she experiences the same.

*“In towns like Nagapattinam, Kadalur, Velankani and Karaikal, one could also see heaps of old and worn-out clothes which no one wanted, lying untouched on either side of the road.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 45)

Once, Murty and team prepare for the Tsunami relief kit of around hundred trunks. For a night, they place them on a plot for the convenience of uploading them on the truck in the morning, for that they take the permission from the assistant of the site architect. However, Lankesh, the Architect argues with Murty on not taking his permission before placing those trunks on the open plot although it is a matter of a night. He arrogantly says,

*“It is not my problem. Perhaps you can pile them on the roadside. You have not taken my permission.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 49)

Murty understands it is matter of Lankesh’s ego, and he is hurt for not taking his permission properly. Instead of helping them with the relief work, he wants to create the problem. In “Treat Me as a Human”, Murty describes a birthday party of one-year-old child. It is full of high class people showing off their wealth. The usual ritual is performed, cutting the cake, blowing out candle, feeding the cake to the baby, video recording, etc. The men are thinking about the new contacts, women are keen on the exhibition of jewellery and saris and latest fashion, however, the

*“...birthday boy was crying. His uncomfortable clothes were hurting him; so were the gold ornaments he had been made to wear. The bright, unfamiliar lights were scaring him. The gifts to the baby were- Expensive silverware, gold chains, cash, even a laptop computer!”*

(Murty, *WO* 188)

The whole party is organised to show of the wealth but not for the pleasure. Murty meets her classmate, Suresh who has come from a very poor family, now he is in Armani suit and drops Murty in his Mercedes Benz! It is a surprise for Murty as his father is unable to educate his son, so everyone in the college used to help this bright student. When she asks if he has any contact with them; he denies saying,

*“I feel everyone in the college helped me because they wanted to feel better about themselves... I am convinced people help others only with a selfish motive.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 124)

When Murty asks him about Mr.Rao’s bad financial conditions who has provided him free food and shelter; Suresh emotionlessly remarks,

*“Yes, that was bound to happen. He fed so many unwanted students who were not good in studies or hard workers. How long he could continue like that?”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 124)

Everyone has helped Suresh when he was a student. They expected nothing in return. However, it is duty of Suresh when is well off to pay his debts out of gratitude. Instead of being grateful, he is thankless and calls them selfish and impractical. A. N. Tripathi aptly underlines,

*“...the common mentality of adopting double standards of value judgement, a much higher one for others and a much lower one for ourselves... This duality of value standards also exhibits itself in the wide gap between profession and practice. The very persons who talk about high ideals, give frequent quotations in Sanskrit, exhort us to follow examples of national heroes, stoop down to lowest levels of conduct for their own personal gains.”*

(Tripathi 5)

Murty warns,

*“If we all behave in this way, our next generation will also have the same insensitive minds.”*

(Murty, *WO* 111)

The double standards of value are also observed in above examples. Double standard of values is prevailing in modern times. Every now and then one experiences such dubiousness and there is no escape from this. Restoration of traditional human values is possible through literature.

### 3.8 Revival of Traditional Values: Need of the Day:

The responsibility of older generation is high and as their life itself is an example to the coming generation keeping positivities of the tradition becomes essential. As Gusfield aptly inscribes this thought in the following words:

*“The Role of traditional values in the form of segmental loyalties and principles of legitimate authority are of great importance in understanding the possibilities for the occurrence of unified and stable polities at national level.”*

(Gusfield 357)

Swami Bhajanananda underlines the importance of traditional Indian value system in the following words:

*“India has an ancient culture rich in spiritual wealth unmatched by any other culture in the world. And its value system which is based on, and aims at, direct realization of the ultimate Reality, holds great promise for the future welfare of humanity. ”*

(Bhajananda 30)

With the progress and expansion of science and technology, especially the information technology and communication technology ethical vigour and vitality of society has not increased, it has indeed decreased to a conspicuous level. Human being has dominated the outer world through study, experiments, hard work, but not the inner world has ever been taken care of. Corruption, intolerance and other such evils are growing. Yogendra Singh defines Modernization in his article ‘Social Change’ in the book *Culture Change in India: Identity and Globalization* in the following words:

*“Modernization is a form of rationalization through which introduction of a whole range of social and cultural changes in societies are legitimated.”*

(Singh 107-08)

In ancient times, India was materially as well as spiritually rich; even in the twenty first century India is considered as a spiritual nation. The traditional Indian values provide a strong base to the social behaviour; it has a strong influence on every individual’s behaviour and conduct in the society. Moral principles are adored and the morality is highly admired even today, though the strong social monitoring is lacking as it was in the older days.

The process of Westernization during the colonization of India has brought drastic changes in the fundamentals of the social behaviour; the process of Globalization started approximately in the late Twentieth Century has also affected the fundamentals of Indian culture and traditions, and accelerated the process of Modernization. Another important factor affecting this whole process is the increasing percentage of youth in the Indian population and its direct contact with the Western and especially American culture through the Internet, Media and other advanced communication technologies.

*“...technology is a part of Indian culture. The present day values in India are largely shaped under the influence of technological society.”*

(Dubey 91)

Therefore, the social norms and behaviour are in the process of speedy changes, in the same way it is affecting the fundamentals of Indian culture, wherein the Value system which provides a base, a format to the national cultural identity of India is also being affected in the process of Modernization. It is natural that no culture could be stagnant, it is ever evolving and continuous. Though at a very slow pace, the change is definite. Without change the culture will be dead, and could be erased from the world map and be a part of history like ‘Maya Culture’. Changes occur in the social norms and behaviour, the value system, social institutions, the thought processes, way of living and the family structure, etc.

*“This is a fact that science and technology occupy a vast place in modern society. The problem is how Indian culture can accommodate technology without going astray- without destroying the inner harmony.”*

(Dubey 91)

As mentioned above, the Indian culture has gone through two processes which have affected it on different planes. they are Westernization and Globalization. They have made Indian culture more complex as the traditionality also coexists at the same time. Though the changes occurred at a slow pace but they are steady, and are noticeable and perceptible; which are gradually engrossed the new set of norms and values, without changing the basic systems of the society.

Therefore, the social behaviour and norms are in the process of speedy changes; in the same way, it is affecting the fundamentals of Indian culture. The value

system which provides a base, a format to the national cultural identity of India is also being affected in the process of modernization. The change is an absolute outcome of the process of westernization. It has posed a threat to the traditional Indian values, the very foundation of Indian value system and subsequently, the Indianness. The vast and unrestrained development in the field of science and technology especially the communication technology and the information technology has accelerated the radical socio-cultural changes, which have affected the value system at large. Dubey precisely clarifies this point, he meditates,

*“Indian value system gives a special gives a special cultural identity to Indian society. In the process of social evolution and change, which emanates from the introduction of value and models of foreign technologies, the Indian cultural system in its entirety is attacked upon. Therefore, the main risk lies in the endangering of Indian cultural identity, which is rooted in tradition.”*

(Dubey 91)

Indian traditional values are at stake in modern times; and the society is moving away from its glorious value heritage. Murty mentions this in her writing especially in her non-fiction. The young generation is influenced by the changing ideologies, socio-cultural beliefs and modern perspectives, however, one needs to respect the traditions of India. As Gusfield remarks,

*“Traditional structures can supply skills, and traditional values can supply sources of legitimation which are capable of being utilized in pursuit of new goals and with new processes.”*

(Gusfield 355)

In this way the traditionality is also useful to the modern generation and provides a support to modern times. Khutiala in his foreword to his book *From Tradition to Modernity* aptly comments,

*“Tradition and Modernity are often incompatible; while they support and sustain each other in some ways, there are several features of traditional social organization and value system that impede the attainment of modernity.”*

(Khutiala i)

Murty depicts the authentic and true India based on her travelling experiences and she underlines various dimensions of Indian traditions and culture. She mainly

depicts the changing values in upper middle class society which is mostly engaged in show business, exhibition of riches and wealth. She notes that the *Insensitivity Index* is going higher day by day and sensibility and sensitivities for the fellow human beings are fading out. It is an eventual product of modern day materialism. She also notifies that the value traditions of India are not totally died out. She proves with examples from her own experiences that practicing a highly principled philosophy of life doesn't require high class schooling or wealth or civilization. She narrates how one could be very happy just by admiring and accepting what life has offered.

Murty's writings contain Indian traditional values which are mainly positive human values with a universal appeal; which Murty advocates them through her non-fiction narratives prominently. These stories are combined with the depiction of modern day evils which are sometimes unavoidable and help the readers understand and change themselves by accepting the positivities to be better human beings. She articulates about changing values in modern times signifying that values are sometimes relative insights and they are reshaped according to the needs of the time. "Alliance Invited" is a superb example of this; Murty compares two matrimonial advertisements representing the changing times, attitudes and values. Murty compares the matrimonial ads of mother and daughter and satires about how everything is getting modernised.

Murty's writing could be understood as a spring of Indian traditional values encouraging empathy, tolerance, the eradication of the sorrows of poor through, philanthropy, compassion and love for the humanity. Her narratives of day to day experiences are touching and inspiring description of modern society. Her narrative "The IT Divide" is a satire on the modern social attitude towards the employees of the IT industry. Devapurkar aptly assesses Murty's writing in the following words,

*"Sudha Murty has golden words for children and adult readers in her nonfiction work, How I Taught My Grandmother to Read and Other Stories...She speaks of simple wisdom and goodwill."*

(Devapurkar 43)

This is evident in all her writing whether fiction or non-fiction or children's books, she definitely provides golden words pregnant with the traditional Indian values, wisdom and goodwill. Swami Gautamananda aptly helps to find how the traditional Indian values could posit as the solution to modern day problems; he remarks,

*“...the ‘Science of Spirituality’, as one may call Para-vidya, is the power to check and control that comes to man by which all his derived from the knowledge of sciences and technology are channelized only to welfare purposes of humanity. Such a wise one would never use an atom for destruction of innocent people. This is the value-system derived through a complete education comprising of Para and Aparavidyas.”*

(Gautamananda 87)

Juilo Ribeiro rightly says about the significance of traditional values as an answer to the modern day problems. He speaks about *values of compassion* in the department of police it might be precisely adapted to all positive human values in every walk of life. He writes,

*“If the police can spread the message of compassion and concern for their fellowmen, that would raise them to a level where they can be the purveyors of new values in a world sinking into crass materialism.”*

(Ribeiro 123)

This ‘crass materialism’ is to be understood as the evils of modernity and therefore, needs to find the permanent solutions through value education of the young minds; these young minds are losing faith in the traditional values. As Ramamurthi puts it,

*“Such a faith should not be frittered away by a careless attitude on the part of the present younger generation.”*

(Ramamurthy 177)

Modernization is a natural process and it is inevitable. One has to accept the changes due to the changing situations. The first and foremost aim of any human society is a peaceful and harmonious existence; for this, a fine amalgamation of positive human values is needed. Therefore, one cannot stick either to traditional values or modern values; a fine balancing between the two is essential. Besides observing and understanding life from various facets, one can't help but appreciate her sincere and truthful attempt to extend and pay a tribute to those traditional values with which India has got her present stature as a country with great traditions and culture.

*“...new institutions and values may often do, fuse and interpenetrate the old.”*

(Gusfield 357)

He continues the thought in following words:

*“Tradition and modernity are frequently mutually reinforcing rather than systems in conflict.”*

(Gusfield 356)

Therefore balance between the two becomes significant. One cannot stick to the traditions if it is not feasible and practical in modern times; and one also cannot be modern in isolation of tradition. Both should be reconciled to live a better life.

### **3.9 Summary:**

Sudha Murthy's writing yields to the reflection of Indian traditional values which are presented through her characters and their experiences in her fiction, description of legendary personalities like JRD and Dr. Kalam, her own experiences as a philanthropist and teacher; and her reactions to them.

The settings of Sudha Murthy's novels are mainly in rural or semi-rural areas though they move to metros; their mindset is basically set in traditional Indian values. They espouse the views of Murthy about the great Indian tradition and culture. Almost all the leading characters promote Murthy's outlook, Vinuta is very humble, simple and loves and cares her family. She sacrifices her happiness for family's sake. She is totally dedicated towards her in-laws. Shrimati too is very humble and obedient and sacrifices her career for her husband's sake; she becomes a true ardhagini and helps her husband to top the corporate world. Anupama too is very humble and obedient in the beginning. Though she is humiliated by her step mother and sisters, she keeps helping them even after her father passes away. She takes it as her own responsibility though there is no emotional bond between them.

Her other characters in the non-fiction writing too advocate Murthy's thinking. Her fiction, the truthful documentation of her own experiences promote her own convictions and beliefs in Indian value system, especially Daanam, Asteya, Aparigraha, Satya, justice, tolerance, etc. These are few of many such human values Murthy underlines in her writing.

The present chapter takes into consideration the reasons of modernization of value system; and also tries to understand the need of the revival of positive traditional values in modern times. Murty doesn't totally deny the modern values; she expects the harmonization of the traditional and the modern. Murty understands that a balance between the two is needed to lead a healthy, peaceful and harmonious life. One cannot choose either tradition or modern; one has to accept the positivities of the both.

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#### 4.1 Introduction:

The exploration of human sensibilities and human interests in a very simple and direct narrative style in Sudha Murty's writing is worth analyzing. Human relationship is an integral part of any social system as it is popularly said that man is a social animal. Human being cannot live without a fellow human beings' company. One needs the compassion, love, care and sharing by the fellow beings. Relationship is seen in every aspect of life of a layman, whether it is between mother/father and children, husband and wife, teacher and student, or in any other manner. Human beings need to get connected with the fellow human beings as it has a humanistic aspect and characteristic. Prof. A. N. Tripathi aptly comments,

*“The quality of life is very much dependent on the quality of relationships we form with others. The real satisfaction in living comes from the warm, friendly, affectionate and loving relationships. In its absence life becomes drab, monotonous and unhappy.”*

(Tripathi 90)

Every social activity has a human dimension of its own, without which a society itself can't have an existence. The social activities actually provide a meaning to the human existence. Developing human relationship is a natural process; which is basically a mutual activity. It helps to solve many problems of a person as well as a society. With the proper perceptive of values in human relationships, one acquaints with the connectedness with every individual properly; and tries to accomplish it. When one understands the values in human relationships, one is able to recognize one's connectedness with them too.

This enables the individual to be a part of the universal human order with a sense of responsibility and compassion; which is central to the writings of Sudha Murty. She is a master in depicting the intimate human relationships and their significance in the existence of a man/woman: a reality of human life. She adequately thinks about the significance of various human relationships as she possesses a great insight into the human psyche.

From birth to death an individual comes in contact with the thousands of fellow beings, with the few of them he/she develops a relationship based on the mutual understanding, love, compassion and care. Sometimes it is also developed

with the negative feelings. The researcher intends to locate the human relationship with a perspective of key human values mentioned above.

Murty portrays herself as a granddaughter, mother, wife, daughter, sister, teacher, friend, student, colleague, etc. in her non-fictional writings; these are the relationships which shape her as a human being. Her fictional writing also contains the husband-wife relationship, teacher-student relationship, mother-daughter/son relationship, and other relations within a family and within society. In her recent book, *Grandma's Bag of Stories* Murty highlights the significance of a bond of healthy relationships in her personal life. She writes in the Preface,

*"I spent my childhood carefree, stress free, with my cousins and grandparents at my hometown Shiggaon, a sleepy town in North Karnataka. We shared everything there, whatever we had, and that became a great bond among us. The binding force was my grandmother...I hope, with these stories, children and parents will understand the unique relationship between the generations and will continue to create bonds of love with one another and older generations in their families."*

(Murty, *GBS* vii-viii)

Strengthening the bond of relationship is very important to lead a healthy and happy life. Murty's writing is based on humanism and human aspects, based on the moralities of Indian traditions and Indian value heritage. Avoiding all the religious orthodoxy she glorifies the Indianness. It is an attempt to understand Indian sensibilities with its positivities and negativities showing the reality of human existence.

Murty's writing is a direct, simple and plain testimony of human relationships showing a slice of real life experiences. It is a window to the human nature providing an acute insight into it with a new outlook towards life helping us to recognize the right from the wrong.

The quest for positivity in human relationships leads to discover the strength in human beings which makes living a satisfying and delightful possibility probing deeper into the intimacy of the humans within a society. Dr. Devapurkar signifies the importance of human values in the development and conservations of healthy and positive human relationships in the following word,

*“The messages for children are for building certain values necessary to make a good human being and enjoying healthy relationships.”*

(Devapurkar 38)

One executes it is chiefly with the help of literature mainly written for the children as Murty does; this could be about a realistic presentation of human relationships leaving an unforgettable impression on the readers' mind. She deals with the various facets of human relationships at the backdrop of 'family' as an integral social unit.

The experiences gained during the period of time help to solidify these relationships; which give a concrete shape to the individual's thought process and the character on the whole, concretising the way of living together within a specified social circle. Altogether there emerges a kind of culture of its own; it is essentially based on the wish of others' wellbeing and the sheer feeling of goodness; otherwise it becomes temporary without any satisfaction into it.

It gives force for the individual's positive development and social progress in total providing a motivation to make life happier. Of course, human differences may affect this sometimes, but a strong base of human values provides a right direction making an individual awareness of the grater responsibilities. 'Traditionality' provides a foundation for the uniformed development. It is generally considered that the narration of the social situation and the reflection of society have been the principal impetus and urge of literature in general.

Literature reveals predominantly three sets of relationships - human beings in relation to the universe, individual in relation to the society, and individual in relation to the other individual; of course there is the relationship of individual with her/his owns self which could be put as intrapersonal relationship. In other words, the fiction would be considered as a documentation of the human relationships in its every aspect. The present chapter focuses on the relationships at personal and social levels.

The social change could affect the human relationships deeply. The individualism and selfishness in the modern era are the major factors which affect the human relationships on the individual level, family level and social level. An individual needs to deal with this changing scenario while taking into consideration the human values, which might be a decisive step in the problem solving process motivating a healthy and positive atmosphere in a society helping the extension and

increase in the stabilisation of peace and harmony leading to the greater fulfilment of the human satisfaction at large.

In the modern world, the individuals are becoming so self-centred that they are almost ignorant about the maladjustments in the culture and the degradation of humanistic aspects and the traditional values. Lessons of humanity and compassion are learnt by giving importance to the positive human values in contemplation of human relations understood by the experiences of the author in her non-fictional work and by the characters in her novels and short stories. It provides an awareness of the individual towards the positivity of the human relations. A. N. Tripathi aptly says,

*“A related dimension of the value crisis is the increasing respectability of selfish individualism. It takes the form of exclusive concern for personal gains without any consideration for the common good... Selfish persons use their friends, parents, relatives, and all other human relationships merely as means for personal advancement, without cherishing them for giving them much in return. They develop their talents, skills and knowledge, not because they make for a good society, but only to encash them at the opportune moment for personal advantage.”*

(Tripathi 4)

Self-interest is always identified with the interest of the whole society. The development of better understanding of the fellow beings help to develop a strong bond between the individuals and the society at large, solving many modern day problems. It forms the chain of generations and help to pass on the knowledge which is helpful for the nurturing of the future generations.

Therefore, to develop healthy human relationships adequate communication is a must requirement. This helps the foundation of relationships stronger, developing more coordination amongst the individuals, encouraging their participation and making it more cohesive. Healthy relationship helps to develop a deep understanding of the fellow human beings, their sorrows, their needs and requirements.

On the fulfilment, it gives a deeper satisfaction to the individual gaining admiration and the appreciation from the society and proving a step towards human development in total. One can understand these relationships are based upon this understanding; it is natural to have right values in these relationships making it healthier and strengthening the social environment.

In India, an individual is naturally a part of a family that includes grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters, other siblings, cousins, nephews and nieces etc. These relationships are a reality of one's life; one is born in these relationships. Friends and colleagues, with whom one frequently interacts, also have deeper impact on individual's life. In our school, in neighbourhood or the college, friends are a significant part of any individual's life. The teachers enable to learn and understand various things in life.

Besides the family, schools or colleges, an individual lives in a bigger social order, where a whole range of relationships support the existence of the individual's life. For example, the corner grocery shopkeeper, the milkman, the washer man, the maid or the helper in the house, each one of them brings a certain value to the living. One can look further into this chain of social dependency and find that there is still a bigger web of interdependency. Such relationships are abundant and again a reality in everyone's lives.

Relationship is an indivisible part of social living. The present chapter attempts to understand the significance of relationships, its impact on Sudha Murty's life; the values and the experiences it bring into the life of Murty with help of her selected writings. The chapter is divided into two broad categories i.e. personal relations and social relations. Personal relations are relations within family. Parent-child relation, husband-wife relation, grandparent and grandchild relation, relation between siblings are prominently taken into consideration while discussing personal relations.

Murty's relationships and relationships in her fictional writings are studied. While discussing social relationships, murty is understood as teacher, friend, student, colleague and boss. Social relations in her fictional writings are also taken into consideration. While discussing these issues one has to consider the positive human values to make them healthy and happy. The importance of positive values such as justice, peace, mutual understanding, trust and harmony are very important for the growth of healthy relations. The absence of such values mar the positive development of these relationships.

One can easily understand the chain of social dependency and realize that there is still a bigger web of interdependency. Such relationships are abundant and they are unavoidable; again a reality in each of one's life leaving its mark on life of the individual and the society at large. One has a greater impact of these values

leading to fulfillment of both sides in the relationship, i.e. it fulfills the individual's needs- mental, physical, psychological, religious and spiritual; contributing to the overall development of the individual as human being.

Living in a relationship is a natural process and a continuous process; every relationship is actually an evolution in terms of human values which promoted harmony in the society. However, if there is disbelief and distrust on the other, the happiness in relationships is missing.

Mutual understanding is the natural outcome of a relationship which recognized with a firm foundation of above mentioned positive values. This leads to the concrete happiness and the complete joy. One works and behaves according to the values he/she cherishes, in a relationship it leads to the accomplishment of happiness on both the sides in the relationship and leads to mutual satisfaction.

Therefore, one must understand the significance of positive values in the human relationships. Justice, trust, respect for each other, mutual understanding, love, care and compassion for the fellow human beings provide a strong foundation for the healthy relationships.

Sudha Murty's writing is a sensible portrayal of human relationships at the backdrop of human values which is central to the present study. Her writings are a simple and lucid testimony of human relationships portraying the humanities of Indian life.

An ingenious and creative author has the perception and the analytic mind of a sociologist who produces an exact record of human life, society and social system as is the case with Murty. She portrays the human beings in Indian society, their problems and plights from time to time as well as their efforts to achieve a harmonious relationship with their surroundings. Most of her writing is generally centred on the family relationships at the backdrop of Indian traditional values.

#### **4.2 Relationships within Family:**

Healthy families have harmonious and pleasant relationships. One lives in a bigger social order where a whole range of relationships support the human existence. This bigger web of interdependency starts within the family circle and then grows to encompass the society. Family relationships could be considered as one such relationship, wherein an individual is born with relationships. By birth he/she becomes a son/daughter, grandson/granddaughter, brother/sister, niece/nephew,

cousin, etc. Sudha Murty in her fiction and non-fiction writings has dealt with various facets and different angles of human relationships most intensely. The traditional heritage of India gives great importance to the family as a basic unit of the society.

There is a whole range of relationships on the larger scale. Healthy families have these harmonious relationships where every relationship is cherished and respected and given its due worth. The whole range of relationships supports the human existence of family system, these relationships are interdependent. The stability of the joint/extended family heavily depends on the mutual understanding of the family members.

Every individual belongs to a family as a human being and does not have a choice to choose one's family. However, there is a bound relationship between the family members that no other means of affection can compare to. Harmony in the human being is the first level of being in a family. The duty of the parents and the grandparents is to inculcate the human values in the coming generations. It is the most important responsibility of any human being which helps to survive the entire human civilization.

Parents are the role model for children to inculcate moral, social and ethical values. Truth, justice, righteous living, honesty, faith and the richness of our heritage is taught to them through their own behaviour and practice, through the narration of myths, short stories, etc. The present chapter is to understand importance of human values in human relationships, so that it could be healthy, happy and contented. Family comes first in any individual's life, so family relations are important. Following are the relations prominently found in Sudha Murty's writing:

#### **4.2.1 Husband - Wife Relationship:**

In Indian cultural tradition 'marriage' is not merely a physical affair, but it is considered to be an essential stage in one's life; it has a socio-cultural and religious importance. It is considered as an important '*Samskara*' in a *grihastha*'s life which helps in correct observance and fulfilment of the duties of husband and wife' this leads to '*Moksha*'. *Grihasthashrama* is a base to fulfil the social needs; it has a spiritual, religious as well as social context. A step towards '*Moksha*' is attained by fulfilling the duties of a *grihastha* prescribed as '*Dharma*'. '*Kama*' and '*Artha*' This is also a stage where one could also fulfil the three *Rinas*; which contributes in the well being of the society; *Grihasthasrama* is base to fulfil the social needs. Marriage itself in Indian culture is an extensive socio-religious responsibility, rather than just a

relationship between the husband and wife. The joint family provides considerable practical and emotional support providing stability to the family. Murty explains,

*“...the expense and ceremonies don’t determine the success of the marriage. Rather, it is the understanding that needs to develop between husband and wife.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 59)

Murty provides a testimony to the novel understanding of human relations in the light of traditional Indian value system and the changes it is going through in the modern times. The husband-wife relationship has various dimensions and depth in Indian traditions and culture. While discussing the husband-wife relationship in the writings of Sudha Murty this context becomes important.

*Gently Falls Bakula* is a documentation of an unsuccessful marriage of Shrikant and Shrimati; the old childhood friends. This marriage is a sheer outcome of innocent love towards each other; both are neighbours and belonged to the rival families. They are bright and intelligent but with a different bend of minds.

Shrimati is simple, plain and ardent lover of history and Shrikant is ambitious, aggressive, rational and practical. He chooses computer science as it helped to ride the ladder of success fast. They are in total contrast to each other. After their marriage, they get settled in Mumbai as it boosts Shrikant’s success. Shrimati always prioritises her husband’s career and gives secondary importance to her own interests and career. Murty writes about them:

*“Our society is strange. The woman always enjoys her husband’s glory and fame, but the reverse is seldom true. Rarely do men appreciate their wives’ talents.”*

(Murty, *WO* 79)

Shrimati is an intelligent and bright student of history; she denies the offer of Mike Collins to get doctorate in the US preferring the love of Shrikant over the love of history as she believes,

*“...that it is not necessary to have a doctorate to gain knowledge.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 49)

Shrimati knows the value of happiness in a healthy relationship. Any luxury, material gain seems her useless if there is no happiness and satisfaction in life. She mainly wants an identity of her own and freedom of thought and expression is

wanting in her relationship with Shrikant. Shrimati never demands any luxury; her priority in this marriage is, as she writes to Shrikant,

*“The foundation of my happiness is not the digits that you earn, but the digits of your love, affection and companionship.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 63)

Collins though congratulates her on her decision of marriage, he doesn't agree with her. He thinks that Shrimati is not aware of what she is getting into, but as the years pass and the attraction between the husband and wife wane and the demands of the marriage increase He understands that 'she would realise what she has given up is immense. Sacrificing the one's 'self' for the sake of husband's success is normal in India.'

Their marriage lasts only for ten years; though they are the childhood friends, and have a love marriage. From the beginning Shrimati has to make all the compromises on every step of married life. They settle in Mumbai for the better opportunities of career advancement of Shrikant. Shrimati just remains a shadow of her husband and obeys what he wants. She sacrifices her dream of getting a doctorate in history to fulfil the familial responsibilities and accomplish the demands of Shrikant's corporate job.

Their early married life is also occupied with the responsibility of Shrikant's job. Though it is clear from the beginning that she is an unwanted member of the family, a total outsider, she has so much care and respect for her husband that she considers his achievements as her own. She learns computer to manage his work, to manage his accounts and correspondences efficiently. Shrimati is completely unaware that hers is a thankless job; she fulfills all the duties of a corporate leader's wife without expecting anything back.

She leaves the tour with Collins in half way as her husband has needed her. On the contrary, Shrikant goes away when she is suffering in the hospital for a whole week; she doesn't inform him as she knows he wont come back leaving his project half-done. Shrimati knows Shrikant will get upset and that he will return only after completion of his job. He has failed as a husband as he doesn't understand the inner needs of Shrimati. Shrimati thinks,

*“A house is made up of four walls but a home is where there is love, affection and a meaningful relationship.”*

(Murty, *GFB* 152)

Love and affection is lacking between them; although both trust each other, which is one criteria of any healthy relationship; as all the money, cheque books accounts are managed by Shrimati. Even if Shrikant needs money he asks Shrimati. She also believes in Shrikant's abilities, intelligence and hardworking nature. She has all the respect for her husband; she is disappointed and faces the emptiness in their married life. As Murty describes,

*"She has done everything but he had never noticed her sincerity; he didn't value her sacrifices for him."*

(Murty, *GFB* 150)

With the passing time, Shrikant has changed a lot, his love for Shrimati doesn't remain the same. He is occupied and obsessed with his success and turned in a real workaholic. Shrimati has lost her identity and self-esteem. Her condition is pitied by her friend Vandana as she is leading a fruitless and barren life. She experiences a vacuum in their relationship, which has happened due to the lack of mutual understanding between them; a main ingredient for any successful marriage and a healthy relationship. Shrimati is unable to live a practical life like Shrikant, and cannot think like him in terms of profit and loss, business and gains.

Shrikant becomes more and more unconcerned about his wife's feelings. She does not understand her husband's ambitions though she supports him from the beginning. Their priorities are different, he wants success power and status; she has a thirst for knowledge. He is opportunistic, workaholic and professionally successful. She thinks her existence 'futile' and is doing a thankless unpaid job. Her husband doesn't understand her needs. He always misunderstands her; misjudges her and has underestimated her capabilities, her dreams and aspirations. Murty rightly describes,

*"She has to live like his shadow all the time. She wouldn't have any identity of her own. Her life would be that of a planet which shine with reflected light, rather than that of a star which radiates its own light."*

(Murty, *GFB* 150)

Murty very successfully portrays the double pulls that Shrimati, the Indian woman is subjected to between her desire to assert her dignity as human being and her duty as a wife and also explores the disturbed psyche of the husband and the wife due to the modern lifestyle. Thus, with the changing time the relationship also changes.

*Mahashweta* is again a story of unsuccessful marriage of immensely beautiful Anupama and very handsome, rich and intelligent Dr. Anand. He falls in her astonishingly stunning beauty and marries her. Anupama, a motherless child is an eldest daughter of a village school teacher Shamanna who is poor and vulnerable. She has never known in whole of her life what lover means. The only person who bestows love on her is her grandmother who has passed away when Anu is very young.

Anupama finds her love in Dr. Anand, who also loves her in return and marries her before going to England for further studies. It is apparent that, he is madly in love with her apparent beauty. His mother Radhakka is extremely orthodox, narrow minded and old fashioned lady. Though she is against this marriage, she has given consent for the sake of her only son as she cannot afford to hurt him and made the grand arrangements for wedding at her own expenses.

Anand and Anupama get married in front of auspicious ‘*Agni*’ and has taken the auspicious oaths of marriage amongst the vast gathering of relatives and well wishers. Anand repeats his oath before leaving for England when both of them are all alone. Anupama is scared whether Dr. Anand will forget her and the oath so she asks him, “*Suppose something happens to make you forget?*” Dr. Anand replies,

*“What a foolish girl you are! Haven’t you heard what they say in a church wedding? “Till death do us part...” And that is my promise to you. We shall always be together. Anu, how can I think of anybody other than you?”*

(Murty, *MS* 38)

Dr. Anand’s promises evaporate when he learns about her disease, leukoderma. He abandons her without even consulting her or even responding to her pleas. Their married life only lasts for two months and they don’t even get much time to know and understand each other. Though they have full faith in each other, respect and trust for each other in the beginning, it fades in the end; it is lost in the ‘ocean of misunderstandings’. Though they lived for a very short period of time together, they are constantly in touch with each other through letters and phone calls. At the end, they don’t have any communication left, as there is nothing to share anything between them. Their marriage collapses due to the lack of faith, trust, justice and mutual understanding. Any relationship flourishes with a sense of togetherness and standing for each other during the time of hardships. Dr. Anand never stands for Anupama.

Murty's another novel, *Dollar Bahu* has three married couples, Gauramma and Shamanna Master, their two sons and daughters-in-law: Girish and Vinuta, Chandra Shekhar and Jamuna. They belong to a simple middle class family from Bangalore. Gauramma and Shamanna own a small one storied house in Jaynagar. Shamanna is a principal in a government school nearby with a very moderate salary, which has never brought any luxury and lavishness which Gauramma aspires for. But Shamanna is a man of values and convictions, simple and satisfied. Gauramma is least educated, but she is greedy of wealth and luxuries.

*"His priorities were different from his wife's. He wanted his children, Chandra Shekhar, Girish and Surabhi, to have a good education."*

(Murty, *DB* 19)

There is a big difference in their natures that leads to the lack of mutual understanding between the two. Shamanna master's role is secondary in the Rao household as Gauramma is always backed by her daughter Surabhi, who follows the example of her mother in greediness. Thus, Gauramma always does what she wants despite Shamanna opposing her.

However, in two occasions which are major in giving turn to the story, Shamanna takes the lead while fixing the marriage of Girish with Vinuta, and not letting Vinuta to sell her dearest ancestral house for a lavish wedding in the beginning of the story. At the end, while Gauramma is away from home with her eldest son Chandru in America, he takes a major decision for the Rao family that Vinuta and Girish with Harsha, their grandson will settle in Dharwad in Vinuta's ancestral house; Shamanna and Gauramma stay back in Bangalore.

Otherwise he is always dominated by his wife, Gauramma, and her words are final. She decides the marriages of remaining two children Chandru and Surabhi the way she wants and with whom and where she wants. She goes to live with Chandru; she is not accompanied by her husband. Shamanna's priorities are different from his wife's. He wants his children Chandru, Girish and Surabhi to have good education and positive human values. However, Gauramma is not satisfied with it.

*"Since her husband had been unable to fulfil her dreams she had pinned her hopes on her children."*

(Murty, *DB* 19)

Gauramma has greed for expensive silk sarees, diamond earrings, and all sort of luxury and material gains; she is envious of others' richness. So she has got blind and deaf to what her husband is saying about the importance of values to lead a happy life. At the end, her eyes are opened towards his goodness and she praises him when she happens to meet Chitra whom Shamanna Master helped,

*“For the first time, Gouramma felt proud of her husband. He may not have earned a lot of money, but his compassion and timely help had made such a big difference to the life of people in trouble.”*

(Murty, DB 109)

Shamanna never has courage to stop Gauramma and Surabhi from insulting and humiliating poor Vinuta. When Gauramma and Surabhi scold Vinuta, she leaves her meal unfinished. Murty describes,

*“Helpless Shamanna just stood, dismayed at the terrible turn of events. Gouramma and Surabhi stayed immersed in the thoughts, avoiding Vinuta's pinched, wet face and continued to eat.”*

(Murty, DB 66)

Gauramma has always dominated Shamanna, and never respected his opinions and never understands his views towards life. Another couple in the story is Girish and Vinuta; is suffering, caring and sacrificing and Girish is of helping nature like his father Shamanna.

Girish a commerce graduate, a clerk in a bank, is contented and happy with his lot. He is more social, indulged in all the cultural activities such as comparing programmes during the Dusshera festival, Ganesh Chaturthi, and Kannada Rajyotsava.

*“If anyone required the help at the bank, Girish would be the first to offer and muster help, be it a medical emergency, a funeral, or celebrations for a happy occasion.”*

(Murty, DB 20)

Girish loves Vinuta, but he doesn't understand Gauramma's double standards. He is not keen on understanding the difficulties Vinuta is facing at home. Gauramma never leaves a stone unturned to harass her, however, she never complains to her husband. Murty delineates,

*“Girish lavished love on her. She realized her mother-in-law was domineering person and Surabhi a carefree, easy-going, rather self-centred person.”*

(Murty, DB 39)

At the end, Girish and Vinuta move to Dharwad as she is unable to lead a life in suffocating atmosphere. Girish's love is not enough for her, she also wants love and care from her in-laws. Though Shamanna understands her, loves and cares for her, he is meek and his support is not enough against Gauramma's domineering nature.

Besides the examples of unhappy marriages in these three novels, Murty describes a very intimate, touchy, and an ideal relationship between a husband and wife which is based on sheer love, care, mutual understanding, standing with each other in difficult times, sharing and sense of togetherness.

"Made in Heaven" introduces us a happy and contented world of two beggars, Madha and Yellamma. Murty is astonished to see Madha, is massaging his wife Yellamma's feet and singing a beautiful folk song for her. Yellamma discloses the secret of these poorest couple in the village; they are the richest in terms of happiness they possess in each other's company.

*"We don't have any problems. We do everything together, dividing the work between us. We usually ask each others' opinion."*

(Murty, *OMHG* 60)

Yellmma and Madha are always free and frank with each other without any biases against each other. Their minds are pure and the relationship immaculate. She reveals the real secret further,

*"We believe that in this journey of life, we should be together in everything. Whether it is some alms or a pot of water, we share whatever we earn. We spend the day begging in different parts of the village but are always glad to be with each other at night. We trust each other and are happy with our lives, full of hardships though it is."*

(Murty, *OMHG* 60)

The trust, the sense of togetherness, belief in each other, the sharing and caring helped to spend their life in happiness. It is not riches, wealth, material comforts or beauty make husband-wife relationship successful, but the commitment, love, companionship, sense of togetherness, justice, respect and standing together at the time of hardships and difficulties make all the difference. Murty rightly comments,

*"For Yellamma and Madha marriage was a partnership, not a burden or an object to be flaunted."*

(Murty, *OMHG* 60-61)

In a narrative, “Crisis of Confidence” Murty comment on a different angle of husband and wife. She comments on her student Charu’s married life. In the beginning, she is very happy, elated and radiant. She becomes unhappy with passing time. Although, hers is a love marriage despite her mother-in-law’s consent. She is harassed by her mother-in-law every day and her husband is party with his mother. Charu does whatever she could to please them, but they continue to tortured her. Charu is highly educated and a bank officer but she is suffering due to her husband; which resulted in her being meek and without any confidence or self reliance. Murty writes,

*“After the first few days of love and care, Charu’s husband and his mother began harassing her, forcing her to do all the housework in addition to her job at the bank. She had to hand over her entire salary to her husband and when she required any money-even ten rupees- she would have to ask for it.”*

(Murty, WO 137)

The taunting and harassment has made her submissive and her husband dominant and torturous; Charu is without any happiness and content in the married life. An unhealthy relationship between them has made her life equal to hell. Murty narrates an interesting aspect in husband and wife relationship through Sumitra and Suresh’s experiences in “Life is an Examination”. They are classmates, affluent, and married but don’t have any children. However, they are made for each other. Suresh is a successful businessman and his wife actively helped him to manage the business. Both value money and hard work, therefore, they don’t spend money unnecessarily. The couple is happy with each other, though they are sad for being childless. They understood each other very well and also respected each other. In their later days both of them choose different direction to spend their life as well as money. Though in the beginning Sumitra thinks that,

*“Money can buy medicine and comfort, but not happiness”*

(Murty, WO 200)

She has changed greatly in the end and starts enjoying the material comforts and spending her money lavishly. There is “*a rift in the couple*” as there is a lack of mutual understanding; they don’t share their views in spending their money with different purposes.

Sumitra starts enjoying life which she has never done in whole of her life. Suresh starts funding scholarships and giving donations to educational institutes, libraries and computer centers in his wife Sumitra's name; which indicates his love and respect towards his wife despite the differences in them. He frankly admits,

*"We may differ in our ideas. But without her help, I would not have built my business. She has her own opinions, but this is the way I look at it."*

(Murty, WO 202)

Sumitra continues to enjoy her life till her death. Suresh and Sumitra react differently towards life although they are deeply in love with each other and respect each other's views and opinions. Murty explains:

*"Suresh seemed to take his dear wife's death very well. They had been married for a long time, so I imagined how hard it must be for him to live without her."*

(Murty, WO 203)

Murty narrates a story of her two students, who fall in love with each other and get married in "Your Money my Money". Ashok and Anita are Murty's students and are happily married to each other. Though they are classmates and have same kind of education, Anita decides to take up the IT job and Ashok follows his heart and remains as a teacher in a college. This makes Anita earn more and faster than Ashok. Though in the beginning there are no ego issues. However, as the days pass, Anita starts speaking of her own achievements and starts comparing her husband and herself in respect of money and success which affects their earlier healthy and happy relationship with mutual understanding, respect and care. Murty describes,

*"I was surprised by her appearance. She looked different. She wore an expensive sari, shining diamond droplets and nearly a dozen gold bangles. And beneath her make-up, her face showed some arrogance. Was it over-confidence or a shade of rudeness?"*

(Murty, WO 207)

There is a lack of respect and mutual understanding between the couple. Anita is not happy with Ashok's teaching job. Ashok shares his views with Murty,

*"I am extremely unhappy with my marriage. Many a time, I wonder whether I should stay married or separate."*

(Murty, WO 208)

Murty writes if there is a competition and lack of mutual understanding the marriage becomes meaningless. Her student Ashok describes his wife's arrogance in relationship as a blight:

*"Anita now feels her job is better and she acts superior. She looks down upon other people. Everything is just "me" for her now. Like "I bought this house with my money", and "with my ESOP shares, I bought a car". She behaves as though she can buy everything with the money she earned by selling her share. The share price of the IIT company she works for keep rising, o no wonder ESOP is a boon to employees. But it is bringing unhappiness in our family. She doesn't respect my old mother as she used to do before."*

(Murty, WO 208)

Ashok and Anita are sincere and hardworking. They both have opted for the teaching job despite being the computer engineers. Later as the financial demands increase such as owning a house, buying vehicle, schooling the child, etc; Anita takes up a job in a software company to earn more money. Ashok doesn't leave his job of teaching and Anita becomes more logical and practical. She climbs the ladder of success faster and within three years builds a house of her own. Ashok opens his mind to Murty,

*"Anita feels she can get what I earn for the entire year simply by selling a few of her shares. She keeps telling me all the time that she's better than I am. I cannot live with a wife who's got such an attitude."*

(Murty, WO 208-9)

This is an example of lack of respect for the partner which is very essential for a healthy husband-wife relationship. Comparison and competition can mar any healthy relation and the bond in husband-wife relation gets stronger only when it is founded on the base of respect and mutual understanding. Ashok is so frustrated that he feels an extreme unhappiness in the marriage and is meditating whether to get separated from his wife. Murty writes,

*"It is important to earn money, but how you handle it is much more important. If Anita had been mature, she would have thanked the people around her who cooperated with her. She would have said*

*'we' instead of 'I'. She would have said, 'With my husband's support, I have built this house.'*

(Murty, WO 209)

The sense of togetherness and recognizing the other's contribution in life makes marriage successful. Anita fails to recognize Ashok's contribution and she has self-centered attitude. To have a healthy relationship between a husband and wife 'ego' shouldn't be an issue which deteriorates the happiness in the relationship.

#### **4.2.2 Parent- Child Relationship:**

Parent child relationship is unique and is bound with love, caring and sharing. Parents inculcate values in their children and the chain continues. However, in modern times, the bond in parent-child relation is weakening. Murty writes about the positive as well as the negative side of the parent-child relationship in the modern times. She narrates one such experience in "Death without Grief", where she goes to meet her neighbour, whose mother has passed away. This is customary in India to visit the family to console and convey the condolences for grief stricken family. Murty visits the family but she is shocked to know that "Death is without Grief" in the family, as they are actually relieved by the death of their mother.

When Murty enters the house, everyone is in gay and happy mood watching the movie, *Kaho na Pyar hai* and the husband and wife are talking about all the errands enquiring about her health and family, discussing the sarees and having a casual talk. Murty gets confused whether to talk about his mother's death or not as the mood and atmosphere is different. There is no sign of grief or sorrow, on the other hand everyone is in a mood of celebration. At the end, Murty hesitantly asks about the mother. She receives a blunt answer from the lady,

*"Of late she was bedridden with a stroke. To look after such people in a place like Bangalore, one requires servants and you know how difficult and expensive it is to get a good servant. I was so tired of looking after her. It was good riddance. "*

(Murty, WO 21)

The lady is a daughter-in-law of the one who died, but the worst comes when the son of a dead woman remarks,

*"Death solved all the problems for all of us. My mother was finally relieved from all her sufferings."*

(Murty, WO 22)

Murty is saddened and disturbed by what she encounters. She is disappointed because in the modern times life has become so fast and busy that the grief of one's death has become proportionate to the usefulness of loved one

“Sorry the Line is Busy” throws light on a different angle in parent-child relationship. Murty narrates an incident about her friend Rakesh and Tara's family. Once Murty wants to wish Rakesh on his birthday on the telephone; but the line is continuously busy for every time she calls. Tara explains her that problem is not with the telephones but the problem lies with their two teenage children who continuously communicate on telephones without any concern for others. The incident is a commentary on the lack of communication between the parents and the children; as modern technology and material affluence have affected the relationships in the modern times. Rakesh, their father is totally unaware of the situation at home. Children are not worried about the bills, they are carefree, and do not bother to communicate with their parents at all. Murty comments,

*“Times have changed, but what Tara says is valid. The next generation will not understand that their elders advise them from experience. Probably these children will only realize the value of good advice when they become parents themselves and their children do not understand them.”*

(Murty, WO 166)

The above incident shows, if there is a gap of communication between parents and children, which might mar the relationship between them. Therefore, understanding each other and communication becomes important in a healthy parent-child relationship. Today, building healthy communication is getting more difficult.

Children spend more time with computers and mobile phones and give less importance to spending time together in family. In modern times, it is getting difficult, though there are many gadgets, advanced communication technology; one has to develop a healthy way of communication consciously.

#### **4.2.2 i Father - Son Relationship:**

The unsentimental relationship, which is totally based on the usefulness and not on trust, mutual understanding and respect is described in a narrative “In India, the Worst of Both Worlds”, the son takes his own father as a stranger to the Infosys Foundation's office to meet Murty and asks some help.

However, they don't disclose their relationship with each other to Murty and lies that they are strangers to each other. The son builds story that he has found the old man at a bus stop without money and without any relatives and needs help and shelter.

Murty is deceived and decides to help the old man in misery and admits him to an old age home. When the old man dies, Murty goes and visits the old age home and she is surprised to see that stranger is claiming the old man as his father and asking for his belongings.

Sudha Murty is shocked and upset to find out the real face of the son who is unable to take care of his own father in his old age and provide family's love, affection and care, who dies in an old age home as a stranger. The son shamelessly explains,

*"My wife never liked my father. She asked me to choose between him and her. At that time we read about your Foundation. We thought then that our problem could be solved without money."*

(Murty, WO 35)

Such incidents narrated by Murty underline how the parent-child relationship is totally based on the usefulness and profit and not on love, care, trust, respect and affection. The bond between the two is weakening. Indian tradition adores and respects *Shri Ram*, *Shravan Baal* and *Pundalik* who have gone through all the hardships and difficulties; left behind all the luxuries and comforts of life for the sake of their parents' wish and will. In modern times, this pious relationship is deteriorating, and only usefulness of the other counts.

#### **4.2.2 ii Father - Daughter Relationship:**

Murty's cordial relationship with her father is underlined in a narration "When Telegrams were Bad". Once, while she is doing a job in Pune, she received 'a harbinger of bad news' a telegram, 'Father expired. Start immediately.' By a close friend called Lata. She decides to leave for Hubli, her native place immediately. In train, she cannot control her feelings and starts crying. She inscribes,

*"My father was more than a friend to me. We used to talk a lot and discuss many things... at first he was a role model but later when I have seen more of the world, he became more of a friend than a hero."*

(Murty, WO 45)

When she reaches home, she finds her father hale and hearty as usual and she finds there is a misunderstanding in telegram. While talking about her travelling experiences with her dear father, she recounts,

*“I was travelling with my father in the interior parts of Karnataka, in the areas bordering Maharashtra. My father, a retired professor and doctor used to guide my work and was my favourite companion on my travels.”*

(Murty, WO 124)

Murty’s father is not only a true companion in her travelling but also a friend, philosopher and guide for her lifetime through his teachings. He is a path ahead of his time. Murty admits, he has provided equal opportunities to his son and daughters and showered love on her children without any kind of discrimination prevalent at that time. Murty’s father has an ability to shape his daughter’s thinkings, show her a right path while leading a corporate leader’s wife. He guides her, and his advice leads her to tremendous philanthropic works she has done in all over India for almost two decades. When Murty becomes sentimental about a young girl turning into a *devdasi* ceremoniously in a temple- they are visiting, her father understands her feeling and advises her,

*“Tears cannot solve age-old problems. We can only try to reduce them. You cannot change the life of every single person. If you can rehabilitate ten such people in your lifetime, I will be a proud father. Proud that I have given birth to a daughter who could change the lives of ten helpless women.”*

(Murty, WO 125)

Murty is contributing to the philanthropic works continually leading a simple life without enjoying any luxuries and lavishness through the money she possesses. She always mentions her middle class background and values she carries with her even after becoming a multi-millionaire, her outlook towards life has not changed due to the teachings she received from her parents.

#### **4.2.2 iii Mother - Daughter Relationship:**

“Two Faces of Poverty” narrates the love of mother towards her daughter. It is story of Leela and her bright and beautiful daughter Girija; whom she wants to make an engineer. Leela works a sweeper in the Infosys Foundation’s office and has a very meagre income. One day she asks twenty thousand rupees by mortgaging her worn

gold bangles for Girija's education. Instead of taking bangles Murty asks Leela to bring Girija with her marks cards to meet Sudha Murty.

Murty finds her excellent academic records and numerous certificates for extracurricular activities; she agrees to pay for her education which is a dream of poor Leela. She reveals the secret of Girija's birth. Girija is a daughter of an unwed mother from an affluent family background for whom Leela used to work as a house maid. Leela takes care of the girl during her pregnancy and when the girl asks her to put the baby in an orphanage, Leela couldn't as she explicates,

*"I tried, but holding the tiny baby in my arms I found myself unable to give her away and decided to bring her up. I already had two daughters and my husband had deserted me, but I know I would always find enough to share with this new soul."*

(Murty, *OMHG* 103)

Murty is stunned to know about Leela's love towards Girija. This is surprising that a poor woman with meagre salary is trying to provide costly education who is not her biological daughter. Murty says,

*"I was dumbstruck by Leela's story and her courage and generosity. The crushing poverty of her life had not diminished the humanity within her."*

(Murty, *OMHG* 103-104)

Murty narrates two opposite incidents in "Mother's Love". Manjula is a cook in Arati's house whose sister is childless and wants to adopt a new born. Manjula's husband is good for nothing and she has five children and is pregnant for the sixth time. Arati's sister wants to adopt Manjula's unborn child and in return she would sponsor the education of all of her children and Manjula agrees to it. Murty comments,

*'...motherhood may not always answer to the logic of agreements.'*

(Murty, *OMHG* 113)

Manjula denies giving away the new born even though she is unable to make the two ends meet. She says,

*"Even if I get handful of rice, I will share that with this baby. She is so tiny and so completely dependent on me. I am breaking my promise but I cannot live without my child."*

(Murty, *OMHG* 113)

Thus Manjula is ready to sacrifice anything for her children. Motherhood is glorified in Indian culture and is respected and treasured. The second incident Murty narrates is totally opposite to the Manjula's, where the mother deserts her own blind daughter, Meera, who is brought up in an orphanage as her mother abandoned her. Meera is abandoned by her mother because Meera's blindness cannot be cured and due to poverty her mother cannot take the complete responsibility of a blind daughter thus she leaves her daughter at a bus stop at the mercy of strangers.

#### **4.2.2 iv Mother - Son Relationship:**

Murty narrates her experiences when she visits 'Kairo' with her son in "Nothing is Wrong with the Next Generation". She wants to know important things in the modern era; her son replies,

*"The most revolutions and ideas of the century, according to me, are the principal of non-violence, the effect of violence, and the impact of the communication media."*

(Murty, WO 119)

He explains his experiences and how these three have affected deeply the modern world. Murty agrees with him only in part as she thinks 'the computer is most important invention of the twentieth century.' But her son proves her wrong and explains how the communication technology has affected the business world as well as the world cultures today. It is evident that newer generation is always a step forward and the older generation has to cope up with them to have a healthy and harmonious relationship with them. Murty articulates,

*"I was surprised with my son, whom long ago I had taught how to hold a pencil. Now he was talking like an experienced adult about global subjects like peace, violence and communication. I am sure that many parents will often have same thoughts. They might have also experienced how their little ones have become wiser than themselves."*

(Murty, WO 120)

She is happy to know that her little son is getting wiser than her. She respects her son as he has better knowledge and thinking power than hers. It is a moment of pride for any mother that her son is becoming independent and has better knowledge and wisdom. She expresses,

*“My son wants to study abroad and I always wondered if this little boy of mine could manage alone. After this conversation with him, I realized that this young bird’s wings have become strong and healthy. The time has come for him to fly on his own and see the world.”*

(Murty, WO 120)

Murty also acknowledges his ability to stand on his own and a sense of independence. She expresses her feelings for her son who has grown wiser and is ready to take the challenges of the world and lead an independent life. She is happy that he has better thinking capabilities and abilities to live without her support.

#### **4.2.3 Relationship amongst Siblings:**

Every relation is deeply being affected by many factors such as modernization, globalization and industrialization. At least changes are seen overtly though the basic structure is not deeply affected. The cordial relationship amongst siblings is also evaporated with the changes in time. Murty precisely comments,

*“Industrialization has its own impact on human relations.”*

(Murty, WO 44)

She describes a terrible experience of Tara who is a prostitute. Her story is ‘heartbreaking’, full of agony and pain. On one *Narli Pournima* Day that is *Rakhi* Day-the celebration of pious relationship of brother and sister, Murty meets Tara. Tara gets angry and enraged when Murty addresses her as ‘Akka’ which means elder sister. Tara hates to be called Akka and warns Murty not to call her Akka as she is cheated and betrayed by her younger brother. She is orphan and has a brother and she used to work as coolie to look after him. Her brother has sold to an agent from the red light area and thus she has become a prostitute. Therefore, she warns Murty,

*“Teacher, don’t call me akka. I dislike that word. All these relationships, like brother and sister, exist in your world. None in mine. Don’t address me like that. You can call me Tara, Tarabai, but not Tara akka. In my world there is only one relationship, that of a man and a woman.”*

(Murty, WO 56)

But in “Salam Namaste”, Murty describes an ideal relationship between a sister and a brother, Sheikh and Zubeida. Zubeida is suffering from cancer and Sheikh Muhammad has a tiny stationery shop near the Infosys Foundation’s office. Murty used to buy books from him so he occasionally visits the Foundation’s office. Sheikh has a meagre income and Zubeida needs an operation so he sells all the ornaments of his wife and Zubeida. He could not manage the required money; but never asks Murty for help. When Murty asks the reason he gives a touching answer,

*“Madam, at least I can afford this much. You should be helping those who are poorer and cannot even afford this. They require your help than I do.”*

(Murty, *WO* 103)

Murty gives him fifty thousand rupees as a donation for the treatment. After some time, Sheikh appears with Zubeida’s daughter to convey the salaam of Zubeida who passed away; and also to return the remaining money. Sheikh is an example of sincere brother who not only has taken care of his sister in her acute illness but is also looking after her daughter when she has passed away. However, one can also come across a negative side of relationships. Murty quotes a general tendency in a narration “Dead Man’s Riddle”,

*“Often when there are two or more brothers in a family, they want to divide their parents’ property between them and get into arguments and court cases over this.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 78)

In a narrative, “Tale of Two Brothers” Murty narrates the story of two identical twins, Ram and Sham, her students; who eventually get married to two twins, thereason they tell Murty while inviting for their marriage ceremony,

*“Madam, when we decided to get married we deliberately looked around for twins, as we felt only another pair of twins would be able to understand us and our friendship completely.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 19)

From the time of their childhood Ram and Sham are inseparable. They are deeply attached with each other, so that they are inseparable at any cost.

*“Ram and Sham were happy in each other’s company and always stayed together in college, sharing homework, lab and class notes.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 18)

The two brothers have married two sisters. However, later the two brothers start quarrelling due to the property division. When Murty goes to their house to know the matter, the house is divided in odd manners. The most close twin brothers have become enemies because, “money is one thing which rarely unites and mostly divides people.” Their mother approaches Murty so that she can solve their family problems and make both the brothers to talk to each other. Murty advises them,

*“From the time you were conceived you have shared the same space. You shared your mother’s womb; you grew up together in this house, sharing your joys and sorrows. You married twins, so that they would understand your friendship better. You must understand that in life sometimes it is important to compromise and live in peace with loved ones.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 20)

Murty’s words don’t move them and they didn’t change their minds because they never want any adjustments for the sake of love and affection. The enmities remain constant between these two twin couples. Murty narrates another incident from her experiences which is totally opposite to the above incident. It is also a story of two brothers but they are not even blood relations, but still there is tremendous love and affection. Once she travels with her friend and his wife to a nearby village from Bangalore. Both of them take sweets and clothes as gifts for their brother, Hanuma. He considers Hanuma as his own brother and feels close to him as both of them shared the milk of same mother, Seetakka. She is a servant at his house and hanuma’s real mother. His mother dies when he is just a month’s old and Seetakka takes care of him as his own child. Murty’s motherless friend survives on the milk of Seetakka, Hanuma’s mother. Hanuma has a whole and soul right on his mother’s milk. Murty’s rich friend has not forgotten his benefactors; his life savers, he explains,

*“I always remember her and consider her to be a great woman. In fact, look upon her son Hanuma as my brother. I gave him the part share of the property even though my relatives opposed the idea as usual. For Seetakka was just a servant, but for me she was a large hearted, simple woman, whose love knew no bounds....We shared the love of the same mother, and that makes us brothers.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 22-23)

There is deep love and affection between them which remained unchanged even after when they grew older. This is total opposite to the relationship between two twins, Ram and Sham which grew in to hatred and enmity.

#### **4.2.4 Grand Parent – Grand Child Relationship:**

Murty's non-fiction writing is mostly compiled of her own experiences from childhood to being the president of Infosys Foundation. The readers come across mostly her real life incidents. She describes the people she met during the life's journey, people from her own family or from the society. In the 'Foreword' to *How I Taught My Grandmother to Read and Other Stories*, Murty gives credit of her writing to her grandfather who used to tell her the stories from the Indian mythology. She remembers,

*“My grandfather was a retired school teacher and an avid reader. He knew a vast number of Sanskrit texts by heart and every night, under the dark sky and twinkling stars, he would tell me many stories....These tales taught me some of my first lessons in life.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* ix)

Murty gives all the credit of her love towards the art of storytelling to her grandfather who used to create. With proper modulation of voice, he used to create an atmosphere of terror, surprise, humour or peace. In a narrative “Books for ‘At Least One Library” Murty describes her inspiration behind the donation of books to the government school libraries. Murty's grandfather used to recite the first line of a Kannada poem and young Murty used to complete it, this is their game as a pass time. Murty used to accompany him for an evening walk and also visit the village library. On one such evening he takes promise from his granddaughter,

*“I do not know how long I will live, but today I realized how much you love books from the way you completed the poem. Promise me, when you grow up, if you have more money than you need, you will buy books for at least one library.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 10)

Murty's grandfather doesn't ask anything for himself but inspires her to do some philanthropic work. His inspiration is a source of energy behind the immense philanthropic work she is doing today through the Infosys Foundation. In a narrative “How I Taught My Grandmother to Read” Murty narrates an unique relationship between her grandmother and herself, when she is a child. Murty used to call her

grandmother 'Avva' which means mother in Kannada, this shows the depth of their relationship.

One day, Avva starts crying in front of her young granddaughter which is very rare as Avva never cried in the most difficult situations. Avva is crying as she is illiterate and the sense of dependence is depressing her. Sudha used to read her a novel *Kashi Yatre*, weekly published in a magazine and when she goes away from Avva, Avva feels frustrated for not being able to read on her own. She explains little Sudha why has she remained illiterate due to the family responsibilities at a young age. Sudha wonders why an old lady is telling her life's story to a young girl of twelve in the middle of the night. Murty writes,

*"...I knew I loved her immensely...I looked at her face. It was unhappy and her eyes were filled with tears... Even today I cannot forget the worried expression on her face."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 3-4)

Murty promises her to teach to read and write Kannada. She starts teaching her grandmother soon. Avva is a hardworking student and she becomes Murty's first student. On the Dassara festival, grandmother gives her granddaughter a gift of a frock material as a tradition but Avva also does something unusual; Avva touches the feet of her young granddaughter as a mark of respect towards her little teacher. Young Murty also touches back her feet and gifts her a copy of the novel *Kashi Yatre*. Avva reads the title. Murty admits,

*"I knew then that my student had passed with flying colours."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 6)

Many of Murty's narratives as well as her non-fictional writings revolve around her relationship with her grandparents. Many incidents and many examples are evident in her writings that explain a very healthy and happy relationship between them. They are truly close to her and influence her thinking and her life in many ways. She mentions that behind her scheme in donating books for government school libraries in Karnataka is actually an inspiration from her remembrances of her grandfather's advice to donate books to library. Her inclination towards philanthropy is also an outcome of the influence of their simple philosophy of life.

### 4.3 Social Relationships:

The human being is born and lives in with human relationships first within the family and further outside the family circle. These relationships are unavoidable and at the same time, very essential for the human being for its existence as human being is a social animal. One has to interact with the friends, colleagues, acquaintances; though they are not obligatory relationships, an individual cannot have an absolute control over the choice of these social relationships.

There is a big web of social relationships and one could trace the interdependency of these social relationships. One starts from the family and then friends, teachers, colleagues, and there is a whole range of social relationships which cannot be defined in words. There are acquaintances which also come under these social relationships. One can look further into such chain of social dependencies, as one is born with these relationships and they are very essential for the existence and sustenance of an individual in the society; this also requires a continuous interaction.

Society is an extension of family, as in the older days a village is considered to be a family; there is, to a certain extent, a very intimate atmosphere in the villages in terms of relationships. The social as well as personal relationships are intermixed. This is possible to live in harmony with every human being, thus laying the foundation for an undivided human race, from family order to world family order. Whether it is in the neighbourhood or in the workplace, one cannot avoid the relationships as they are significant part of an individual's life. A social relationship is generally a relationship between an individual and the society, it is also between two individuals. Murty aptly mentions the importance of maintaining healthy relationship,

*“If you try to please everyone, you will please no one. It is impossible to lead your life for others' happiness. In any permanent relationship, it is wiser to put all your cards on the table, show how much you can change and how much you cannot.”*

(Murty, WO 138-39)

Murty gives a guru mantra for developing the healthy relationships within the society and within the family circles. Relationships between individual and society at large are the dominant and significant scene in her writings. Individual's relations to the variety of people he/she encounters: men, women, strangers, friends, neighbours, colleagues, employees and employers, etc. It is an understanding of the way in which people or things behave and react to each other in particular situations. She narrates

and gives a memorable impressions created by the overwhelming characters at the backdrop of traditional Indian culture and values. Social values guide an individual in the social relationships to make the choices. As Mills and Bullard rightly puts it,

*“As one internalizes the social values about what is right and a wrong, a personal guide or belief system is established by which one makes decisions. What is believed to be right and wrong, good or bad varies enormously from culture to culture and thus person to person.”*

(Mills and Bullard 168)

She encounters the enumerable persons as a student, friend, colleague, employee, employer, neighbour, and a philanthropist, they have a deep impact on her own personality and also the characters in her vast writing. She describes them in vivid details.

#### **4.3.1 Relationship amongst Friends:**

All the other relationships are bound as blood relations, however friendship is the only relationship where one goes beyond not only blood relations but caste, community, age, gender or colour. Murty in one of her narratives says,

*“I was born with relatives, but at least I can choose my friends!”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 91)

As Murty rightly puts that friends are always well chosen by a person as the friendship one cherishes is much more important in one’s life. Friends generate joy and happiness. Openness between the friends is very important, friends share a relationship of mutual fondness and affection. It is a bond between two or more people. The most important value a friend should cherish is mutual understanding. Friends are recognized by the understanding, compassion, kindness, consideration, empathy, honesty, understanding each other’s problems, trust, standing together during hard times, sharing emotions, etc. Selfless bonding amongst the friends proves to be important.

In a narration, “Freedom of Speech”, Murty speaks about her friend Alka; they have been together till they have finished their studies. So they share everything with each other, even they could speak harshly at times without hurting the other. Alka used to work as an HOD in a college, and Murty is just a lecturer. Once Murty visits her, Alka is very agitated due to her maid. When Murty laughs at Alka’s agitation due to Tulsi, her maid’s absence, Alka became upset and alleged,

*“You do not realize the responsibility I have been given in this seminar. You take things too easy. That is why you remained only a visiting professor.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 6)

Murty doesn't mind her remarks as Murty understands her agitation and anxiety to reach her college in time and if her maid doesn't turn up she has to carry all the household chores, she articulates,

*“I did not get upset at Alka's remarks. After all we had been a friend for a long, and had always been very frank with each other. And what she said was also the truth, which few other people could have said to me.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 6)

To be free and frank with each other as friends is considered good for healthy relationship. True friendship allows them to be free and frank with each other and also understand the other's problems. Later, Alka opens her mind to Murty and tells her agony regarding her husband's deceiving regarding the house she owned. She brings forth her helplessness; despite being an earning woman she is not capable of her own decisions. It underlines the openness between the two friends, Alka and Murty.

In a narrative “Horegallu”, Ratna acts as a confidant and a silent listener of the colleagues she works with. She becomes their good friend by patient listening and keeping their secrets and not revealing them to anyone. As Ratna thinks,

*“God has given me two ears to listen to others. I hear the out with sympathy and without judgment. When a person in trouble or under a lot of strain finds an outlet for his worries, it reveals his half burden.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 13)

Ratna becomes a true friend by sincerely listening to her colleagues' problems and tensions, and she doesn't betray anyone by telling away their secrets. She cannot gossip their worries. Thus, sincerity and trust are significant in friendship. Murty mentions her transparent friendship with Saroja who is a doctor and not satisfied with her life. On a way to airport Saroja offers Murty a lift. Murty describes their friendship,

*“Saroja and I have been friends for a long time now, though our ways of looking at life are completely different. However, we have always maintained a transparency in our views, which has kept the friendship alive. It also helps that Saroja is an open-minded person, and does not hesitate to tell me her opinions. Sometimes we get into the arguments, but talking frankly with one another helps to patch things up.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 78-79)

Murty describes important values to boost the friendship and that is the open mindedness, certainty and surety about each other. Murty describes a deep friendship of her two students Radha and Rohini whom Murty describes as ‘*inseparable friends*’ as they studied together from the first year of their school. Their friendship is rare. Murty describes them,

*“people would think they were sisters. There was such perfect understanding between them that they never felt the need to make other friends.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 87)

Radha and Rohini get married and are settled in two different cities, Radha in Delhi and Rohini in Bangalore. Both retain their friendship, though Rohini starts keeping distance with Radha afterwards; Radha is unaware of the reasons, she talks to Murty regarding this. Murty decides to speak to Rohini to know the reason and understand what the matter is. As Radha expresses,

*“I don’t know why but Rohini has changed a lot... I was so keen to come back to Bangalore because of her too. She was almost like a sister to me. And I know that was the way she felt about me as well.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 89)

Murty doesn’t want their true friendship to be perished for some trivial reasons. She talks to Rohini who makes clear that as Radha is richer and affluent than Rohini there isn’t any friendship between the two who are not at equal financial status. Friendship is above from any barriers of social status, including caste, community, language, age or gender and none can put barriers between friends. Murty gives her an example of ideal friendship between Lord Krishna and his poor friend Sudama, their financial status didn’t affect their friendship.

*“...in a true friendship the status does not matter. It is what you make of the situation.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 91)

Murty thus becomes successful in reviving their friendship and true friendship doesn't count the money and financial status of friends.

#### **4.3.2 Relationship amongst Colleagues:**

In a narrative “An Officegoer's Dilemma” Murty describes the relationship between the employees and their boss. Shanti is her student and she is working as a project head in a Software company with her own separate cabin and she is working as a boss of a very efficient team working under her. Though outwardly it appears that she has a perfect job with a handsome salary, flexible timings for work, and she is an efficient programmer who always completed her projects within the given deadline. However, she is not happy with her present job as she has a bad boss; who is never satisfied with the Shanti's work. She used to harass Shanti in every way she could.

The tendency of her boss has turned a cheerful Shanti into an unhappy and sad person. Though she has a good job she felt like quitting it. She is satisfied with the company, her team members, but because of one person her life turns into the hell, though she is a hard worker, competent and well-organized. When Murty meets Shanti afterwards, there she finds a total change and is again in her original self, happy and cheerful. Murty happily listens to her,

*“My new boss is fantastic. Now I really look forward to going to office. If we ever have a disagreement he immediately talks to me and clears the issue.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 34)

The new boss's friendliness and understanding nature help to make the atmosphere more cheerful and welcoming. His motivation plays a key role in augmentation of the work output and everyone works more efficiently, which results in the better performance of the employees. She is very much in praise of her boss that she says even though he insisted her to work from home during her pregnancy she keeps going to the office till the day before she delivers her baby.

The healthy relationship between the employer and the employees always brings the best output. Shanti regains her energy and happiness due to the positive attitude of her new boss. Shanti concludes,

*“Because of our new boss each person is happy working there and feels proud to be part of the team.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 34)

#### **4.3.3 Teacher- Student (Guru- Shishya) Relationship:**

Respecting the Guru (teacher) is the prime duty of Indians, it is either a teacher in the school or colleges and in other professional situations or the spiritual Guru. There is a great tradition of *Guru* and *shishya* which is generally known as *Guru- Shishya Parampara* in Indian culture.

The *Guru* plays an important role in shaping the *Shishya*'s character and the personality in total. Therefore the *Guru* is placed above the God, a true *Guru* is considered as a divine gift to an individual influencing the whole life of his/her *shishya*; *Guru*'s teachings and blessings help his/her *shishya* to lead a right path in life. Murty's grandfather is a retired teacher. She describes him, *“He always held a book in his hand. In the evening people would come to him for his advice. Even the richest man, when passing by, would greet him respectfully.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 7)

She always accompanies him and feels frank to ask him questions. She asks him once, why a teacher is so much respected? Her grandfather tells her a story of Arjuna and Drona from Mahabharata and then explains her that traditionally in India *Guru* (teacher) is considered as equal to God. Young Murty comes to know about the richness of a *Guru* (Teacher). She states,

*“A teacher gives knowledge to students and I consider him the richest person. That is the reason a teacher is respected; not for his riches but because he is the source of knowledge.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 8)

#### **4.3.3 i Sudha Murty's Relationship with her Teachers:**

As Murty belongs to a family of teachers, she understands the life of teachers very well. Her grandfather is a teacher, her father is a professor, and her father-in-law is also a teacher; thus, she has a firsthand experience of teacher's life as she herself used to work as a professor of Computer Science. There are many anecdotes describing incidents about Murty's students. Murty is very much popular among her students. While talking about her school teacher Murty proclaims,

*“It is true that school teachers, more than college teachers, build your fundamentals. It is easy to teach at graduate and post graduate levels, but difficult to do so at the school level. (As) Teachers –good ones at least- must have an enormous amount of love for their students. Knowledge is not the only criterion to judge a teacher. ”*

(Murty, WO 113)

Murty’s teacher Raghavendra Vernekar is an ideal Indian teacher, who is totally dedicate to the betterment of his students by imparting knowledge and making them absorb the human values. His life itself is an embodiment of these values. He does not believe in the accumulation of wealth through teaching. For him, teaching is not just a job but it is his duty. Murty underlines the intimate and close relationship between a teacher and a student from the very beginning of schooling. She accepts that her teacher contributed a lot in building her personality, she owes him much. She describes him,

*“My teacher Raghvendra Vernekar, was an extraordinary man in every sense of the word. He was from my home town; Hubli. He lived a very humble life and did not receive any recognition or awards. He excelled in his profession even though he was not a graduate. He taught mathematics so well that whenever felt it was a difficult subject.”*

(Murty, WO 114)

Murty thoroughly respects him with a deep reverence; even after being a successful and a well known personality she is humble towards him, because he is a man of principles and convictions that no difficulties could change him. Murty describes his greatness in the following words,

*“Had he been in a bigger city and working in a bigger school, he would have made money by taking tuitions or by starting a school himself. He did not do that. He believed in his principle and his life was an example of it”.*

(Murty, WO 115)

Vernekar Sir’s life is based on traditional Indian values underlining the importance of selfless service of a teacher; who does not run after the materialistic gains of his knowledge of mathematics. He spends whole of his life teaching in a small town and contributing in the betterment of his children by teaching a difficult

subject in a simple way. Murty is humble toward her maths teacher Vernekar sir; she expresses her deep feelings for her guru:

*“He reminds me of a burning candle- giving light to everybody while burning itself out.”*

(Murty, WO 115)

Murty owes him a great extent; she knows that her great personality is indebted to the teachings of her teacher. She is fascinated by his personality, simple living and complete dedication towards his profession and his students whom he treats as his own children and always thinks about their betterment. He used to make the difficult subject very easy to understand make the learning experience a fun. It is not just a give and take relationship but the bond is at deeper levels when she admits,

*“Today, when I stand on a dais and speak confidently or face any kind of difficulty in life, I think of my teacher. He taught me this lesson, which no amount of money can dilute and no university can grant.”*

(Murty, WO 115)

Today, when Murty has successfully built her career as Computer Science teacher, she still considers herself very humble before her teacher. She admits that even today he can pat on her back as if she is still a child and can ask her not to waste time in shopping and concentrate on her office work. He can advice her, in fact, command her,

*“...why are you wasting your time on MG road? Go back to office or work at home. Don't teach without preparation.”*

(Murty, WO 114)

Sudha Murty mentions an incident which underlines Vernekar sir's self-respect. Murty says his life itself is an ideal example and embodiment of traditional Indian values imparted by a Guru. Even in financial difficulties he doesn't accept her gift. She quotes his life's philosophy,

*“The duty of a teacher is to make a student confident to face life. Life poses unknown examinations. The greatest joy to a teacher is to produce students better than him. I have done my duty very well. My students are so famous today that it gives me great joy and pride to be recognised as their teacher. ”*

(Murty, WO 115)

Therefore, every single word of Murty is full of respect towards her childhood teacher as he has left a deep impact on her personality. She remembers his teachings even today, as now she is established as a chairperson of Infosys foundation, and a successful professor in a difficult subject like Computer Science. Murty appreciates many of her teachers like Gauramma, her Sanskrit teacher and her many other teachers about whom she writes in some of the narratives, those are the happy remembrances.

Murty as a person is shaped by her teachers. To show how a deeper bond could be developed between a teacher and a student, Murty narrates a very subtle and keen relationship between her and her school teacher Gowamma. She is a childless woman and therefore, she is always insulted in school, at home and in the society. Even her husband left her and married another woman to have children. But she is kind and warm, beautiful and always cheerful. Murty writes,

*“She used to teach us Sanskrit. She was a great teacher and would tell lots of stories in the class. Students usually took Sanskrit as an optional language, in order to score marks like Maths. They were not interested in the story. They only wanted to get good grades and were not interested in Gowamma’s old epics. As soon as the class was over, students used to run to escape from her elaborate stories, so I would sit with her for hours.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 98)

Gauramma is her Sanskrit teacher and a great story teller. She used to tell stories from ‘Kathasaritsagar’ of Indian Mythology, of Rama, Krishna, Hanumana, etc. she is so good in the art of storytelling she leaves a deep impression on young Murty’s imagination.

When Murty becomes a successful woman with name and fame as the Chairperson of Infosys Foundation, she often used to deliver lectures in schools and colleges taking a chance to interact with the young students. On one such occasion, a bright girl asks her a question regarding her life and how she tackles the problematic situations. Murty, instead of answering straightly, narrates an incident from lord Hanumana’s life. By using this anecdote, she answers the question and every one applauded but Murty humbly gives the credit to the art of storytelling of Gowamma.

#### 4.3.3 ii Sudha Murty's Relationship with her Students:

There are various incidents in Murty's narratives the students discuss their personal issues with Murty. In a narrative, "My Money, Your Money", Murty talks about a couple Ashok and Anitha, both husband and wife are her students. They both discuss their personal problems with Murty. They also share their views on their married life and the life partners. Murty has all the details of their life, she becomes their confidant. They could confide in them without any kind of doubt. She is well aware of their problems and also gives them the right advice and serves as their best friend and a counselor. Thus, she tries to settle their issues. It shows that Murty shares a deeper and closer relationship with her students. She admits,

*"I always feel that I am young at heart, irrespective of my age. The reason is that I am a teacher, so I mix with the younger generation. Their energy is contagious. They share their secrets with me. They are my inspiration... No wonder old wine, old memories and old students are so precious and rare."*

(Murty, WO 204)

In a narrative "Hassan's Attendance Problem", she throws light on another aspect of a teacher student relationship. It is generally considered that a teacher is for the well being and the upliftment of the students. A teacher always wants the betterment, growth and development of his/her students, and tries the best to see the students successful in their lives. While doing so, sometimes the teacher overlooks the rules and makes his/her student stand in life.

Murty narrates one such experience as a teacher. She speaks about her bright student Hassan from the first batch, who is good in studies but poor in the attendance. He is undisciplined, which is totally against the characteristic of being a student. However, he somehow manages to pass his engineering examinations in flying colours. She admits,

*"I could not remain angry for long. Teachers do get upset with the students who are not regular, but if the attendance shortage affects their appearance in the final examination then one tends to melt like snow against the sun. A teacher will always wish for the best for her students, though I do agree discipline is very important too."*

(Murty, TMGR 20)

Hassan has never taken his life seriously, therefore, Murty tries to interact with his parents to know more about Hassan and solve his problems, if there are any. It is Hassan's own conception of study and education which is wrong; therefore, nobody can correct it but himself.

Murty tries her best to correct him, and make him understand his responsibilities, liabilities and duties as a student, but in vain. After a few years' gap, Hassan meet Murty again in her office of Infosys foundation. Murty observes a young, handsome, and bright Hassan has been converted into

*'a man of about thirty-five years, plump with a bald head and moderately dressed'*

(Murty, *TMGR* 22)

He is selling CDs of software useful in teaching Maths, Physics, and Chemistry. He is having a small job of selling high school software door to door. It is definitely because of his laziness and undisciplined, irregular lifestyle. Although he is in such condition for no fault of others but himself Murty advises him still considering herself as his teacher and she still thinks her duty to inspire him and motivate him. Though Hassan meets her after so many years' gap still Murty is his teacher. The bond of teacher-student in India could not be merely on professional levels, but it is deeper and the teachers' opinion and advice is always revered, respected and followed. Teacher's simple words can change his/her students' entire life. Murty advises him,

*"There is nothing which is impossible. You only require willpower. You are yourself unaware of all your potential. Please remember when elders say something that is because they want you to lead a better life than them. Excellence does not come by accident but by practice."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 24-25)

Hassan's lesson is also an example of the modern attitude towards education and students' lack of respect towards the great Indian tradition of '*Guru-Shishya Parampara*'. In the narrative, "A History Lesson on Teachers' Day", Murty speaks about the ignorance and carelessness of today's students. She regrets that they have little or less knowledge of their own tradition and heritage.

On one particular teachers' day, Murty is out of Bangalore and she feels depressed as she is not with her own students. Therefore, her friend takes her to a

nearby theatre to watch movie. There she finds a huge crowd of young students in the queue. When she asks them questions regarding the significance of teachers' day, they don't have any interest or any knowledge of the teacher's day. One girl's comment shows the deterioration in the respect towards teachers in the modern times. She says'

*"Our school may be celebrating Teachers' Day but we don't want to go. We see the same teachers every day. Why see them even on the holiday?"*

(Murty, *TMGR* 38)

The bond between the teacher and the student is getting weaker; the relationship between them is merely on the professional level and no more on the personal level in the modern times. One could trace the corrosion in the traditional *Guru-Shishya* relationship. Murty accepts that it is not the total fault of the students, as they do not get the proper guidance. It also becomes the responsibility of a teacher to build a healthy relationship between them and the students based on trust, respect and mutual understanding. She also suggests that instead of giving holidays on such important days, the students should be oriented and motivated.

#### **4.4 Summary:**

Trust, respect for each other, mutual understanding, etc. are the integral values which provide a foundation to the healthy human relationship solidify the mutual understanding between the individuals. If these values are lacking in any relationship, it leads to the attenuation and decrease in the health of any relationship. The solidification of these values in relationships helps to increase the happiness. The mutual fulfillment of these values satisfaction and happiness. The disbelief and mistrust in any relationship brings a sense of sadness and discontent. The frankness and openness makes the relationship harmonious.

Most of the writings of Murty evolve around family relationships, especially those which exist between husband-wife, daughter father and mother-daughter, and grand children- grandparents, etc. As one knows everybody has to live within relationships. No one can live in a vacuum. It is essential for everyone to live within relationships. However, to live a happy and healthy life these relationships must be based on the positive human values viz. respect, trust, justice, mutual understanding, love, and compassion. Definitely 'family' is the ultimate centre of all human

activities, which is also reflected in the literature. Most of the writings of Murty has central theme of the family relationships as well as the social relationships.

Sometimes a stranger could touch the deeper cord of the human heart and could show the spark of humanity; such examples are abundant in Sudha Murty's writings, especially when she describes her experiences regarding her philanthropic works and while she is travelling. Denying the existence of these relationships only increase the problems resulting in the contradictions and conflicts. The healthy relations cannot be developed thoroughly if it is based on mere fulfillment of physical needs. The evaluations of the human relationships in terms of materialistic values mar the positive growth of the humanity in total. Material things like money and prosperity, etc. reduce the human relationships to the fulfillment of physical and material level.

Within the basic study of human values as a free and open society, human relationship seeks to enable the individual, groups, and communities in achieving highest possible degree of social, mental and physical well being. Therefore, the human relationship is basically concerned with living a healthy life and the betterment of the humanity in total. Reconciling the positivities of the human beings through basic values, avoiding the clashes in the value orientations of an individual and making the life worth living is the motive of human relationships.

Murty's writing is a protest against inhuman treatments and the dehumanization of the individuals. Her writing is a commentary on the state and condition of the present day social relationships and the degradation prevailing in it today's scenario which also has a universal appeal. The oppressions, the dominance due to the racial and gender discriminations; and all the other kinds of discriminations prevalent in the society today based on caste, colour, community, education or financial statues, etc. can be answered through the emphasis on the positive human values providing an insight to the society at large. What really important about the writings of Murty is that her writings hold a universal appeal that clearly emanates from her rootedness in age old traditional Indian values, it underlines her belongingness to the Indian society and the environment holding up a mirror to our own culture and the society.

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## 5.1 Introduction:

General it is said that Experience provides Wisdom. Human beings become wiser and wiser as much as he/she gains experiences. The human beings at birth are experience less and do not have any sort of experiences, on the other hand when he/she grows gains them. Wisdom is seeing and understanding life as a whole.

*“With age human beings gain lots of experiences to share and wisdom to pass on. They are the building blocks who stand in the middle of past and future. Hence it is really important to utilize and respect such an immense source of knowledge.”*

(Kleinman 358)

The lessons one encounters as one travels the path of life, help to grow wiser as one gets mature. Eventually, the wisdom becomes the most trusted, dependable and reliable source of guidance in life. Panikkar aptly states,

*“Experience means allowing something to directly affect and penetrate me. It means absorbing it so I can identify with what I have come to understand.”*

(Panikkar 45)

Literature is the collection of these experiences of the author. When one shares the wisdom, it becomes a touchstone and provides inspiration, guidance and teachable moments for the other fellow beings; the same experiences are encountered by others. Panikkar’s views could be aptly applied to the literature as a store of wisdom and experiences; he says,

*“Only what has been experienced can be interpreted; only then can one understand it. Only what has penetrated me and then springs out of me in a spontaneous fashion, has life, power and authority.”*

(Panikkar 45)

The author mainly tries to interpret his/her experiences into the writing and the reflections in the literature prove to be the wisdom for the readers. As most of the time is spent in thinking about the future tasks, events, and how one will move forward in life. One rarely reflects on the experiences one encountered in one’s lifetime. This task is generally done by a author as one’s own experiences provide the raw material to the writing. Life’s ups and downs, wins and losses, heartaches and celebrations provide a captivating and honest reflection of what has shaped one’s life, beliefs and decisions so far. While each individual’s life experiences are so different

and variant; no two lives are the same. By sharing these varied and myriad life experiences help one to learn about the life itself with different perspectives; it also help to grow as a human being.

Indian literature has a great heritage of wisdom literature. Learning from important and meaningful life experiences can foster wisdom. Learning acquired through experiences encourage wisdom which is defined as a real life experiences encompassing the core components. Wisdom has a deep relationship with the experience. Lessons are also learnt through the mistakes making an individual to understand life in a different way. Panikkar truly states that,

*“...by means of experience and observation, each person gains understanding...”*

(Panikkar 47)

Experience is the best teacher making an individual to grow as a human being. Life imparts knowledge and wisdom through life’s experiences. The choice of right and wrong comes through the life’s lessons learnt through real life experiences and the practice of positive human values enriches the life. Human being’s life is a continuous journey of self discovery and experiences.

Wisdom is the ability to utilise the experiences enhancing the functional set of guidelines to live life with convictions and values. This has an ability to look into certain standard errors in judgement, like experience bias, personal perspective which helps to absorb life experiences making one understands effectively. Panikkar in the preface to his book *Dwelling Place for Wisdom* defines wisdom in following words:

*“Wisdom is the art of life. This could be a simple description of a basic human experience, expressed by people from almost all cultures in various ways and called by different names. Wisdom is a ‘savoir vivre’, whereby ‘savoir’ does not mean knowledge about life, but simply intellectual experience of life.”*

(Panikkar i)

Wisdom also comes from strong intellectual principles and human values. Enriching the circles of experiences take one beyond the levels of mere gathering knowledge, it leaves the individual richer in the perspectives. One also learns from others’ experiences. It also leads to the finding answers to the questions of life. If one gathers more experiences of life, it means one has a capability of finding answers to

the human problems. The author under study, Sudha Murty, articulates how her simple experiences have turned into the wisdom for life time. She elucidates,

*“I have learnt many lessons in life ever since we started helping people monetarily through the Infosys Foundation. I have seen women hiding their diamond studs in their purses and asking for funds for the poor. I have seen well-off parents declaring their children orphans and applying for scholarships. I even know some men who presented their parents destitute so they could get help from me.”*

(Murty, WO 102)

These experiences have helped Murty to grow wiser and take the decisions based on these experiences. Negative experiences also help an individual to grow wiser and give direction to take decisions accordingly. One such negative experience is mentioned by Murty in her narrative ‘Insensitivity Index’ very high in high class society as they do not show any sympathy towards the Bhuj earthquake victims, they are reluctant to donate a paisa to relief fund instead they are discussing about the lavish preparations of a wedding ceremony. The lady says,

*“We all love Gujrati sweets, but our cook has gone to Gujrat. He has lost his family. I wouldn’t want him to come to the wedding because it is inauspicious.”*

(Murty, WO 111)

Murty is insensitive towards her cook, who has lost everything and worried about the preparation of Gujrati sweets. Here Murty remembers Buddha, who left all the luxuries for the betterment of the mankind and wished to learn the sensibility towards others’ sorrows. No one can become like Buddha but at least could learn a little part from him. The Infosys Foundation has been playing a vital role in helping the destitute in and around India. Murty mentions her experiences as the Chairperson of the Foundation,

*“If somebody honours me with a shawl, there is usually an application that comes with it. If a person praises me, most of the time there is a request at the end. I have decided to help only people who do not have anything, people who may perish without support. These are my people. They are my relatives. I work for them, regardless of their caste, community, gender, language or political*

*affiliation, provided that we have funds. I don't expect anything from them, not even a bouquet of flowers. The happiness in their eye is the real award."*

(Murty, WO 117)

This is the golden lesson Murty has learnt during her work as a philanthropist. It is generally said that experience is the mother of wisdom that means the more that happens to one the more one will learn. Learning could also be taken through the mistakes. Alfred Sheinwold rightly puts,

*"Learn all you can from the mistakes of others. You won't have time to make them all yourself."*

(Sheinwold 97)

Experience is gained through what an individual does, also experience come with the age. Murty rightly inscribe it,

*"Life is a great teacher. I learnt everything by experience. By learning something from each of my mistakes, I learnt not to repeat them."*

(Murty, WO 81)

Therefore, human beings have unique feature to learn from their mistakes and others' as well. Wisdom is gained through the life experiences, it is remarkable that the literature one comes across, the books one reads also help to enhance the level of experiences. Gaining wisdom is one's life's aim; however experiences always take some examinations first and then help to learn lessons. Every experience is an addition with the wisdom.

It is generally said that, Good judgement comes from experience, and often experience comes from bad judgements. As one grows with age he/she becomes wise. Oscar Wilde rightly comments,

*"Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes."*

(Wilde 373)

Experience is what causes a person to make new mistakes instead of repeating the old ones, because in youth one learns; and at the old age one understands the life experiences. There is only one painful thing more painful than learning from experiences and that is not learning from the experiences. Mckee and Barber rightly explain,

*“Wisdom is ‘not exclusively cognitive but involving a broader experience.’”*

(McKee and Barber 151)

Thus there is a concord between wisdom and experiences, they go hand in hand. Experiences whether individual's or other person's, it enhances the wisdom to better the human life as well as society. Therefore, ignoring the valuable lessons taught by the experiences result in deride of wisdom. Wisdom imparts righteousness, dedication, and deliverance. Wisdom makes a human being pure, peaceful, gentle, open minded, open to reason and full of mercy, impartial and sincere. Wisdom is advantage of knowledge; wisdom preserves the life of the one who cherishes it. The one who follows his/her wisdom has good understanding capabilities; and it enriches the human life and ultimately the culture and civilization.

Wisdom is presented with humility, humbleness and modesty, and it is a unique cause of deep understanding. Experiences provide us good judgments, it consists in perceiving. Knowledge and experiences help to get better decisions providing a depth of knowledge and understanding. Individual's life events make one wise providing a rich complement to the societal wisdom at large.

The lessons one encounters while travelling through life, invite to grow wiser as one matures. Ultimately, the wisdom becomes most trusted source of knowledge; which guides to live life wisely. And when one shares his/her wisdom it becomes a touchstone providing inspiration, guidance and teachable moments for the other fellow human beings as they may encounter the same situations with similar experiences along with their life's journey.

Wisdom is more abstract; in that it seems to be insight that is gained from a collection of knowledge. Wisdom is not what is wise, but that by which it is wise; not what should be done, not the answer, but the explanation. Wisdom is the gaining of those insights; thus experiential knowledge affects the action of the individual and also one's value preferences in daily life. Murty remarks how she has got these insights through the experiences of the common man. She states,

*“Having come to study the destitute in the area, I sat separately, talking to people. There were fruit sellers, bangle sellers and other vendors. I learned a lot from these people on the street. They had faced the harsh realities of caste, money, politics, old beliefs and*

*much more. Their opinions and suggestions at times educated me better than any Ph. D. thesis or seminar on poverty.”*

(Murty, WO 124)

Intelligent person gains wisdom from one's experiences and a wise person gains it through the experiences of others. It also helps to make sense and be reasonable with the happenings and the other fellow human beings. A. N. Tripathi defines a wise person,

*“Wise persons are able to solve ill-defined and even thorny problems because of their acumen and values.”*

(Tripathi 223)

Murty's writing contains such wisdom in her non-fiction, fiction as well as in her writing for children. Therefore, wisdom in simple words is understanding life in a better way; and also putting this understanding into practice. It helps to make difference in one's own life as well as in the life of others and to recapture the life.

The newer experiences enrich the individual's understanding of life and make him/her wiser. It is said that great wisdom comes from the people who have worst experiences. These worst experiences are storehouse of knowledge and wisdom, Panikkar exactly puts this in following words,

*“Experience as a path to understanding, as identification with what has been understood, is a sacramental intertwining of the person with the things one understands. This way we grow, mature and live.”*

(Panikkar 46)

One grows, matures and gets wiser with the versatile and complex experiences. One cannot have hold on one's life experiences or the power to make the things right. Simply the road to wisdom is to err, and gather various kinds of experiences. Life itself is a trial to know whether one has learnt through the experiences or not. The world itself is a school, one has to learn on one's own.

No other person has a capability to learn from the experiences of others; through the life's experiences which is a mixture of positivity and negativity lead to the birth of a wise person. Wisdom cannot be gained or accumulated, but shows itself to the individual the path of right and wrong, and becomes a true cause behind deeper understanding.

Wisdom is gained by broadening one's understanding from the references and acting from a broad view of potential consequences. Human beings are born in the innocence of ignorance. The object of life is to progress to the innocence of wisdom. Innocence is the willingness of to be led by others' wisdom which consists in perceiving, willing and doing on one's own; and evolving the good that comes out of truth. It also brings the familiarity. Murty helps her readers of all ages by discovering and sharing her wisdom and experiences through her life experiences to appreciate life in a better way.

Murty has immense respect for the wisdom of the elders which is evident in her writing. Her story "Dead Man's Riddle" reveals it in detail. Murty has aptly portrayed the role of the elders and their valuable suggestions to live a happy and content life in simple words. Som Gowda advises,

*"...Experience is the best teacher in life. Elders have seen many ups and downs in their lives and interacted with many people. During the process they have acquired knowledge which can't be taught in a school or college. It has to be learnt over a period of time. Now it is left to you people to make the decision."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 81)

Sudha Murty uncovers and shares the nuggets of wisdom. Most of Sudha Murty's writing contains the experiences she has gone through as a daughter, granddaughter, mother, sister, wife, and teacher and a philanthropist. Sudha Murty admits many a times that she has grown as a person due to Infosys Foundation. Her three works under study viz. *Wise and Otherwise*, *The Old Man and His God*, *How I Taught My Grandmother to Read and Other Stories* are the collection of her life experiences. She develops the all-inclusive perspective of gaining wisdom. Experiences provide a base to all ideas; Arthur Kleinman rightly puts in the following words what experience is:

*"Experience I will define, following many others, as the felt flow of interpersonal communication and engagements. Those lived engagements take place in a local world. Experience is thoroughly intersubjective. It involves practices, negotiations, contestations among others with whom we are connected. It is a medium in which collective and subjective processes interfuse."*

(Kleinman 358)

Wisdom comes from experiences: good or bad, one gains in lifetime. Wisdom is the knowledge based on life experiences which is gradually acquired in the lifetime. These experiences become the source of knowledge and wisdom. Thus, Experience alone can translate Wisdom and it becomes important to understand it in the light of Murty's non-fiction writing. Dr Devapurkar in her book on children's literature states the importance of stories to inflict the human values in children; she notes down

*"Stories give information and also teach values of life. They are full of wisdom and prepare a child for the world and also teach how to sustain one's self in the midst of oddities of life."*

(Devapurkar 83)

Murty's writing exemplifies this to the verbatim; her stories are full of wisdom and values; it helps to unlock the age old Indian traditional wisdom. Since all-inclusive compassion is the primary response of non-dual wisdom to the world, to train in such compassion before we have directly realized that wisdom is to harmonize the mind. Murty is right when she says in one of her narratives in *How I Taught My Grandmother to Read and Other Stories*,

*"Experience has taught me many things in life."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 81)

*Wise and Otherwise* is a collection of around fifty-one real life stories from the life of Sudha Murty which she narrates in simple and straight language touching the hearts of the readers and encouraging them to evaluate their inner selves, and the world around. They open the eyes of the readers as they are the storehouse of wisdom. Gautamananda's definition of wisdom is aptly describes the writing of Murty, he explains,

*"Wisdom is to know what is permanent and what is not and to reject the latter."*

(Gautamananda 93)

While depicting her experiences Murty reveals the realities of Indian value system. She also admits that her personal experiences, her encounters with the common people; provide her extraordinary understanding and wisdom. T. J. S. George in his preface to the *Wise and Otherwise* puts it in the following words:

*"An accomplished storyteller in Kannada, Sudha wrote for the first time in English to inaugurate fortnightly column in New Sunday Express. She focused on her personal experiences, her travels and*

*her encounters with ordinary people with extraordinary minds. The column attracted instant attention because of its freshness and its directness. Evidently, she was not writing with her pen but with her heart. Anecdotal insights into human nature merited a format more enduring than journalism could provide.”*

(George xi-xii)

The age old traditional Indian culture is a rich source of wisdom which helps to live a better and balanced life helping to achieve the long term goals. It also leads to the happy and satisfied life and encourage an individual to enjoy the good as well as the bad experiences and understand the life in a better way. This makes the human life more meaningful. Murty shares her experiences with her readers providing an opportunity to choose well from bad and understand life. Her writing also provokes the readers to change one in order to develop the awareness towards the social issues through the philanthropic experiences.

The family system in India has had a long tradition of imparting value education. With the presence of so many worldly-wise elders, it is but natural for the younger generation to receive shelter and expand adequate knowledge for the survival in the world. In her narrative, “May You Be The Mother of Hundred Children”, Murty talks about her grandmother Amba Bai who is affectionately called as Ambakka Aai by everyone in the village, Savlgi. She is an illiterate, traditional and orthodox Brahmin in a way.

Though she is an illiterate widow, experience has made her wiser, that whole village respects her. Her whole world limited is to her large family of ten children and forty grand children, the village, and the large field and farms they owned. She manages the large fields, cows, horses, buffaloes; she is hard working, and never wastes her time. She always helps the villagers not thinking about their caste or community. She speaks a universal truth about the condition of women even in modern era; these words come out of her experiences:

*“Any woman can do a man’s job but a man cannot do a woman’s job. After your Ajja’s death, am I not looking after the entire farming? Akkawwa, always remember women have more patience and common sense. If only men realized that...”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 126)

Ambakka Aai feels happy and proud about helping others in their difficulties especially the woman during their pregnancy and at the time of delivery of a baby. If anyone objects her being illiterate and getting the deliveries without medical assistance, she laughs and tells them,

*“My four decades of experience is better than any book.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 125)

Ambakka Aai is widowed earlier still she singlehandedly manages the large estate; and also helps the villager, has earned their respect and lot of affection. Being widowed early she has suffered a lot, and experienced the pain mostly because of social customs in her early life, but still she is satisfied and contented.

Wisdom and not mere information or knowledge is the ultimate goal of any human being. Wisdom helps us to understand the perpetual truth, helps us to grow. Wisdom provides a vision to accept what is permanent. Wisdom could be possibly gained by following the lessons from experiences. Mostly, one wishes to know more about other’s life experiences– what they cared about, what struggles they overcame, why they made certain decisions, what they intended with their gifts of inheritance, how they wished to be remembered, how they found their way in difficulties; this helps to learn from their decisions.

Murty’s autobiographical accounts of wisdom, as they are demonstration of complex life experiences, engross more than simply the cognitive area of wisdom. These involve actions, emotions, decisions, cognitions, relations, value choices and preferences and motivations; these are integral parts of her narratives. Wisdom is also to be cultivated by following the path of others’ experiences. A reverence to the learning from others’ experiences is also to be given importance as individual cannot have experience of each and everything on the earth, therefore others’ experience also leads to the wisdom. Murty rightly pin-points,

*“Experience is the best teacher in life. Elders have seen many ups and downs in their lives and interacted with many people. During the process they have acquired knowledge which can’t be taught in a school or college. It has to be learnt over a period of time.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 81)

Literature is full of variety of experiences, so it is easy for one to understand life from the experiences of the author. Thus, life leading to peace and harmony is a sweet fruit of the tree of wisdom nurtured by the experiences, first hand experiences

of the individual or gained from others' experiences, which strengthens the liberal attitude towards life.

Stories are profound with Murty's straightforward, flowy and simple narration. These are the recollection of specific life experiences of justice, helping, caring and sharing, togetherness, courage, honesty, humility, hard work, struggle, and joy that goes straight to the hearts of the readers providing a lasting sense of generational connection and gratitude towards traditional Indian culture and values. These stories are also the bunch of selfish, meek, careless, self-centred people Murty comes across and has enriched Murty with different experiences and making her as well as the readers worldly wise. In "Doing What You Like is Freedom" Murty gives words of wisdom,

*"Freedom to choose your own life; freedom to pursue your own interest; freedom to enjoy your own likes, provided they are not harmful to you and society."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 97)

On a train journey from Bangalore to Belgaum she meets two students Puneet and Sharad. Puneet is over protected by his parents and Sharad is confident and independent. Sharad knows true meaning of freedom by his own experiences. Murty underlines the wisdom gained through the experiences of ages by a simple tribal man living in the deep forest of Kalahandi district in Orissa. "Old Man's Ageless Wisdom" is the gist of the wisdom of all the sages and saints of ancient India stated in very simple and a very straight yet humble way. He depicts the value of Aparigraha and Asteya; the values taught in scriptures and other religious documents held in high esteem.

This old man does not have any knowledge of current happenings in the world; he is away from the digital revolution and high speed communication technology. This might seem his ignorance and illiterate state and could be labelled as a backward person in this modern era of development where owning properties, money and gold is considered as a mark of higher status. His ignorance is to an extent that he didn't know that India got independence from Goriwali Rani almost sixty years before.

However, he astonishes Murty by providing the *ageless wisdom* which she might not have expected from such ignorant tribal old man. When she shows him an

Indian currency note, he doesn't show any anxiety or eagerness to possess it, in fact, he calls it just a *piece of paper*. And expresses,

*“For this paper, people fight, go away from our ancestral land, leave our forest and go to cities.”*

(Murty, WO 30)

He further adds that their life is complete and fulfilled without having such *piece of paper*, he says,

*“Have we not led a complete life without that piece of paper? Our ancestors did.”*

(Murty, WO 30)

According to the old man, they have lived from ages without money or any materialistic comforts and luxuries but still they have complete satisfaction of life, he further reflects,

*“We are children of God, settled here happily without this paper. This is God's land. Nobody owns this land. No river is created by us. No mountain is made by us. The wind does not listen to us. The rain does not ask our permission. These are gifts of God. How we can sell or buy land, I do not understand. When nothing is yours, then how can you make such transactions? This little paper of yours can turn our lives upside down.”*

(Murty, WO 30)

This *ageless wisdom* leaves Murty speechless, because until that moment she is assured that she knows more about *currency movements, political parties, about the difference between Bill Gates and Bill Clinton* than this old tribal man; however she is proved wrong. What he further says is the gist of Indian philosophy. Murty writes,

*“...he was aware of deeper, more eternal truths. He knew that nobody owned the land, the mountains or the wind.”*

(Murty, WO 30)

Murty finds the most deserving people live a simple and humble life. She has sustained her basic ideology implying love for humanity through the encounter with such true wise people. Murty mentions many such experiences which she encounters during her life's journey and leave her wiser and the life richer. She has put her lifetime experiences in her narratives. She locates this age old wisdom in the realm of common day to day life's activities and amongst the common people teaching her the

way of life leading to happiness and satisfaction. The life of these common people has the potential magnanimity giving a more mature thought towards life.

Murty narrates her experiences to convey the rich culture and heritage of India; to show *the myriad shades of human nature*, an introspection of humanity at large. Her writing is not the propaganda of her philanthropy but the real experiences and what she learns while going through them as a human being, as a woman, teacher, philanthropist, mother, daughter, granddaughter, wife and a part of society. This could be helpful to the readers to enhance their understanding of life. These are minute weaving of fabric of daily experiences to improve the perception of life. She has unfolded stories with a subtle touch of her experiences turning into the life's wisdom evoking the readers to follow them in their daily life.

Murty's writing is the epitome of wisdom and experience which is an affluent knowledge of life, regulations of emotions and feelings, acknowledgement of the reality and appropriate action in the face of improbability and insecurity, personal well being, helping others for common good, and insight. Traditionally, wisdom has been affiliated with the experience; and it includes the correct value choices and it is rightly accepted that with increasing experience, there is often greater emotional balance, contentment with life, and a theosophical approach that matches wisdom.

Murty's fiction writing is an epitome of her wisdom and help readers to learn the life's lesson as if while reading they feel like getting the first hand experiences. She has blended her thoughts with her experiences in her non-fiction writing too. The simple and straight narrative style in the fiction writing make them real and less factious helping the readers to go through the experiences of the characters as if it were true and happened with the people around. Her narrative skill generates the worldly wisdom for its readers.

Sudha Murty's writing guides us to use the experiences optimally to amplify wisdom in individual's life. Murty's writing exemplifies the traditional wisdom of India which is strengthened by her experiences. The tremendous impact of her work on the readers could be witnessed by the popularity she has gained through her writing. Her personal experiences have a deeper impact on the individuals as well as families and communities. Her writing has a universal applicability that has extensively relied on the meaningfulness of the Indian traditional wisdom underlining her involvement in and focus on enhancing larger well-being.

Sudha Murty's perspective on human values is the epitome of experiences she has gained in her lifetime providing a splendid dimension to her personality. In this way, Murty shares her experiences and wisdom achieved through it with her readers. She is successful in providing a wise direction and guiding a balanced path towards a successful and healthy life through value foundation. Mainly in her non-fictional writing she has typically spent most of her time dwelling on thoughts and reflections on tasks, events, and how she moved forward in her life. This inspire the readers the most and motivate towards living the value based life. These are the reflections upon the experiences she encountered along the way and the wisdom she gained from living and enjoying her life.

Murty writes about life's ups and downs, wins and losses, despair and joy, celebrations and heartaches provide a captivating and honest reflection of what has shaped her life, beliefs and decisions so far enchanting her readers. She also writes about the enchanting life experiences of others she has come across during her life journey.

While each of her life experiences is so different, and one can learn a great deal about the life in general and about one's self in particular and grow as a human being. It is obvious that she is successful in her writing by uncovering and sharing our nuggets of wisdom, that is exactly why her non-fiction writing is as crucial for our understanding as a human being.

Murty illustrates the pathetic state of Hassan who is a very bright and intelligent student, never succeeds in life because of his incompetency, laziness and self-centeredness, and quarrelsome nature. He confides Murty,

*"Finally, my father got so fed up he told me to stay separately. He always gave me a lot of freedom but I never picked up any good habits. My state today is the result of my own habits."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 24)

These are the words of repentance; however, he has wasted the precious time of his youth wherein he might have been a very successful person. Murty consoles him with her words of wisdom,

*"Hassan, you knew your faults, you could have improved and made a better life for yourself. There is always a start at any age. Don't get disappointed. You may have lost a battle but you can still win the war..."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 25)

Murty's words are the true words of wisdom and guidance giving the life lessons to youngsters and show them the right path to live the healthy and contented life. Murty shares her experiences with the readers and enriches them. She also talks about her interactions with the people around her. Murty freely shares her words of wisdom with her friends to spread the poitivities. She writes about a friend who is ever complaining. She consoles her and gives some wisdom words which are even beneficial to the readers to live their life happily. She articulates,

*“The world is full of difficulties and unfulfilled desires just as the earth is full of dust and mud. If you want to keep your feet clean in this muddy world. There are only two solutions. Either cover the entire earth or wear a pair of sandals.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 82)

If everyone abides by Murty's wisdom there would be less difficulties and problems in the society and could lead a happy, peaceful and contented life. Murty writes about her colleague's notion of perfect life, and how she suffers due to it. She speaks about what is a wise solution to face the difficult situation and could have avoided the eventual depression she goes through, Murty affirms,

*“We can live our life in happiness only when we acknowledge our difficulties and failures and try to overcome them with our strength of character.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 96)

According to her, life cannot be perfect, everyone lives with imperfections and difficulties, and one has to live with them to live a healthy and happy life. Her life stories help us get to the heart of Indian traditional values and underline their significance in our day to day life. These are the storehouse of life reflections and wisdom. One gets the expansion of a sense of purpose and direction for living one's own life when one reflects upon the past and present; helping to shape the future path for our loved ones as they find meaning and inspiration from one's experiences and wisdom. And Murty's writings are the generational touchstones providing direction and a substantial association to those who will embark upon their life journey in future.

Thandappa of a remote village situated in the deep dense forest of Sahyadri Hills gives Murty a wisdom lesson cherished for the lifetime- a lesson in humility and living graceful life even without any materialistic comforts and luxuries. Once Murty

goes there to offer the school children some clothes and umbrellas; Thandappa, the village head accepts her gifts only on one condition that she should accept some return gifts in exchange. Then only he can accept her help for his village children. He doesn't take it for free as it is their tradition. It is really surprising to Murty as she has met some people who rarely recognized her help; some expressed their gratitude out of formality, some even complained about the insufficient help and asked for more. She writes,

*"I have taken all this in my stride finding fulfilment in the giving, not in the responses."*

(Murty, WO 16)

However this encounter with Thandappa surprises her with the pleasant experience as he also offers her a return gift, while accepting her gift. She mentions,

*"Here in the Sahyadri forest was an old man, a tribal with no schooling, practicing a highly principled philosophy of life-give when you take, do not take without giving... The Thandappa rose even further in my esteem when he remarked with a twinkle, 'There is a grace in accepting also'."*

(Murty, WO 16)

In the same way, Hanumanthappa surprises Murty with his honesty despite his poverty and dire need for money; he returns Murty the remaining stipend provided by her for his teacher training education. Murty is stunned by his honesty and humility. She expresses,

*"Experience has taught me that honesty is not the mark of any particular class nor is it related to education or wealth. It cannot be taught at any university. In most people, it springs naturally from heart."*

(Murty, WO 5)

This is again a learning experience for Murty that honesty is not anyone's property; even the poorest of the poor could be the honest person. Experiences have enriched Murty with lifetime wisdom. Murty, now grown up and matured with experiences of life, laughs at her childish convictions in the past and sometimes behaved foolishly and unthinkingly to prove herself right. Young Sudha is a staunch feminist who always wants to prove that girls can do anything and everything that boys can do and girls are always better than boys. She writes,

*“When I was young, I was very sensitive about what people said about girls. If they said, ‘Girls cannot do that’ immediately I used to feel I should do it just to prove them wrong.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 127)

She is very ardent about the women’s issues. Even once she writes a postcard to JRD Tata, when she comes across an advertisement by TELCO mentioning *‘Lady candidates need not apply.’*

(Murty, *TMGR* 42)

She not only opposes the policy of TELCO for not taking women for that particular job, but in a heat she applies for it and faces the interview with somewhat rudeness, joins TELCO, a totally male dominated automobile company, and handles the heavy machinery. Stubborn Sudha becomes a liberal and understanding later but this has come out of many such experiences, one such incident explains, it in a better way.

In “My Biggest Mistake”, Murty narrates an incident when she is working in a company. When her boss comments about *a huge fifteen kg heavy Tandon Disc Drive* can be carried by men only as it is too heavy to be carried by a woman. Young Murty takes it as a challenge and carries that heavy disc to the boss’ office without showing any strain on the face as she accepts,

*“I believed strongly that showing emotions on your face is a sign of weakness.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 128)

For young Murty, it is really difficult to carry such a heavy drive, though she does it just to prove that girls can do anything. Now, the experienced and matured Murty states,

*“I wanted to show to the world that girls can do everything. Today I laugh at this logic. Men can do certain things well and women other things. Men and women are complementary to each other. One need not prove one’s strength.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 127)

Murty has become wiser and experiences have made her liberal towards the issue of gender equality. She frankly accepts that to prove one right one does not need to prove others wrong. There should be cooperation and not rivalry among men and women. In the same narrative, she mentions that she leaves that heavy disc containing

the vital information of the company like finances, employee details, etc. she calls it 'a foolish behaviour'. She writes her resignation and puts it before her boss and to everyone's surprise, he doesn't accept her resignation. He tears it and said that he has already taken the backup of the data stored on the broken disc and kept it safe in the store room. He advises her,

*"Everybody commits mistakes...Repentance itself is a punishment and you have repented enough... Go and do your work."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 129)

This is a lesson in how to handle the situations in a wiser way and be a good leader; gives a lifetime experience to Murty which has exposed her to a lot of positivities. She admits,

*"That incident taught me that when you become a leader you should be kind and forgiving to your subordinates. It is not fear that binds you to your boss. Affection, openness and appreciation of your qualities build a long-lasting relationship. We spend most of our time at our work places. This time should be spent in happiness, not in blaming each other."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 129)

Experiences have definitely increased patience in Murty's attitude towards the rude and displeasing around her. "A Helping Hand" is a depiction of such incident where she comes across a rude and arrogant architect Lankesh who is totally unconcerned about the 'relief' task Murty and her team doing selflessly for the Tsunami victims, in fact, he asks her to remove the heavy trunks prepared to help the victims, immediately from his unused plot. Murty's team has kept those trunks just for a night and a truck would load them next morning.

However, Lankesh opposes it and she knows the futility of arguing with him as he just wants to show off his power. She apologizes the rude and arrogant Lankesh who is adamant to help her just by allowing her to keep those heavy trunks on his open plot. Therefore, all the trunks are placed by road side, a watchman voluntarily guards the trunks and also offers his day's salary as a contribution towards the help to Tsunami victims. Murty calls these volunteers as her boosters to continue the selfless service to the society.

Murty learns and unlearns through her own experiences. She mentions two incidents which have taught her not to give away anything for free and not to provide

a complete help, only partial help should be provided otherwise it doesn't have any respect and is not utilized appropriately. She writes,

*"...two incidents in my life taught me that sometimes it is better to let a person struggle. It provides an incentive to strive harder. Anything given away for free loses values and is not treated with the respect it deserves."*

(Murty, *OMHG* 97)

She writes about Ravi whom she gives 50 rupees a month, his monthly income, so that he can continue his studies as he is a bright student and attend school regularly instead of selling dusters at the traffic signals. Murty is shocked when Ravi comes to her office and asks to increase his stipend to 100 rupees as the cost of the duster is doubled. According to him, his studies is the responsibility of Murty and his main focus is earning money; and he doesn't care for Murty's desire to educate him. Ravi considers Murty's help as his own right and there is no sense of gratitude.

Another incident Murty mentions where she is utterly taken aback to see that the Atlases her Foundation distributed for free in every rural school library to give the rural students a proper exposure. One day, she takes groundnuts outside a school gate; to her surprise, the groundnuts are wrapped in the page of Atlas given by her. When Murty enquires, the seller explains,

*"...oh, some lady gives these books free to the school. The paper is nice and thick, so we use it sometimes for wrapping things."*

(Murty, *OMHG* 100)

Murty's experiences make her wiser and she decides to help partially as complete help is never appreciated and utilized to the fullest. Murty not only narrates her own experiences but she also writes about others' experiences. Her friend Ratna states,

*"Life is a great teacher. I learnt everything by experience. By learning something from each of my mistakes, I learnt not to repeat them."*

(Murty, *WO* 81)

Experiences have taught her to accept life as it is. She remarks,

*"At twenty we were idealists, at forty we had become realist."*

(Murty, *WO* 81)

A communist Murthy, Narayan Murthy, her husband tended to be leftist and has been an 'ardent believer in principles of Marxism' turns out to be 'a socialist capitalist' and built 'an export focused company', 'with his values'. This drastic change is brought because of a life-changing experience once he goes through. Sudha narrates this incident in her narrative "The Journey". While returning from France he decided to hitchhiking, however, it is difficult to travel in this way inside the '*the communist block*' i.e. in Nis, a border town between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Murthy is touched by the predicament of a scholar girl from Sophia, that she cannot live a normal married life due to the hindrance of their respective governments. Murthy expresses his sympathy,

*"It is an unfair system. Whether it is a communist or a capitalist country, issues like the choice of partner for marriage, or job, and the freedom of expression should not be curtailed..."*

(Murthy, *OMHG* 26)

Murthy's discussion on the 'rights and duties of citizens in a communist country' has offended the police and he is jailed for four days and receives cruel treatment; a ruthless efficiency of the system to wash out even a single voice raised against it denying the basic freedom. Murthy illustrates,

*"But now hungry and overwrought after his brush with a communist state, Murthy had to rethink all his ideals...He also realized that the only way to get rid of poverty was not by raising slogans or issuing diktats, but by creating more and more jobs. He vowed then and there to himself that he would generate wealth not only for himself but for many others, legally and ethically."*

(Murthy, *OMHG* 28)

Murthy goes through an eye-opening experience, narrated in "The Way You Look at It". The Foundation has built toilets in rural as well as urban and metropolitan areas. These public toilets in urban are pay and use one to ensure their cleanliness and maintenance, and in rural area the maintenance is taken care by the village headman. Women from the cities like Bangalore understand that it is a business venture to earn profit, although it is an effort to improve the city's civic life. Murthy expresses,

*"For a while I was upset. Then I cooled down and told myself that people may say whatever they like, but I had to do what I had decided on."*

(Murthy, *OMHG* 17)

She calms down herself and thinks,

*“I know that the public toilets have benefitted many like Sharanamma. What she had perceived village women, was looked at here by these two women, as a business venture... After all, life is the way look at it.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 17)

The matter of thinking and attitude towards the same thing that makes the difference in perception. Murty decides, no matter how people take it, she has to carry on her duty towards society.

She meets same kind of negativities towards the philanthropic work. She writes about a genuine philanthropist, Shri Hiralal Jain, ‘a successful pharmacist and businessman’ who used to donate medicines, provide doctors and also arrange vans for the medical camps without any selfish motif, however, his son is total opposite and stops the medical supplies and other helps for the camp and thinks it as ‘a waste of money’. He puts new terms to advertise his name, and only surplus stock of medicines are to be provided as he says,

*“Philanthropy is a key to business promotion.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 44)

Murty disagrees with his conditions she advises him,

*“...don’t mix business and philanthropy. You will not be able to do justice to either.”*

(Murty, *OMHG* 44)

Murty understands philanthropy as a duty towards society, a means to shower love and help to the needy; it can’t be a part of any business. This is what she does through her Foundation. The Infosys Foundation helps her to enrich herself with various such experiences while doing the philanthropic work and also inspires her towards her duties and aspirations to help the needy and poor ones. Murty once visits a school in South Canara, where she meets illiterate Kuttamma, who denies jewels and gold by her rich son instead she asks him to build schools in the rural areas to spread education. Murty understands,

*“It is certainly true that if one man studies, only one person is educated whereas if one lady studies, the entire family is educated.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 36)

It is proved true by Kuttamma's experience. A simple village woman understands the significance of education and inspires her son to build schools in remote areas and distant villages. Such travels also enrich Murty with many experiences and give her different slice of life; changing her perspective towards world. "A Foreigner Always" comments about Murty's subtle experiences on the heritage site of 'Takshila' in Pakistan. She faces the harsh reality of Indian Partition; and Pakistan despite sharing the same food, language, culture and environment is a foreign and alien land to the Indians. She affirms,

*"I realized, in spite of the similarities in our dress, language, food and even love for Bollywood movies, Partition had divided us forever. It had made us strangers in each other's lands and even in a place like that ancient university town, the Buddha's words of love and tolerance were not enough to bring us together. The Rs. 200 ticket brought me crashing back to reality!"*

(Murty, *OMHG* 69)

This very feeling of alienation is expressed by Mrs. Roopa Kapoor, an elderly lady from undivided India now settled in Chennai; expresses her deep sorrow to Murty in following words,

*"This is my land. This is my soil. My ancestors made this their home. They were born and burnt here. The land, the trees, the air, the water everything was ours. We knew the customs, the culture and the food. One day, some person drew a line and created two nations. And suddenly we became foreigners in our own land."*

(Murty, *OMHG* 77)

Murty underlines the agony, plea and the traumatic experiences in simple yet touching words. Murty mentions many such experiences in her non-fiction writing. She gives all the credit to her grandparents for making her life rich and loaded with the wise moments. In Foreword to 'How I taught My Grandmother to Read and Other Favourite Stories' she writes,

*"...I have tried to recreate some stories from my experiences, all of which have taught me something. In the course of my work for the Infosys Foundation and as a teacher, I meet many people, young and old, each of whom has enriched my life in some way."*

(Murty, *TMGR* x)

Murty calls her grandfather, a retired school teacher rich ‘*with experience and knowledge*’. For Murty real wealth is experience and wisdom. Her reverence and respect towards JRD, Abdul Kalam is not due to any materialistic wealth but the wealth of rich experiences and their wisdom. These two stalwarts could be described in the following words of Tripathi,

*“Wise persons are able to make good decisions which reconcile the divergent interests of different persons and groups. These decisions are in the best interest of everybody. In the process they are able to harmonise their individual wellbeing with that of the collective wellbeing.”*

(Tripathi 223)

Murty has learnt a lot from these two great personalities whom she pays her deep respect and reverence. In “Red Rice Granary”, Murty poses the ancient wisdom of Indian culture which is passed down by her grandparents. Her grandmother tells her to give the best and keep secondary to oneself. Traditionally, Indians always give importance to the one who come and ask for *Bhilsha*, it is assumed that God also comes in a form of begger; therefore, a begger too receives the best. Murty writes,

*“This lesson from my grandparents, told to me that I was just a little girl, has stayed with me ever since. If at all I am helping anyone today, it is because of the teachings by those simple souls. I did not learn them in any school or college.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 30)

Murty gives all the credit to her grandparents for preaching her traditional human values by exercising them in their life and following them. Murty now brings them into practice. Murty’s grandparents are a source of inspiration to her. Murty not only shares experiences from Indian village life, she also learns from the experiences she encounters while travelling in foreign countries. One such incident is narrated in ‘*A Wedding in Russia*’. Murty meditates that Indian could learn a lot from Russia.

*“We are busy shopping for saris, buying jewellery and preparing elaborate menus and partying in discos.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 59)

During the wedding, on the contrary for Russians, *'love for country is more important than wedding celebrations.'* When Murty asks why the groom is in *'military uniform'* on his wedding day and visiting the war memorial after getting married. An elderly Russian explains her,

*"This is a mark of gratitude... The newly married couple needs to remember they are living in a peaceful, independent Russia because of their blessings."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 58)

Murty regrets that how Indians are careless about our own history and the Independence Day in India has actually become *a red letter day-a holiday*. For Murty, it is a learning experience, she states,

*"My eyes filled with tears at the thought and I wished we could learn a lesson from the Russia."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 59)

Nobody wants to even remember the martyrs. She wishes that Indians should follow Russian rituals and pay the due respect to the freedom fighters. The author's education from the people around her is unending. Even her teenage daughter becomes her 'Guru' and shows her the path of philanthropy. Murty shows her gratitude towards Akshata when she receives the prestigious 'Economic Times' Awards for her contribution in philanthropy through Infosys Foundation, Murty writes,

*"I will remain indebted to Akshata forever for the way she made me change my life and the lesson she taught me."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 65)

Murty's life is changed by Akshata's simple and straight questions asking her about the purpose of her life,

*"What are you looking for in life? Are you looking for glamour or fame? You are a daughter of a doctor, granddaughter of a schoolteacher and come from a distinguished teaching family. If you cannot help poor people then don't expect anyone else to do it."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 63)

Akshata's these thought provoking questions help her to discover the motif of her life. Murty decides to '*Give Back to Society*' which is the true meaning of her life. She feels exhilarated by the thought and explains,

*"When I see hope in the eyes of a destitute, see the worm smile on the faces of once hopeless people, I feel so satisfied. They tell me that I am making a difference."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 64)

For this, Murty is *ever grateful to Akshata for helping bring this happiness and satisfaction* in her life. That small incident has made a big difference in Murty's life and has given the correct direction to her life. Murty calls her own daughter a Guru, a pathshower. Murty's mother too has a great share in her today's success, it is her advice which Murty follows and helps to contribute in building the empire of Infosys. Murty gives the credit of her today's success of Infosys company to the advice given by her mother at the time of Murty's wedding. When Murty gets married her mother gives '*some words of advice*'; actually these are proved as the words of wisdom at the end as Murty follows them and has helped to establish a successful business venture. Murty's experiences are the life's lessons which are truly valuable. Murty inscribes,

*"I often tell this story to my children and students. One never knows when a rainy day will come. And when it does, my mother's words will always stay true."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 90)

Murty's mother's valuable lesson in Murty's words is,

*"In life we never know when a rainy day will come and you might fall short of money. In order to be prepared for such a situation, you should always save some money from your salary, and if you are not earning, then from your husband's salary...When you are in difficulty only few things will come to your help. Your courage, your ability to adjust to new situations and money which you have saved. Nobody will come and help you."*

(Murty, *TMGR* 86-87)

Murty obeys her mother. Her *rainy day's saving* changes her life truly and turns it into a colourful rainbow. Her savings of Rs. 10000 helps her husband to start Infosys and build an empire in software industry. Murty admits,

*“When I look back now, I realize that our lives changed completely because I had listened to my mother’s valuable lesson.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 90)

This has happened only because Murty has followed *mother’s valuable lesson, the true words* of wisdom which she conveys to the coming generation through her writing. Murty’s relation with the coming generation is at deeper level as she is a teacher. She always interacts with her students and not only teaches them computer science but gives them the life lessons; sometimes she tells them her own experiences, sometimes others’ and sometimes she tells them the stories to understand the age old wisdom to live life meaningfully. In one such class she tells them a story and advises,

*“...whenever any problem arises we should view it from different angles. The decision each of us arrive at will be different. Whenever we blame somebody, for a minute we should enter into that person’s mind and try to understand why he did what he did. Only then should we take decision.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 108)

The credit of Murty’s success as a teacher, philanthropist, orator, and writer is by and large bestowed upon her teachers. Murty states,

*“Today, when I stand on dais and speak confidently or face any kind of difficulty in life, I think of my teacher. He taught me this lesson, which no amount of money can buy, no difficulties can dilute and no university can grant.”*

(Murty, *WO* 115)

Sodha Murty is indebted to her teachers; she has learnt the valuable life lessons from them, so the credit goes to the teachings of her teachers like Gauramma and Raghavendra Varnekar. She remembers what her teacher has taught her,

*“The duty of a teacher is to make a student confident to face life. Life poses unknown examinations. The greatest joy to a teacher is to produce students better than him. I have done my duty very well. My students are so famous today that it gives me great joy and pride to be recognized as their teacher.”*

(Murty, *WO* 115)

Her teacher Gauramma has taught her many stories and anecdotes from Indian mythology which now Murty uses during teaching, and during her speeches to convey

herself more easily. She states what her teacher Gauramma has taught her as an answer to the question asked by a student; she explains,

*“When you come across difficulties, you have to grow bigger than the problem. You have that capacity within you, but you are not aware of it. If you become bigger, difficulties will look smaller than you, and you can solve them easily. If you become smaller than the difficulties, they will look like mountains and crush.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 101)

How true it is if one applies it in our daily life. Murty conveys so much of wisdom in such simple words. She in another narrative explicates,

*“Many a times there is no perfect solution for a given problem. No solution is also a solution. Everything again depends upon how you look at it.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 104)

If one follows Murty, life will be much easy, simple yet meaningful. Teacher Murty is very much fond of her students and tries to give her best to her students; she explains,

*“As a teacher I feel that apart from academics, it is very important to teach students the basic code of life...Education means scoring good marks in exams or receiving certificates. Life is an exam where the syllabus is unknown and question papers are not set. Nor are there model answer papers. There are various types of questions that can come from any direction, but one shouldn't run away. Education and financial independence are tools that can help us face difficulties, but confidence must be developed throughout life.”*

(Murty, *WO* 139-140)

Her writing is an evidence that Murty as a teacher follows the examples of her teachers who not only taught them their respective subjects but has poured the wisdom of their experiences so that the students can lead and face life with confidence and happiness. Murty is aware that,

*“The one who acquires knowledge should be respected, irrespective of age, gender or class.”*

(Murty, *WO* 120)

Murty is amazed to know that her own son has grown into a mature person and she is truly satisfied. She depicts her feeling of content in the following words,

*“I was surprised with my son, whom long ago I had taught how to hold a pencil. Now, he was talking like an experienced adult about global subjects like peace, violence and communication. I am sure that many parents will often have the same thoughts. They might have also experienced how their little ones have become wiser than themselves.”*

(Murty, *WO* 120)

This wiseness is an output of their knowledge of the world and the exposure they get, and the experiences they go through, so Murty relaxes as *all is well with the next generation*. She is sure that the young generation is also getting wiser and no need to be unhappy with the changing world. Though the young generation has less experience, their experience is deeper and higher as they get more exposure due to the globalization and spread of education. Murty’s education is continued even with the persons she meets in her day to day life. Her cousin Balu, an uneducated and happy-go-lucky person enlightens her,

*“Life is uncertain; anything can happen. If you want to give anything, you must give him immediately. Time is never in your hands. On the contrary, all of us are living at the mercy of time.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 113)

Murty says then onwards she keeps at least a chequebook and some cash so that she can directly help the needy one without any delay. She expresses,

*“(Balu) taught me a great lesson. When donating don’t think twice, or put it off for another day. Nobody has conquered time. Time is not in anybody’s hand.”*

(Murty, *TMGR* 114)

Sudha Murty has a friend, an LIC officer, *forever unhappy*, gloomy and cynic, belittling others, scolding the surrounding, ever complaining about everything and anything, called Meena. She meets Murty at Bombay’s Flora Fountain, completely changed and totally different from what she has been earlier.

This cheerful and positive attitude seems magical. As Murty describes she is happy and cheerful even in drenching rain. When Murty asks her how she has become so much optimistic, she surprises her by saying, *“A beggar changed my life.”* She

explains, she saw a beggar and an young girl playing in rain with empty stomach *clapping and screaming joyously, as if they were in paradise. Hunger and rain did not matter.*

This made Meena to meditate on her negativities. She counts her comforts, luxuries and wealth as compared to beggar who has nothing. However, the index of happiness of that popper is higher than this rich LIC officer. Though she has all the comforts, she lacks happiness and on the contrary the beggar hasn't even food but is happier and contented despite all the hardships in his life. She feels ashamed and starts listing the things she possessed, the comforts, luxuries and riches, she expresses,

*“That day, I decided to change my attitude towards life, using the beggar as my role model... Now nothing matters. I am always happy. I find happiness in every small thing, in every situation and in every person.”*

(Murty, WO 61)

Meena became happy by getting learning a life-changing lesson from a beggar. Murty admits in one of her narrative,

*“At twenty we were idealists at forty we had become realists.”*

(Murty, WO 81)

Meena's change in attitude is an evidence of this; everyone grows with the time. Girija, Murty's cook is Murty's teacher in 'Think Positive, Be Happy', a wisdom lesson to live life happily and with positivity. Murty learns it from her poor cook, Girija, who despite all the difficulties is

*'always cheerful and neatly dressed in a cotton-sari, flowers in her well-combed hair.'*

(Murty, WO 121)

Girija's husband abandoned her and her son and married another woman, but she took it positively; she says,

*“...I think I am lucky because I have only one child to support. My son is bright and obedient. Because his father deserted us, my son is more concerned about me. If I was all alone or if I had many children or if my child was irresponsible, then I would have had serious problems. God has been kind enough to me that I don't have any such problems...”*

(Murty WO 123)

What she further says is the life lesson she learns and follows through her bad experiences of her life,

*“Amma, I have not learnt in school but life has taught me one thing; always look at life in a positive way. You feel nice and so do the people around you.”*

(Murty, *WO* 123)

Sudha Murthy's first novel *Gently: Falls the Bakula* is narration of an unsuccessful marriage because ambition and self-interest take their toll. Shrikant represents modern values and work ethics and leaves no stone unturned to succeed to the highest position in the corporate world; however, he loses the love of his life. His wife, Shrimati learns a lesson for life and abandons her husband to make career in the field of her interest i. e. History in an American University and leaves him at the end. Despite the love marriage they are separated as for Shrimati this marriage is a harsh lesson of lifetime that she is degraded to the stature of a personal secretary and her husband didn't need her as a wife.

A first ranker, genius and talented Shrimati learns a lesson in her journey of life that she has to be her own; her husband no more needs a wife, but a secretary. Their marriage has become mechanical without any love quotient in it to make it lively. Her endurance and encouragement for his career is not worthwhile and he never recognizes her vital contribution in his career building. One day, she decides to break all her bonds with her husband and ends her family life. At the end, she finds her identity and pursues her career, a direction to understand her own worth. Shrimati learns this lesson by going through the harsh realities and bad experiences due to her overambitious machinelike husband.

*Dollar Bahu*, another novel by Murty, assess the hustle and tussle of staying in India or abroad very adequately and portrays the understanding of Gauramma about the realities in both the worlds. America is her dreamland and American daughter-in-law as a model of perfection. However, at the end, she understands that India and her Indian daughter-in-law are no less than America, in fact, it is better. Sometimes, in life there is no villain particularly, but the circumstances choose to be the enemies. Because of poverty and lack of education that Gauramma has witnessed in her childhood, she is captivated by the dollar as iron is attracted to a magnet and thus resorts to the comparisons between two lands. At the end, she is brought to reality by what she experiences in America. Gauramma admits to Shamanna,

*“I have changed a lot, America has opened my eyes and I shall never make that mistake again.”*

(Murty, DB 141)

What is this *mistake*? Gauramma is so much obsessed about life in America that she always underestimates India and her Indian daughter-in-law. It is ever comparing America with India and American daughter-in-law Jamuna with the Indian daughter-in-law, Vinuta. At the end, Gauramma gets a firsthand experience of value crisis in American Indians, the double standards of her *dollar bahu*, she understands that

*America is great but our country is no less.*

(Murty, DB 141)

She tells Jamuna, the *Dollar Bahu*,

*“My place is in India and I am more comfortable there, in spite of all the difficulties.”*

(Murty, DB 131)

Lastly, Gauramma understands that *money is not everything in life*. At the end, not only Gauramma completes her learning but the reader too is enlightened towards the deeper truths of life and importance of human relationships and togetherness of the family and its role in individual's life.

A leading character of *Mahashweta*, a leukoderma victim, Anupama gets stronger at the end due to the traumatic experiences she goes through due to the prejudices of the people around her. Even her husband Anand, a doctor rejects her. She settles in Bombay where her worth is considered as a teacher, human being and director of Sanskrit dramas. She gets the confidence to lead an independent and respectful life without relying on anyone for the support. She gets her self-identity through the self confidence this comes out of severe experiences of suffering and trauma due to hatred of her close relatives, her husband's rejection, social taboos and inhibitions, indifference, denunciation by her family and friends. Crisis of humanity make her wiser to live her life independently even though her husband wants her to come back. A week after her wedding, Murty describes Anupama's life,

*“Her life seemed a perennial fountain of joy, of love and happiness. She was unable to understand how philosophers could describe such pleasures temporary.”*

(Murty, MS 36)

The experiences she undergoes in future, proves ancient philosophers right; her pleasures become temporary and loneliness and suffering become permanent. Murty describes

*“Anybody would envy her. God has been kind to her and she had married into such a distinguished family without having to face any obstacles.”*

(Murty, MS 37)

After the plight and trauma, everybody starts pitying her as the so called *distinguished family* rejects her due to leukoderma. The tribulations of Anupama are due to the ignorance and taboo about the disease, the lack of sympathy by her husband whose love proves to be only skin deep and he abandons her. The insulting incident with Hari makes Anupama to be anyone’s sister; she stops Satya calling her sister, she expresses,

*“Satya, I have helped you the way any human being would help another;... I don’t want like being caught in relationships of convenience. I don’t want to be anyone’s sister or aunt...surely a man and woman can also be just friends.”*

(Murty, MS 114)

Anupama grows wiser with the worst kind of experiences she goes through. Mumbai helps her to emerge into a complete individual. She is independent and lives life on her own terms. Anupama learns that individual’s self understanding and self respect is an outcome of a severe suffering and traumatic experiences. She experiences a lot of emotional trauma and crisis of values which purify her as an individual. When Satya asks her who has taught her the philosophy of life, she credits it the life experiences. She admits,

*“My experiences have taught me this. I have come to realize that courage and confidence are the real wealth in life. Education can improve your chances of success, but ultimately you have to face life all alone. I don’t depend on any guru nor do I read any philosophy. My conscience is my guru and it guides me well.”*

(Murty, MS 116)

When Anand comes back to *rectify his past mistakes* she rejects his offer to start a new life and she rejects Vasant’s idea of remarrying, she explains,

*“I am sorry, Vasant, but please forget your idea. I don’t want to get entangled again in the same circle of husband and family. My past has taught me a very valuable lesson. I don’t want a family of my own.”*

(Murty, MS 150)

Anupama has grown above the worldly materialistic outlook due to the worst experiences of life. At the end she understands that,

*“I know too well the prejudices that people like me will have to face in a small village. Bombay has become very dear to my heart; nobody reminds me that I am a leukoderma patient. I don’t have any complaints about my life here. This is my world and I am very happy in it.”*

(Murty, MS 150)

At the end, Anupama comes out as a confident, independent self-sufficient, guiding and a respectable person who is able to find her own identity. It is interesting to know that Murty’s novel *Mahashweta* turned out to be a learning experience for a couple to live life happily without any prejudices and taboos about leukoderma. Murty attends a wedding where she understands that her fiction has saved the life of a real bride who is also suffering from leukoderma. The groom’s eyes are opened after reading ‘Mahashweta’ and who has changed his mind to marry his fiancée who is suffering from leukoderma after her wedding is fixed; and he is in a mind to reject this marriage though both the family’s support the bride. Murty’s novel saves his marriage.

While Murty helps her readers of all ages by discovering and sharing her wisdom and experiences through fiction as well as non-fiction. There is a tremendous impact on the readers, as well as on their families and communities as various universities and education boards in India have prescribed Murty’s books for the UG courses and in school curriculums. Stories are made profound by genuine, straight and simple language recollecting specific life experiences of simplicity, sympathy, courage, honesty, humility, caring, sharing, hard work, struggle, and joy, etc. that goes straight to the readers’ hearts providing a lasting sense of enhancement. Murty cultivates the seeds of wisdom through openness, straight forwardness. One experiences intellectual growth, and life reflection using simple words helping to live

life with positive human values. She collects such heartfelt nuggets of wisdom from the life experiences providing the inspiration, guidance.

Murty has not only used her own experiences to convey the morals to the readers, she also uses fairy tales, folk tales and stories to put into words the morals and wisdoms to readers. Her collection of such stories, *The Magic Drum and Other Favourite Stories* is a storehouse of wisdom. “The White Crow” is a story of Umasundari’s learning experiences. She is a talkative person and loves to gossip. Her husband gives her a lesson so that she could stop this bad habit which could harm her or other persons in their village. He tells her about *a beautiful crow sitting on the white roof of their outhouse* and warns her not to tell anyone; that made her so anxious that she is dying to share this new information with her neighbour. In this way the news is circulated in such a way that the rumour is spread that crow sitting on the white roof meant the hidden treasure and the headman sends men to crack down the outhouse; but no treasure is found. It is clear that it is the sheer outcome of Umasundari’s talkative, gossiping and outspoken nature.

*“After that day, no one believed a word of what she said and nobody would sit down to chat with her.”*

(Murty, MD 36)

Umasundari learns to control her talkative nature. “The Very expensive Coconut” is a story of learning experiences of miser Chandrakant and how his excess greed is punished. He wants to eat coconut burfi so he starts searching cheap coconuts; in the beginning he gets it for five rupees, so he walks ten kilometres to get them for fifty paise. That too he doesn’t want to spend and walks another ten kilometres to get them free. That is not the end of his troubles. He climbs the tree but doesn’t know how to get down so he asks a mahout to help him and promises to pay a hundred rupees, they both are left hanging; after sometime a horseman comes and promises to help him for one thousand rupees. However, at the end the three of them fall down and

*“Chandrakant had to pay a thousand rupees for their treatment. And all because he would not pay five rupees for a coconut.”*

(Murty, MD 43)

“A Bottle of Dew” is a learning experience for lazy *son of a rich landlord*, Ramanatha and how his eyes are opened at the end, he understands that there is no option for the hard work; one has to work hard to earn and no magic potion comes to

help. A sage Mahipati promises him to provide that magic potion turning everything into gold, however, he has to collect one whole bottle of the morning dew drops and he will chant a magic mantra to turn it into magic potion which *will transform any object into gold*. So he starts planting banana trees so that he could get the dew drops faster and more. *At the end of six years, he finally had his five litres of dew*. However, Mahipati doesn't turn it into the magic potion. Though Ramanatha has turned into richer with the gold bars his wife presents to him. Mahipati tells him that there is no magic potion to turn everything in gold as there is no shortcut to success, Ramanatha has worked hard to collect the dew drops by planting more and more the banana trees and his wife has sold the bananas in the market and made money out of the huge crop of bananas and it is actually the outcome of Ramanatha's sheer hard work.

*“Ramanatha understood the wisdom behind these words and worked even harder on his plantation from that day on.”*

(Murty, MD 50)

Ramanatha learns his lesson through his experiences of ruthless hard work. *Nakul's First Lesson* is a story of Nakul, a son of rich businessman Bhaskar. Bhaskar advises him some wisdom words of his own experiences which definitely could help him to expand his business. He advises,

*“When you do business and travel to foreign lands, make sure you know the local culture as well. Try to gain much information as you can before you go there, as only your knowledge and presence of mind will come to your help in an unknown land.”*

(Murty, MD 65)

After his father's death, soon Nakul has to leave for a business venture in an unknown land where he gets struck in troubles however he follows his father's words of wisdom and experience and he comes out safely. At the end of the story Murty articulates,

*“Nakul went on to do a lot of business in that country and returned home richer- in wisdom too!”*

(Murty, MD 67)

*The Bird with Golden Wings: The Stories of Wit and Magic* is a collection of folktales and fairytales from India and around the world which Murty has come across, she has reshaped them and gave an Indian touch to them to make them appealing to the Indian readers. *The Precious Rupee* is a story of rich merchant's lazy

son, Ashok and how he learns important life lesson by going through the hard experiences due to the condition posed by his father, Ramanath. When Ashok asks Ramanath money for his new business venture. However, this time Ramanath agrees to provide the capital for his new business on one condition, Ashok has to pay a rupee every day until he ask him to stop.

Ashok seems this condition very easy and agrees to it happily. Lazy Ashok starts paying his father a rupee daily from the money Ramanath provided him for business. Soon he becomes empty; Ramanath used to throw that rupee in a well in their backyard. In the beginning, Ashok doesn't pay any heed to this and doesn't care about his father's act of throwing a rupee in the well. He takes money from his mother, then he continues to take money from his sister, but a day comes when they both run out of money; therefore he has to start earning a rupee a day to pay back his father who throws that in the backyard well.

Finally, Ashok stops his father from throwing his hard earned rupee into the well, it is priceless for Ashok as he now knew the value of that rupee and respects it; this is the wisdom he gained through his experiences of striving hard to earn money. His father happily agrees,

*“My son, finally you have realized how hard it is to earn even the smallest sum. Now you know the effort one has to put in to bring home an honest day's wage. I think you are ready to start off on your own...Never forget the virtues of hard work and honesty.”*

(Murty, BWGW 34)

“The Rich Silly Boy” is again a story of lazy son of a rich merchant who learns life's lessons in a different way. Anil, a selfish and headstrong boy goes to sell a cow in nearby market sitting on a splendid horse, very well dresses with a gold chain around his neck and rings on his fingers. Manjunath, his father advises him,

*“When you go to do business, it's best not to show how rich you already are...”*

(Murty, BWGW 56)

Anil arrogantly turns deaf ears to his father's worldly wisdom and faces the worst situations. He is robbed in the way; the thieves even steal his best clothes. *Poor Anil had to walk home in his underwear and the entire village laughed at his stupidity* and he understands his father is right and learns life's lesson. “A Father's Wisdom” is a story is a story of two sons of a wise father who advises them to

*“Build a house in every city. Sleep comfortably. Enjoy your food.  
When you lend someone money, don’t ask him to return it...”*

(Murty, BWGW 82)

One son, Puru follows every word by his father and become penniless and Puneet becomes rich however he too follows the words of his father but in a different way. He says,

*“Puru, you did not understand the real meaning that lay behind our father’s words. He meant we should make many friend living in different places, so that when we travelled to those places these friends would offer us a place to stay and keep us comfortable...I too lent money to people and never asked them to return it instead I kept a mortgage ...I ate only when hungry, and at that time the simplest meal tests like nectar.”*

(Murty, BWGW 83-84)

Puneet becomes rich by interpreting correctly his father’s words of wisdom. Thus, Murty’s works mainly revolve around the wisdom of life which is essentially considered as an accomplishment of experiences enhancing the understanding life as a whole. These are the lessons she came across during he travels the life’s journey. It helped her to grow wiser and matures.

## **5.2 Wisdom Quotes proclaiming values in Murty’s Selected Writing:**

Eventually, the experiences have become the source for her extempore writing providing guidance in her life and the life of her readers inspiring the guidance and teachable moments for readers as encountering similar experiences could help them to enrich themselves with the life’s journeys. The author pens down her experiences and wisdom accomplished through it with her readers thus providing a wise direction and guiding a balanced path towards a successful and healthy life through value foundation. Murty in her simple, lucid and direct words gives wisdom for life. Her language is very simple, yet it is full of meaning worth to be cherished for the lifetime. Following are the excellent wisdom quotes one comes across in Murty’s non-fictional writings:

## **5.2.1 Quotes from Wise and Otherwise: A Salute to Life**

### **5.2.1 i Traditional Values:**

- Give when you take; do not take without giving.(16)
- Trust is the most precious qualities you can find in this world. (202)
- Money should come slowly over a period of time. Then only one does respect it. Whether it's a man or a woman, earning too much money in too short a period is as bad as excess liquor. (209)
- Life is always unfair. If you want, you can make it fair. (213)
- The duty of a teacher is to make a student confident to face life. Life poses unknown examinations.(115)

### **5.2.1. ii Moral Values:**

- An achiever has to work hard and have faith in his work. If I am unable to realize my dream and somebody else does, it is better for me to feel happy for the other person than to feel sorry for myself. The best culture is one in which we rejoice in each other's success. (143)
- When people with different ideas face the same situation they act differently. (220)

### **5.2.1. iii Modern Values:**

- Everybody should know her own capacity and strength. One should also know one's own limitations. It is more difficult to recognize our weaknesses than our strengths. (126)
- If you try to please everyone, you will please no one. It is impossible to lead your life for others' happiness. (139)
- Life is an exam where the syllabus is unknown and question papers are not set. Nor are there model paper answers. There are various types of questions that can come from any direction, but one shouldn't run away. Education and financial independence are tools that can help us face difficulties, but confidence must be developed though out life. (139-140)
- In real life, no human being has all good qualities, no human being has been successful in every aspect life, no system is without negatives. In reality, life is a mixture of plus and minus, joy and sorrow, ups and downs. (151)

- Change is very essential in life. Depending on the circumstances, rituals and people change. Is it not true that nothing is constant in life except change? (161)
- Dreaming is good, but turning the dream into reality is more important. (177)
- Always look at life in a positive way. (123)

## **5.2.2 The Old Man and His God: Discovering the Spirit of India**

### **5.2.2 i Traditional Values:**

- ...there is something within all of us that attracts us to the truth. (i)
- ...the expense and ceremonies don't determine the success of the marriage. Rather, it is the understanding that needs to develop between husband and wife. (59)
- The world is full of difficulties and unfulfilled desires just as the earth is full of dust and mud. If you want to keep your feet clean in this muddy world, there are only two solutions. Either cover the entire earth or wear a pair of sandals. (82)
- ...sometimes it is better to let a person struggle. It provides an incentive to strive harder. Anything given away for free loses value and is not treated with the respect it deserves. (97)
- ...different communities need to live together in harmony and build a strong country... (122)

### **5.2.2. ii Socio-cultural Values:**

- We all carry our burdens according to our situations and capacities. But every once in a while we need to stop, put down that burden and rest. Only then can we be refreshed enough to pick up the load once more. (12)
- ... in a true friendship the status does not matter. It is what you make of a situation... It is not the price but the thought behind a gift that matters... (91)
- 'I was born with relatives, but at least I can choose my friends!' (91)

### **5.2.2. iii Moral Values:**

- After all, life is the way you look at it. (17)
- Your behaviour today will determine how the world behaves towards you later. (57)
- We can live our lives in happiness only when we acknowledge our difficulties and failures and try to overcome with our strength of character. (96)

### **5.2.3 How I Taught My Grandmother to Read and Other Favourite Stories:**

#### **5.2.3 i Traditional Values:**

- It is better to be worn out than to be rusted. (14)
- ...whenever you want to give something to somebody, give the best in you, never the second best. (29)
- In the larger interest of people you must sacrifice your personal pain. (67)
- The more you collect the better is the life you lead later. (76)
- Save some money and use it only in extremely essential situations. (89)
- Grandparents always look after children very well and also teach them better lessons. (109)
- Life is uncertain; anything can happen. If you want to give anything, you must give him immediately. (113)
- When donating don't think twice, or put it off for another day. Nobody has conquered time. Time is not in anybody's hand. (114)

#### **5.2.3. ii Socio-cultural Values:**

- ...after a certain age children do not listen to their parents. Only life will teach them. (21)
- ...everything will perish over a period of time- flowers, beauty, food. No person looks beautiful forever. But education brings confidence to your face and that is the real beauty. (35)
- It is certainly true that if one man studies, only one person is educated whereas if one lady studies, the entire family is educated. (36)
- Each of them(students) will go their different ways after they complete the course, but love, affection and concern for each other will always bind us together. (38)
- Children should be led by example and teachers are the best examples. What we preach, we should practise. (40)
- ...in real life, to be successful, academic excellence is not a necessary condition. (43)
- Never start with diffidence. Always start with confidence. When you are successful, you must give back to society. Society gives us so much, we must return it. (49)

- Help people without expecting anything in return. (54)
- Freedom to choose your own life; freedom to pursue your own interest; freedom to enjoy your own likes, provided they are not harmful to you and the society. (97)
- ...when you become a leader you should be kind and forgiving to your subordinates. It is not fear that binds you to your boss. Affection, openness and the appreciation of your qualities builds a long-lasting relationship. (129)

### **5.2.3. iii Moral Values:**

- Excellence does not come by accident but by practise. (25)
- Experience is the best teacher in life. (81)
- ...ultimately it is you and you alone who can change your life by hard work. (84)
- When you come across the difficulties, you have to grow bigger than the problem. (101)
- ...grades are important but honesty is even more important. (117)
- Gratitude is the highest form of education,...When climbing the ladder it is very easy to kick those below, but one must not forget that you cannot stay at the top forever. The higher you go, the longer is fall. (125)

### **5.2.3. iv Modern Values:**

- Many a times there is no perfect solution for a given problem. No solution is also a solution. Everything depends upon how you look at it. We make judgements on others depending upon what we think of them. (104)
- ... whenever any problem arises we should view it from different angles. The decisions each of us arrive at will be different. (108)
- Try and try and try again, you will succeed at last. (110)

Wisdom through Experience related to day to day living, occupations and culture had been passed on in Murty's writings. The above wisdom quotes are the outcomes of Murty's experiences which are useful for readers because they deeply relate to the way of life and daily problems. These are very good sources of knowledge, information and guidelines for living life based on positive human values from Indian tradition and culture. To conclude, at the end, one can rely on the words of Montaigne, he proclaims,

*“There is no desire more natural than that of knowledge. We try all ways that can lead us to it; where reason is wanting, we therein employ experience.”*

(Montaigne 815)

Montaigne thus states that reasoning is less important as compared to wisdom gained through experiences, experience is more significant than any logical thinking as it helps to lead life with happiness and satisfaction. He further adds,

*“...truth is so great a thing that we ought not to disdain any meditation that will guide us to it. Reason has so many forms that we know not which to take; experience has no fewer; the consequence we would draw from the comparison of events is unsure, by reason they are always unlike.”*

(Montaigne 815)

Therefore, it is essential for every human being to accomplish with wisdom to lead a peaceful and a amiable life. Even our scriptures- the wisdom literature of India speak eloquently about this kind of wisdom, which enables every individual to set free him/ her from the shackles of bondage and to enjoy the freedom within to realise the sense of living on earth.

Experiences are the treasure of any individual who cherishes it as the most precious aspect of one's life. Murty uses her experiences as the anecdotes to convey the readers the traditional human values and the age old wisdom. T.J.S. George, the editorial advisor of The New Indian Express writes praises the significance of Murty's in following words,

*“She focused on her personal experiences, her travels and her encounters with ordinary people with extraordinary minds.”*

(George xi)

Murty turns the commonplace, everyday experiences into extraordinary. She meets very simple and ordinary people in her day to day life, chats with them in very simple and humble way, and the simple words of daily experiences are turned into the wisdom quotes. It is popularly said that, *the art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook*. The diverse kind of experiences have filled Murty prudence and have made her more sensible towards the people around her. As Tripathi defines wisdom,

*“It (Wisdom) is an overall human competence. It includes sensitivity and commitment to live and work in accordance with human values”*

(Tripathi 223) All religions are the storehouse of age old wisdom, they guide the society, the correct way of life, His Holiness Dalai Lama states that,

*“The common factor among all religions is that, they are primarily concerned with helping their followers become better human beings...all religions encourage the practice of kindness, generosity, and concern for others.”*

(Lama 39)

Religious literature is a source of age old wisdom generated from the ancient times and they guide us throughout life with the universal values. Sternberg states reasoning ability, experience and maturity are the confounding dimensions of wisdom, he says,

*“Experience and maturity change merely the quality of expression of wisdom...”*

(Sternberg 209)

Murty's collection of experiences, the same kind of maturity, wisdom and commitment with the human values are seen in the leading characters of her fiction writing. Mostly in her non-fictional writing, she has characteristically spent most of her time residing on thoughts and reflections on tasks, events, and how she has moved forward in her life which inspire the readers the most motivating towards living the value based life. The reflections are based upon the experiences she encountered along the way and the wisdom she has gained from living and enjoying her routine life.

### **5.3 Summary:**

Murty writes about life's ups and downs, wins and losses, despair and joy, celebrations and heartaches, hardships and happiness and provides a captivating and honest reflection of what has shaped her life, beliefs and decisions so far enchanting her readers. She also writes about the enchanting life experiences of others she has come across during her life journey as a teacher, philanthropist, student, and as a social being. She also remolds the folktales and fairytales, Indian and foreign which

she has come across and present them in a way appealing to the youngsters of India today. These stories are also the storehouses of wisdom and traditional Indian values.

Although each of her life experiences is so diverse yet simple, and one can learn a great deal about oneself and grow as a human being leading a 'value'able life. She wishes to be a good human being by uncovering and sharing the nuggets of wisdom which is so critical to our existence. These life stories can help her readers to know what is correct and what to follow in life gaining a greater sense of purpose and direction for living reflecting upon our past and present. It helps to shape the future path to find meaning and inspiration from these experiences and wisdom leaving generational touchstones to give direction and a tangible connection to the next generations.

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## 6.1 Introduction:

Indian English Literature has a rich background and heritage of Indian literature at large. Writing in English mainly started in India with the spread of English education with Lord Macaulay's *Minute on Indian Education* in February, 1835. Anglo-Indian Literature as it was earlier recognised has been a major contributor in the world literature today with the writings of Indians as well as the Diaspora.

Indian English Writing spans from the first book by an Indian Sake Dean Mahomet in English published in 1793 to the present eminent writers like Salman Rushdie, V. S. Naipaul, Amit Chaudhuri, Zumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai, Arvind Adiga, Chetan Bhagat, Ruskin Bond, Sudha Murty & other; the list is endless as Indians from every corner of the world today are actively contributing to the Indian literary canon. They are the forerunners to the glorious and splendid diversity in Indian English literature today. Many of the authors have made India proud by winning the prestigious Nobel Prize, Man Booker Prize, Booker Prize and many more. Though authors from India and with Indian origin have a vast range of writing, one could trace a common factor in them. Indian value system forms a base to these great literary works. Few of the authors have written with motif of human values and Sudha Murty is a prominent name in it.

It is easily understood that there cannot be any universal pattern of value system for all societies. A suitable blend of early and modern values may provide an answer to the problem. A famous dictum says, if wealth is lost, nothing is lost; if health is lost something is lost; if character is lost, everything is lost. Therefore, either for a society or an individual character is important and literature helps to build character and value education; these values present a true perspective of the development of any society or civilization.

Literature has the slice of wisdom; it is a measure to tell readers the development of the society. Values are mainly virtues, ideals and qualities on which actions and beliefs are based and direct towards what is acceptable, good and right. Values in any culture are the guiding principles that shape the world outlook, views, attitudes and conduct and are actually inborn divine virtues such as love, peace, happiness, mercy, compassion, humility, tolerance, responsibility, sharing, caring, cooperation, truth, justice, honesty and simplicity.

Today, one witnesses the deterioration of moral values which is manifested through corruption, dishonesty, maltreatment, individualism, lack of respect towards elders and women, lack of parental control over children and other such malpractices in society. Though there is no quick solution to these social evils, value education leads to a long term and reliable solutions as children are the future citizens. Value education helps for the character building of future generation and helps to improve the social responsibility.

The process of modernization in India is not only affecting the outward appearance and mannerisms in India but also the basic structure. There are some elements in the Indian tradition which have universal approach and they are important to maintain the very sense of Indianness. Therefore, the best way is to reconcile the eternal traditional values with the unavoidable modern values, maintaining the social development and the upliftment of every human being. The movement from tradition to modernity is an incessant process and there is always a period of transition.

The traditional values in the Indian society are not hostile to the modern values and those could be retained without posing any impediment to the progress of humanity. However, it is generally seen that the modern values come into conflict with the traditional values of joint family system in India.

One has to accept the changing systems and adjust oneself accordingly and combine the goodness of the old and the new as this change is inevitable. One cannot run away from the changing situations. However, it doesn't mean that one needs to forget the goodness in his/her roots. Literature could provide a step towards it. Dr. Sulabha R. Devapurkar states the significance of stories for children in the following words,

*“There are chiefly four objectives in story books, pleasure, instruction, building up an attitude and value education.”*

(Devapurkar 35)

This is true about the writing of Sudha Murty; almost all her writing covers the above mentioned objectives, chiefly it fulfils the motif of character building and value education very essential in the modern times. She prominently endorses the positive aspects of Indian culture and traditional values. Sudha Murty guides us towards the solution for value education. She is more remarkable as she extraordinarily writes about her own ordinary experiences, shares her own convictions, how she take life and what she stands for.

Her life is an example in value education itself; her writing is not mere a propaganda or mere idealism delivered sitting in the ivory tower. Her perceptions, thinking, understanding are genuine appealing to the heart of the readers encouraging them to imbibe the positive human values to be better human beings and to revive the traditional Indian values relevant in modern times. Without value, the life would be meaningless and shapeless because as Swami Tyagananda states,

*“The whole of life is oriented and structured by values.”*

(Tyagananda 7)

Murty’s writing contain values of parental love, simplicity, *asteya*, *aparigraha*, honesty, justice, trustworthiness and simplicity, etc. which have been dealt and illustrated in very simple, lucid and straight forward style making her writing enjoyable and interesting. The present research enhance the insight of the readers to do what they believe is right and follow their convictions helping to reinforce their understanding of beliefs based on the value system of the society they belong to.

Murty also help people to be aware towards the pathos and suffering around the society. There are eye opening narrations facilitating one to be optimistic and positive towards life and how one could contribute in their own small way making them the responsible citizens and productive members of society. Accordingly, the present research demonstrates that reading good literature bequeath the readers the aptitude to judge what is good for them and for the society too.

During the course of the research, it was traced that writing of Murty is able to persuade honesty, sympathy, tolerance, friendship, empathy and many more values of humanity and compassion that could be effortlessly related to the rich culture and inheritance of Indian value system. However, the research highlighted traditional Indian values that surface notably and comprehended easily. Murty’s writing introduces the values which children need to be imbibe & for the betterment of generations to come.

Indians are mainly renowned for the traditional values they carry with them in any corner of the world generating respect from the other part of the world as they are timeless and with a universal appeal. Modern times has so many issues such as terrorism, corruption, intolerance, chauvinism, etc. Murty’s writing tries to answer these issues with simple solutions mainly accepting the world as it is, accepting and respecting the differences, caring for the downtrodden, tolerance, *daanam*, etc.

## 6.2 Value Education: A Key to the Solution of Modern day Problems:

Self-augmentation is considered important as compared to the larger goal than of the family affecting the family's value system and therefore, the value system of the whole society. Globalization has injected the notion of individualism in the Indian society which is mainly collective in nature.

Traditionally Indian family is a joint family where three generations live together and the grandparents take care of their children. This set up still exists mostly in rural parts of India. Due to the increasing influence of the modernization and tremendous use of communication technology and greater mobility of the Indians, a nuclear family pattern seems to increase in contemporary India. Swami Bhajanananda aptly states the need of value education in following words:

*“If India is to attain economic prosperity, social well-being intellectual advancement, national integration, and the rejuvenation of her ancient spiritual culture and values, drastic changes in ethos of the people must be brought about.”*

(Bhajanananda, 31)

Murty's writing and philanthropic experiences help in value education. Philanthropy is underlined and highlighted in her writings forming its core. She took for charity as she thinks it is a small share in the betterment of the society; it could be a small step towards the lessening of the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

Sudha Murty's social work is done out of sheer love toward India and the Indians. She is passionate about selfless service to the society and eventually, it has becomes a way of life providing a life motif. These lifetime experiences, thinking and meditation, the learning which she has shared in her writings could be traced as lessons in value inculcation. Swami Gautamananda also indicates value education as a solution to the modern problems; he writes,

*“The values in education alone can save us from the ‘ruin unspeakable’”*

(Gautamananda, 95)

Murty's writing sometimes become very heartrending as it depict the harsh realities of life of the unprivileged and cruelties they go through due to the inhuman treatments of the people around them. She tries to instigate a person to be thankful for their blissful and contented life. She inspires readers to be humble, empathetic and compassionate towards the downtrodden.

Her travelling into the remote villages and tribal areas, villages stricken by poverty, communities distraught by illness and diseases helped her to reach the needy whom she assisted during natural catastrophe as earthquakes, flood and Tsunami. Greed and other such obstacles never discouraged her from her true mission due to the human values she inculcated during her upbringing and education.

Most of her stories are based on her daily experiences and observations, that's why it has a flavour of the soil, very simple and humble, direct and straight appealing to the readers' heart. Many of her writings centre around common people and her views on day to day issues. She is actively involved in the Social development initiatives through the Foundation which provides the raw material for her writing.

Through her short stories and narratives, she gives valuable lessons in simple and direct English which touches the readers' heart. She has an undaunted faith in mankind and humanity, therefore, she has a keen eye on the focusing on the positive side of the human nature. Her respect for the human relationship, human values, Indian traditions, history, culture and heritage is apparent in her writing.

The most remarkable feature of Sudha Murty is that she lives her life on her own selfless terms, by her own philosophies, values and with her own convictions which are developed by her middle class upbringing which she is proud of. Besides being an Indian social worker, philanthropist, she is an educator, author and a very good human being. She also presents herself as a daughter, mother, wife and also in many other roles. She has sympathetically treated Indian sentiments and the themes from the soil without many complexities and has portrayed contemporary society with competence.

Her writings encompass the themes such as the traditional Indian values, social value system, integrity, patriotism, love, humanity, positivism, compassion, generosity, human relationship, social responsibility, respect and faith in mankind, etc. which help to strengthen the individual's faith in the traditional values. Her life itself is an ideal example of simplicity, traditionality harmonised with the modernity and compassion for the fellow beings. S. Abid Husain underlines this fact in following words,

*“In a society based on a proper balance of freedom and equality, culture should be regarded as a harmonious expression of universal human values common to all men, high or low, rich and poor, and should be within the reach of all.”*

(Husain, 167)

A mentor in the corporate field Dr. N.R. Narayan Murty created the giant company in the field of software and made India one of the prominent software hubs on the world map. The Infosys could rightly be called as the manifestation of their belief in moral and social values. The company is an embodiment of what Abid Husain states about a harmonious peaceful and value based society. The company through Infosys Foundation is trying hard to bring such ideal social condition in reality.

Sudha Murty’s writing stimulates the perception of the readers; she mainly deals with the common lives. She also has an easy entry in the higher stratum of the society as she is the better half of giant software professional, she also portrays the lives of higher class people. She was born and brought up in the simple middle class family; therefore, her narratives about the middle class people are authentic.

Murty’s writing is a reasonable clubbing of every Indian social class, which she describes with honesty, underlining their positivities as well as negativities; on the whole she is interested in the human nature. She also gives her honest opinions and views about the various aspects of life and the Indian traditions and heritage, about the malpractices in modern life. She believes in the sincerity and honesty in the professional and personal life, which helped her to outshine in her life.

Sudha Murty, to be precise, can be described as a modern woman with traditional Indian values. People around Sudha Murty are her true inspiration like APJ or JRD or Hanumantappa. She admires the honesty and integrity of the common people. Murty’s experiences are translated in wisdom building foundation to lead life with positive human values developing an ability to recognize good from bad. Murty’s writing is an exact replica of predilection in almost every aspect of human experience; it encompasses all the aspects of human world.

Wisdom can be established through one’s behaviour, understanding and with the ability of discrimination i.e., whatever be the knowledge that is gained through; mainly by going through the experiences and observations; are translated into writing

with the spirit of natural acceptance and reflections on the significance of Indian traditional human values.

Today, the development of inner soul of a person is not given much importance to make one a responsible and good human being with values such as veracity, truthfulness, honesty, compassion, tolerance, uprightness, reliability, integrity, justice, etc. therefore, modern Indian society is surrounded with the value crisis in almost every aspect of human life; however, everyone boasts about India's traditional values and her glorious past.

The advanced industrial societies are modern societies Murty brings forth its repercussions the society is facing and the vacuum through which it is going. Industrialization and globalization are also responsible for such alterations spreading the so called modern views, which is further resulted into the value crisis.

Chapter I is an introduction to the present research work. Firstly it has briefly introduced Indian English literary canon and Children's Literature in India; significance of translation and Murty's prominent contribution in it. There is an explanation on the topic chosen for the study and why it is considered as *Diachronic*. It has taken an overview of Indian culture, civilization and tradition and gives a general idea about Indian traditional value system and its significance in modern times.

It has also taken into account prominent points of Indian culture and traditions especially Indian Value System in brief and illustrated the changing values in modern times and helps to understand the significance of literature as a medium of value transmission. There is a brief analysis of changing family system in India as family is a basic system in developing values. It summarised Murty's selected works for present study; stating the details of Murty's life and her relationship with the Infosys Foundation.

With the help of selected writings of Murty, the present research work has tried to comprehend the changing value system in the modern era, its repercussions and limitations. Murty retains the significance of age old traditional values which provide base and meaning to the human existence with apt examples from her own life as well as from her characters. The present study focused on certain aspects of Indian socio-cultural values found in Sudha Murty's selected works to understand the significance of traditional human values in modern times. It also underlined a need in a fine balance between traditional and modern.

Chapter II is about understanding Indian socio-cultural values and their significance in modern times. These Values, in simple words, are all that makes the human existence significant, considerable, meaningful and beautiful. The present chapter takes into consideration major values such as truth, justice, honesty, *aparigraha*, simplicity in Indian context with Murthy's perspective.

The chapter also underlines that today's generation is the torch bearer of its past generations who has to pass it to the next generations with the light more enriched with its own blooming positive energy. The positive energy comes from the enriched traditional socio-cultural values which combine tolerance, togetherness, peace and harmony, compassion, generosity and non-violence, etc. Traditional values lay the foundation to the human personality with its various aspects such as social, cultural, moral, religious, philosophical, etc.

Chapter III mainly comprises Murthy's writing as reflection of Indian traditional values which are presented through her characters and their experiences in her fiction, description of legendary personalities like JRD and Dr. Kalam, her own experiences as a philanthropist, teacher and her reactions to them.

The chapter compares traditional with modern and also gives Murthy's perspective on the same. Her inclination towards rich heritage of Indian tradition and culture; however, she doesn't totally deny the importance of modernity although she underlines its repercussions. However, one could always find a synthesis between the old and new-the traditional and modern. Therefore, most significant quest of mankind is search for ultimate human values.

Murthy's characters in fiction and non-fiction writing advocate Murthy's thinking. Her fiction, the truthful documentation of her own experiences promote her own convictions and beliefs in traditional Indian value system, especially *Daanam*, *Asteya*, *Aparigraha*, *Satya*, justice, tolerance, etc. are few of many such human values Murthy underlines in her writing. Besides observing and understanding life from various facets, one can't help but appreciate her sincere and truthful attempt to extend and pay a tribute to those traditional values with which India has got her present stature as a country with great traditions and culture. However, social changes are gradually occurring and the individual's independent behaviour, action and thinking is accepted.

Chapter IV has been dedicated to human relations in context with selected writings of Sudha Murthy. Human relationship could be healthy and full of happiness if

it is based on human values. Trust, respect for each other, mutual understanding, etc. are the integral values which provide a foundation to the healthy human relationship solidify the mutual understanding between the individuals. If these values are lacking in any relationship, it leads to the attenuation and decrease in the health of any relationship. The disbelief and mistrust in any relationship brings a sense of sadness and discontent. The frankness and openness makes the relationship harmonious.

Most of the writings of Murty evolve around family relationships, especially those which exist between husband-wife, daughter father and mother-daughter, and grandchildren- grandparents, etc. As one knows, everybody has to live within relationships; no one can live in a vacuum. It is essential for everyone to live within relationships. However, to live a happy and healthy life these relationships must be based on the positive human values viz. respect, trust, justice, mutual understanding, love and compassion.

Definitely 'family' is the ultimate centre of all human activities, which is also reflected in the literature. Most of the writings of Murty has central theme of the family relationships as well as the social relationships. Within the basic study of human values as a free and open society, human relationship seeks to enable the individual, groups and communities in achieving highest possible degree of social, mental and physical wellbeing.

Therefore, the human relationship is basically concerned with living a healthy life and betterment of the humanity in total. Reconciling the positivities of the human beings through basic values, avoiding the clashes in the value orientations of an individual and making the life worth living is the motive of human relationships. Lessons of humanity and compassion are learnt by giving importance to the positive human values in contemplation of human relations understood by the experiences of the author in her non-fictional work and by the characters in her novels and short stories. It provides an awareness of the individual towards the positivity of the human relations.

Murty's writing is a commentary on the state and condition of the present day social relationships and the degradation prevailing in it today's scenario which also has a universal appeal. The oppressions, the dominance due to the racial and gender discriminations; and all the other kinds of discriminations prevalent in the society today based on caste, colour, community, education or financial statues, etc. can be

answered through the emphasis on the positive human values providing an insight to the society at large.

What really important about the writings of Murty is that her writings hold a universal appeal that clearly emanates from her rootedness in age old traditional Indian values, it underlines her belongingness to the Indian society and the environment holding up a mirror to our own culture and the society.

The familial and societal relationships are not created, they just exist. One can understand these relationships which are based upon the mutual understanding; it would be natural to have right values such as truth, justice and mutual understanding in these relationships.

These values are absolute, stable and unchanging; if one wants a healthy relationship one has to follow these positive values. These values could be accepted with faith and conviction. One has also seen that recognizing the relationships and having the values in relationships is a mutual activity; an intrapersonal relationship. The recognition of these positive values in relationships, the fulfillment of these values which results in mutual happiness.

These values are essential in all relationships, be it with a small kid in the family, the older generation, the maid in the house, friends or the distant relations. One needs to grow up in relationships to ensure continuity of justice in all the relationships. Justice, trust, mutual understanding, respect are the essential values to make these relationships healthier and happier.

Understanding each other and enhancing the experiences is a natural and a continuous process. Human relationships tend to grow above bodies. But in modern days, one evaluates all our relationships in terms of material things like money, property, success or material gains, etc. In short; the purpose of relationship has been reduced to physical and material needs and its barter.

Therefore, one thinks that working for physical facilities alone is enough or, one assumes that as long as one is accumulating physical facilities and providing the same to the other, the relationship is automatically rewarded. Trust, respect, affection do not find any space in daily lives, however, these are the values which strengthen the relationships.

The fact is, one needs to have the right understanding of the relationship and this right understanding is not ensured by having money. Secondly, one needs the feelings in relationships to be fulfilled, which are also not ensured by sheer possession

of money and the material needs. Therefore, the unwavering trust is the initial value in any human relationship. Feeling of Trust in relationship is understood as an assurance that each human being innately wants oneself in order to be happy and prosperous.

When one is assured that the other is for one's happiness and prosperity, the individual has trust in relationship with others. When this is doubted, the individual lacks the trust and it becomes the source of fear and hesitation which leads to the complete dissatisfaction and unhappiness; it consequently mars the development of mutual understanding and natural acceptance of the relationship and its capability to fulfil the psychological needs and the aspirations of an individual.

One cannot face a problem in any relationship, unless he/she has ended up doubting the intention of the other, no matter how intimate they are. Doubting the others' intentions in a relationship leads to the dissatisfaction and unhappiness. However, a sense of opposition between the individuals is developed. Therefore, one can clearly find out that the problems arise because of doubts and confusions, and it would disappear when the doubt and confusion is replaced with mutual trust.

Otherwise, it would lead to the problems creating a conflict with natural acceptance and leading to the dissatisfaction, unhappiness and disappointment. If someone understands an importance of trust, respect for each other and mutual understanding, the proficiency to fulfill the other's needs save the individual from this unhappiness and conflict in one's self. It is proved by numerous examples in a family and outside a family and in a society. When one explores the natural acceptance of the motivation behind the development of any human relationship is to be happy, satisfied and content and making others happy and satisfied to craft a society a better place to live in which leads to happiness and satisfaction. Value shapes our relationships, behaviour, choices and sense of identity.

Trust comes from having the right understanding of the Intention of every human being. Mutual fulfillment is the natural outcome of a relation correctly recognized and lived. One can understand the importance of 'justice' in human relations. Justice is the recognition of values in relationship, fulfilment and the right evaluation of the fulfillment resulting in mutual happiness. Mutual fulfillment is the characteristic of justice; justice is very essential in each and every relationship.

The human being would be at ease only when one is in accordance with the natural acceptance, which is to recognize and fulfil the relationships with every human being. When one understands the relationship, he/she easily accepts it. When

one is not able to see it, one has a sense of opposition or lack of belongingness. One can see evidence of this today in the families and neighbourhoods.

If everyone understands the other well and has faith in the others, definitely there will be happiness, content and satisfaction in social atmosphere. For any such relationship mutual understanding, trust and justice are very important values. Murty's writing is a lesson of humanity and human values especially the notion of compassion for the fellow human beings. For her the philanthropy and compassion for the sufferers is the chief motif behind human existence and the living makes more meaningful and pleasurable. It gives depth to the intimate human relationships generally within the family as her family is extended with the Infosys Foundation.

Chapter V understands the importance of experiences to gain wisdom in context with the selected writings of Murty. Experiences are the treasure of any individual who cherishes it as the most precious aspect of one's life. Murty uses her experiences as the anecdotes to convey the readers the traditional human values and the age old wisdom. It is evident in the Murty's collection of experiences, the same kind of maturity, wisdom and commitment with the human values could be seen in the leading characters of her fiction writing.

Mostly in her non-fictional writing she has characteristically spent most of her time residing on thoughts and reflections on tasks, events and how she moved forward in her life which inspire the readers the most motivating towards living the value based life. The reflections are based upon the experiences she encountered along the way and the wisdom she gained from living and enjoying her routine life.

She writes about life's ups and downs, wins and losses, despair and joy, celebrations and heartaches, hardships and happiness and provides a captivating and honest reflection of what has shaped her life, beliefs and decisions so far enchanting her readers. She also writes about the enchanting life experiences of others she has come across during her life journey as a teacher, philanthropist, student and as a social being.

Sudha Murty remoulds the folktales and fairytales, Indian and foreign which she came across and present them in a way appealing to the youngsters of India today. These stories are also the storehouses of wisdom and traditional Indian values. Her interaction with the simple humble folk left her wiser theorizing the life's wisdom in truly simple and straight words.

Although, each of her life experiences is so diverse yet simple and one can learn a great deal about oneself and grow as a human being leading a 'value'able life. She wishes to be a good human being by uncovering and sharing the nuggets of wisdom which is so critical to the human existence.

These life stories can help her readers to know what is correct and what to follow in life gaining a greater sense of purpose and direction for living reflecting upon the past and present. It helps to shape the future path to find meaning and inspiration from these experiences and wisdom leaving generational touchstones to give direction and a tangible connection to the next generations. Wisdom and experiences inculcate the human values easily.

Murty's experiences are translated in wisdom building foundation to lead life with positive human values developing an ability to recognize good from bad. Murty's writing is an exact replica of predilection in almost every aspect of human experience; it encompasses all the aspects of human world.

The non-fiction writing of Murty is the outcome of her experiences as a daughter, sister, mother, friend, wife, teacher, student, and most importantly as a philanthropist and a human being. Wisdom can be established through one's behaviour, understanding and with the ability of discrimination i.e., whatever be the knowledge that is gained through; mainly by going through the experiences and observations; they are translated into writing with the spirit of natural acceptance and reflections on the significance of Indian traditional human values.

While reflecting upon the experiences one gains from one's life journey, it is noticeable that they also help to form beliefs in taking decisions. However, each individual's life journey is so different and no two lives are the same, one can learn a great deal about oneself and help to grow as a human being by uncovering and sharing the nuggets of wisdom. That is the reason life reflecting stories are so critical of the existence. These are the compilation of life reflections. Wisdom could be considered as knowledge based on the combination of good and bad experiences. Experiences make the difference and work as a control on oneself. Human beings have a unique identity to learn from their mistakes as well as from that of others. It also comes from one's life experiences.

### 6.3 Findings of the Present Research Work:

- Murty's writing is a fine blend of Indian sensibilities and middleclass moralities, a spontaneous expression of her convictions.
- Her writing appeals the heart due to its lucidity, spontaneity, simplicity, directness, openness and novelty. She is simple and true to life.
- The vignettes in Murty's writing portray positive Indian Traditional values.
- These values help individuals to take the challenges of life positively.
- One has to follow one's convictions in the presently changing socio-culture scenario.
- She also portrays positivity in Indian culture and tradition.
- She underlines the significance of human relationships in a family, and in a society.
- Her writing is equally appealing to the adults as well as the youth and children influencing them to follow the human values depicted.
- It is immensely inspirational and motivational providing an insight into life and human nature; though not didactic.
- Murty with her lucid style creates the world of people from all strata of the society as one of the finest portrayals of Indian sensibilities reviving the ancient tradition of Indian value system.
- She dreams about the brighter future of India widening the vision to see things happening around and people in the surrounding with different perspective as it sharpens the self-examining quality.
- Sudha Murty's enormous respect for learning and knowledge; and her admiration for diligence and hard work is permeated in her writing.
- She describes her deep bondage with her grandparents, parents, children, friends, colleagues and students; thus brings in forth the significance of values in relationships.
- Murty rewrites some of folktales, stories from *Panchatantra*, *Kathasaritsagara*, and *Mahabharata*. While rewriting them she mainly focuses on the reasoning and logic; and avoids magic, gods and goddesses to bring only the positive aspects of those age old stories.

- Murty mainly writes about India and the great Indian personalities like JRD and APJ to inspire her readers by describing their positive values to be followed as their life is a message as it could shape society's outlook.
- The people in her family and around, stories told by her grandparents, her own middleclass upbringing and education have shaped her convictions and life values.
- Murty is a committed teacher and it has provided a solid base to her writings. As a teacher she communicates about her learning through teaching. She inspires, helps and nurtures her students.
- The Infosys Foundation has a great role in her life as she calls it her *mother*. She travelled extensively in the remote areas of disaster stricken areas which was otherwise highly impossible. This enriched her as a person.
- She tried to transmit her life experiences to the next generation inspire them to inculcate these values that could benefit Indian society at large.
- The experiences and the values she portray are deeply rooted in the Indian traditional culture and value system.
- Murty could be hailed as an icon in Corporate Social Responsibility and a role model for today's generation. She helps us to be better human beings.
- Her interaction with various kind of people, her daily experiences have inundated Murty with the richness of Indian culture and heritage.
- Murty underlines the lessons of positivity, and optimism through the depiction of simple and humble person who do not make issue of their poverty or difficulties and lead a healthy and contented life.

#### **6.4 Scope for Further Research:**

There is an extensive scope for future research in the books of Sudha Murty as her writing encompasses the society and culture of India. In India very less work is done in the canon of Indian children's literature so there is a large scope in this area for the future researchers. There is a scope in the field of value education through literature and the study of indigenous culture, and Indianness in her books. Her books could also be analysed to study stylistics, linguistic, pragmatics and a contemporary literature; there is also a huge scope to carry out research on women and women's issues in Murty's books, thus the works of Murty could be helpful in the research

based on language and culture. She has also sympathetically explored the agonized existence of modern man which also led to the sociological study of modern times.

One could study Murty's works with autobiographical point of view. The present research is limited to limited books selected; however in the course of time Murty has authored many other books, fiction, non-fiction and children's books which could also be studied with different perspectives. Murty's writing has been translated in almost all the regional languages, so there is abundant scope in understanding and analysing them in regional languages. Her books could also be analysed under transliteration and translation studies. Few of her writings are based on Indian Mythology, so one could also explore it with mythological perspective.

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