

**RESEARCH ARTICLE****Exploring the Perpetual Hypocrisy in Toru Dutt's "Lakshman" Poem**

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**Abstract**

Today, everything on paper says that every individual is equal in the hands of the law but not in practice. Feminism started when women realized they were not given equal rights and were not treated equally to men. From the time a girl is born, it is believed that she is a man's prophet, propman's, and that is destiny. So many centuries have passed, but still, women are being restricted for things that we believe have changed; no country in the world can ever say that women are free to live, to choose, and to stand up for themselves.

**Keywords.** Gender, Feminism, Hindu Methodology, Equality, History.

**Introduction**

Toru Dutt is a tremendously young author with a good foundation in the history of Hindu mythologies. This profound knowledge of history made her write such lovely poems at a very young age. The poem "Lakshman" is taken from the book *The Ancient Ballads and Legend of Hindustan*, which portrays the conversation between Lakshmana and Sita when Raman was a way to get the golden deer for his wife, Sita. This paper will bring my interpretation of *Lakshman Rekha*, which can be considered as the limits to which women can move or as a border. The restrictions women in society face are the main idea I will study in this paper. The beliefs and practices people have registered in their hearts regarding what women must do should be studied seriously, especially in Hindu mythology, as we see in Ramayana and Mahabharata, and in a grand epic, which is highly relevant in our society, women are portrayed to be other men's propmen's and even under their thoughts. Lakshmana Rekha can be seen as the limiting force on women's women's jobs, dress codes, and appearances. The problems such as forced marriage because of their family situation, women being ill-treated by their husbands and husbands, and husband's how women are not allowed to enter the Hindu temple when they are on their mensuration cycle can be studied under this. These can also be the limitations women faced in older times and still face today. This paper will investigate some contemporary issues and study them from the perspective of the seemingly meager but so much mighty Lakshmana Rekha.

Toru Dutt was born in Calcutta and studied at home with the help of her father and tutor. As it was British India, she was a girl who left her homeland and had a chance to study in another country. She went to Europe when she was 13 years old and went to many countries like France, Italy, and Germany. In those days, women were not permitted to join the University of Cambridge or given any opportunities to do their higher studies. However, in 1872, she was offered to attend a lecture at Cambridge University, which helped her explore a lot with her other colleagues. After

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returning to her mother and motherland, she realized no country could replace India. The more she studied Sanskrit with her father and listened to stories about India from her mother, the more her force on Hindu mythology. Hindustan's ancient ballads and legends show her interest in Hindu mythology, especially Ramayana.

Ramayana is a central and significant epic that tells about the life history of lord Rama and Lord Sita. India has a solid foundation in Hindu mythology, so Toru Dutt progressed from a translator to a poet when she wrote the second volume of Hindustan's ballads and legends. The poem Lakshmana is a brilliant poem with twenty stanzas, which portrays how firm her foundation was in the Hindu culture of India.

In the poem Lakshman, the first line is from Sita towards Lakshman, where she tells Lakshman to listen to the voice of his brother Rama, who needs his help. Instead, I would like to take that line differently, as Sita's voice is the voice of the hopeless women who have not come out of their homes and are still dependent on their husbands or any of the males in the family. Sita tells Lakshman that women have not been given what they want initially. Instead, women are meant only to sacrifice things for their family, only to love their family but not to do what they love. In every family, a woman should be the only person who compromises her feelings for the children, but men escape from these compromises because they go out to work and earn for the family. Sita says listen, listen to the voices of women who have been crying from birth till she gives birth to a child.

Why did Lakshman think that Sita could not fight the demons by herself? Did he think that the women were not strong enough to fight reality? If they think so, why did they not send Sita to get trained in the wars that happened in those times? Day-to-day, men believe that women are not stronger than men. However, they do not act accordingly because men's minds are built on the ideologies that women are strong only in their menstruation time and during their pregnancy time but not in society or not in the street when they walk alone or on night shift work or at midnight party. They believe the limitations of women are to safeguard them, but they do not condition men because they do not want to stop the problem that's happening but only delay it. Imagine a world where men are not allowed to leave their homes after six for the midnight party, night shift work, etc. If that happens, society will have no problem, and new theories and philosophies will emerge in the 21st century.

"He perish" — well, let him die!  
His wife henceforth shall be mine own!  
Can that thought deep imbedded lie  
Within thy heart's most set zone!  
Search well and see! One brother takes  
His kingdom — one would take his wife!  
A fair partition! — But it makes  
I shudder and abhor my life.

From a Hindu standpoint, these are the most important lines that depict Goddess Sita's

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worSita's thoughts as sinful. However, this research paper would like to communicate these lines on how terrified Sita would have been in that situation, and there is nothing wrong with Sita's words towards Lakshman. From Sita's point of view, what she asked is fitting because those days were when people were practicing polygamy. So, Sita might have thought that one brother of Rama needed his kingdom, and the other might needed his wife. There is nothing wrong with Sita's thoughts or actions.

Sita said those words because Lakshman did not leave that place to help Rama but stood to safeguard Sita. It is understood that if Rama dies, Lakshman has to take care of Sita, as Rama said before. In day-to-day life, this occurs: a man cannot live with his wife happily but wants to live with another married woman. There is a new question that makes every female think a lot: can women prevent men from going to other women even though he is married or unmarried? There is an excellent example in Hindu Mythology about polygamy in Mahabharata, where five brothers marry a woman. She has to live with her five husbands, and they also lose their wives while gambling. It shows that Women of that time and this time are being changed from one hand to the other like a bowl. This article tries to draw a picture that women from that time and this time are treated as bowls, property, and sex toys; some do not even consider them to be human. The poems Ramayana and Mahabharata were written in the same period, building the foundation of Hinduism. When five men share a girl in Mahabharata, what is wrong when Sita portrays that Lakshman wanted to own her? People may believe that only women are the cause of all the abuses that have happened and are yet to happen. They may think that women changing their way of dressing can reduce the trouble faced by the world, but this research paper would like to say that through women dressing, we cannot stop anything; it is Definity'sDefinity'sview, and until this point of view is, there will be problems. Only when you and I teach our children about equality, that both boys and girls are equal in the hands of the government, will there be a change in society and the world that will develop and bring happiness to the future generation.

Lord Sita is compared to all the women in the world. Lakshman did not do what Sita said, which has been followed until today. Men have yet to realize what women truly want. Men believe and assume that women want only money and want to live luxuriously, but that is not true. Every woman in the world needs only respect from her husband and society; equality between men and women and men's freedom should also be given to women. Only then will women stop talking about Feminism. However, no country can ever say that women are equal to men. An independent woman does things happily without any criticism from her husband, her family, and society.

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