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The Power of Written Narratives to Convey Queer and Trans Experiences with Reference to the Plays of Mahesh Dattani

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Abstract: Work of literature has the potential to enrich everyone's lives in many ways. Study of literature can take us beyond the limited experience of our lives to show us the lives of others, giving us the experience we may not have in our own lives and the plays of Dattani have set such standard. Mahesh Dattani has taken transgender (*hijras*) and homosexual characters for the development of story line in the plays and the transgender and homosexual characters in these plays best represent the psychological and social problems faced by them in the society while existing with the heterosexuals.

Key words: transgender, homosexual, social exclusion, inclusion

Work of literature has the potential to enrich everyone's lives in many ways. Study of literature can take us beyond the limited experience of our lives to show us the lives of others, giving us the experience we may not have in our own lives and the plays of Dattani have set such standard. After watching or reading the plays of Dattani, the readers/audience are forced to discuss on the issues the plays deal with. If they are informed of the realities of the society, they are made to realize the pains and sufferings the marginalized members of the family or society lives with and the audience or readers are filled with empathy for them. To quote G. N. Devy;

Literature is a kind of knowledge, the knowledge about human existence with reference to the cosmos, nature, society and the inner mental processes of human beings. Besides, it is presented in a manner that is aesthetically remarkable (126).

The relationship between the literature and the society, mainly focus on the purpose or utility of literature in human life. Literature is the artistic form of human life seen through a temperament; hence the study of literature is a study of various temperaments. A writer plays his role in that field. Hence, his writing is not purposeless. Dattani's plays mirror society and help audience and readers understand and connect to the world they live in.

Mahesh Dattani in his plays *Seven Steps Around the Fire*, *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai*, *Do the Needful*, *Bravely Fought the Queen* and *Night Queen* have transgender (*hijras*) and homosexual characters for the development of story line in the plays. In the plays *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai*, *Bravely Fought the Queen*, *Do the Needful*, and *Night Queen* the homosexual characters in these plays best represent the psychological and social problems faced by them in the society while existing with the heterosexuals.

