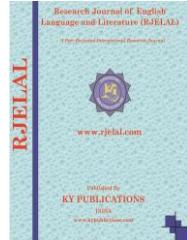


RESEARCH ARTICLE**ISSN**
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2395-2636 (Print):2321-3108 (online)**STRUGGLES OF LIFE IN JOHN STEINBECK'S *THE GRAPES OF WRATH*****G. SENPAGAPRIYA¹, S. SANTHIYA²**¹Research Scholar PRIST Deemed University, Thanjavur.²Research Supervisor PRIST Deemed University, Thanjavur.**ABSTRACT**

The term *struggle* refers to make forceful or violent efforts to get free of restraint or constriction. Writers like Akbar Ahmed, Francisco Jimenez, James Gregory, have written about migrant struggle in their works. John Steinbeck is one of the first famous novelists written about the migrant struggles. *The Grapes of Wrath* depicts the problems of American immigrant workers. America has faced the great depression in 1930's. The great depression has devastating effects in countries. The people have suffered in poverty. So, most of the families have moved from their native place. *The Grapes of Wrath* opens with the vivid picture of Oklahoma who migrant to California. They move to cities for their survival, but they face various troubles in settled place. Their basic needs are rejected by the native land lords and government. They treat migrant as worst than animals. They are working very hard, but they have very low income from the land lords. So this article focuses on the struggles and pain of immigrant workers. The migrant people search there self-identity. *The Grapes of Wrath* is a novel about social protest in California. The migrants portray the contemporary problems of America in his novel *The Grapes of Wrath*.

The following abbreviation is used after the quotation:

TGW - *The Grapes of Wrath*HB - *Holy Bible*

The idea of the struggle for life is closely related to natural selection. In the most general sense, the struggle for life derives from the inequality between the great capacity of organisms to multiply and the limited amounts of space, food, water, and so forth necessary for the normal existence of organisms of any species. *The Grapes of Wrath* describes tenant farmers suffering firsthand, John Steinbeck write this novel with the intention of give voice to the people who are homeless, starve, and face misery by landlords. In 1930's California receive migrant people who were came from various countries, a like they accepted okies from Oklahoma. Because, the Great depression not haunted kansas, texas and parts of new mexico. It

affected Oklahoma also. so, they were evicted by landlords. Migrant moved to california. Because, they saw Advertisement as labour jobs in California's central valley.

Oklahomans made the greatest impact on California and Arizona, where the term okies, denoted as poverty stricken, migrants from the southwest from 1935 to 1940. California receive many migrants; the plurality of the impoverish once came from Oklahoma. Tom Joad from Oklahoma state prison, after serving years for manslaughter conviction, Tom Joad makes his way back to his family. And his family was forcing to go from their farm in the Depression Oklahoma Dust Bowl set out for California along with thousands of others in

search of jobs. Joad travels to meet his family among the migrants who struggles to get food in the hands of landlords.

While they have travel to California in a unsteady truck is long and difficult travel. Grandpa Joad a feisty old man, he does not want to leave his land. After the family's departure he that died on the road shortly the farmers and women's are extremely heartfelt and show the Frustration and utter hopelessness to the migrants. Near California migrants hear ominous, rumors of a existence job market. Their first day in California prove tragic, Joad family members move one dirty camp to the next to find food. The migrant families expect help and protection from the land lords. But they face only struggles.

They move one place to another for the purpose of getting job. People have some basic needs like food, clothes and shelter, but this basic needs also neglect by the landlords. Oklahomans economic conditions stimulate them to move California. They have great hope before left Oklahoma. But it is destroy by the giants- landlords of California. Here migrants treat like an animal, landlord acts like Bed bug, who suck the blood of migrants.

Landlords lead wealthy and happy life, they can't understand the feeling of migrants and their sufferings. Landlords lead luxurious life through the migrant's hard work. But the landlords give only low pay to migrant. In California landlords called the migrants as 'New Barbarians', the migrant workers need only two things, land and food. Migrants live in the corners of California. The migrant laborers are killed by the landlords like shooting rats. These landlords think themselves as a God of the Labors.

The landlords and bosses are unsettling by the conditions that the workers have become usual to in the government camps. "Those folks in the camp are getting used to being treated like humans. When they go back to the squatters' camps they'll be hard to handle" (TGW 380). The 'Camp' got an important place in this novel, because migrant's spends their life and refugees in the migrant camp. They don't treat properly by the government as well as the landlords. This camp settle near the irrigation ditches of farms. Through we can see their unsafe

life, because Migrants working in a pipe laying job. Tom knows that the police plans to destroy their migrants camp. He alert and organizing the men in the camp Tom helps to deflate the danger. The government camp is best one, when compare with others camps the landlords.

Tom Joad cannot survive without steady work. He works as fruit-picker. He knows this work is not permanent because they are hiring to break a workers strike. This circumstance, make them to decide to move towards the camp. Migrant people face numerous societal problems which is unavoidable. Migrant is very poor, dependent while staying in a ruinous camp known as "Hooverville". Tom and several men get into a heat argument with a deputy sheriff over whether workers should organize into a union. When the argument turns violent, Jim Casy knocks the sheriff unconscious and is arrest.

Tom runs into Jim Casy who, after being released from jail, has begun organizing workers, in the process. Casy has made many enemies among the landlords. When the police hunt him down and kill him in Tom's presence, Tom take revenge and kills a police officer. It is unexpected one. So Tom hides himself and his family moves one place to another. They reach boxcar on a cotton farm. Landlords use their power to keep them as civilized animals.

Ma Joad the mother who is pretty much the pillar of the Joad family, no doubt about it. Without her, we don't know how far Joads would get their quest for a new life. "She walked for the family and held her head straight for the family" TGW (169). Ma Joad a determine and loving woman, she is the Backbone of the family. During Joad journey to California, Ma in her desperation to maintain family unity she consistently proves to be the novels. She is the strongest supporter of family and togetherness, Ma joad suggest that even the most horrible circumstances can be weather with grace and dignity. Children are starving, so Ma needs to feed proper food for her family. But neighbor's child who are playing and asking food to Ma. Ma wants to share food to all but it is not possible. This situation reflects how migrants lived in the society. "If you're in trouble or hurt or need go

to poor people. They're the only ones that'll help the only ones" (TGW457). The house wife Ma has approximately pay \$ 20 per week for all essentials needs including the food and shelter for her family. They trade their skills to earn small amount of money for food. Women who find job eventually but equally the number of unemployed increased in the country, although the women who faced heavy opposition. They hold cleaning, nursing or clerical positions that could not easily be faced by men.

Rose of Sharon is the older of the Joad daughters and Connie Rivers' wife. As her name suggests, she is searching for romance and beauty in life. Rose of Sharon is pregnant when she meet him, and she constantly increasing physical discomfort coincides generally with the gradual worsening of the whole family's situation. Once a gay, carefree, somewhat boisterous girl, Rose of Sharon has, but with her pregnancy, she becomes very preoccupy with herself and her future. Encourage by her somewhat timid husband, she becomes petulant and insists that her unborn child will be adversely affect by every jolt and bump of the truck. "She is all secrets now she is pregnant, secrets and little silences that seemed to have meaning. She is pleased with herself, and she complains about things that don't really matter" (TGW 52). Suspicious by nature, she sees every death, whether it is Grandpa's demise or the family's pet dog, as an evil omen of what will happen to child. Once deliver of her stillborn child, Rose of Sharon seems more incline to appreciate and try alleviating the suffering of others. She does not seem repel by the thing of nursing the man, but rather accepts the task as something inevitable, something which simply has to be done.

Rose of Sharon breast feeds an ailing man with her own courageous action. The action of Rose of Sharon compares to Jesus Christ in the Bible. Jesus saves the people on earth. Jesus is widely known, help those in need. He offers food for hungry person, offers cure for those ill and offers guidance to those persecute so, Rose of Sharon compare to Jesus. She helps the man by nourishing him through breast feeding. Jesus feeds 5000 peoples by multiplying the amount of food, fish and wine we can see this from Mathew as,

"When it was evening his disciples came to him, saying this is a desert place and the time is now past send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, they need not depart; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, we have here but five loaves, and two fishes, he said bring them hither to me, and he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, en he blessed, and brake, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled and they took up of the frgments that remained twelve baskets full. That had eaten were about five thousand men, beside woman and children" (HB 9).

As Jesus, Rose of Sharon nourishes the ailing man. Her sacrifices compare to mother Mary. Mother Mary allowing god to take possession of her baby of fertilizes her with infant "Jesus" without such offer by Mary; Jesus may not have been able to born. He may not serve those who are in despair. She doesn't have food. They try to stop the flooding at river. They find a born refuge until rain stops. Ma and Rose of Sharon realize what they must do while seeing a starving man and a boy. So she provides her breast Milk.

John Steinbeck who proclaims his views up on such issues in this *The Grapes of Wrath* he expresses his views through literature. In 1930's education system changed, we can see new development in elementary and high schools. During the great depression, the rural communities have one room school, houses, are still common. However, the modern high school systems which is using in suburban and urban areas. When come to women's right almost it is neglected in California at 1930s. Migrant's life fills with pain and struggles in every second. Finally Tom leaves his problem, because Jim Casy save the life of migrants and helps them to return their own land. He is also ready to die for the sake of migrants. In life nothing is permanent; change is the only thing which never changes in the life of humans. The ending of this book is highly unexpected. The true meaning of the end this novel is about new life, second chances and the innate kindness that lies within all people.

Through the entire novel we can see the experience of Rose of Sharon pregnancy and her struggles. Generally babies represent new life-a fresh start. Unfortunately the baby doesn't make it. In the ending "the grapes" provides hope to all of us. Hard and struggles isn't matter in our life. But love and care make everyone as a strong person. So we can survive in this struggle.

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