

focusing on the themes of anger, survival, and memory. However, what remains underexplored is a comparative, theoretically grounded reading of how Kutti Revathi and Sukirtharani use corporeal metaphors and poetic form to perform embodied resistance.

While individual poems have been anthologized and translated, there is a critical gap in examining their works together through the intersecting lenses of gender performativity, radical self-love, and archival resistance. Most readings tend to isolate their work within either feminist or Dalit frameworks, without addressing the overlap between bodily autonomy, caste marginalisation, and poetic form. This article aims to address this gap by offering a comparative close reading of three poems, Revathi's two poems from “கூட் டிரவேதிகவிதகைகள்” (Poems of Kutti Revathi) under the subdivision “உடலின் கதவா” (“Body's Door”) — “இங் கஓராகவிதகை” (“Here is a Poem”) “சஓழிகள் ஆக் கியஉடல்” (“Body Made of Seashells”), and Sukirtharani's poem “My Body.” It examines how each poet reimagines the body—not as a static site of oppression but as a performative space of agency. The poems “இங் கஓராகவிதகை” (“Here is a Poem”) and “சஓழிகள் ஆக் கியஉடல்” (“Body Made of Seashells”) were roughly translated by the researcher.

The analysis is informed by Judith Butler's “Theory of Gender Performativity,” bell hooks' “Politics of Love and Resistance,” and Anjali Arondekar's “Intersectional Archival Critique.” These frameworks provide valuable insights on how Revathi and Sukirtharani employ language, metaphor, and sensuality to reclaim their bodies and challenge dominant norms surrounding beauty, silence, and submission. By doing so these poems transcend the mere literary artifact, emerging as political interventions calling attention to complexities of inhabiting a body that resists entrenched systems of oppression, including caste, patriarchy, and textual traditions which have historically excluded the body.

Feminist Legacies

Judith Butler's theory of performativity, as developed in *Gender Trouble*:

Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (1990), challenges the traditional notion that gender is a stable, innate identity tied to biological sex. Instead, Butler argues that gender is not something one is, but something one does—it is performative. This means that gender is constituted through a repeated set of acts, gestures, behaviours, and speech that are socially recognized as “masculine” or “feminine” (Butler 25). Butler emphasizes that performativity is the way discourse and actions bring gender into being through repetition over time (Butler 33). This understanding allows for a critical engagement with how bodies become intelligible or unintelligible within cultural regimes. In the context of Tamil poetry, this is particularly relevant, as female or Dalit bodies are often subjected to erasure, hypervisibility, or abject within both literary and social traditions. Revathi and Sukirtharani subvert these conditions by inscribing new embodied narratives in their poetry, disrupting expected scripts of femininity and caste propriety.

bell hooks’ concept of self-love is deeply intertwined with her vision of radical resistance, particularly in the context of Black feminist thought. In her work *All About Love: New Visions* (1999), hooks argues that self-love is not a narcissistic or individualistic pursuit but a revolutionary act, especially for those whose identities have been historically devalued or oppressed. She asserts that “loving ourselves means that we are no longer willing to be victims,” positioning self-love as a crucial foundation for personal and collective liberation (hooks 61). For hooks, love is both an ethic and a practice that enables individuals, particularly Black women, to resist internalized racism, sexism, and dehumanization. She emphasizes that the act of affirming one’s worth in a society that constantly seeks to deny it becomes a political gesture of defiance. Self-love, then, is not passive but rather a form of radical resistance that enables people to care for themselves and others while actively challenging oppressive systems (hooks 67). Through this lens, hooks reframes love as a transformative force central to social justice and community healing. The Dalit woman’s body, often inscribed with historical violence and erasure, becomes, in hooks’ terms, a site of radical love when spoken, celebrated, and defended through language. This love is not merely emotional but structural as it challenges caste, gendered expectations, and the politics of invisibility.

Anjali Arondekar’s approach to intersectionality extends beyond a simple

layering of identity categories to explore how histories of sexuality, colonialism, and archival knowledge intersect in complex ways. Rather than treating intersectionality as a fixed framework of race, gender, and class, Arondekar emphasizes the need to consider how these identities are historically and discursively produced, especially within colonial and postcolonial contexts. In her book *For the Record: On Sexuality and the Colonial Archive in India* (2009), she critiques the limits of identity-based analyses and urges scholars to consider how archival silences and erasures shape the very construction of marginalized subjects (Arondekar 14).

Intersectionality, for Arondekar, is not merely about recognizing multiple forms of oppression but about interrogating the structures of knowledge and power that determine who becomes visible in history and who remains absent. This epistemological approach challenges liberal models of inclusion and instead calls for a deeper engagement with the material and ideological conditions that produce difference itself (Arondekar 22). Through this lens, intersectionality becomes a method of reading and resistance that is attentive to both presence and absence in the production of knowledge. It offers a critical tool for examining how the poetics of Revathi and Sukirtharani refuse singular categorizations.

Poetics of Kutti Revathi

Kutti Revathi's poetics radically reclaims the female body from its historical suppression in Tamil literary culture, where women have been traditionally portrayed as passive, silent, and spiritual rather than desiring, embodied, and vocal. Her work disrupts these norms through rich corporeal metaphors that center fluidity, sensuality, and interiority. In both the poems, "Body Made of Seashells," "Here is a Poem," Kutti Revathi uses images of the sea, sand, coral, and light to articulate a feminine self that is both natural and insurgent. These poems offer a vision of the body not as a bounded entity, but as a dynamic space, constantly in motion, always becoming.

“அவளாக் குள் / உயிருள் எகடலொன் றவைவரைந் திராக் கிறாள்”
(இங் கஜேராகவிததை)—“Within herself / she has drawn a living sea”
 (“Here is a Poem”) where the speaker announces her internalization of the sea. The body becomes not merely a metaphor for nature but a living

ecosystem—teeming with life, refusing containment. The sea does not just exist outside her; it becomes her. Through this identification, Revathi collapses the boundary between the inner and outer world, challenging normative conceptions of feminine containment and modesty. The poem speaks in sensual tones: fish frolic in her hair, moonlight spreads across her skin, and coral shells graze her loneliness. In the moonlit landscape of the body, Revathi finds a space to articulate female desire, not as shameful or hidden but as central to existence. This lyrical reclaiming aligns closely with Judith Butler’s Concept of Performativity, where gender is a stylized repetition of acts across time. Revathi’s poetic body does not adhere to the gendered scripts of submission or silence; instead, it performs resistance by affirming corporeal autonomy. The poem’s refusal to mark the body as polluted, sinful, or invisible directly contests heteropatriarchal constructions of femininity. The speaker does not wait to be desired; she desires, she contains a sea, she radiates light. In this way, the poem “Performs” an alternative femininity that subverts gender norms through language and metaphor.

The second poem “Body Made of Seashells”, continues this aesthetic of insurgent embodiment, but with an intensified engagement with bodily violence and resilience. The ‘polished stones’ that make up her body are sensual and tactile, but also bear the weight of erosion and endurance. The imagery of crabs playing, waves battering the shore, and a coastline made from her own body underscores how this body is not untouched, it has been acted upon, but it does not surrender. The speaker asserts:

“ கரையனைன் உடலென் றுஆக கினால் ... ”

(உரூட் டிவிடப் பட் டசுஓழிகளால்) — “If the shore could be made into my body” (“Body Made of Seashells”). This statement enacts a reversal, the landscape submits to the body, rather than the body submitting to the landscape. In Butler’s terms, the body here is not just formed through external discourses, but also forms the world around it. The poetic voice refuses victimhood; even as the sea attempts to erase her, she becomes the shore, a fixed, visible, resistant edge. The bodily metaphors become increasingly confrontational, as the poem ends with a denunciation of ‘coarse stones’ that lack joy or agency, implying that passivity is the true affliction. The given idea aligns profoundly with bell hooks’ conception of radical self-love as resistance.

For hooks, loving oneself, particularly for Black or oppressed women, means reclaiming the body from histories of degradation. Revathi's poetry performs this reclamation not through didacticism but through sensuous lyricism, where the body is both adored and defended. Her poetics invite the reader not only to witness but to re-feel the body, its heat, its weight, its erotic potential. This is not a body offered to the male gaze; it is a body for itself, a site of agency, memory, and radical presence.

Through Revathi's poems, the feminine body becomes language, becomes sea, becomes resistance. She does not write from outside her body but from within it, the poem becomes her skin, the metaphor becomes her muscle. This mode of writing, in Anjali Arondekar's terms, constitutes a 'counter-archive,' a literary formation that resists historical silencing not by offering facts but by offering felt experience. Revathi refuses to fit within the archive of Tamil literary decorum; instead, she creates a new terrain where the sensual, the violent, and the lyrical coexist.

In both poems, the imagery of movement, touch, and boundary dissolution suggests that Revathi is not merely writing the body, she is writing as body. Her poetics, infused with the ocean's rhythms and textures, enact a rebellion not only against patriarchal values but also against aesthetic forms that sanitize female experience. Through this insurgent embodiment, Revathi constructs a poetics that performs resistance, and breathes agency into the corporeal.

Poetics of Sukirtharani

Kutti Revathi's poetics emerge from a sensual oceanic interiority, whereas Sukirtharani anchors her resistance in the textures of earth, fire, and blood. Her iconic poem "My Body" is a visceral declaration of Dalit womanhood, portraying the body not as a metaphor for nature, but as nature itself—untamed, eruptive, wounded, and ungovernable. The poem resists such essentialism by collapsing distinctions between subject and environment—the speaker is not merely in nature but becomes it. In doing so, they perform a kind of undoing of the rigid boundary between human and nature, male and female, culture and wilderness. The tiger's bloodied mouth, the sap from trees, and erupting volcanoes are all expressions of embodied performances—not symbolic gestures, but acts that blur the lines between violence and vitality. These

corporeal enactments destabilise the hegemonic binaries that often inform subjecthood, echoing Butler's claim that performative acts can destabilise and reconstitute power.

bell hooks argues that loving the self in a context that devalues certain bodies is an act of radical resistance. The poem, in its lush and unashamed portrayal of physicality, even in its messiness and danger, affirms the body as a sacred site. The line "fruit, tasting richly of ginger / break open their fine skins / and put forth their seeds" is a sensual celebration of creative power, invoking a politics of self-love where natural processes are neither shameful nor hidden (Holmstrom 83). This becomes particularly resonant when read as a metaphor for marginalised identities who claim space through the unapologetic affirmation of their own bodily existence, an act of resistance in a world that often seeks to erase or contain them. The poem's imagery, especially the tiger, volcano, and river, works through a multiplicity of temporalities and geographies. Each element evokes histories of colonization, environmental violence, and indigenous embodiment. Arondekar's intersectional lens helps us read the poem not simply as an environmental ode, but as an entangled space where multiple identities and oppressions coexist and resist. For example, the tiger, often symbolic of power and survival in South Asian contexts, drinks from 'swift water-streams' while still marked by violence, suggesting a simultaneous experience of violence and vitality, marginalization and survival.

Corporeality and Resistance: A Comparative Analysis

The poems of Kutti Revathi, and Sukirtharani, while distinct in voice and imagery, converge around a powerful thematic axis: the reclamation of the female body as a site of resistance. This reclamation is not only literary but also political—challenging dominant narratives about femininity, caste, sexuality, and agency. Their works serve as embodied counter-discourses that rupture hegemonic aesthetics and epistemologies in Tamil literature. Revathi's poetics centers on the oceanic, emphasizing the fluidity of female experience. In "Here is a Poem", the body contains the sea, which in turn becomes a metaphor for emotional and sensual interiority. The sensual images of corals, moonlight, and hair echo a form of poetic desire that celebrates the body's capacity for pleasure and transformation. Sukirtharani's "My Body" positions the female body as

earth, fire, and blood, a terrain marked by violence, resistance, and survival. The Dalit body here is not merely metaphor; it is material, explosive, and ethical. Her volcanoes, rivers, and cliffs are not just symbols but reinscriptions of trauma, anger, and power into the literary field. In both cases, the female body is not a passive vessel but an agentive force, not written upon, but writing itself. This autonomy resonates deeply with Judith Butler's theory of performativity, which dismantles the notion of gender as a stable identity. In the poems, the repetition of bodily metaphors, natural imagery, and sensory details serves to destabilize imposed gender roles. The speakers, with their luminous skin and mobile sea-body, volcanic, and blood-drenched landscape perform femininity outside of patriarchal legibility.

Anjali Arondekar's framework of intersectionality urges scholars to move beyond identity categories and attend to the affective and historical dimensions of marginality. Revathi's poetics challenges gender norms and helps her explore sensuality and abstraction with lyrical freedom. Sukirtharani, conversely, is entangled in the material and structural violence of caste. Her embodiment is always shaped by oppression; thus, her resistance is more visceral and antagonistic. But both the poets converge in rejection of purity, a concept foundational to both caste hierarchy and patriarchal control. hooks also insists on self-love as an act of political rebellion. Both poets practice this, Revathi by adorning and asserting the body, Sukirtharani by naming and narrating the body's trauma and resilience.

The materiality of their metaphors also reveals a poetic politics. Revathi's metaphors move like waves, fluid, cyclical, interwoven. Sukirtharani's metaphors are geological, heavy, eruptive, and irreducible. This difference is not merely aesthetic but ideological. Revathi's approach draws attention to the interiority of female experience, whereas Sukirtharani emphasizes its historical exteriority of how bodies are shaped by caste, labor, and pain. Yet, both challenge the politics of silence, and inscribe female agency into Tamil literary modernity.

Conclusion

Kutti Revathi and Sukirtharani offer two powerful, distinct yet complementary visions of embodied resistance in contemporary Tamil feminist poetics. Their

works challenge and deconstruct the hegemonic binaries of body and soul, purity and impurity, center, and margin, and feminine and masculine by centering the body not as an object, but as agent, archive, and author. Through their verses, they articulate a politics of presence and insurgency, carving literary space for feminist epistemologies grounded in embodiment, desire, caste, and sensuality.

Judith Butler's theory of performativity helps unpack the way both poets destabilize traditional markers of femininity through repeated, stylized acts of writing the body. bell hooks' vision of self-love as resistance is crucial to understanding the ethical dimensions of these poetries, where love for the self becomes a declaration of survival and defiance. Arondekar's notion of the intersectional and affective archive allows us to view their poems as historical texts, repositories of caste, gender, and emotional memory that exceed normative structures of documentation.

Both poets offer us a poetics where the Dalit feminist self is a speaking subject, whose corporeal presence interrupts, challenges, and redefines the literary canon. In doing so, they transform the poem into an act of resistance. Their work insists that the body is not shameful. It is not excess. It is text, it is resistance, and it is the future of feminist thought in South Asian literature.

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Embodied Narratives: Disability, Gender, and Self-Representation in the Autobiographies of Malini Chib and Preeti Monga

Suman Chaudhary

Abstract

The intersection of disability with gender remains an underexplored area in academic studies, despite these factors shaping lived experiences. Considering the importance of intersectionality of gender and disability, this essay examines the autobiographical narratives of two disabled Indian women writers—Malini Chib’s *One Little Finger* and Preeti Monga’s *The Other Senses*. Critical feminist disability studies has been employed as a theoretical framework and feminist critical discourse analysis as a research method to analyse the experiences, stereotypes, and negotiating strategies to assert the agency by women with disabilities. The analysis reveals how both writers navigate discrimination in educational institutions, employment, and social relationships through challenging assumptions about disabled women’s intellectual, professional, and sexual capacities. The comparative analysis shows how different impairments create different challenges and possibilities of resistance. Chib’s international education provides her lenses to critique charity and the medical model of disability. On the other hand, Monga’s struggle for economic independence reflects the class intersection with disability. This research contributes to understanding the complex intersections of gender, disability, and self-representation in contemporary Indian women’s lives via highlights how autobiographical practices can function as sites of resistance and reclamation.

Keywords: Women with Disabilities; Autobiography; Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis; Critical Feminist Disability Studies; Indian Women Writers

Introduction

Despite the continuous growth of disability studies in India, autobiographical narratives by disabled women remain limited. Autobiographies by Malini Chib’s *One Little Finger* (2011) and Preeti Monga’s *The Other Senses* (2012) are

two important contributions in this genre. This article analyses how these two autobiographies function as acts of resistance against the intersectional exclusionary practices that position disabled women at the margins of society. Further, this article argues that these autobiographies are not merely a personal testimony but create a space to show their struggle and societal discriminatory practices and pave a path for portraying new possibilities for disabled women's self-representation. Chiba and Monga's narratives question the conventional ideologies that situate disabled women at two extremes, either as objects of pity requiring charity or as inspirational figures (overcoming personal tragedy). Their narratives show how disabled women struggle to access education, navigate with the gaze of pity, and assert sexual agency.

This article is mainly structured in five sections. After the introduction, the second section discusses various arguments made by different critical feminist disability scholars regarding how exclusionary practices shape the identity of disabled women. The third section is a methodological section, which includes the rationale behind selecting feminist critical discourse analysis as the research method for comparative textual analysis. The purpose of this analysis is to analyse how these texts operate as counter-narratives that challenge dominant representations. Further, the fourth section proceeds through four interconnected analyses. The first theme of analysis describes how both the authors challenge medical and charity models of disability by depicting their experiences of making space for themselves. The second theme analyses their experiences of educational and institutional discrimination. The second theme sheds light on how schools and workplaces systematically exclude disabled women through subtle forms of rejection. The third theme includes how economic disparities in relation to the nature of their impairment shape different life trajectories for both of the authors. And the final theme reflects how both authors reclaim sexuality, desire, and motherhood. This directly confronts cultural assumptions that position disabled women outside normative frameworks of intimacy and family.

Through analysis of these two authors' work, this article shows how autobiography becomes a significant tool for disabled women to assert agency. These autobiographies demonstrate how they navigated the intersectional discrimination and complexity of experiences that shaped their personality.

Scholars across disciplines have examined how the politics of the body are always a part of society, where some bodies are subjugated and

discriminated against while others are at the top. One of the renowned philosophers of his time, even Aristotle, classified the women as mutilations of the male body, where the male has been recognised as an active and rational being and the woman is passive and materialistic (Horowitz 185). Similarly, historically disabled bodies have been perceived as cursed, deformed, and deviant from the normal bodies. According to Morris, both the persons with disabilities (PwDs) and women have been put at the margins of the normative curve, representing the negative and unworthy figures in a society (158). Furthermore, critical feminist disability scholar Rosemarie Garland-Thomson is one of the key contributors in feminist disability studies, analysing various historical texts in order to depict how both feminist studies and disability studies can benefit from each other and share a similar trajectory. Feminism has broadened our understanding of what it means to be a woman and worked to reduce negative stereotypes about women. Similarly, disability studies has examined what it means to be disabled, with the goal of helping people with disabilities become more fully included in society.

This intersection of disability and gender creates what critical feminist disability scholars such as Garland-Thomson term 'extraordinary bodies' that exist outside the normative social structure of the society, where such bodies challenge the idea of normative bodies in our society and create the space for discourse on fluid ideas of bodies (30). However, these extraordinary bodies pose a threat to pre-decided ideal bodies, placing them at the periphery of the normalcy curve. Furthermore, she argues that disability does not just function as a biological given but as a cultural construction that intersects with gender to create complex matrices of oppression and resistance as well. Garland-Thomson introduces the concept of the 'normate,' which she describes as a social figure through which individuals can position themselves as exemplars of humanity, typically characterised as male, able-bodied, white, heterosexual, and middle-class. Such conceptualisation automatically positions disabled women as being doubly deviant from normative expectations (xii).

In the Indian context, Indian scholars shed light on the intersectionality of being women and disabled in a patriarchal society, where these two interlinked identities become the source of discrimination and subjugation. Stereotypes and biases regarding disabled women may have emerged due to cultural attitudes deeply embedded in religious and mythological frameworks that often pathologise women and disabled bodies (Ghai 107). Central to understanding this marginalisation is what critical feminist disability scholar Jenny Morris terms

double oppression, where patriarchal and ableist ideologies lead to the creation of forms of discrimination that cannot be understood through single-axis analyses (Morris 162). Building on Morris's work, critical feminist disability scholar has further theorised how disabled women experience unique forms of social exclusion that cannot be captured through a single model of oppression (Wendell 52). The intersection of patriarchal structures with ableist ideologies creates what scholars term double jeopardy, where disabled women experience marginalisation based on both gender and disability status.

In the Indian context, this intersectional lens becomes particularly significant for understanding how caste, class, religion, and regional identities interact with disability and gender to shape disabled women's lived experiences and narrative possibilities. Critical feminist disability scholars such as Tobin Siebers provide additional grounding through his theory of 'complex embodiment' by challenging binary constructions of normal and abnormal bodies. He asserts that disability exists as a complex social location where biological factors interact with social and environmental conditions to create varying degrees of ability and limitation (Siebers 25).

However, in recent decades, despite experiencing various hardships and discrimination, globally disabled women have taken various steps and initiatives to make space for themselves in society. They have started to represent themselves through different forms such as art, academia, cinema, life writing, and using autobiographical narratives to challenge their marginalisation and concretise their existence in a patriarchal-ableist society. These autobiographical texts do not just work merely as personal testimonies; instead, they need to be considered a narrative form of activism. In such a form of narrative activism, disabled women employ storytelling as a political tool to resist dominant cultural scripts that position them as objects of pity, inspiration, or medical intervention rather than as complex individuals with agency, desires, and valuable contributions to society. Critical disability life writing scholar G. Thomas Couser demonstrates how autobiographical narratives by disabled people function as sites of self-representation that challenge medical and charity discourses positioning them as objects rather than subjects of knowledge (Couser 12).

This theoretical understanding of autobiographical narratives as sites of resistance aligns with feminist standpoint theory, which recognises that living with disabilities creates unique positions for analysing and criticising social structures. Rather than suggesting a single disabled standpoint, this theory

acknowledges the diversity of disabled women's experiences based on factors like type of disability, access to resources, cultural context, race, and class (Hartsock 283; Collins 270).

Hence, considering autobiography as a tool of social reform and upliftment, especially in the context of India, where women with disabilities presenting themselves through autobiography is still very limited. This article examines two pioneering autobiographical narratives by disabled Indian women: Malini Chib's *One Little Finger* (2011) and Preeti Monga's *The Other Senses* (2012). Chib, who has cerebral palsy, depicts her journey from childhood through adulthood, challenging assumptions about intellectual capacity and physical limitation while asserting her identity as a writer, activist, and sexual being. Monga, who lost her sight at age five, narrates her experiences of navigating educational institutions, professional environments, and personal relationships while challenging societal assumptions about blindness and women's capabilities. Both narratives emerge from urban, educated, middle-class contexts, providing insights into how class privilege and cultural resources enable particular forms of resistance and self-advocacy while also revealing the persistent barriers faced by disabled women across social hierarchies.

This research has employed feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA), as developed by Michelle M. Lazar, as a research method to analyse the autobiographies of Malini Chib and Preeti Monga. FCDA provides analytical tools for examining how disabled women's autobiographical narratives function as sites of discursive resistance against double forms of oppression. The rationale behind selecting FCDA as a research method is because it aims to "reveal the complex, subtle, and sometimes not-so-subtle ways in which frequently taken-for-granted gendered assumptions and hegemonic power relations are discursively produced, sustained, negotiated, and challenged in different contexts and communities" (Lazar 142-143). This methodological framework enables analysis of how Malini Chib and Preeti Monga employ various discursive strategies to challenge normative constructions of both femininity and ability while asserting their agency as disabled women in Indian society.

The article employs a comparative textual analysis approach, examining two autobiographical narratives by disabled Indian women to understand how different types of impairments create diverse modalities of disabled female embodiment and narrative possibility. This comparative framework allows for analysis of both commonalities and differences in how cerebral palsy and visual

impairment intersect with gender to shape women's experiences and self-representation strategies. The research follows what Lazar terms feminist analytical activism, which functions as a form of critical consciousness-raising through research and teaching that theorises and analyses gendered discourse practices (145-146), positioning this article as both academic inquiry and political intervention that contributes to broader conversations about disabled women's rights and representation.

Challenging Charity and Medical Model of Disabilities through Autobiographical Discourse

The application of Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) to Malini Chib's *One Little Finger* and Preeti Monga's *The Other Senses* reveals the effect of the dominant medical and charity model of disability. However, the act of writing their stories by positioning themselves as authoritative narrators of their own experiences challenges what Lazar identifies as "frequently taken-for-granted gendered assumptions" (142). Further, one of Chib's statements explicitly depicts her criticism of the medical model of disability when she writes that "The doctor who said I would be a permanent vegetable has had to eat his words. I have two master's degrees. I travel, write, and lecture across India and abroad" (193). This excerpt from her autobiography reflects what Couser terms 'narrative prosthesis,' where people use storytelling as one of the tools to challenge the dominant discourse which labels them as objects of medical intervention instead of subjective beings with agency. The use of the metaphor for the doctor 'eating his words' itself challenges the dominant traditional doctor-patient power dynamics, where Chib's story shows the medical expertise as fallible.

Similarly, Monga challenges charity model assumptions through her strategic positioning as an independent entrepreneur. When discussing her past experience, she shares the brutal statement of her husband, who said to her, "Hey you blind bat... he would yell, 'What do you think of yourself? You should thank your stars. I married you... Don't you all ever forget it'" (105). Monga, through her narrative, proved that she is not someone who would live on the pity of others. Instead, she took this as a challenge in 1988 and became a successful entrepreneur and the first visually impaired aerobics instructor in India. The autobiography of Monga shows what Garland-Thomson calls extraordinary bodies that challenge normative assumptions and turn scepticism into motivation (Garland-Thomson 31).