

**UGC MINOR RESEARCH PROJECT**

**‘ CONCEPT OF SELFHOOD IN RAJA RAVI VARMA’S WOMEN  
PAINTINGS’**

BY

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# **CONCEPT OF SELF HOOD IN RAJA RAVI VARMA'S WOMEN PAINTINGS**

## **SUMMARY OF MINOR RESEARCH PROJECT**

The traditional ways of painting in Kerala was rewritten by the great artist Raja Ravi Varma. He portrayed the classical and historical characters in line with western realistic approach which made him stand out from others and made his paintings known worldwide. Women became an inevitable part in most of his paintings. This study is aimed at revealing the identity of women portrayed in Raja Ravi Varma's paintings. Even in these modern times when gender equality is much talked about, several incidents remind us that the identity of women is not given its due importance. Years ago even under unfavorable conditions Raja Ravi Varma gave importance to individual identity of women portrayed in his paintings. The study of this individuality is taken up here.

This project work has been divided into four chapters. In the first chapter an effort is made to get a better insight to the life of Ravi Varma as a painter. Femininity and identity are being defined in the second chapter. In the third chapter, the dual identity of women characters in Ravi Varma's painting has been studied. Here dress code, mental status, facial expressions and postures are being examined. The findings of this study are being concluded in the last chapter.

Following are the findings made from the above study:

- The paintings of classical and historical figures that were confined to the temple walls in Kerala were brought to the vast world of canvas and oil paint by Raja Ravi Varma. He introduced the concept of Indian Women in his portrayal of women.
- Identity is the symbol of individuality. Environment, faiths and values determine identity. The identity of women differs from that of men. The real identity of woman is based on her self respect. Over and above this the identity imposed upon by a male dominant society is also evident. This type of dual identity can be seen in Raja Ravi varma's paintings.
- The way of dressing reflects culture. The dress code of women in Ravi Varma's paintings expresses dual identity.
- The combination of physical and mental expressions of a women also influence her identity. Imposed identity can be viewed peripherally and real identity can be seen indirectly in Ravi Varma's paintings.
- The background and headings of paintings also reveal dual identity.

This study holds great relevance as the study of identity is of great importance in today's world.