

Psychograph of Women characters from the writing of Indo – Anglian Novelist

Anita Desai, Bharati Mukherjee and Manju Kapur

Ankita Rameshchandra Shah

*Ph.D. Registration No.7616, Research Scholar, Department of English, School of Languages,
Gujarat University.*

Under the supervision of Dr. Nilesh Sathvara

Ph.D. Supervisor, Department of English, Gujarat University.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this Research is to examine the emergence of the feminine sensibility as a concept of reality in the fictional world of Anita Desai, Bharati Mukherjee and Manju Kapur They are the one of the most recognized figures in Indo - Anglian fiction. The present work attempts to analyse the psychological study in selected novels. They have added a new dimension to Indian –English fiction by focusing on the inner world of their characters. In a sense, they have ushered in the psychological novel in Indian –English fiction among women writers. The writers like James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence and G.M. Hopkins who used stream of consciousness as a genre for writing, made an impact on her mind, so here it is interested to the inner world of the character instead of external world and the extent of psychological consequences of women characters from the writing of Anita Desai, Bharati Mukherjee and Manju kapur. The Nuances of Indian cultural life provide a living ambience to all three novelist, sometimes accepted, and at times even appalled against but they are perpetually their terms of orientation to distinguish and go through the western ethos.

Keywords: *psychograph, Indo-Anglian, gender discrimination, patriarchal ideologist, hyper-sensitive*

INTRODUCTION

These Indian women Novelists have portrayed women's issues realistically both psychologically and physically in their novels. They broke the literary and social norms of the past. They studied deep into psyche of their characters and projected various images of women and their status in society. They have written about women in a varied cultural perspective. In fiction, some women characters have attitude of rejection and negation of life while others have an affirmation and acceptance of life with a compromising attitude leading to deep sense of fulfilment. In this sense, the postmodern Indian women writers create a pattern of new study because they have dared to shatter the myth of a male dominated social system. They laid a firm foundation in the realm of female study in Indian Literature in English.

The novels in the previous era were mainly concerned with pre - independence problems and external aspects of society and little with the human psyche. Now it has become more sociological and psychological. Indian woman writers had started questioning against the prominent domination. Now they are not the puppet of man's hand. Women writers depict the suffering of frustrated women. They give the voice to the voiceless women and their issues. Patricia Meyer comments, There seems to be something that we call a women's point of view on outlook sufficiently distinct to be recognizable through the countries. The women writers deal with the women's issues. They give the voice to the voiceless woman through her novels. Their work presents the struggle, suffering, identity crisis, rebellion and protest, man-woman, relationship child marriage, alienation and loneliness.

Indian English woman writers portray the Independent woman who is not in conflict with the male, but accepts responsibility for herself. The term such as stress, feeling of isolation, alienation, identity and psychology has its crucial effect in present life style. Stress has its adverse effect in one's life which creates problem in long run. Assimilation from social and psychological view point Manju Kapur is one of the best known celebrated post-independence writers exploring Sociological and psychological sensitive issues. Thus conflicting internal and external experiences, pressures and expectation produce anxiety. The term such as stress, feeling of isolation, alienation, identity and psychology has its crucial effect in present lifestyle.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ANITA DESAI

Anita Desai is one of the celebrated Indian fiction writers. For three times she was shortlisted for the Booker prize. She holds unique place among novelists of India. She is the recorder of dilemma faced by a person in Indian urban setup. In her career as a novelist she has published ten novels and other literary work. In her novels female character play important role. Her female characters are rebellious and rebel against the traditions. Her female characters are sensitive and as a consequence, they are unwilling to adjust with the reality. Anita Desai is not believer of feminist movements. She makes it clear that her interest is with individual man and woman, only the individual, the solitary being, is of true interest. One must be alone, silent, in order to think or contemplate or write. She introduces a new age of psychological realism in her novel Cry, the Peacock (1963). Anita Desai like Kamala Markandaya has made human relationship as a central of her fictional subject. She is mainly concerned with the journey within her characters, the main protagonist being a female character. Anita Desai's novels present the agony of existence in a male dominated society. In her novel the struggle of the protagonist, as heroic attempt finally brings glory to the individual and add dignity to the spirit of freedom.

A.N. DWIVEDI HAS RIGHTLY ARGUED:

Anita Desai is the first among Indian English novelists to have forcefully expressed the existential problems of womankind; she is the first to have laid bare the inner recesses of the human psyche; she is the first to introduce the deep psychological probing of her characters. Anita Desai moves inward in her subtle psychological probing and grapples with the abnormal or the hyper-sensitive to lend a dimension of psychological depth and a poetic parable of consciousness to the Indian novel in English. Her work projects the difficulties faced by her characters in shedding their fears and insecurities, which results in disruption of their family ties.

The investigation of women's experiences in the two major spheres that are the private or domestic and the public sphere, examine how their spatial existence and movement are constrained by the patriarchal ideologies enforced by men in the community. Also investigate the interaction between oppression, suppression, and self-determination experienced by women in both the domestic and public spheres. As India is still governed by traditional values, women find it difficult to escape from their gendered roles as mother, daughter, and wife. If any attempts are made by them to transgress into the public sphere and to seek equal status with men, they have to face isolation or self-destruction.

Here, in the novels, we see women's marginalization through the use of third person narration, the female characters' accounts of their past memories and the use of narrative voices of the female characters. What I will like to argue is that though attempts have been made by women to escape from the patriarchal society, they cannot achieve total independence and liberation. Personal adjustments have to be made by women to connect themselves to the community so as to avoid being isolated and estranged.

Anita Desai is an eminent contemporary Indian English woman writer of fiction. She has written on a variety of themes but a majority of them are based on women's sufferings. She has a unique inner approach to women psyche, which, she explores with careful sensitivity and relevance to the modern times. This study concentrates on the pivotal roles of female characters in her novels and their status in the intricate realm of her fiction. The unique inner approach of Anita Desai to women psyche shows her deep understanding of women's problem in India. Selected novels of Anita Desai have been studied along with the novels of Bharati Mukherjee, Kamala Markandaya, Shashi Deshpande, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, Shobha Dey, Arundhati Roy and others. This work, in fact, is the critical psychoanalytic study of Indian fiction in English. The suffering of woman made her psychic and meets to tragedy.

Anita Desai asserts that her protagonists are new and different.

“I am interested in characters who are not average but have retreated or been driven into some extremity of despair and so turned against ... the general current”.

In Anita Desai's novels *Cry the Peacock*, *Voices in the City*, *Fire on the Mountain*, She has explored the psyche of both Childless woman and women with Children. She has covered women of all age groups and types. The women characters of Anita Desai undergo a strange psychic experience and suffer from failures and frustrations. They undergo trauma due to their hypersensitive nature and their insensitive husbands. Most of the female characters of Desai are either women with affluent background or are mere house-wives. The women in the novels under study are not those who play dual roles as that of a house-wife and a career woman in order to suffer from the tension of being over-worked. The restricted surroundings make the women suffer intensely, due to which they react silently or violently. This leads to incompatibility between the husband and the wife

The novel, “*Cry, the Peacock*”, depicts incompatibility between the husband and wife as there is no harmonious relationship between them. Maya suffers from hypersensitive fantasy and is unable to lead a normal life with her husband.

In another novel, “Voices in the City”, Desai deals with the psychological trauma of an educated woman Monisha, married in a conservative Hindu Joint family this is not to her Refereed (Peer Reviewed) Journal www.ijellh.com 759 standard. There is no mutual love and understanding between the husband and wife.

According to Dr. Suresh Singhal, She represents the tragic intensity of conjugal incompatibility suffered by a woman, in the Indian context, who becomes emotionally, psychologically and physically vulnerable to her husband, and at the same time, paradoxically, that the security of the wife’s role justifies and maintains relations between man and woman on the basis of the family institution rather than on the basis of real human involvement with each other

Anita Desai’s “Where Shall We Go This Summer?” is yet another novel depicting the mental disturbance of Sita, the protagonist. Sita’s husband Raman, a busy factory owner, belongs to an upper middle class and being engrossed in his work has no time for his wife. She feels frustrated due to the neglect by her husband. Sita is already burdened with four children and is expecting her fifth child. She becomes psychic and starts smoking in order to overcome the neurotic disturbances and their psychological frustrations and abnormal sensitiveness led them to the act of homicide and self-annihilation.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MANJU KAPUR

Manju Kapur is another notable novelist. She is a professor of English at Miranda House in Delhi. She speaks for middle class. *Difficult Daughters* is her first novel appeared in 1998. The novel received the commonwealth prize. Her second novel *A Married Woman* is her second novel. It is a seductive story of a love at a time of political and religious upheaval. It is told with sympathy and intelligence. It is the story of an artist whose canvas challenges the constraints of middle class existence. Manju Kapur describes through her protagonist. “A woman should be aware of self-controlled, strong willed, self-reliant and rational, having faith in the inner strength of womanhood A meaningful change can be brought only from within by being free in the deeper psychic sense”.⁶ Inter caste marriage, family bond; male-female bond and co-existence of past and present are some of the important issues handled by Manju Kapur in her novels. She has narrated her women protagonist as a victim of biology, gender, domestic violence and circumstances. She has written only five novels. *Difficult Daughters* (1998), *A Married Women* (2003), *The Immigrant* (2008), *Home* (2006) and *Custody* (2011). Kapur thinks that, there is a man within every woman and a woman in every man. When, manhood is questioned womanhood is fragmented.

Manju Kapur has given us a trail of female characters; some are shown as highly modern, but who cannot come out of their feministic trait. If *Virmati* is taken in this cadre, she cannot be considered as a woman of Indian culture; modernity doesn’t mean usurping another’s husband! In *Ida*’s words, she loves her mother as a mother, but not as a woman. A woman cannot be called simple or innocent when she can marry somebody else’s husband.

In this novel the novelist brings out powerfully the psychological problem of woman and discusses it artistically without crossing the barriers of art. The novel also transcends feminine constraints and raises issues which the human beings in general encounter in their life. The novelist aim is to show one should take refuge in the self. It means that woman should assert and ascertain herself, so she can overcome the suppressing forces.

A novel which brings the political scenario before us with characters like Virmati and Ganga having psychological conflicts, and Kasturi, Lajwanti and Kishori Devi striving with sociological conflicts of the day. A novel which brings the political scenario before us with characters like Virmati and Ganga having psychological conflicts, and Kasturi, Lajwanti and Kishori Devi striving with sociological conflicts of the day.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF BHARATI MUKHERJEE

Mukherjee's works are essential contribution to the multi-ethnic literature of United States. Her short stories present the experience of Indian immigrants in a multi-cultural country like America. She advocates how the people from various countries are weaving America as a multi-textured and multi-cultured country. Mukherjee's works are essential contribution to the multi-ethnic literature of United States. Her short stories present the experience of Indian immigrants in a multi-cultural country like America. She advocates how the people from various countries are weaving America as a multi-textured and multi-cultured country.

Bharati Mukherjee is a strong voice of Indian diaspora in America. She celebrates a different diasporic identity in her writings and tends to focus on cross cultural issues where diaspora means 'gain' and no 'losses. She illustrates the fluidity of cultural boundaries, putting hybridization, migration, ethnicity and globalization at the top of her literary agenda. Bharati Mukherjee is a strong voice of Indian diaspora in America. She celebrates a different diasporic identity in her writings and tends to focus on cross cultural issues where diaspora means 'gain' and no 'losses. She illustrates the fluidity of cultural boundaries, putting hybridization, migration, ethnicity and globalization at the top of her literary agenda.

Bharati Mukherjee is one of the contemporary Indian women writers who has settled in USA as American citizen. Unlike other diasporic writers, Mukherjee likes her host land more than her home land. As a diasporic novelist, Mukherjee stands apart from other writers. Instead of highlighting the immigrants' alienation, nostalgia for their homeland, she highlights assimilation, adaptation and acculturation as a solution for immigrants to overcome them.

The characters of Bharati Mukherjee tell tales of gender, racial and ethnic complications shedding light on the challenges faced by immigrants but the focus of this paper is the feminist aspect of her work and the application of the Situated Knowers Theory to her novels and characters. Furthermore, as Situated Knowers, the characters of Mukherjee have knowledge regarding the social repression and extreme conditions faced by women but they acquire the status of "survivors", rising from the ashes of emotional and corporal form of challenges (Myles 107). Bharati Mukherjee helps her characters to evolve their identity but her female characters gain more spotlight than her male characters because the stories are more about the struggle and subsequent success of women in their identities

The story is told from the first-person point of view by the female protagonist, who undergoes multiple identity transformations in her quest for self-empowerment and happiness. Mukherjee uses the cinematic techniques of flashback and cross-cutting to fuse Jasmine's past and present. The novel is steeped in violence. The story is told from the first-person point of view by the female protagonist, who undergoes multiple identity

transformations in her quest for self-empowerment and happiness. Mukherjee uses the cinematic techniques of flashback and cross-cutting to fuse Jasmine's past and present. The novel is steeped in violence. It is a poignant story of survival, expediency, compromises, losses, and adjustments involved in the process of acculturation to American life. As Jasmine says in the novel,

“There are no harmless, compassionate ways to remake oneself. We murder who we were so we can rebirth ourselves in the images of dreams.” It is a poignant story of survival, expediency, compromises, losses, and adjustments involved in the process of acculturation to American life. As Jasmine says in the novel, “There are no harmless, compassionate ways to remake oneself. We murder who we were so we can rebirth ourselves in the images of dreams.”

CONCLUSION

The study of their huge fictional works in context of psychological explorations of Indian women is the aim of present research work. Thus these three fictionists have been studied from the view point of psychological explorations of Indian women these three great Indian women novelists handled various themes regarding women's life and status in male dominated society. For example gender equality, her alienation, anxiety, insecurity, fear her marital familiar and social relation, sufferings and exploitation, struggle for new identity, psychological disturbance in her mind, mother-daughter relationship, disharmony between husband and wife's relationship etc. Through these themes these women novelists have tried to project various images of women. For example the image of traditional, modern and new, liberated, immigrant, middle class, sensitive, sterile, emotional and self-sacrificing woman.

There is a gradual acquisition of new values and ideologies related to liberty, equality, nationalism, a rational outlook and a zeal for social justice. Unlike the previous generation which accepted a secondary position submissively they look for companions and support. These women writers try to show the changes during the last four decades by portraying their protagonists' diversities in their attitude in searching for their identity within themselves. All these writers recorded the marital disharmony and family disintegration that are the consequences of the changing outlook in women. An attempt has been made in this research work to portray the changes that have come about in society through the writings of Manju Kapur, Anita Desai, and Bharati Mukherjee.

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