



AN OVERVIEW OF THE INFLUENCE OF INDIAN WOMEN WRITERS ON THE LITERARY CANON

RAGINI SHARMA ¹

¹ RESEARCH SCHOLAR, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, RADHA GOVIND UNIVERSITY, RAMGARH.

ABSTRACT:

Women have a natural talent for creativity. The Indian society is largely characterized by a significant power imbalance, where men hold greater authority and status than women. Both the male ego and the empowerment of women have been some of the most significant topics that Indian female authors have addressed. Through the medium of their work, they have persistently endeavored to call into doubt the unquestioned rule of mankind. After growing up in a society where males control all the authority, these writers have spoken up about the challenges, failures, and hopelessness they encountered throughout their formative years. Many people believe that the paintings represent a rejection of the expectations and traditions that society sets on women. They say this since they are used in the paintings. These writers shed light on a society in which males wield the bulk of the power because they described it. They have exerted a great deal of effort in order to highlight the feminine identity seen in their works. Through their writing, Indian female writers have consistently advocated for gender equality in the literary world. The writers in this anthology have taken a deliberate approach to addressing gender-related topics in their own works of writing. In addition to this, they have made an attempt to reinforce the idea that language or geography should not be used to categorize the work that is done by women. It can be concluded that their writing has had a significant impact on the experiences of women in Indian English literature and beyond.

KEYWORDS:

EMPOWERMENT, ATTEMPTED, CONSISTENTLY, SOCIETY AND FEMININE IDENTITY.

PAPER ACCEPTED DATE:

19th July 2024

PAPER PUBLISHED DATE:

22nd July 2024

PAPER DOI NO: <https://zenodo.org/records/12793925>

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the novel as a literary genre in this country happened at a later time compared to other nations. Before the start of the book, a number of talented female writers contributed short stories in various languages including Marathi, Kannada, Urdu, Bengali, Hindi, Malayalam, and Tamil. Throughout history, women have played a vital role in the preservation and transmission of oral storytelling traditions. These traditions encompass a wide range of narratives, such as songs, tales, legends, and myths. During a specific period in India, there was a dissemination of information, which led to the creation of poetic and theatrical adaptations of these stories. Considering the significant difference in educational achievement between women and men, it is not surprising that women faced challenges in creating extensive written works. This factor contributed to the novels' ongoing lack of recognition. Creative ability is something that comes naturally to women. India has a long-standing practice of males having more powerful roles than women in our culture. Our is a legacy that has been passed down from generation to generation. Attempting to do something that is both unique and

cerebral in this setting may be pretty difficult.

All of the literary works that Indian women authors have produced have received recognition from both readers and critics alike. Through their creative works, female authors make an effort to convey the bias, dissatisfaction, and anguish that women experience in their professional lives. In their creative works, these female authors push and go beyond the conventional gender standards that have been established. Their work reveals a distinct mixture of dissatisfaction and a strong longing for liberation from regimes that are repressive. The work that they have done has brought to light the complicated difficulties that women experience when they are stuck between the limitations of a patriarchal society and their own aspirations and feelings of longing. The tyranny that an Indian woman experiences at the hands of her husband and children does carry a significant amount of weight. Over the course of many years, they have been subjected to the impact of society expectations, and as a result, they have grown to embrace the concept of being dominated and take solace in their own struggles. It is customary for women to fulfill the roles of a competent homemaker, a

loving parent, and a provider in the society in which they live.

A wife and mother are often required to display values such as service, sacrifice, obedience, and tolerance if they are to fulfill their roles. The system that is now in place has had an impact on Uma's mother, just as it has on countless other people. Her kids' uniqueness, in addition to her own sense of self, has been utterly abandoned by her. She has fully let go of both. Those women who acquiesce to conventional authority are seen to be betraying their daughters, according to this point of view.

A COLLECTION OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE WORKS BY INDIAN WOMEN AUTHORS

There were a number of notable Indian women authors who wrote in English, including Nayanthara Seghal, Shashi Deshpande, Kamala Markandaya, and Arundathi Roy, amongst others. There were many additional writers. The actual fight that women have been waging for equality and the abuses that they have been subjected to have been the primary topics of debate. One of the things that sets novelist Shashi Deshpande different from other feminists is the fact that she examines the challenges that women face in our society, which is dominated by males. Throughout her body of work, she investigated the myriad of mental, emotional, and spiritual challenges that women confront in contemporary patriarchal society at the present day. The work is primarily centered on the unyielding resolve of the main characters to achieve independence and liberate themselves from the constraints of tyranny. This is the fundamental emphasis of the work.

The ultimate goal of their organization is to challenge and alter the norms that have been created by society in relation to women. She does an in-depth investigation of the struggle for women's autonomy and dignity. The book "That Long Silence" written by Shashi Deshpande in 1988 depicts the narrative of Jaya, a housewife from Bombay who comes from a rich upbringing and makes the decision to stay quiet throughout her whole life. In this segment, she examines the possible impact on women's independence that could arise from marriage. The author's intention was to shed light on the systematic oppression that women face in domestic settings and male-dominated societies through her literary works. The characters in *The Binding Vine* (1993), *Mira and Kalpana*, both undergo traumatic experiences - Mira within her marriage and Kalpana outside of her marriage. These experiences leave them grappling with overwhelming feelings of despair. The novel is told through the perspective of the main character, Urmila. This book delves into the subject of rape, regardless of whether it takes place within or outside of a marital relationship. *Roots & Shadows* (1983) delves into the narrative of a woman who challenges societal conventions and breaks free into the vibrant urban landscape.

The female protagonist in Deshpande's works frequently experiences a life filled with constant changes and chaos.

Throughout this narrative, Indu encounters numerous obstacles and restrictions due to the pervasive gender disparity within society. Driven by a desire for self-improvement, she liberates herself from a deceptive relationship with Narendra. Nayanthara Seghal is a writer who skillfully depicts the obstacles encountered by women in a society that is heavily influenced by patriarchal norms. She is committed to creating a literary landscape that recognizes and appreciates the skills and qualities of women on par with those of men. The work skillfully captures the essence of Indian femininity. The focus of her works is primarily on female characters. She provides a thorough and knowledgeable perspective on the subject of women's liberation. Her perspective on feminism has grown stronger and more assured due to her difficult marriage.

Seghal's works, spanning from *A Time to be Happy* (1957) to *Mistaken Identity* (1988), portray female characters who methodically record their journey to defy societal norms and uncover their true selves. Motherhood has also been subject to evaluations and criticisms. Seghal's perspective on parenting is situated within a broader discussion. She primarily concentrates on women and their value systems. The novel "The God of Small Things" (1997) by Arundathi Roy prompts readers to reevaluate the traditional depiction of women in literature. Ammu, our protagonist, fearlessly challenges societal norms as she embarks on a life-changing adventure with her partner, who comes from a marginalized caste. She fearlessly questions the societal expectations placed upon her as a divorced mother of two children. She highlights the importance of recognizing women as unique individuals with their own perspectives and convictions. Just like men, women possess the power to shape their own destinies. Each person has their own individual personality that sets them apart. Roy sought to advance feminism in her literary works while simultaneously questioning long-established societal norms. She is committed to examining and addressing the systemic injustices experienced by women in Indian culture, with a focus on improving their perception. Arundathi Roy carefully studied and evaluated the previous social system. She is a dedicated advocate who consistently focuses on women's struggles and social inequalities.

Nectar in a Sieve, a book written by Kamala Markandaya in 1954, digs thoroughly into the difficulties that women confront in today's society. She illustrates that women possess unique human traits, creativity, and skills that are equal to, if not superior to, those of males by discussing the emotional and spiritual reactions that women have to their situations. She does this by diving into the emotional and spiritual responses of women. They are able to preserve their resilience in spite of the enormous problems they are confronted with. It is possible that some people can get consolation and direction in their religious beliefs, which might assist them in navigating their goals. Specifically, she discusses the predicament that Indian women find themselves in, which is that they often find themselves

caught between keeping traditional traditions and accepting contemporary ideology.

One of Kamala Markandaya's primary concerns is the challenges that women experience when confronted with terrible conditions, and she does an excellent job of depicting this element. Clearly, the figure of Rukmani is a symbol of the traditional values and beliefs that people have. Female authors had a difficult and important challenge when they attempted to shed light on the inner workings of a society that was ruled by males. The patriarchal ideas that are prevalent in Indian society have been a barrier to the appreciation of the works of Indian women authors. By adopting a more diverse style in their writing, these female authors took the initiative to confront cultural bias between the sexes. They did this by expanding their range of writing styles. Another significant issue that was addressed by the female authors was the question of "Style in language." As a result of Jane Austin's immaculate writing style, she established a foundation that would serve as a model for aspiring female authors everywhere. Her attitude was real, graceful, and appropriate, and it elevated the bar to a level that others should strive to achieve. Instead of the symmetrical and patterned sentences that are often used by male authors, loosely connected clause sequences in women's writing may serve as an alternative to these types of sentences.

Numerous works created by Indian women authors address the continuous influence of patriarchy in Indian society and concentrate on the challenges that are faced by disturbed housewives. All of these works are authored by Indian women. The women Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, and Arundathi Roy are examples of female role models that resist the expectations of society and demonstrate the strength and perseverance that they possess. It is because every one of these outstanding women has a unique personality that they are able to prevail against the conventions that are associated with patriarchy. Their ambition is to be able to live their lives according to their own preferences. They demonstrate attributes like as fearlessness, independence, and strength that are admirable. They are driven by a strong desire to be independent and to live life to the utmost extent possible. Through the medium of their work, these female authors tackle the problem of prejudice and sexism that exists in our society.

CONCLUSION

The representation of women in literature has undergone substantial transformation during the last fifty years. Female writers have deviated from the conventional portrayal of strong and selfless female protagonists. Instead, they have started to delve into the depths of complicated female characters that are defined not by their victimisation, but by their interior battles for self-identity. The female characters of the current era

assert their independence and defy conventional gender norms such as motherhood and matrimony, which is a sharp departure from those who came before them.

The purpose of this paper was to offer a complete understanding of the manner in which female authors from India shed light on the power dynamics and subordination that women suffer in a culture that is ruled by males. At the same time as each individual piece of artwork in the feminine cosmos performs an important function in reorganising and altering the deeply embedded emotions of women, it also provides them with a possibility to freely express themselves. There is no denying the fact that women have started to show interest in the craft of writing. There is no difference in the value of writing produced by women and that produced by their male colleagues. With regard to the socioeconomic position of people and the variety of people, we are now at a crucial juncture. Recognising the tremendous impact that female writers have had on the development and general distribution of the literary genre is an essential step that must be taken seriously. The purpose of conducting experiments is to investigate topics such as gender, class, caste, identity, and individuality. These experiments are carried out utilising a wide range of strategies, methodologies, and participants. There is a wide library of Indian novels written in English, and Indian women authors have made major additions to this collection. The novels written by women in India have played a crucial role in reshaping the perception of the country's history. These novels have acted as a catalyst for social change by highlighting the presence of women, addressing their needs, and empowering them to have a say in shaping the path of Indian history.

REFERENCES

1. Asthana, S. (2024). WOMEN IN THE EYES OF INDIAN WOMEN NOVELISTS IN ENGLISH- A BRIEF OVERVIEW. *International Journal of Novel Research and Development*. Volume 9, Issue 3, ISSN: 2456-4184.
2. Creative Books, 2003. Print.
3. Deshpande, Shashi. *That Long Silence*, New Delhi: Penguin India, 1989. Print.
4. *Indian Women Novelists*. Set III, Vol.4. New Delhi. Prestige books. 1995. Print.
5. Pathak, R.S. *Indian English Literature: Marginalized Voices*. New Delhi:
6. Roy, Arundhati. *The God of Small Things*. New Delhi: Indialnk. 1997. Print.
7. Sahgal, Nayantara. *Plans for Departure* 1989. Print