

Concept of Women in Indian Society

Abhinav

Assistant Professor

Baba Mastnath University, Asthal Bohar, Rohtak

Abstract: This title is concerned with the theory of feminism feminist theory become prominent in modern and post modern literature. Women's liberation movement is aiming at an upliftment of women in society. The first voice rose by many wall stone craft in "A Vindication of the Right of women (1792). She demanded equality in each sector of education, polices and economics. Some male novelist and writers came in a strong favor of women liberation, John Stuart Mill, expressed a serious concern about women's operation in his 'The Subjugation of Women' (1869). The term feminism is worldwide revolutionary ideology. It is a socio-political movement that aims at the liberty of women from patriarchal society. It is also an equivalent to humanism. Its puts a profound impact on the debate concerning the relationship between culture, genders and creativity and knocks down the claims of a particular culture.

Keywords: Feminism, Liberation, Subjugation, Oppression, Patriarchal, Humanism Culture, Gender.

Introduction: Feminism is an ideology against exploitation and oppression of women in patriarchal society. A highly concern goal of feminism is to establish a equal environment in society for women and it has been minutely handled in the works of Indian English literature especially Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai , Bharati Mukherjee, Gita Hariharan, Kamla Markandaya, Shoba De, Sunita Namjoshi, Arundhati Roy Mahashweta Devi, Nayantra Sahgal etc. These Indian women reformers have greatly portrayed women's issues both physically and psychologically in their novels. They totally broke the social norms of the past. They studied deep about the psycho of their characters and explored images of women and their status

in society. They have expressed about women in a varied culture perspective. Post modern Indian society women writers create of pattern of new study because they have dared to shatter the rumor of male dominated social system. This study attempts to focus on different images of women in Indian English fiction.

Anita Desai is one of the most prominent Indian woman writers who have written by and large about women characters through her fiction. She is very distinguished Indian novelist. She has been recognized as such both in India and abroad. Kiran Desai focuses on the personal struggles of middle class women in the contemporary India as they attempt to overcome the societal imitations imposed by a traditional bound patriarchal society. Her major novels move around women's character although she is pre-occupied with the theme of incompatible marital couples. Most of the Desai's work equal with the complexities of modern culture far from feminine perspective.

The struggle of women writers in Indian literature for their equal right to claim a niche was to make their voices hard. Their social position changed in line with the contemporary social structures. The general situation was oppression and suppression and male domination in a patriarchal society. In the Vedic period girls enjoyed a honorable position in the society. Women were considered as the embodiment of culture, beauty and wisdom. Maitrayee and Gargi were the renowned scholars. Saraswati, Vak, Lopamudra, Ubhya Bharti, Ghosa, Apala, Surya, Savitri, Juhu, Yami etc. were renowned poets, whose verses were incorporated in the Vedas and Puranas. In later Vedic period, the status of women started to deteriorate. Men established themselves as the master of the society. in later Vedic period, evils like polygamy, subjugation of women, child marriage, widowhood came into existence. This brought a halt in the creativity of women.

In the Puranic and Samitri ages, the system against women becomes rigid. Manu Smriti was a great blow for the status of women. it removed many restrictions

on the day to day activities of women, especially so on widows. in the text of manu smriti referred as god. As a consequence, woman becomes submissive, illiterate, weak and dependent. In the epic age the status of women improved in some extent. Girls got freedom to choose their husbands when Buddhism came into existence; it opened different opportunities for women in their personal lifestyle. This gave rise to many learned women who became proficient in the sacred texts. When Muslim invasion came in India, women lost their freedom in a large scale. Condition of women became pathetic; social civil like sati-partha, child marriage came into existence. They plunged into darkness, ignorance and inaction.

Although, feminism in India has got momentum in the last 100 years of western influence, it already existed to an extent in the earlier periods, as evident from the contemporary Indian writings in various languages when the British came in India, the condition of women was at the worst level. During the time to British rule such freedom fighters and writers Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Maharishi Karve, Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar. They truly focused on the hardships of the women culture and advocated for education. In the Indian literacy world, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee wrote the first Indian novel in English 'Raja Mohan's wife', which deals with the contemporary Bengali society and made women the centrifugal. It explores the story of a house wife who revolted against ill treatment. Contemporary Indian writers showed urban as well as rural life, highlighting social evils like subjugation of women, superstitious and plight of the lower class women. In 19th century Indian women writers depict a new awareness in the society with their writings. Maharishi Lal observes the following about these works:-

Romantic attachments that she read in charlotte Bronte or George Eliot were immensely alluring to the intellect but totally false to her own position as an object agreeable to an arranged marriage.

Though flights of fancy the woman writer could transform some of her insistent reality what she managed in these transformations was re-telling of her own life in one way or the other.

They tried to tell the work the problems women faced and disadvantages they suffered in a Hindu world. These women writers tried their best to give form and shape to their autobiographical accounts, which attracted publishers, both in India and abroad. Sarojani Naidu known as the nightingale of India, depicting varied feelings of love. She made an attempt to depict the plight of Indian women as well in her writings.

In early 20th century Indian women writers in English art also autobiographical projections. Taru Dutt's Bianca, or the young Spanish maiden, Krupobai Satianthan's Saguna, Kamala and the story of a conversion, Swarna Kumari's. An unfinished song, Cornelia sorabji India calling and India recall etc. are some of the noted examples of this category. The main theme of these novels of the early women writers was the new Indian women emerging through the social changes. In English, the emergence of women writer was very productive because it gave more opportunity to girls to participate in social and public life. The formation of Indian women's Association in 1917 by Annie Besant was an important event in the national awakening and women's resurgence. It stimulated the people to liberate women from their trapped life. A Bengali woman writer Swarna Kumari Devi worked for the upliftment of poor widows and used her writing for the spread of social reforms among the Indian culture. Her novel "Unfinished Song" supporting women's right. Ramabai's 'Sthri Dharma Neeti and high caste hindu women, which described women's education and emancipation many periodicals were edited by women writers on women issues. Muslim women participate in political struggles too in a large extent.

Awakening of Feminism: In the literary context the awakening of feminism can be traced to the middle of the 19th Century. 19th century period witnessed the emergent of a set of intelligent, educated, independent woman in the western countries, having new thoughts. They were confirmed that women are capable of doing things as efficiently as man. This kind of awakening in women led to a form of social revolution. They believed that women should take part in new moment and analysis about social problems. Many of women voiced their problems, feelings, experiences desires and failures in there critical writing. To avoid the embarrassment in their surroundings, they disguised themselves in away as fictional heroines of their writings and displayed their own experiences. This revolutionary and global idea was coined as feminism. This word 'feminism' was first used by the French dramatist, Alexander Dumas, to designate the emerging movement for women's suppression and oppression in society and aware about men and women to change this situation. Today feminist writers are working towards the emancipation of women. Today, feminism is a struggle for the achievement of women's equality, freedom of choice and dignity.

Many Indian English women writers portrays their experiences and real life situation through characters specifically created for this purpose. Rashmi Bajaj a Indian writer make the following statement-

"We have here increased social consciousness a strong awareness of Identity as women, championing of women's cause, problems of alienation and identity crisis, daring portrayal of sex and emphasis on the study of personal relationships".

Many Indian women poets in English make their depth in 1960s. Noted among them are Kamla Das, Margret Chatterjee, Monika Verma, Ira De, Roshan Al Kazi, Sujata Modagil, Mamta Kalia, Gauri Deshpande, Sunita Jain, Suniti Namjoshi, Indiana

Dhanraj Gir, Shri Devi Singh, Gauri Pant, Chitra Parshad, Narsima Aziz, Vimla Rao, Malathi Rao, Dorothy Sinha and so on. They are confessional. They shared their personal experiences, displaying feminine sensibility. They create the theme of man-woman relationship. They present frustrations of women living in a male dominated society and the deal with themselves like love, lust, sorrow, sex, grief etc. They do not hesitate to discuss on childbirth, masturbation, and menstruation, lesbian and so on. However, the post independence presents a better intelligence of Indian women writers.

Conclusion: The above study depicts that women writers have gone up from difficult to Tribal and rural areas too, but all of them have expressed their interest for women and their problems in different subjects, they have touched upon is a great contribution in creating awareness for the contemporary women all over the globe. Feminism is a phenomenon of social change that describes the liberate women from the shackles and a tight grip of male dominated society, enabling them to clean the right as free human beings. It intends to rebel against hostile environment in which a woman is forced to leave the main perspective of feminism is to improve the status of women and to provide equal opportunity and dignity with men. Feminism aims at compulsory education for women and improves employment. The writers, who were influenced by the feminist Idea, involve themselves in expressing their ideas in there writings, which had led to the development of feminist literature. The forgoing study explores that Indian women writers in English have reached a remarkable height of achievement. They have understood the techniques, graft, bone and structure and have applied them in their writing. They have chosen various things like the male counterparts, but they have given special prominence to the role of women. They have created a new tradition in the Indo-English literature.

References



1. Malashri Lal, Women writers in Indian English, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, 1995, p. 5.
2. Elaine Showalter, The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature and Theory, New York, Pantheon, 1985, p. 5.
3. Rashmi Bajaj, Women Indo-Anglian Poets: A Critique, Asian Publication Services, New Delhi, 1996, p. 28.
4. Sunandha Chavan, 'The Fair Voice', A Study of Women Poets in English, Sterling Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1984, p. 9.
5. Quoted by A.N. Dwevedi, Studies in Contemporary Indo-English Verse, Vol. 1, 1984, p. 22.
6. Quoted by K. Neera Bai, Women's voices – The Novels of English Women Writers, Prestige Books, New Delhi, 1996, p. 20.