ABSTRACT

CROSS-CULTURAL CONFLICT: A STUDY OF INDIAN DIASPORA IN THE NOVELS OF SELECTED WOMEN NOVELISTS

Introduction (The Problem / Subject Matter):

The research was undertaken to explore cross-cultural conflict in the novels of selected Indian women novelists against the backdrop of Indian diaspora. The novels are, Kamala Markandaya’s The Nowhere Man, Anita Desai’s Bye-Bye Blackbird, Bharati Mukherjee’s Jasmine, Zumpa Lahiri’s The Namesake and Kiran Desai’s The Inheritance of Loss.

These women novelists share a common heritage in that they emigrated abroad from India. Consequently, the aim of this research was to probe into their selected novels and discover the new world with new experiences they opened up. Subsequently, the research also aimed to trace out the attitude of these writers towards the entire issue of cross-cultural conflict. The purpose of this research was to unfold the new world of immigrants and new perspective on their treatment of nostalgia, rootlessness, pain and loss before the readers. These aspects are seen in different degrees and from different perspectives by these writers.

Many renowned critics have shed light on the works these novelists. However, the purpose of this research was to look afresh at the works of these authors and discover those areas which have remained untouched and thus unexplored. In the course of this research, the researcher has taken a new critical stance, which has not been undertaken so far to the best of the researcher’s knowledge.

Statement of the Research Problem:

Cross-cultural conflict is the clash between two cultures. Of course, culture is the prime identity of human life. Cross-cultural conflict is the testimony of painful experiences that imbibed by immigrants, who have encountered several
problems as psychological, social, global, economical and emotional on an alien land. Their painful experiences inspire many diasporic writers to share their varied experiences with world through their words. They have disclosed the futility of Western glamorous life and baseless romantic views.

Cross-cultural conflict escorts the problems like psychological, sociological, ideological, and religious and so on. Cultural problems are the highest flying distinctiveness of Indian diaspora. Rootlessness is the most significant issue in the life of the immigrant. Cultural differences highlight many issues in the life of immigrants and they hang between homeland and adopted land, and remain rootless in their entire life. The immigrant lives rootless and dies rootless. Rootlessness becomes the emblem of their life. The entire vigor disburse in the adjustment of alien life and culture with nostalgic feeling for motherland.

Objective of the Research:

The present research aims to focus on exploration of cross-cultural conflict in Kamala Markandaya’s The Nowhere Man, Anita Desai’s Bye-Bye Blackbird, Bharati Mukherjee’s Jasmine, Zumpa Lahiri’s The Namesake, and Kiran Desai’s The Inheritance of Loss. Subsequently other objectives are: to find out the positive aspects of contextualization of their literary works; to place their works in international perspective; to cast light on geographical or cultural perspectives; and to bring out identity crisis and inventing the seeds of Indian sensibility in their fictional texts.

Hypothesis:

Now a day, human is walking his life in the visible and the invisible difficulties. There are scores of issues that are responsible for the agony and tyranny of human being. As a result, he is swinging like a pendulum between the pleasurable pain and the painful pleasure. The world becomes the global village, but human being is taking pleasure to give pain to other helpless human beings
through his various means. Subsequently, he forgets to globalize the human values.

**Significance of Research:**

The present research is an attempt to contribute the world of literature from various aspects. Primarily, the work is based on cross-cultural conflict and Indian diaspora. All women novelists chosen for the research work are immigrants. Their second home is adopted land, so the experiences are the tale of their life. It has autobiographical bearings. Therefore, the research is not merely an examination of textual elements, but it has the ground of reality. It is the contribution to the study of Indian diaspora with feministic approach. Again, it might be feministic Indian diasporas. This work has tried to manifest authentic circumstances of immigrants on the alien land. It presents the need of global vision and universal brotherhood for peace and healthy life to touch the new horizons of human life.

**Methodology of Research:**

The present literary research is analytical. Therefore, the research is analytical in the nature. The research is based on the critical analysis of the selected novels of women novelists. The researcher has used the selected novels as a primary source and critical books, articles, research papers, journals, book reviews and e-content as secondary sources. Apart from this, the researcher has used the analytical, interpretative, descriptive, socio-cultural, comparative, psychoanalytical and textual analytical methods to complete research work.

**Scope and Limitation of the Research:**

**Scope:**

The present research attempts to study the cross-cultural conflict in the selected works. Besides, it contextualizes these works as diasporic and immigrant narratives. The research does not take into consideration any other literary and non-literary aspects represented in the selected works. Hence, the focus of the
research is studying and comparing the representation of immigrant psyche in the works of these writers. It examines the dialectics of diasporic and immigrant writing in which there is both longing for the native land and desire to embrace the cultural, social, political and economical milieu of their present host country.

**Limitation:**

The research is based on original works of the selected novelists. It also seeks resourceful assistance from critical works on these writers and the issues of immigrants and diaspora. It does not require any fieldwork. So also, the study is limited to the study of selected literary works and the issue of cross-cultural conflict and immigrant psyche.

**Chapterisation:**

The present study comprises seven chapters. It is textually organized and analyzed. Each chapter is organized to provide a concrete a definite body of knowledge that can contribute to the development of the ideas relevant to research problems.

**Chapter I: Introduction**

The Chapter I is Introduction. It is introductory in nature. It puts systematically and analytically brief history of Indian English novel. It deals with the biographical information of these women novelists. It displays the factors that affected of these writers forcing them to be immigrant writers.

**Chapter II: Quest for Identities with Racial and Cultural Conflicts: A Study of Kamala Markandaya’s The Nowhere Man**

This chapter depicts the estranged life of the immigrant on the alien land and other social and psychological problems of immigrants. Shrinivas, the protagonist of the novel, loves England from the bottom of his heart. Although, the local English society does not accept him. The author narrates pathetic,
gloomy condition of Shrinivas, who becomes the victim of racial hatred. He lives marginal, neglected and rootless life

**Chapter III: Exile and Cultural Encounters: A Study of Anita Desai’s *Bye Bye Blackbird***

This chapter puts forth psychological picture of the immigrants. It deals with various themes as East-West encounter and plight of Indian immigrants in London. The novelist depicts the psychological problems of Indian immigrants against the backdrop of cross-cultural conflict. Here the storyline presents basically cross-cultural conflict, which is the tension between two opposite cultures. Loneliness is the result of inner and outer circumstances. It is graphically presented in the storyline.

**Chapter IV: Quest for Identity and Cross-Cultural Genetics: A Study of Bharati Mukherjee’s *Jasmine***

This chapter presents the story of a Punjabi widow, who reinventing herself in America. It manifests East-West encounter and cultural conflicts in various forms. It has tried to attempt metamorphosis of Indian woman on the alien land with difficulties. It has also concentrated the problems of Jasmine as the immigrant on adopted land.

**Chapter V: Changing Identities and Cultural Dislocation: A Study of Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake***

This chapter has explored the cultural dissonances experienced by the immigrants, who caught between the culture of their Indian birthplace and the unfamiliar ways of their adopted home. Apart from this, it has focussed a story of Gogol, a second generation immigrant, who must navigate both traditional values of immigrant parents and the main stream American values of their peers. He leads a liberal life of Western society. He understands the importance of good cultural aspects in the life of human being. All the humiliations and psychological restlessness have been illustrated minutely.
Chapter VI: Loss of Identity and Cultural Predicaments: a Study of Kiran Desai’s the Inheritance of Loss

It is an artistic picture of the consequences of immigration and illegal immigration on other land. Illegal immigration has been discussed with critical endeavour. The old cook and his son Bju, retired judge Jemubhai Patel, his orphan granddaughter Sai have been depicted with cross-cultural theme and phase of problems. A global issue in economy is responsible to scratch the wounds rather than heal them.

Chapter VII: Conclusion

The final chapter, Conclusion, brings together all the strands in the thesis and highlights the new stance and perspective of these writers and the differences that emerge therein. These writers have a common rich heritage and respond in a rich and varied manner to the experience of the migrants. Like expatriate writers, they introduce entirely new world to the readers. Their fictional world is a world of reality; a world in which they live. These writers also try to resolve the issue of cultural clash in their own way.

Major Findings:

It has explored the world of immigrants, their issues and problems related with migration on the alien land. This study has been done on the canvas of Indian diaspora and its further consequence is cross-cultural conflict. It covers the issues of identity crisis, alienation, isolation, racial hatred, rootlessness, transculturalism, and metamorphosis of major victimized and suffered characters, nostalgia for home land, racism, and psychological, social, personal, cultural problems on adopted land. It has also studied how the novelists mark and explore identity problems. It has tried to show human virtues, which are essential for universal peace, humanity and globalization.

All the women novelists have explored the issues of cultural conflict in their particular era and time. They have explored painful experiences that are the outlet of their emotional violence on the alien land. Although, they have tried to insist the importance of universal brotherhood for universal peace and humanity. It has attempted to make human values, virtues, global to create harmony on this
beautiful planet. It has been tried to show that humanity is significant than any other issues in this world.

The present research work has tried to explore longingness towards homeland and soil. Therefore an immigrant does not belong to adopted land, not lived in homeland. So he is from ‘Nowhere’ and remains rootless like pendulum between the homeland and the adopted land. Subsequently he behaves like a Trishanku.

**Scope for further Study:**

The study may serve as a platform for further research related areas. The other works can be studied from the point of view of cross-cultural conflict. It would help to enhance the knowledge regarding the culture, society, religion and politics of the contemporary relevance on the part of the researcher. The same is applicable to the works of other writers.

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