



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**English Literature**

**EXPEDITION OF THE EMERGENT DISPUTABLE WOMEN IN MANJU KAPUR'S NOVELS**

**KEY WORDS:** Emancipation, Exploitation, Idealism, Pragmatism, Patriarchal Hierarchy

**Dr. S. Vanitha**

Assistant Professor, Department of English (SF) Vellalar College for Women (Autonomous), Thindal, Erode, Tamilnadu.

**ABSTRACT**

All domains of the woman's growth, social, political and psychological study helps to explore the expedition of the emergent disputable women in developing India. The icon of women presented under analysis is determined, challenging, daring, dissipated, power-hungry and bold. As Swami Vivekanandha declared: 'Educate your women first and leave them to themselves', Kapur's women use education as bludgeon to win and shape men to their view-point and get the best out of them. In Kapur's novels the concept of traditional Indian woman becomes out dated and the modern woman turns into trendy. In the present scenario, the educated women govern and tackle the problem daringly to reach their emancipation.

Women are fundamental part of human civilisation. No society or country can ever progress without the dynamic contribution of women in its overall development. Women are conscientious to play only the traditional roles. Though women are known for self-sacrifice, amendment, adaption, and concession; still in many part of the Indian society, they have been considered inferior than men for many years. Because of such type of lowliness they have to face various crises in their life. Consequently, they are in situation to go extra miles than men to establish themselves counterpart to men. Women were utilized only as medium to keep family happy and healthy, but were not able to shape themselves. Even in the new changed vibes her pose is still unpleasant.

Women face a lot of confrontation because of their conjugal responsibilities, cultural and social specified roles etc. So, women aware of their exploitation, rebel against the social issues and cultural philosophy which control their liberty and status. They attempt to voice their bitter feelings of protest. Further, they are reaching forward to accomplish equality of status in almost all vicinity through their education and economic independence. Today, education provokes and possesses significance to women in family and society. The educated women conscious of their uniqueness try to assert their rights as a human being, and substantiate to fight for equal treatment with men. It is true, "women's education, their rights of citizenship and alternative legal rights and specifically their profitable employment and economic independence have staggeringly influenced their outlook on life and stepped forward for challenging the society."

The women of present era strive to break free from conservative constraint and voices for women's rights, progressive marriage arrangement and changed sexual perception. The aspect which considered new in their actions and statements differ from the existing norms and historic traditions. The woman in the Indian context is quite different from the western woman, though undoubtedly influenced by them. The dawn of courageous woman in India is a reality as the concept and position of womanhood transform in the modern milieu. Though, the innovative change in women's thought has its variables; the results are relative depending upon the individual. The modern women are a fusion who despite of all kinds of upheavals, are able to strike a balance among diverse spheres of their life.

Altogether women strive hard to be the beloved daughter, the darling sister, the dotting wife, the loving mother above all an individual with her own mind and intellect. Each woman manifests the modern man to look up to her not as a submissive and weak individual, but as someone who has potential and can change the traditional whimsical thoughts and age-old customs and beliefs that fetter her pursuit for recognition, fame and honour. Kapur being an Indian woman writer has been a part of this transition. Hence, she felt more

proud of the fact besides being woman. She has endowed with supremacy to bring before the society the assertiveness and confidence of fashionable women. She voices that a woman is equally competent just like a man. In recent days, the woman has not only confined to household activities but also has become a direct money earner. The woman of the modern era thinks on different lines and moves forward to get succeed in her life. Such notions and facts are effectually depicted and incorporated in the novels of Kapur. She explores the feminine subjectivity and applies the theme that ranges from childhood to complete womanhood. Through her novels she spreads the message of what actually the challenging woman is.

In her first novel *Difficult Daughters* there are two kinds of women. The first category is the traditional women like Kasturi, Ganga and Kishori Devi and next is the challenging women viz. Virmati, Ida, Shankutala and Swaranlata. The traditional women described in the book are like the clouds of ignorance, but the exigent women are enlightened with modern views. The modern women constantly engage in a battle against ideological imposition and power oppressions of patriarchal system. However, they finally come out with what they claim to achieve. This shows how the writer articulately delineates the female characters in a realistic way. The women in her novels personified as the protesting females, struggle against the social evil customs to break the tradition of silence. At first, the story attempts to link the readers with Kasturi's cruise in the direction of a traditional eminence; secondly through Virmati's journey towards independent status and further with the third generation woman Ida's isolated and new life. But among the three women it is Virmati and her daughter Ida who defies and breaks all the fetters of traditionalism and looks like modern woman at the time of freedom movement in India. In general, *Difficult Daughters* is the anecdote of the rebelling life of three generation women – Kasturi, Virmati, and Ida.

Following *Difficult Daughters*, the second novel *A Married Woman* underlines and bespeaks the central concern for Indian modern women. The text deals with Astha, a spirited woman protagonist and gives us revolutionary themes, and the plot centres on a woman's obsession with love and lesbianism. The protagonist is job oriented, rebellious, sophisticated, thoughtful and modern in perspectives. Astha, the young heroine is the representative of the woman striving to gain their space in life and socio cultural domains. It is another new aspect of the novel that tussles for women's recognition in the society. It divulges the struggle of woman against the traditional patriarchal society. In quest of her new life, she forges many relationships with different persons. She represents the entire woman race in the changing Indian society where the upper middle class educated woman who, although financially independent is still facing the problems of adjustment between idealism and pragmatism.

The next novel, Home creates an impact on the society. The theme of the novel is different from her earlier novels. It is the pictorial flight of joint family. The novel presents the problems of amalgamated journey in the joint family. Similar to Difficult Daughters, Home unfolds the story of three generations but it expresses the strained relationship in the joint family. The novelist portrays the clashes in the pooled relations and generation gap and delivers the drastic truth of the love in the kindred.

Next to the succession of Home is the phenomenal novel The Immigrant. It sketches the awful exploration, the immigrants experience and the dilemma of immigrant women all the way through Nina. Nina, a middle class woman is bound in shackles of cultural differences in the alienated land. Nina unlike Virmati, Ida, Astha and Nisha countenances different sought of experience in her life. In all aspects, the novel is an excellent presentation of cultural conflict between the east and the west. The sequence of events unfolds Nisha's cruise to obtain the juncture of motherhood and identity in her life. It depicts the struggle for subsistence in the foreign land. Nina's jaunt to Canada and getting trapped into an aloof life is heart rendering. Later to vindicate her standoffish life she starts her journey in search of her new life.

Identical to Nina's aspiration glide, Shagun and Ishita in Custody undertake a different pathway to fulfil their craving life. Shagun paying no heed to her husband and little children embarks towards modern and luxurious life through extra marital affair. Shagun's exodus from her arranged marriage life and defrayal in love marriage is a diverse motif in the novel. Later the fight for custody of her children is an exotic concept which emanates right the way through the plot. On the other hand, Ishita an educated and middle class married woman sustains the equivalent motherhood problems as of Nina in The Immigrant. But Ishita's life is dissimilar to Shagun. Ishita's infertility tosses her out of the first marriage and travels long to find her identity through the second marriage. She accomplishes her long hankering motherliness in safekeeping Shagun's daughter Roohi.

The protagonists of Kapur's novels are mostly skilled, aspiring individuals unveiled on the stage within the confines of a conservative society. Their education leads them to self-regulating assessment for which their family and society become intolerant of them. Similarly, they start up a long journey during which they countenance various struggle between tradition and modernity. The novels envisage the expedition of all the principal women characters of how they are caught in the tribulations and how they are yearning and fighting to be a part of the political and intellectual movements of the day.

The novels divulge that the male characters intrude on the psyche of women to an extent that all the major women characters whether they are Virmati in Difficult Daughters, Astha in A Married Woman, Nisha in Home, Nina in The Immigrant, Shagun and Ishita in Custody, all are on the verge of secluding themselves from the company of man. Only so, the major women characters are stepping out of their house, and searching a place for themselves in the male dominated civilization.

As a consequence, through Virmati, Ida, Shakuntala, Swarnalata, Astha, Nisha, Nina, Shagun and Ishita, the study implies only with the spread of education, the present scenario has changed. Currently, the women are managing to find their own self in family and the society. They also try to live according to their own liberty. So this is not the time to keep women behind the screens or in confine. The orthodox thinking of the male sphere is obviously needed to be changed. Today, women desire for their due and rightful place in the society. If they do not get their goal, they will rebel against and get whatever they want. In a nutshell, the

contemporary woman is necessarily a pro-woman but not entirely an anti-man. Each woman's tangible step moves towards an enhanced human relationship. Only so, the modern feminists and women writers focus on the challenging women's fluctuation and portray them realistically, psychologically and, physically in their works of art.

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