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## **A Portrayal of Para Norm of Feministic Identity in the Works of Bharti Mukherjee**

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### **Abstract:**

The present paper fixates on sensibility exploration of women characters in the novel of Bharati Mukherjee, *Desirable Daughters* (March, 2002). Feminine sensibility required women to show sundry qualities in their demeanor such as modesty, piety and compliant, which highlight the moral standard for women. This is a story of such a woman character that is flipped between two different cultural rooms to outlive. The novel withal fixates on the prevailing conditions of three sisters and their techniques of handling circumstances. Protagonist Tara feels that her life after espousment is not going smoothly and she decides to ambulate out of her marital life. Tara is very much distressed with her cultural displacement and fragmentation. In spite of her consent to accept and adopt incipient culture, she is unable to manage with the traditional mould of an Indian woman. Tara is a woman migrant who belongs to cosmopolitan world having wealth, encephalon and resplendency an accoladed life as the wife of a Silicon Valley entrepreneur. She belongs to more than one nation or culture. She has the experience to live among the people of different countries/cultures. Bharati Mukherjee's imagination of feminine sensibility lies in that edifying synthesis of promise and zealousness, quandary and predilection, positivity and promiscuity. Bharati Mukherjee has been prosperous in highlighting the rudiments of feminine sensibility through her unique literary exploration of female characters. Thus, in *Desirable Daughters*, Mukherjee demonstrates the efforts to probe identity of three sisters who face both modern as well as traditional worlds and their transmuting values.

**Keywords:** Cultural Displacement, Feminine Sensibility, Imagination, Multicultural, Multiple identities, Optimistic.

### **Para norm of feministic identity in the works of Bharati Mukherjee**

Feminine sensibility describes women's capacity to be influenced by the male dominated society around them. It withal directly relates their emotional faculties with their moral magnification. It required women to show sundry qualities in their comportment such as modesty, piety and duteous, which highlighted the moral standard for women. Bharti Mukherjee's latest novel *Desirable Daughter* is an endeavor of her longing for her domicile-land which seems as her key involution in this novel. This is a story of such a woman character that is flipped between two different cultural rooms to outlive. The novel is very

proximate to the novels 'Difficult Daughters'(1998) of Manju Kapoor and 'Enslaved Daughter' (1998) of Sudhir Chandra which are an endeavor of search for protagonist roots and identities. It is an astronomically good mixture of imagination and historical facts of the novelist Bharati Mukherjee. The novel has definite the feminine stand that develops near understanding with the novelist and her emotional longing. The novel 'Desirable Daughters'(March,2002) is a story of the persons who have come to live perpetually in a nation that is not their own. The novel fixates on the posture of three sisters and their techniques of handling with circumstances. The designation of the novel, suggests that one type of daughter, which parents would be proud of and for whom every parent would long for. The denomination is ironical, consequential and pertinent. It shows that manners and deportment of daughters must be desirable because daughters are the object of family status, that is to verbally express, in tune with the rules genial by the society and not deviant. The three sisters are grand-daughters of Jai Krishan Gangooli and the daughters of Motilal Bhattacharya belong to a traditional Brahmin family of Bengal. Name of three sisters imagined on the designation of Hindu Goddess Shakti, i.e. Padma, Parvati and Tara. They are a cumulation of modern and traditional prospect. They endeavor to adjust with the transmuted synopsis and this is the only thing a woman could do. Thus, the research article endeavors to explore the sensibility of women characters in the novel.

### **Realisations of the Study**

In the novel, Bharati Mukherjee reveals the instant cultural negations which are required by the immigrants. Tara is very much distress with her cultural displacement and fragmentation. In spite of her consent to accept and adopt incipient culture, she is unable to manage with the traditional mould of an Indian woman. However, Tara, the protagonist in the novel is unable to adjust herself within the conventional gender role of a mother and wife. The traditional setting of Tara ascertains her to reckon that "she isn't, perhaps never will be, modern women". Tara feels ripped between the double place and its culture that brings her nothing else than the scattered identity. She reminds the alluring mountain resorts of India in San Francisco. She is acutely cognizant of her cultural differences. Her habitation at San Francisco seems as a woebegone home. She verbally expresses: "I am not the only blue jeaned woman with Pashmina shawl around my shoulders and broken down running shoes on my feet. I am not the only Indian on the block. All identically tantamount, I stand out, I am convinced. I don't belong here, despite my political leanings; worse, I don't want to belong." (Desirable Daughters, 79) The engenderment of identity transpires as a conventional process, perpetually converting and never genuinely total, in the novel. Tara is a woman migrant who belongs to cosmopolitan world having wealth, encephalon and comeliness an accoladed life as the wife of a Silicon Valley entrepreneur. She emigrates after espousing Bish Chatterjee, and reaches America submerged in Indian culture presenting the comportment of the representative Indian wife. Back at home, she was circumvented with Indian tradition, culture and values though directed by the Catholic nuns during her edification and she had led a secured life. Thus, Tara reckons the jolt between liberation and tradition as she endeavors to meet prospects that are often wildly conflicting, when she reaches America. But then she at once endeavors to embrace American culture taking benefit of the chances it strives and affords to assimilate as best as she can into the incipient culture. She is perpetually cognizant of being different, yet how much ever she strives to amalgam with the multicultural population of San Francisco. She finds it infeasible to expound to American friends of comparatively classless, mobile society how static and relegated Indian identity is: "The

dusty identity is as fine-tuned as any specimen in a lepidopterist's glass case, confidently labelled by father's religion (Hindu), caste (Brahmin), sub-caste (Kulin), mother-tongue (Bengali), place of birth (Calcutta), formative region of ancestral inception (Mishtigonj, East Bengal)....." (78) It goes on perpetually in ever diminishing circles. Tara is always on the active interpreting manners, names and accentuation whenever she meets strangers of Indian inception, albeit Bishwapriya Chatterjee and Tara had left Calcutta decades ago. But Tara's frustration at her strives to assimilate and Bish's lack of it eventually guides to a divorce. It marks her liberated self and transition into an incipient identity. She understands the double standard for sex, the inequitable distinction between male and female sexuality in the Indian culture. She anon acknowledges that her sexuality is withal a component of her identity, which she can possess and hold, after being faced up to the same men who had been courteous towards her during her espousment. She engenders an incipient sexual identity that does not come in clash with her prior self-insights. They only get surmounted from the incipient and different insight. In equipollent projection are the two men in her life who betoken two branches of cultures and her cultural predicament. She is in the trap of identity crisis as she dwells between America and India. In the truculent country Tara kens her restrictions – she kens how hard it is to emerge from the culture and tradition; she understands how infeasible the pull of the past is; she feels the constraints of an uprooted self; she understands the circumstances and apprehensiveness of an isolated self in an unfamiliar nation. She decides to stand up against a community who can never connect themselves to her situation. And, she has to forego that community that can relate but has lost meaning in her life. In search of prosperity and to achieve her objective; she stands alone to oppose it. She fails to explicate the height of her distress and the benediction of their individuality. She verbalizes, "When everyone kens your business and every denomination declares your identity, where no landscape fails to contain a plethora of human figures, even a damaged consciousness, even solitude, become privileged commodities". (34) Tara belongs to the Indian Bengali Brahmin culture but she is multicultural. Tara stays on in America; she is a venerator and adherent of American culture being an immigrant American. The twofold identity of Tara is always at crisscross junctures engendering havoc in her personal life as an venerator and adherent of both the cultures, Indian and American. Albeit Tara is so crucial about the Indian practices and customs such as dowry system, child espousment and the custom of polygamy etc., she is withal blissful to be a component of the immensely colossal family, she verbalizes "We are Bengali Brahmins from Calcutta, and nothing can physically contact us." (Desirable Daughters, 44). Tara is additionally influenced by Hungarian culture because she lives with a Hungarian carpenter. She belongs to more than one nation or culture. She has the experience to live among the people of different countries/cultures such as India, America, Hungary, Argentina and China. Tara espouses Bishwapriya Chatterjee, goes on arranged espousment. Tara feels that her life after espousment is not going smoothly and she decides to ambulate out of her marital life, a representative American divorce settlement follows. It shows that Tara is the admonisher, the extra-modern and the revolter, she believes in adjustment policy of life, ergo she takes Andy in her life after her falling out of espousment with Bishwapriya. Tara works in a pre-school as a volunteer. She cherished moments with Andy. As a divorce settlement, she sends his son with his father. Tara returns to her father's house for comfort, determinately. In America, being a Bengali immigrant, she feels the woebegoneness of her divorce and espousment, she verbally expresses, "When I left Bish after a decade of espousment, it was because the the promise of life as an American wife was not being consummated. I wanted to drive, but where would I go? I wanted to work, but would people cerebrate that Bish Chatterjee couldn't support his wife?" (82) Tara verbalizes as an immigrant, "I've lost the Indian radar" (118), "Now, my radar was down" (195). 'Radar' here highlights her Hindu virgin auspice. During the entire novel she swings

between American and Indian culture and identity. Eventually Tara turns back to homeland. It reflects her annexation with her homeland, and search for identity in her homeland which is disoriented by her migration to America. Tara, the protagonist verbally expresses, "I determinately yielded to that most American of impulses, or compulsions, a "roots search," (Desirable Daughters 17). Thus, the woman protagonist is affluent with her identity of America. However, she identifies with her Indian roots. She turns back into the past – she feels the sundry emotional moments spent with her great grandfather and her three sisters. The novel discusses the truth that Indian expatriates are always vigilant of their reputation, ex-status in both cultures. Tara confesses that: "If we're unhappy, we're expected to suction it up for the kids' sake or our reputation. We worry what our parents will celebrate, even when they're halfway around the world and we're middle aged adults." (Desirable Daughters, 162) Furthermore, Bharati Mukherjee has two sisters and the novel seems to be the autobiography of her. Likewise Tara, the protagonist has withal two sisters, Padma and Parvati. Padma is the elder sister of her. She has espoused a businessman namely Harish Mehta, who is non-Bengali and age difference of twenty years between Harish Mehta and her. He had priory espoused and had children. Now she is denizen of Incipient Jersey (Montclair). She is T.V. hostess of a television program of India, held in Jackson Heights, Queens, run by her Indian doter, Devanand Jagtiani (Danny). She is plenary Indian in her dresses, attire, and in her cuisine and vocation who lives in Incipient Jersey. Once she remained with her partner as being espoused couple, now she lives alone without his fortification and fame. Tara's family and its past reveal to her the counterfeit identity of Chris Dey and she approaches the police to endeavor avail from. Tara as customary believes in her life that nothing can physically contact a Bengali Brahmin from Calcutta, but the presence of Chris Dey can engender perturbances in her life and ruins her certain posit. She kens the fact that her sister, Padma dotes Ronald Dey, the Christian medico and Chris's perceived father, but she was withal confident of the stringent Brahmin Bengali criteria. She is plenary confident of the fact that in India, categorically within the grasp of an exhaustive cultural background, it is not just challenging but infeasible to sanction as well as approve anything that is out of control: "But Ronald Dey was not possible. Daddy had not yet sanctioned someone for Didi to espouse. And whenever that time did come, it would not be with a Christian, no matter what his convivial status and brilliant prospects. Consequently I must be erroneous. Ergo, Ron Dey slipped under the most refined radar system in the world: Hindu Virgin Bulwark." (Desirable Daughters, 31-32) Parvati, her another sister is plenary Indian in her whole cultural practices as she sanctions her husband's relatives to be the house guests for weeks at her sumptuous flat with its breath taking view of the city. But for Tara all her treatment to the relatives, coadjutants, and drivers seems very hysterical and inconvenient as she presents herself much more modern in her posture and follows the American way of life style. She believes that her sisters lead very stressful life and make her life uncomfortable for unwanted things. So whatever Parvati does that is because of her Indian bend of her mind and she does not care for American practices while as Tara shows herself as the most modern lady among all her sisters who do not care these ways of displaying Indian life style and mean to adopt the practices of American culture. She does not relish all that her other sisters do because of their Indian affixment. The article highlights that Bharati Mukherjee revealed the cultural constraints for women in India. But Mukherjee's women have capacity to transmute the people around them and themselves. The female characters in this novel depict that they have engendered multiple identities due to their circumstances. Tara, the protagonist is competent of living with multiple identities.

### **Predictions of the Researcher**

Bharati Mukherjee's imagination of feminine sensibility lies in that edifying synthesis of promise and ardency, quandary and predilection, positivity and promiscuity. She has been prosperous in highlighting the rudiments of feminine sensibility through her battered literary exploration of female characters that have not just proved their livelihood but have developed their identity with an optimistic prospect. The path is capricious and unidentified, but with the avail of one's roots and the stresses of one's novelty Mukherjee's female characters, along with her, move on to achieve sundry appreciable objectives. Thus, in *Desirable Daughters*, Mukherjee demonstrates the efforts to probe identity of three sisters who face both modern as well as traditional worlds and their transmuted values. Search for identity in the multicultural land of America by the protagonist, Tara is impeccably presented through the differences of tradition, personal recollections, different places and latest styles of life in the altered socio-cultural quandaries. Tara not only longs to establish herself identity, but she endeavors to reconstitute her own identity against the traditions to which she belongs. Yet, while doing so, she withal annexes her Indian identity of which she celebrates proud. The efforts of maintaining American and Indian identities make her the coalescence of incipient culture that again raises the question of her authentic identity. Thus, throughout the entire novel, Bharati Mukherjee reveals the female sensibility through the identity crisis of its protagonists, Tara and her two sisters.

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