

ISSN: 0976-8165

IMPACT FACTOR 7.86

THE CRITERION

AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL IN
ENGLISH

Bi-Monthly Peer-Reviewed eJournal

VOL.14 ISSUE 5 OCTOBER 2023

14 Years of Open Access

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ISSN 2278-9529

Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal
www.galaxyimrj.com

Vikas Sharma: The Emerging Writer

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Article History: Submitted-29/08/2023, Revised-12/10/2023, Accepted-14/10/2023, Published-31/10/2023.

Abstract:

India's literary space is an ever-expanding hotbed for fresh voices, inventive stories and unhindered writings. Many emerging writers armed with just a pen and passion for writing - are changing the way we interact with literature and how we perceive the world around us. They are revisiting the limits of Indian literature and interacting with the forces of modernity and globalization that are altering the nation. These authors' writings have had an impact on a whole age group.

Indian literature is a veritable gold mine of fascinating storytelling, varied storylines, and deep insights into the nation's rich cultural past. New generations of bright and diverse writers are entering India's literary scene and making a big impression both domestically and internationally. These new Indian writers combine cutting-edge storytelling skills, enlightening viewpoints, and a keen awareness of current affairs.

English literature is widely produced in the world and India is the place whose contribution to the collective English literature has been rising greatly. In fact, India is the third largest producer of books in English at present. The objective of this paper is to analyze the role and contribution of the emerging Indian writers with a particular focus on the works of Dr Vikas Sharma, professor and Head at the Department of English, CCS University, Meerut. This study, attempts to elicit more information from Vikas Sharma's novels and serve as a resource and manual for upcoming authors.

He is entitled to a notable mention as he is the face of the contemporary world of writing in the Indian Literary scene. In this study, we shall discuss the various themes adopted by Vikas Sharma, which made him a renowned name in the literary world. He has penned seven novels which are a major success and have been well received by the readers. The list of his works is Raah Ke Patthar, Love's not Time's Fool, IAS Today, Never Together Never Apart, 498A: Fears and Dreams, Medicine: Light in Twilight, Hope Against Hope and Ashes and Fires.

Keywords: Indian Literature, globalization, Vikas Sharma, storytelling techniques.

Introduction

The emerging writers of Indian English language have improved the standard and vibrancy of literature. They represented the history, culture, and all the variations required for the enlargement of literature around the globe. Indian authors have made significant impact on world literature as a whole. Indian writers have primarily contributed to English language literature through their publications in India, with novelists taking the lead in this regard.

With the Vedas as its foundation, Indian literature spread its illuminating and enlightening light across the entire nation. Particular authors expanded the geographic reach of admiration, self-esteem, and connection. Indian English writing has improved significantly since the country's independence. In light of this independence, it has been continuously expanding.

If we look at the current scenario, poetry, drama, and criticism have not registered remarkable performances, but fiction is about to touch its finishing line in the race, lagging behind all the genres. Authors are bagging international and national awards in fiction. Indian English literature is currently a reality that cannot be overlooked. Over the years, both in India and overseas, it has attracted a sizable following. A special mention should be made of Indian English writers since they have helped Western readers understand our nation, its rich social and cultural legacy, and its societal standards. British linguistic styles and elements have not been nativized by Indian writers, who instead have gathered English in an Indianized setting. Raja Rao has well remarked in this reference:

One can notice “Indianness” in Indian writing in English. (Kanthapura)

Salman Rushdie’s bagging of the prestigious Booker Prize in 1981 for his “The Midnight’s Children”, was a momentous event for Indian English novel. It generates confidence in the Indian authors. He won the ‘Booker of Bookers’ in 1993 and the ‘Best of Bookers’ in 2008. Arundhati Roy won the ‘Man Booker Prize’ for her novel “The God of Small Things” in 1997. Kiran Desai won the same prize for “The Inheritance of Loss” in 2005, and Arvind Adiga won it in 2008 for his “The White Tiger”. Similarly, Jhumpa Lahiri is the ‘Pulitzer Prize’ Awardee for the novel “The Interpreter of Maldives” in 2000. These writers have taken Indian English literature to a remarkable place in the world. I would like to mention some other contemporary Indian novelists whose works have found a remarkable place among

the readers and critics. They include V.S. Naipaul, Vikram Seth, Anita Desai, Amitav Ghosh, Shashi Deshpande, Rohinton Mistry, Shashi Tharoor, Vikas Sharma, Amit Chaudhary, Manju Kapoor and many more.

These writers have developed confidence in the young, talented, aspiring and budding writers and have opened the ways of world literature to them, too. The writers here come up with multidimensional themes and are making their place among scholarly readers. They touch on various themes like socio-political issues, romance, individual psyche, feminine subjects, diasporic elements, marriage, history, environment, politics, etc. These emerging writers today can compete with the best in the world. Because their vehicle itself speaks a globalized language, they can cope with new problems and changes with ease. Salman Rushdie once told in an interview in 1982: “I think we are in a position to conquer English literature” (Ibid, 1989:552), and that is true too, as this is precisely what these novelists are trying to do in their own ways. So, they demand a serious critical attention, analysis and classification.

Dr. Vikas Sharma, Dr. Prem Prakash Pathak, Ashwin Sanghi, Vaibhavi Sonawane, David Davidar etc., are such emerging writers whose works today can be found in almost every literary library. Ashwin Sanghi’s novels are inspired by the high values of mythology and theology. He is the author of famous novels like *The Rozabel Line*, *Chanakya’s Chant*, *The Krishna Key*. He promoted conspiracy fiction as well.

Dr. Prem Prakash Pathak has more than fifteen years of experience in preaching ‘Teachings of Bhagwat Gita’. These preachings help students and employees develop essential life skills based on Bhagwat Geeta. He is the author of “The Golden Eggs”, which is based on the education ecosystem. His book “6 Essential Life Management Skills from Bhagwat Gita” presents six essential management skills from Bhagwat Gita. These skills are as Listening Skill, Emotional Intelligence, Understanding People, Developing Divine Character, Acquiring the Right Attitude and the SAP Coaching Model. SAP Coaching Model was used by Lord Krishna to motivate Arjun and fix his goal just before the great war of Kurukshetra when Arjuna was in a dilemma. This novel discusses the utility of this SAP Coaching Model in the corporate setting for personal growth.

David Davidar’s “The Solitude of Emperors” narrates the journey of a young newspaper journalist in the 1990s. He blamed racial tension on officials, the media, police, politicians, and more. The path of a rural, destitute character who becomes a business tycoon by assassinating his master is depicted in this story. The writer highlights the economic,

political, and social disparities and the widespread greed and inhumanity in society. The author draws attention to essential subjects, including communalism and socioeconomic injustice. This work uses of a textbook that emphasizes the importance of teaching youth about secularism. It places a strong emphasis on the need to raise young people to be responsible and religiously tolerant.

Vikas Sharma

Professor Vikas Sharma is a well-known name in the academic and literary world. He has served as a Principal in D.A.V P. G College, Bulandshahr (U.P), for about four years. Currently, he is serving as the Head of the English Department in Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut. He has published several works in English as well as in Hindi. Apart from Hindi, his novels were translated into Urdu and Punjabi. He published seven novels, which proved to be a significant success and well received by readers nationwide. Some of his novels are a part of the syllabus of UG and PG courses in various universities. His debut novel 'Raah Ke Patthar', in Hindi, proved to be a foundation stone in his literary career. This novel got remarkable applause from the readers, its theme being the Hindu-Muslim unity. Not only this, it was translated into English as 'Never Together Never Apart.' It got a similar response in English, too.

Vikas Sharma is a contemporary emerging novelist, poet, short story writer, academician and a keen observer of society. Besides a writer, Dr. Vikas Sharma is a much-respected teacher who, from time to time speaks on various social and legal issues on different platforms. He has more than fifty research papers on his credit. He is the guide, and mentor of so many students who have been awarded the PhD degrees and some are still pursuing the same under his guidance. He is a master writer and a consummate educator with more than 27 years of experience in the classroom. He wrote a famous collection of poems and short- stories entitled 'Epiphanies'. The widely anticipated publication of his most recent book, "Novel as an Art Form," makes particular reference to Anglo-Indian artists, and attempts to draw readers' attention to a broad genre that is both wonderful and educational.

Dr Vikas Sharma, being a keen observer of society, opted for the themes of his novels from within the society itself. It is being indeed said that a writer is a mirror of contemporary society. Love, romance, extra-marital affairs, dowery, divorce, middle-class working women with a passion for their career, living in relationships etc., are some of the themes, he picked up for his novels from the contemporary society.

His first novel, *Raah Ke Patthar*, was published in 2021 in Hindi and later was translated into English as *Never Together Never Apart*. It attempts to raise humanity above the thoughts of caste and communalism. This novel encourages Hindu-Muslim unity, which was the need of the hour. His novel, *Medicine: Light in Twilight*, represents the corruption in education system. From another novel *IAS Today*, we learn that clearing the prestigious, IAS exam is not a piece of cake; it requires a lot of hard work and dedication. Moreover, it teaches us not to surrender in critical situations. *Hope Against Hope* is based on the theme that one should not lose hope and should have faith on God. *Fire and Ashes* and *Love's not Time's Fool* represent the New Women who crave against radical social changes.

The Concept of New Women in Vikas Sharma's Novels:

The developing "new women" have been given enough room in Vikas Sharma's novels. At the close of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries, the traditional ideal image of women in English literature began to alter. Till then, New Women become the central character of the fiction. In addition to challenge male dominance, new women also emphasised women's rights and inspired intellectuals to rework on gender roles. The difficulties surrounding women, and their role in the home, society, and the workplace were all addressed by Victorian women novelists. Simone de Beauvoir claimed that women are bound to traditional roles such as wives and mothers. She observes: for him(man), she(woman) is the sex- absolute sex, no less. (*The Second Sex*). The main female characters in Vikas Sharma's novels like, Richa in "*Love's not Time's Fool*," Shivangi from "*IAS Today*" and Suvidha from "*Ashes and Fire*" can be seen as a replica of new women. New Women started taking sexual liberties. New women have new ideas, and new thoughts and they want to fly high in the sky. As a result of the general disapproval of women, she was forced to pursue the traditional middle-class woman's careers of marriage and motherhood. Her role was fixed by the patriarchal Victorians. She was, not permitted to discriminate against them on the basis of sex, gender, or any other basis. Nevertheless, one may assert that several social, political, and economic elements contributed to the creation of the "New Woman", and that this conception of the "New Woman" never stayed static but instead changed over time, taking on various shapes and tones and same can be seen in the novels of Professor Vikas Sharma.

Richa is bold enough; she had an affair before her marriage, and to that affair, she had a baby. She gives preference to her physical desires and so she engaged in another affair with her employee Abhilash even after her marriage. Shivangi also breaks all the social shackles and

gives preference to her passion of dancing. She jumps from the Victorian threshold of the society that wants to limit the women inside the domestic circle and elopes with Danny to go to Mumbai, the dream city where she wants to give air to her dreams. Similarly, Suvidha, the protagonist from Vikas Sharma's novel "Ashes and Fire" go against the fixed patriarchal morality for women only. Her father, after her husband's death, wants her to be in the role of a mother, a guardian and a caretaker for her children. She was well-educated and wanted to make a place for herself in the society. She continuously urged her father to be independent: "I want to establish my own image in the society." (47). She enters into a new world where unethical sexual relations are normal. She knows nothing of borders and cares nothing for rules and customs.

The rise of the new woman in fiction was influenced by socio-cultural forces, new science, new technology, new education, and movements towards liberalisation. The word "New Woman" was used by author Sarah Grand in her piece "The New Aspect of the Woman Question" which appeared in the North American Review in March 1894. From here only, 'Ouida' (Maria Louise Rame) received the inspiration for her essay's title, "The New Woman." This phrase was coined by Sarah to describe a contemporary, independent woman who is resistant to significant change. According to other sources, Henry James coined the term "New woman" to refer to American immigrants who were living in Europe (Stevens 27). The most significant quality of an autonomous person, according to him, is the growth of the intellect, which he used to characterise this. Rich, materialistic, sensitive ladies exhibited a free spirit in their attitude and conduct. They changed their behaviour in response to numerous social, political, and economic influences, assuming new roles in these spheres of human existence.

Women won significant victories in political and legal reforms during the early 20th century. Women gained unprecedented physical freedoms—sexual liberation dissolving all societal hierarchies. In all his novels, Vikas Sharma has presented liberated women who, after going through all the hurdles in their life, stand for their own identity. They fight from the external and internal dishevels of their mind and society and emerge as the New Women. The women characters presented by Vikas Sharma are very realistic as they search for material and physical pleasures. It seems as if they are our next-door neighbours. They are very bold, brilliant, intelligent, elegant and powerful characters. Shivangi is the perfect example of a modern, determined and ambitious woman who is free from the obstacles of societal norms but is not available to everyone. She refused to sacrifice herself before the director and producer representing the male domination and sexual exploitation of women at workplaces.

Famous heroines like Daisy Miller (Daisy Miller), Isabel Archer (Portrait of the Lady), Nora Helmer (A Doll's House) and Sue Bridehead (Jude the Obscure) presented themselves as the new women who were a threat for the conventional ideas of the Victorian society. They also made the way for these emerging new women like Richa, Suvidha and Shivangi. All three female characters, Richa, Suvidha and Shivangi, become self-independent and stand like the New Women by the end of the respective novels. Richa has a footwear company; she runs it very effectively. Suvidha started her school after completing her PhD. Shivangi sold her property for fulfilling her dream of having a studio of her own. Richa, despite being cheated by her lover, does not put a stop on her dreams. Like a new- women, she realistically deals with the situation to cater to her emotional, biological and financial needs. Similarly, Suvidha and Shivangi, by overcoming all the patriarchal and societal limitations, give flying colours to their dreams. Richa and Suvidha's stand on the issues of love and sex herald the new women's craze for uninterrupted romance. Vikas Sharma's heroines are free from the taboos of society and live according to their own will. They are the voice of the new women who are self-dependent and wander in their own world in which they want to live just like the Daffodils of Wordsworth, which are fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Conclusion:

In the contemporary literary scenario, Indian writers in English reflects the truth of Indian society, and shed light on the little-known realities. The most important issue of harassment of women in or outside the threshold and her emergence as a new woman can be seen in the writings of the male writers, too. Numerous emerging authors are jointly provoking, amusing, and engrossing audiences and scholarly readers all around because of their diversity and ingenuity. With a significant body of work that has garnered the attention of the masses, they have emerged as the colossal major socio-literary characters. They have attracted a sizable readership and strong critical endorsement that reflect the attention of severe academicians and scholars. These writers are carrying the concrete base and platform of Indian English literature to new heights.

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