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FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE AND IDENTICAL PROBLEMS IN THE NOVELS OF ANITA NAIR

GODELA SUNITHA

Lecturer in English

Telangana Social Welfare Residential Degree College for Women Department of English. Arts &  
Science Ranga Reddy dist. Hyderabad.



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ABSTRACT

Feminist movements in European society become the strong voice for miscellaneous women of the world. Many feminist women writers contributed abundant in English literature. Mostly in their works woman played protagonist role where writers glorified their sensibility, beauty and emotional world while sometimes they present women as the victims of male hegemony. Mainly they upheld the women rights through their writings. Besides Indian women writings got significant status in Indian literature. Their fictional works consists a key section of the contemporary writings. The burning question of women freedom and their equality remain major point of discussion in the Post-colonial period. Feminist movement's endeavors to seek women's independence and their search for identity has created havoc across the world. Anita Nair is credited a bestselling Indian author of fiction and poetry as well. She always shows affinity towards writing and followed her dreams to pursue her career in the writings field. She is the writer of great energy and creator of amazing works. She sketches realistic female personae in her works and her strength reflects lies in her daily lives characters and the representation of their desires and doubts. This paper analyses the feministic perspective and quest for identity in the Anita Nair's women world.

Keywords- Anita Nair, Feminism, postcolonial, identity crisis, self-discovery, women emancipation.

Critics define identity as a state of mind granted by the communication between fellow beings in the society and acceptance by the society as well. AS far as women's identity crisis is concerned it defines women struggles to obtain self-discovery and independent status against those forces of society who confined them and deprived from equal opportunity. Generally women seeks their identity in the societal relationship as a wife, mother and daughter and they accepted willingly all these relations. But during the current period women have started to refrain themselves from these kind of identical relations and become conscious now to understand the duplicity of these identical parts which are imposed on them by the male dominated society. Now they wants independent status and equal chance in every sphere of life. They refutes to associate themselves with these relations and doesn't not like to know someone's mother, wife and daughter rather they demands their own individuality. Besides they do not expect the support of male society to make their own identity which is often

called quest of identity where woman protest against the stereotypical image of Indian women. Here they want identify themselves as a being not as an object of commodity and not an appendage of man. Such women also believes that woman is on other or not an addition to man but also characterizes as an autonomous being and follower of their dreams. They confronts challenges and finds ways of solution by their own consciousness. Basically feminism describes as a challenging form of patriarchy, stereotyping and oppression. One of the critic F. Cott illustrates feminism in following words:

Feminism as an organized movement appeared in the late nineteenth century in a number of countries with agitation for women's suffrage. As individuals and in groups they had sought diverse means and ends to assert their share in directing the world's public as well as private destinies. They had sought to gain access to the rights and prerogatives men had, and to reevaluate and re-value women's nature and abilities. (16)

Moreover new modern women themselves unwilling to remain continued with the identity of conventional women and the sole object of physical needs of men. They embodies emancipation, liberation, individuality and the symbol of emerging Indian women with their open minded womanhood. Contemporary women novelists mainly depicts the psychological and inner conflicts of the desperate housewife. Indian literature also comprises prominent women novelists such as Arundhati Roy, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai, Manju Kapoor, Anita Nair, Kamla Markandaya and others whose writings consists chiefly feministic elements. Their novels mainly characterizes by the novels of protest and the outburst of contaminations. Besides their works infused with the ambiance of Indian-ness thoroughly. The common subjects in their works are complexities of human relationships, man-woman relationship, woman's psyche and her potential. Their works presents a deep inspection into the female psyche and have created an awareness of different kinds and forms of female experience. Mostly the novels set in upper and middle class Indian society where heroines are portrayed as educated, intelligent and sensitive but also dislocated individuals who confronts a crisis in life as a result of repression within the family and their forced relationship, disillusionment in marital life and lastly the lack of assertion and realization in their own life. Anita Nair is one of the popular writers who received global recognition for her remarkable contribution. Ladies Coupe is one of her striking feminist work which was translated into more than twenty five languages around the world. Here Nair raises profound questions, which often remain in readers mind, about the role of women in contemporary post-colonial India. Here novelist presents India as a state which suffers from a system of sex role stereotyping oppression of women under patriarchal household. This novel could be termed a discourse on Womanhood. Every persona in this novel confronts painful experiences of domestic violence in Male dominated house and also they attained relentless elasticity not only to keep themselves alive, but also to ascertain their inner source of vitality and artistic wellspring. This novel presents a woman's quest for inner strength and individuality. It comprises six women who accidentally met in a train journey and their life experiences narrated by each woman during the journey in the novel. Akhila is a protagonists who tells and also listens the story of these five women in the compartment and tries to ascertain a solution of their questions which bothered her in her life. In this novel we observe that Anita Nair present country into a suffering situation by patriarchal dogmas that is used in many ways to suppress, demean and degrade the half of the population of the country i.e. women. Nair intention to poses such questions in the novel not only exposes ideological ground of man's patriarchal role in traditional society but also denote the existence of an alternative reality. The plot shifts from past to present and present to past and henceforth we are shown of certain women who are humiliated and debased. The persona of Margaret Shanti in the novel strongly reflects the victimization of women in Male dominated society and how some of them shows resistance towards the harsh challenges. Margaret's husband Ebenezer is symbolizes male chauvinism and doesn't realize the importance of her wife as a woman in the novel. One of the critic comments on Margaret's shattered dreams and her problems:

Her dreams broken, she comes crashing down to reality when she is forced to abort her first pregnancy. Gnawed by indecision, guilt, and pain, she allows herself to be coerced into it. She realizes/sees another side of her husband when after her apportion, a week later, he says: "I love it when you call me Ebe... I

like you this... untainted and clean... I never want you to change I want you to remain like this all your life (Rachel, 111).

This novel deals with the theme of Self Identity, independency, quest for identity of the women in a male dominated society where they struggles to seeks their liberty and lastly also redeem themselves from the web called male jingoism. It depicted beautifully feminist voice and a woman's journey from sacrifice to self-assertion. Doris Thomas eulogize Nair novels in the following comment, she says

Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupe* (2001) is a profound discourse on womanism. All the characters of this female enclave without exception go through the grueling experiences of domestic oppression at the hands of their families and every one of them acquires an implacable resilience not only to stay alive, but even to discover their inner source of dynamism and creative wellspring. (46)

Another novel *Mistress* also revolves around the subjects of feminism. This novel discovers the deepness of relationship between a couple Shayam and Radha. In this failed relationship Radha find herself caged creature by the owner who confined her freedom and liberty of life. English renowned feminist critic and writer Simon De Beauvoir asserts that the marital relationship has somehow spoiled the spontaneity of feelings between the husband and wife by "transforming freely given feelings into mandatory duties and shrilly asserted rights, (3)." It is true to admit that a woman should be accepted more than her body. She is not only a Being-in-itself but also a Being-for-itself. In the novel heroine alienation under the rubrics of sexuality is on the account of his partner's unemotional intellectuality. Such aloofness and cold attitude of Shayam turned Radha into sadness and later she finds her love in another man Chris in the novel. Her relation with Shayam remain futile and spoiled and she remain unable to receive much love from his side which lead her to go another man to satiate her physical needs. Radha discards Shayam domineering atmosphere and she protest against the dishonest greediness and crudeness of the society. Besides she nearly refutes her marital life. She finds love as a form of male possessiveness and does not want love only to be an aspect of male dominance. Radha who had a pre-marital affair with a wedded man, later her abortion and finally her affair with Chris reflects that she handles all this for the true sense of love. When she goes back to her uncle life she experiences various severe truth of her past. From an agitated Radha disturbs with ugly life she keeps robust longing to ascertain an order. She also make efforts to explore the past of her uncle and Chris as well who remain so closely connect with her secretive past and this thing gave many realizations about her life. During her own self-realization process transformed her into new direction and provides her strength to bring back Shayam to her house. Moreover this classical postcolonial masterpiece of Nair unfolds the interesting plot of a women craving for love and independency. The novel around the captivity of the tradition and modern contemporary India intertwines a triangle of desire that represented by the persona of Radha and her lack of desire for the husband Shayam and Chris and for a travel writer from America.

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