

The study of Feminism and Womanism in Namita Gokhale's 'Priya: In Incredible Indyaa'

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Abstract

Feminism and womanism both the words deal with the change of society. Feminism concentrates on female centered in patriarchal society and womanism focuses on every day problems and experiences of woman. Major differences between both terms attached with the treatment of gender concept that is the same or the opposite. The Present paper is the study of the terms feminism and womanism with the reference of Namita Gokhale's novel 'Priya: In Incredible Indyaa'. The author portrays a world of women with her beautiful and dominating characters like priya, poonam, Nnutasha and many other who are the symbols of upper class society. The protagonist of the novel 'Priya' resurrects from her first novel 'Paro'. This novel concentrates on how priya transfer from lower middle class to high class society and how she faces problems in her life. In this process, the author concentrates on the relation between men and women and treatment of women by other.

Key words: Feminism, Womanism, patriarchal, gender concept

During the early years, women have little opportunities to enjoy their life. They were not treated as equal to the men and they are also not eligible to take equal rights and privileges as men. They were treated as dependents in every aspect of her life like individual, social and cultural. These differences lead to limit the woman place in the world. From many ages, women oppose against these differences, achieved a lot and try to be achieved. From many years to till date women struggle to get equal role in personal, professional, social and cultural aspects but women have still not achieved identity in either aspects.

A number of changes have taken place in the position of women in the society. Earlier women were discriminated by men, it was different from the present scenario. Present women are able to work with men. Discrimination is something that women face in every country around the world and every stage of her life even from birth onwards. This can be presented in every walk of her life. At present, this scenario changes and differences not only between men and women but also depend on the understanding between the same. Women attitude towards other women also comes under the account. These differences not only placed in Africa, it is also observed in different places and cultures. Different theories developed to demonstrate the differences between these terms.

The differences and experiences of women are the main ideas of women writes. Indian women writings occupies special place in English writings with their themes. These writings reflect the change of women position in the society. Indian Women Writers struggled to create the world of women and their different roles in the society against patriarchal norms, inequality between men and women, and the treatment of women to other women. Indian women writers like Ruth Praver Jwala, Nayantara Sehgal, Shobha De, Namita Gokhale and many other occupies a prominent role with their new themes.

Namitha Gokhale is one of the prominent Indian women writers. Namita occupies a special place in the contemporary women writers. She creates a sensation with her first novel “Paro: Dreams of Passion” and the sequel “Priya: In Incredible Indyya”. She resurrects some unforgettable characters from her first novel Paro. She describes her personal experiences and the life style of high-class society. She creates a world of women through major and responsible characters and with their attitudes. The new women neither fight against patriarchal society nor demand for equality with men. She has completely given an importance to her own path of life. Namita female characters are bold enough to face any situation in their lives. Priya, the narrator and the main protagonist, carried from her first novel. She is a middle class woman in her first novel and subsequently she is changed as symbol of rich. Paro is another unforgettable character who lives in the minds of other characters after her death. Other women characters of this novel are Poonam, Nnutasian Phantasian, Paromitha and Geetha.

She develops new perspectives in the portrayal of women characters. She uses feministic and womanistic views to express her intention. 'Womanism' and 'Feminism' deal with the changes in the position of women in the society. The broadest definition of womanism is it can apply for all women regardless of color. The term "Womanist" is developed in Alice Walker's *In Search of our Mother's Gardens: Womanist Prose*. Alice Walker's *Womanist* is talk about a girl who symbolizes for will power, bold and extraordinary behavior beyond the range of societal norms. It reflects the folk expression "acting womanish."

In Walker's story *Coming Apart*, a womanist deals with the context of using black men and women as pornographic objects. During the late 1980s, great scholars such as Clenora Hudson-Weems, Alicia Boisnier, Linda Hogan and Delores Williams began to share their ideas with the world through their writings. Linda Hogan uses the term womanist to represent a feminist of colour. She presents the major difference between feminism and womanism further. She says that womanism allows black women to celebrate their color and culture. In the words of Clenora Hudson-Weems and Alicia Boisnier, womanism deals with black women struggle and treated as traditional feminism. On the other hand, Delores Williams, a womanist theologian, womanism is associated with the traditions and also from the conditions, events, meanings and values within the African-American community. She majorly concentrates on the difference between the experiences of the black woman and the white woman that makes it difficult to identify with feminism.

Womanism is a social theory; it is not only concentrates on the racial and gender oppression of black woman but also the everyday problems and other experiences of all. It also deals with the women's relationship with herself, other women and her surroundings comprise an essential part of the ideology. In the novel, Priya concentrates on everyday problems of the women and she is the symbol of high class, her experiences mingle with ups and downs of her previous life. She gives much importance to Indian traditions. So, she accepts the role of Bharath Nari with the external forces.

“Your mother is True Indian women, the personification of a Bhartiya Nari ...

I am an Indian woman. I cannot lie, but even more than that,

I cannot tell the truth”.

PgNo: 60-61

She gave importance to her inner forces. Though she acts as a responsible person in the high class society, she always gives an importance to her boss and ex lover B.R even at the age of menopause. It shows that how she tries to break the norms of the society.

“Priya, my love, how delicious to hear your voice, -----

I forgot the I was an Indian wife and mother.....”.

PgNo: 47-48

Namitha creates a sensation with her feministic character ‘Paro’ in her first novel ‘Paro: Dreams of Passion’. With the same intention, she continuous to create the comparison with her another character Poonam in ‘Priya: In Incredible Indyya’. She clearly presents the attitude of women by comparing qualities and beauty.

“Paro and Poonam : so different from each other, like nylon and silk.

I was obsessed by Paro ,Poonam is in insistent pursuit of me.....”. PgNo: 157

Priya neither opposes the world of her husband nor supports his activities. Though she identifies the relation between poonam and suresh with love letter, she never questions her husband.

“ My dear dear Poonam, I love you dumb.....”.

PgNo: 174

Priya is the main protagonist of the novel. She neither opposes the rules of society or male dominating society nor supporting other thoughts. She was set as high class society and her job was to look after her family. She highlighted the treatment of woman with other women. Priya set as an example to the views of womanism, whose ideas are similar and Poonam set as example of feministic thoughts.

Namita creates a world of women with different attitudes. Poonam set as against to the patriarchal views who develop clear idea with henpeck party the way they treat male person is resemblance of woman position in male dominated society.

“Hen night will be a ladies party.....the theme of the party ,...

‘young and Old-Go for Gold’.....

This one was naked except for a narrow gold cummerbund wrapped tight around his groin.

He walked halfway through the lit-up ramp and stood there ,

The women were whistling and cheering.”

Pg:No:167-168

Priya dislikes the nature of some women characters who tries to deceive opposite gender. She clearly presents it in the discussion of Nnutasian Phantasian, Astrologer and Poonam, love for many.

“Nnutasian Phantasian,Poonam’s discredited numerologist.....

‘I am a spiritual doctor’, In short botox for the spirit!”

Pg:No:175-176

Namita succeed in feministic perspective by developing number of major women character in her writings. She presented men with major positions of minor roles. Active woman characters reflects different mindset how they treat the same, opposite and the society. She even provide the new role of woman with Nnutasian Phantasian ,Astrologer. It reflects the beliefs of society how man and woman gives importance to the superstitions. It sets an example of mind set of the society.

Conclusion

According to Walker, feminism concentrates on gender inequality and womanism on race and class-based oppression. Walker's cited a phrase, "womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender" and also suggests that feminism is a part of womanism.. Womanist gives an equal importance to both male and female and their desires in a world. Feminism or womanism is the result of their

experiences. Namita Gokhale develops new approach in the presentation of women characters and their thoughts. She clearly understands the mindset of changed Indian woman and projected through her characters. To express women ideologies, Namita selects both feminist perception and womanistic perception. Priya follows the qualities of womanistic ideologies and gives an equal importance to both man and woman in her life. Namita succeed in the presentation of woman qualities like kind, sympathy, understanding, opposing and importance to one. She clearly succeeds in the presentation of two different views through her characters. For her feminist ideology, she creates characters like Poonam and Nnutasian Phantasian who try to change the societal norms.

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