

# Thematic Concern in the Works of Jhumpa Lahiri

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*This paper highlights on the Indian English writing, Feministic perspective, Second Generation Adaptation, Diasporic Consciousness in Lahiri's work. The works of Jhumpa Lahiri show their concern with the social and cultural injustice meted out to women who are marginalized and exploited. She has written about the Indian women, the problem faced by them in the male governed social set up, the role assigned to them in the society, the prejudiced attitude of men towards them. Jhumpa masterfully explores the themes of the complexities of the immigrant experience and foreignness, the clash of lifestyles, Cultural disorientation, the conflicts of assimilation, the tangled ties between generations and paints a portrait of an Indian family torn between the pull of respecting family traditions, and the American way of life. It's a tale of love, solitude and emotional upheavals with an amazing eye for detail and ironic observation.*

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Literature is an aesthetic representation of human emotions, feelings; thought and experience that always try to preserve its inherent nature and their conflict that subjugate the true manifestation of human conscience.

Indian English writing in English literature is not essentially different in kind from other Indian Literature. It is a part of it, a modern fact of that glory which, commencing from the Vedas has continued to spread its mellow light.

**Introduction:** - In the development of the India English Literature, the feminine sensibility has achieved a self-sufficiency and has developed very well in spite of its late manifestation traditionally India had a male-dominated culture. In literature as well as in social life,

Indian Women had no autonomous existence as they were suppressed by layers of prejudice, convention, ignorance and reticence.

A woman writer imprisoned within her own social dogmas had to choose her literary canvas from a selected area of experience with certain vistas remaining beyond her reach. These forbidden vistas are being creatively explored and delineated.

There has been a spurt of woman writers like Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Bharti Mukherjee, Geeta Mehta, Shashi Deshpande, Uma Vasudev, Geeta Hariharan, Namita Gokhale, Nina Sibal, Shobha De, Arundhati Roy, Manju Kapoor and Jhumpa Lahiri. Through their

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writings, the women writers very successfully and skillfully capture the Indian ethos.

The works of Jhumpa Lahiri show their concern with the social and cultural injustice meted out to women who are marginalized and exploited. She has written about the Indian women, the problem faced by them in the male governed social set up, the role assigned to them in the society, the prejudiced attitude of men towards them.

She presents women in their deprived state in society and showcases their position and role in the man-woman relationship, she also examines the Indian woman as a stereotyped wife, as a Child bearer and as an object to please and allure men by her physical charms. Women she feels must be vindicated in their self-assertion and in their demand for dignity and self-respect.

Namesake (The novel) describes the struggles and hardship of a Bengali couple who immigrate to the United States to form a life outside of everything they are accustomed to. The Namesake is the cross-cultural, multigenerational Story of a Hindu Bengali family's journey to self-acceptance in Boston.

Jumpa masterfully explores the themes of the complexities of the immigrant experience and foreignness, the clash of lifestyles, Cultural disorientation, the conflicts of assimilation, the tangled ties between generations and paints a portrait of an Indian family torn between the pull of respecting family traditions, and the American way of life. It's a tale of love, solitude and emotional upheavals with an amazing eye for detail and ironic observation.

**Feministic perspective:** - Many of her short stories are narratives recording the feminist perspectives of the lives of women who are conditioned by certain ingrained and instinctive aspects of life the very fact of their womanhood.

It is a common belief that feminists all over blame not only male possessiveness and chauvinism but also female reluctance, easy acquiescence and lethargy for the bad shape that women existence is in. Male-gods are the unchallengeable legislators of a patriarchal society and women join them in their pride which makes the matter worse, but if we go through the stories written by Jhumpa Lahiri we may say that this notion is wrong for the contemporary woman is all set to acquire her own space and establish an identity of her own.

### **Second Generation Adaptation: –**

United State of America is popularly known as a melting pot of all cultures People from different cultures all over the worlds have been immigrating to America since the last centuries and have created a totally new culture which is made of all the different cultures. In fact, immigrants are expected to assimilate themselves into this culture as soon as possible. This poses interesting challenges to people who come from other cultures, which had a strong influence on their way of life, like people from the Indian subcontinent.

Thus Lahiri Shows how later generations depart from the constraints of heir immigrant parents who are often devoted to their community. Lahiri's shifts to the fact that succeeding generations become increasingly assimilated into American culture and are comfortable in constructing perspectives outside their country.

### **Diasporic Consciousness: –**

Jhumpa Lahiri, a child of immigrant parents was born and brought up in America. Her culture and heritage are inclined to both India and United States. From her personal experience as a child of immigrant parents; she records in her literary output, the emotional journey of characters seeking Love beyond the barriers of nations, culture religion and generations. Her

works reflect the immigrant individual's effort to make balance between the primeval traditions of new world.

Jhumpa Lahiri's winning collection of short stories. The Interpreter of Maladies reveals her commendable grasp of the theme of exile and diaspora. Lahiri introduced us to people who left behind family and friends and the familiar heat and dust of India to live a new life in America, which is a cold and bleak land of strangers and new customs like a miniaturist, Lahiri straddles between two worlds of Boston and Bengal with great ease. The stories of Interpreter of Maladies depict the trauma of the first generations Indian migrant to America. The sense of alienation longing, loss and hope which are often marked as the immigrant experience are explicitly dealt with in the stories. Though most of the stories in this collection have an American setting, India especially Calcutta often remains in the memory of its characters.

Her earliest stories A Real Durwan, The Treatment of Bibi Haldar and the Interpreter of Maladies are set in India. India continues to form

a part of fictional landscapes in the collection. Lahiri draws heavily on the memories of her parents to depict an India which she did not know. Thus Jhumpa Lahiri has shown in her works that whatever may be the reason of immigration, diasporic community faces the problem of displacement, rootless ness, discrimination and marginalization in the migrated country. The contribution of Jhumpa Lahiri to the variety and versatility of the Indian English novel is considerable Fiction by Jhumpa Lahiri provides searching insights and a great deal of human understanding. The potential of human achievement can be realized through her writings, without assessing the work done by women writers, no critic can comprehend the sweep and range of Indian English literature. In the male dominated Indian society woman is given a secondary place. Whether a woman is a technologist, a bureaucrat, a lawyer, a novelist or a scientist, she cannot escape her ordained duties as a wife or a member of the family. Jhumpa Lahiri has taken up issues related to their status and tried to influence the conscience of the society.

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