

Women's Representation in Hamidullah's and Chughtai's Selected Short Stories: A Psycho-feminist Study

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Abstract: Even though staunch feminist writers take up responsibilities to represent them, the question of identity remains unresolved because of insufficient understanding of women's psyche and sensitivity. This study focuses on the psychoanalytical behavior of women in phallogocentric society to investigate how gender discrimination depends on the social identities of interacting parties. This study examines women's identities in the selected short stories by Ismat Chughtai and Zaib-Un-Nisa Hamidullah to explore how women's gender and their inhibitions create difficulties in self-representations for them. This research takes into account the South Asian socio-cultural settings in which Chughtai and Hamidullah's works are placed. Both writers have addressed the core issues related to women's life going deep into their psychology. Employing the theoretical underpinnings of Chandra Talpade Mohanty, this research would engage with the lived experiences of the women of the sub-continent and highlight the debates and remedies to resolve their issues. The study seeks to clarify how patriarchal systems, power dynamics, and psychoanalytic processes affect women's sense of self and agency through an analysis of the women's experiences. The findings shed light on more general concerns of gender, identity, and empowerment as well as feminist literary criticism.

Keywords: Chughtai, Hamidullah, Psycho-Feminist Criticism, Representation, Short Story, Woman

Introduction

The study of women's identity has been a major literary issue, reflecting the variety of experiences and difficulties that women have in different communities. Understanding women's identity becomes especially important in the setting of South Asia, where cultural norms and patriarchal systems frequently impact women's lives. Women's identities have long been a topic of study in literature, especially in works that question social standards and established gender roles. Insights into the complexity of femininity and the realities of women in South Asian countries are provided through the fascinating storylines in the short stories of Hamidullah and Ismat Chughtai (Abdullah, 2021). We may explore the psychological layers of the characters, look at the power dynamics at work, and learn more about how women's identities are created by using a feminist psychoanalytical method. To examine how women are portrayed in literature and how patriarchal systems affect their lives, feminist psychoanalysis blends feminist theory with

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psychoanalytic ideas. Through the prism of a few of Hamidullah and Ismat Chughtai's short stories, this article explores the idea of a woman's identity. This research intends to analyze the intricate interplay of gender, power relations, and psychological processes in developing women's identities as shown in these literary works by using a feminist psychoanalytic perspective.

Famous South Asian authors Hamidullah and Ismat Chughtai are renowned for their moving depictions of women's experiences. Their short fiction offers complex and nuanced themes that capture the socio-cultural realities and difficulties of women's experiences. The challenges, aspirations, and agency of female protagonists in a culture that is firmly rooted in patriarchal traditions are shown in these works. For analyzing and comprehending women's identity in these stories, the feminist psychoanalytic method provides a strong foundation. This method, which analyses the complex dynamics of power, desire, and processes that affect women's sense of self and interpersonal interactions, draws on psychoanalytic theories. A better comprehension of the stories' symbolism and subtext may be gained by probing the characters' psyches, analyzing their connections, and looking at their relationships as a woman. By concentrating primarily on the writings of Hamidullah and Ismat Chughtai, this study tries to add to the body of information already available on women's identity. It is not surprising that consumer researchers frequently look at how sex and gender affect consumer behaviors given that the act of purchase has long been linked to these factors. It should also come as no surprise that a lot is known about how gender and sexual orientation affect consumer behavior. Gender identity derives from societal conceptions of what it means to be male or female, just as gender is a cultural construct (Firat 1991; Lerner 1986). Men were considered to be macho and women were considered to be feminine for a long time (Beauvoir, 1949). However, it has long been known among others, including consumer behavior experts, that some men are more feminine than masculine, and that some women are more masculine than feminine. This division of gender and sex is much more obvious in the postmodern culture in which we currently reside.

Research Objectives

The following are the search objectives of the study:

- To find out women's representation in the phallogocentric cultural and political milieu
- To figure out the research gap in understanding women's psyche and sensitivity

Research Questions

1. How do Hamidullah's and Chughtai's selected short stories reflect the female desire of representation?
2. How do Hamidullah's and Chughtai's selected short stories challenge the eternal patriarchal norms?

Significance of the Study

The study of women's identity through a selection of Hamidullah and Ismat Chughtai's short stories has substantial significance in a number of ways. It offers insights into the complexity of femininity and the realities of women's identity, contributing to the disciplines of literature, gender studies, and South Asian cultural studies. The following are some significant factors emphasizing the importance of this study. The status of women in various spheres of society has improved significantly over the past few years. Although progress varies by nation and region, the following general trends can be observed. There has been a

developing spotlight on engaging ladies and advancing orientation correspondence. Endeavors are being made to build women's cooperation in choice-making processes, positions of authority, and generally male- overwhelmed fields like science, innovation, design, and math. Women now have easier access to education around the world. More young ladies are signing up for schools and colleges, and endeavors are being made to lessen orientation aberrations in training. Expanded education rates among ladies add to their monetary and social strengthening. More and more women are entering the workforce and pursuing careers that go beyond their traditional roles. The short stories that are chosen give women's experiences and viewpoints a platform for representation and visibility. The research raises the voices of women and focuses light on their particular struggles, goals, and agency by critically analyzing these stories and also challenges the male-dominated narratives that are present in many literary traditions and helps to create a more inclusive literary canon.

Theoretical Framework

The psycho- feminist criticism examines and comprehends women's experiences and gender dynamics in society by fusing the ideas of feminism with psychoanalysis. It aims to investigate how gender roles, patriarchal systems, and power disparities impact women's psychological growth, identity formation, and mental health. The psychoanalytic interpretation of woman identity, which was influenced by Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytical theories and later developed by feminist psychoanalysts, examines how women form their identities, the difficulties they encounter in patriarchal societies, and how gender dynamics affect their psychological growth. Sigmund Freud put out the idea of *penis envy* as a key component of a woman's psychosexual development. Young girls, according to Freud, feel inferior due to their absence of a penis and their yearning for one, which fosters the development of femininity. This theory is emphasized by feminist psychoanalysts who contend that it promotes gender stereotypes and does not take into consideration the variety of experiences that women have (Raza & Siddiqui, 2016). According to Freud's theory of identification, a girl's sense of self-worth is formed through her identification with her mother. Internalizing feminine qualities and duties is a part of this process. Feminist psychoanalytical viewpoints are aware that this process is influenced by cultural norms and has the potential to perpetuate them. A psycho-feminist study emphasizes how mothers and mothering play a part in defining women's identities. It investigates how women's mothering experiences and interactions with their mothers affect their sense of identity, attachment preferences, and views of femininity (Perry Jr, 1999). The idea of object relations, which emerged from psychoanalytical viewpoints, looks at how a person's early ties with caregivers often the mother shape their sense of self and interpersonal connections. Feminist psychoanalysts take into account how gender dynamics affect these object interactions and how they help women create their identities.

Texts Analysis

A psychoanalytic analysis of Ismat Chughtai's works can shed light on the psychological dynamics and experiences of the characters. Although Chughtai's work may not openly use psychoanalytic principles, examining it via a psychoanalytic perspective might help uncover the characters' unspoken aspirations, conflicts, and unconscious motives. This study looks into the characters' unconscious fears, conflicts, and desires and examines their suppressed or buried aspirations that can be at odds with what is expected of

them by society or their own conscious goals and looks for instances where their thoughts, dreams, or behavior reflect these underlying patterns. The impact of traumatic experiences and early experiences on the psyches of the characters find out how women's behavior, relationships, and sense of self are affected by early experiences, such as family dynamics, cultural influences, or childhood traumas. Indian author Ismat Chughtai is noted for her outspoken and audacious portrayals of women in her books. Her poems frequently give complex depictions of women's identity while challenging cultural conventions and patriarchal institutions. The following are some major themes and things to keep in mind while analyzing characters in Ismat Chughtai's works. Chughtai (1990) frequently presents his female characters as disobeying society's rules and expectations. They combat restrictive practices including child marriage, the purdah (veiling), and other sorts of social and cultural limitations placed on women, challenging conventional gender norms. Chughtai (1990) wrote about female sexuality and desire, which was forbidden at the time. Her characters explore their sexual identities while challenging preconceived ideas about what it means to be a woman. They frequently express their aspirations and autonomy by defying social norms. Chughtai's female characters are deep and versatile, displaying a variety of emotions, strengths, and vulnerabilities. They do not just fit into one-dimensional caricatures; instead, they show themselves to be fully developed people with goals, conflicts, and complexity (Chughtai, 1990).

Chughtai (1990) emphasizes the value of female solidarity and sisterhood. Her writings frequently feature female characters standing up for and strengthening one another against patriarchal tyranny. They band together, question conventional norms, and defend their rights by forming alliances. Class dynamics and intersectionality are also explored in Chughtai's books. These additional social constructs include class and religion. To illustrate the discrepancies and power dynamics that exist within femininity, she looks deeply into the lives of women from various socioeconomic backgrounds. Chughtai's writings focus on social concerns and challenge patriarchal societal institutions. She focuses awareness on the common hardships, injustices, and inequities experienced by women via the characters she creates. Chughtai's female protagonists frequently go on self-discovery quests and experience inner struggles. They challenge cultural norms, face their anxieties and limits, and work to develop their own identities according to their standards (Chughtai, 1990).

The motivations, behaviors, interpersonal interactions, and character development of Ismat Chughtai's female characters must be carefully scrutinized while doing a character analysis of her writings. Pay attention to how they negotiate or question gender norms and societal expectations as well as the social and cultural milieu in which they live (Chughtai, 1990). To identify any unsolved issues or traumatic experiences that have an impact on their adult life examines how the women's defense systems help them deal with internal problems or emotional suffering (Chughtai, 1990). This study takes a look at how Chughtai's female characters explore their gender and sexuality via their psychosexual growth and at how the female representations deal with society's expectations and standards surrounding relationships, sexual urges, and gender identity that define any tensions or problems associated with their sexual expression or growth (Chughtai, 1990).

Chughtai's works employ metaphors or symbols that could stand in for deeper psychological or unconscious meanings. This study pays attention to reoccurring symbols or images that can shed light on

the inner thoughts or emotional states of the characters. A psychoanalytic framework to examine the relationships between the characters examines how unresolved tensions, power struggles, and unconscious desires affect their interactions with one another. Any instances of counter transference or transference may affect the characters' experiences with self-discovery and identity creation that examine the story to see whether any psychological processes, such as individuation or the development of a strong sense of self, are present (Chughtai, 1990). The female characters face challenges or conflicts that prevent their psychological development and help readers learn more about the inner lives of Chughtai's female characters and the intricacies of their experiences, motives, and psychological dynamics by applying a psychoanalytical interpretation to them.

Women's Representations in Hamidullah's Selected Short Stories

Pakistani author Hamidullah is renowned for her contributions to Urdu literature. Her writings frequently explore the complexity of female identity and the difficulties that women experience in society. Hamidullah explores the disparities in power between men and women in several of her stories, stressing how societal standards and cultural expectations restrict women's agency and autonomy. She frequently features female characters who work within these patriarchal organizations and overcome the difficulties they face. The people involved could struggle with problems including discrimination against women, unequal power dynamics in relationships, and social pressure to fit into stereotypical gender stereotypes. In his writings, Hamidullah frequently questions patriarchal conventions and challenges established power systems. She encourages thought on how these frameworks affect women's lives and the need for societal change via her storytelling. Her writings contribute to continuing dialogues regarding women's empowerment, gender equality, and the deconstruction of patriarchal structures (Rizwan, 2019). Although the specifics of how Hamidullah portrays patriarchal institutions and power relationships may differ throughout her many works, these issues are nevertheless crucial to her examination of women's identities and their challenges within social frameworks.

The literary works of Hamidullah frequently feature a psychoanalytic investigation of the psyches of characters, probing their ideas, feelings, and motives. She uses a variety of storytelling strategies to provide readers a greater knowledge of the psychological landscapes of her characters by shedding light on their inner lives (Hamidullah, 2008). To understand how her characters' behavior and choices are influenced by their unconscious wants, anxieties, and conflicts, Hamidullah uses a psychoanalytical approach. She investigates how socioeconomic and cultural influences affect the characters' psyches, frequently exposing the emotional conflicts they experience while negotiating complicated relationships and societal expectations.

Hamidullah (2008) explores the human brain through her writing, illuminating the complexities of her characters' personalities and the psychological influences that shape their behavior (Hamidullah, 2008). Themes like identity, self-discovery, and the intricacies of interpersonal relationships can be explored in her narratives. To give insight into the characters' current psychological states, she may dive into their prior experiences, childhood traumas, or suppressed memories. Hamidullah (2008) encourages readers to consider the universal elements of the human psyche and the intricate interaction between conscious and unconscious motives by using a psychoanalytic perspective. Her investigation into the

minds of her characters gives her narrative depth and complexity and enables readers to empathize with the characters more deeply. Hamidullah (2008) frequently examines the characters' irrational conflicts and latent impulses, which might affect their choices and actions. These underlying motives may have their origins in traumatic personal experiences, cultural expectations, or early life events. Hamidullah (2008) offers a greater comprehension of the psychological composition of the characters by bringing these unconscious components to the fore. Character psyches are typically explored by diving into their pasts, especially their formative years. Hamidullah looks at how early experiences affect people's personalities and actions. Characters' psychological growth and adult life might be significantly influenced by childhood tragedies or major interactions throughout formative years. Hamidullah frequently talks about the idea of repression, in which characters hide upsetting or unpleasant ideas, feelings, or memories. These suppressed components may reappear and be expressed in many ways, affecting the characters' relationships and mental health. By examining these unsolved concerns, Hamidullah gives her characters more psychological nuance. Hamidullah's books often include discussions of the complexities of interpersonal dynamics as part of their psychoanalytic analysis. She dives into character dynamics, exposing the conscious and unconscious reasons that influence how they interact (Hamidullah, 2008). Power conflicts, suppressed desires, and the effect of cultural expectations on relationships may all be topics of these inquiries (Short & Candlin, 1988).

The psychoanalytic technique taken by Hamidullah frequently incorporates the characters' journeys of self-discovery and identity construction. She investigates the conflicts that people face as they deal with their ideas, feelings, and wants as well as society's constraints and standards. She offers insight into the struggles and difficulties people encounter as they negotiate their identities via this investigation. It is vital to remember that while Hamidullah's writings do contain aspects of psychoanalysis, the degree, and particular focus might alter across her many short stories and novels. In the framework of the story and the ideas being explored, each piece offers a distinctive investigation into the psyches of the characters (Hamidullah, 2008).

The stories of Ismat Chughtai and Zaib-Un-Nisa Hamidullah's provide intriguing insights into the hardships, difficulties, and societal realities that women in South Asian civilizations must contend with. Both address gender-related issues, offering nuanced representations of femininity and putting light on the nuances of women's existence. Here are a few crucial comparisons: In both Chughtai and Hamidullah's works, some female protagonists question the expectations that society places on women. They show women who challenge patriarchal institutions' limitations and defy gender stereotypes in their quest for liberty and self-expression. In their respective works, Chughtai (1990) and Hamidullah (2008) explore the sexuality of women. They include characters who struggle with their urges, cultural stigmas, and the repercussions of expressing their sexuality in conservative cultures. Their accounts offer a critical analysis of the discrimination against women and the limitations imposed on their sexual agency. Both authors criticize the patriarchal institutions and power disparities present in their nations. They draw attention to the uneven power relationships between men and women as well as the negative impact these systems have on women's lives. Chughtai (1990) and Hamidullah (2008) question the repressive nature of patriarchy and promote gender equality via their stories.

The stories of Chughtai (1990) and Hamidullah (2008) represent the sociocultural reality of their respective eras. Women's education, societal hypocrisy, and the influence of social customs on women's choices are some of the subjects explored in their works, which were mostly produced in the middle of the 20th century. Themes connected to post-colonialism, cultural identity, and the changing status of women in Pakistani culture are all covered in Hamidullah's writings, which span several decades. Their works acknowledge the intersectionality of women's identities and the interaction of many societal forces that influence their experiences. The stories of Chughtai and Hamidullah include women from various socioeconomic origins, taking into account how these distinctions in class, religion, and geography also affect women's identities and problems. Chughtai and Hamidullah give their female characters agency by empathizing with them and giving voice to their innermost thoughts and feelings. They show women who, despite the constraints placed on them, exercise agency, make decisions, and manage their lives with resiliency. Even though Chughtai (1990) and Hamidullah (2008) may have comparable subjects to discuss, it is important to acknowledge their different writing styles, historical settings, and personal viewpoints. It would be possible to have a deeper understanding of both authors' contributions to the representation of women's identity in South Asian literature by doing a thorough comparative analysis of specific stories and characters by both of them.

A comparison of Ismat Chughtai's (1990) and Zaib-Un-Nisa Hamidullah's (2008) works focuses on the parallels and contrasts between their narrative motifs, writing styles, and approaches. Chughtai and Hamidullah both give significant attention to the viewpoints and experiences of women. They criticize gender inequality and cultural standards often while giving voice to the hardships, ambitions, and difficulties encountered by women in South Asian civilizations. The writings of Chughtai and Hamidullah capture the socio-cultural conditions of their respective eras. They deal with the difficulties that post-colonial South Asian nations face, including patriarchy, social hierarchy, and cultural conflicts. Strong and multifaceted female characters that defy social norms and question standard gender roles are presented by both authors. As they work around the limitations placed on them, their female heroes frequently demonstrate resiliency, intellect, and agency. Chughtai (1990) and Hamidullah (2008) give a realistic portrait of life while also providing social commentary (Sultana, 2010). They provide social commentary via their stories, criticizing repressive structures, cultural hypocrisy, and the difficulties experienced by women in patriarchal societies.

Hamidullah's career lasted several decades, whereas Chughtai's writing was predominantly produced in the middle of the 20th century. The themes and problems they examine are influenced by this variation in historical settings. While Hamidullah's writings focus on the problems facing post-colonial Pakistan, Chughtai's works depict India's pre- and post-independence era. Although both authors use a realistic perspective, their writing styles and methodologies may vary. Chughtai's writing frequently includes vivid, in-depth descriptions, whereas Hamidullah's writing may have a more inward-looking, psychological focus. Although both writers discuss gender-related subjects, there may be differences in their particular focus and motifs. While Hamidullah's writings may examine cultural identity, power relations, and historical backgrounds, Chughtai's stories frequently deal with female sexuality, societal hypocrisy, and women's rights. Regional Specificity: While Hamidullah's works frequently represent the social and cultural realities of Pakistan, Chughtai's writings are predominantly situated in North India,

notably in Uttar Pradesh. The distinctive flavors and settings portrayed in their stories are made possible by this geographical distinctiveness. It is vital to keep in mind that these comparisons and contrasts are generalizations and might not hold for all of Chughtai and Hamidullah's writings. A thorough examination of certain short stories and novels would provide readers with a more in-depth knowledge of the distinctive writing styles and themes of both authors, who have made substantial contributions to South Asian literature.

Conclusion

To sum up, a psycho-feminist approach to Zaib-Un-Nisa Hamidullah's and Ismat Chughtai's selected short story provides a nuanced understanding of women's identity and the nuances of women's experiences in South Asian countries. This method allows us to explore the psychological aspects of the female characters, the power relationships that are there, and the cultural factors that affect how they see themselves. Hamidullah and Chughtai both feature strong female characters that go against society's expectations and conventions to exercise agency and autonomy in patriarchal environments. We may examine these individuals' needs, tensions, and motives through a feminist psychoanalytic perspective, looking at how their experiences are influenced by both their psyches and the wider societal structures in which they reside. This strategy enables us to investigate the hidden motivations, suppressed desires, and internal struggles that could affect the decisions and deeds of the female characters. It helps us to learn how cultural norms and gender roles affect people's sense of self, interpersonal interactions, and goals. Furthermore, a feminist psychoanalytic analysis of the chosen short story might reveal the gendered symbolism and power relationships that are present in the works.

It aids in our comprehension of how patriarchy functions, examples of male domination, and how women negotiate and challenge these institutions. We may question conventional perceptions and assumptions about women's identity by employing a feminist psychoanalytic approach. It enables us to analyze the characters' internalized patriarchy, complexity, and inconsistencies, as well as their capacity for empowerment and change. An in-depth knowledge of woman identity in South Asian civilizations is provided through a psycho-feminist study of a few of Hamidullah and Chughtai's short stories. It aids in revealing the psychological aspects, power relationships, and cultural factors that affect how women perceive life. This perspective helps us better understand the complexity, difficulties, and agency of female characters in their works. Ismat Chughtai and Zaib-Un-Nisa Hamidullah's writings provide insightful analyses of the experiences of women in South Asian countries, illuminating the intricacies of their lives and the difficulties they encounter. Focusing on women's perspectives, sociocultural realities, and the presentation of strong female characters are shared interests of both authors. The socioeconomic and gender disparities that exist in the separate societies are highlighted in the writings of Chughtai and Hamidullah. They criticize patriarchal systems, cultural norms, and restrictions imposed on women. They challenge established gender norms and promote more equality by giving voice to the hardships, aspirations, and agency of women via their stories. The works of Chughtai and Hamidullah have certain characteristics, such as their examination of female lives and their adoption of a realism aesthetic, but they also diverge significantly.

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