TRENDS IN RESEARCH IN ENGLISH AND HINDI LITERATURE FROM 2010 TO 2019: A STUDY BASED ON SHODHGANGA PORTAL

Smruti Swaroop
PhD research scholar at Veer Narmad South Gujarat University
Corresponding Author- Smruti Swaroop

Abstract:
A study of the titles of theses submitted on ShodhGanga by the departments of English and Hindi by five selected universities between 2010 to 2019 were examined based on the hypothesis that feminism and multiculturalism are the most sought-after theories for research in literature. However, results were not in favor of the same. Combining both departments, the maximum number of theses on feminism were 19 out of 100 and on multiculturalism were 17 out of 100. It was noted that other theories like realism, humanism and areas like comparative literature, the form of a literary work, were also popular among researchers.

Rationale of the study:

Research in literature involves reinterpreting written as well as visual texts. It may also include rediscovery of certain texts. For this process, a researcher chooses a specific critical or creative perspective. They are usually based on literary theories. This leads the researcher to examine existing works of literature through the chosen lens and then produce new knowledge or present new analyses. Therefore, they contribute to an understanding of how literature connects with different walks of life, how the context of production and reception impacts literature, the aesthetics of literary works, and evolution of literature, etc. Given this background of how research is conducted in literature, this paper postulates that, in recent years, a lot of emphasis has been laid on feminism and multiculturalism and therefore, researchers may also prefer the frameworks associated with these two concepts for their research.

Feminist criticism deals with the various ways literary works present oppression of women. They may either strengthen or subvert the way in which they are oppressed. Oppression may be psychological, financial, social, cultural or political. Researchers make an effort to examine texts and how women have been portrayed in those works. These texts may be written by any gender (Feminist Criticism, n.d.). Multiculturalism is a very vast term that encompasses how society 'behaves' with those who are not a part of the mainstream. This includes all those communities who are marginalized on different grounds including language, religion, culture, class, caste, economic, social, etc. Therefore, researchers dealing with this theme would examine, for example, dalits in Indian society, African Americans in the Western society.

Objective of the study:

It has been noted that multiculturalism and feminism gained a lot of importance in the past few decades. Therefore, the purpose of the research paper is to verify whether the research conducted in literature matches with the trend seen in literary theories. It aims to check the percentage of research carried out on these topics. In addition, this also aims to know what, in general, the other areas that interest the researchers are in case a majority of research is not based on feminism and/or multiculturalism.

Hypothesis:

This research examines trends in topics chosen for theses submitted by departments of English and Hindi. Since feminism and multiculturalism are trending literary theories, it is presumed that a considerable number of researchers would have chosen them as framework for their theses in the last ten years from 2010 to 2019.

Methodology:

Quantitative research methodology was used to examine data obtained from Shodhganga which is a repository of theses written and submitted by Indian universities. Theses submitted on this portal from 2010 to 2019 were considered. Since literature is quite a vast area, that is all languages have their particular literatures, this research was limited to theses written English and Hindi by departments of English and departments of Hindi respectively. Further, 5 universities were considered for this analysis. They were University of Madras, University of Calcutta, Anna University, Savitribai Phule Pune University and Chhatrapati Sahuji Maharaj University. These universities had been chosen

because they had submitted the highest number of theses on Shodhganga by 16 June 2022. However, it was then noted that Anna University did not have a Hindi department and for the theses uploaded by University of Madras, the year of completion was not indicated. Therefore, the universities next in line of submitting a high number of theses were chosen.They were Aligarh Muslim University and VBS Purvanchal University. Filters given on the website were used to make a list of theses submitted during the selected time period. The words used in the titles were analyzed to check if the topic chosen belonged to the category of 'feminism' or 'Multiculturalism'. In cases where the titles were ambiguous, the abstract/preface of the thesis was read to categorize the same. The table below shows how the words used in the titles were classified.

Feminism		Multiculturalism	
English	**Hindi**	**English**	**Hindi**
image of women, discovery of self (women), female identity, ecofeminism, feminist, female subjectivity, female positioning, new women, female consciousness	stree/nari vad, stree/nari asmita, stree/nari chetna, pitri satta, mahila aatmakatha, stree/nari jivan, stri/nari vimarsh, mahila sashaktikaran	subaltern, aboriginal, sexual minorities, gender and class, black consciousness, class conflict, lower caste, diaspora, culture clash, Third World, expatriate, cultural identity, race, marginality, victim, alienation, queer, post-colonial identities, cultural plurality, Apartheid, power structures, cultural dominance, race and ethnicity, cross-cultural, immigrant sensibility, Parsis	Muslim samaj, dalit, jatiya, nimnvarg, aadivasi, Haridasee, dalit aur stree

Fig: 1 Categorization of titles

Conclusions:
Following are findings of the study:
1. Researchers choose feminism and multiculturalism for their research work.
2. However, unlike the hypothesis, they are not the major ones. That is, for the universities undertaken for the study, the maximum was in SPPU, that is, 19 out 100 thesis were on feminism, and 17 out 100 on multiculturalism in the department of English though the Aligarh Muslim University submitted a higher number of theses.
3. In the department of Hindi also, in SPPU, 11 out 100 thesis were on feminism, and 9 out 100 on multiculturalism in though the number of theses submitted is higher in VBS Purvanchal University.
4. Considering the wide variety of literary theories at the disposal of the researchers, they may account for a good number but this trend is not observed across universities.
5. It was difficult to classify researches that were based on sociological, cultural, political, psychological theories.
6. These theories formed the macro lens of the research but at a micro level, gender, caste, class, minorities were being analyzed. Such research was not considered for this paper.

University	Dpt. English (2010 - 2019)			Dpt. Hindi (2010 - 2019)		
	Feminism	Multiculturalism	Total	Feminism	Multiculturalism	Total
University of Calcutta	5	6	71	7	5	74

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University	Dpt. English (2010 - 2019)			Dpt. Hindi (2010 - 2019)		
	Feminism	Multiculturalism	Total	Feminism	Multiculturalism	Total
Savitribai Phule Pune University	7	6	36	8	7	75
Chhatrapati Sahuji Maharaj University	17	17	135	15	5	233
Aligarh Muslim University	14	19	149	6	3	65
V.B.S Purvanchal University	11	10	112	24	14	305

Fig: 2 Theses submitted on the selected theories

University	Dpt. English (in percentage)		Dpt. Hindi (in percentage)	
	Feminism	Multiculturalism	Feminism	Multiculturalism
University of Calcutta	7.04	8.45	9.46	6.76
Savitribai Phule Pune University	19.44	16.67	10.81	9.46
Chhatrapati Sahuji Maharaj University	12.60	12.60	6.44	2.15
Aligarh Muslim University	9.40	12.75	9.23	4.62
V.B.S Purvanchal University	9.82	8.93	7.87	4.59

Fig: 3 Theses submitted on the selected theories (percentage)

1. Overall, in departments of English, there is an inclination towards multiculturalism as compared to feminism. This may be because there are a wider variety of texts available on this theme - that is, texts from various languages (including Indian and foreign) in the world translated into English and texts originally written in English.

2. In addition, multiculturalism in the texts written in English provides a wider scope of research, that is, researchers could analyze the representation of LGBTQ, diaspora, Afro-Americans and other marginalized and oppressed groups. Not all these phenomena are a part of Indian literature and therefore, texts explore issues and problems that are related to the Indian context.

3. Moreover, Indian culture does not 'allow' writers to speak loud and clear about all themes like sexuality of women. In some other cases like LGBTQ, this had not come out into the open and overt texts about these had not been penned.

4. This could also be true about the societies that the researchers come from. Despite being democratic and liberal academicians, they are not completely free of the social norms that are followed in a given environment. Therefore, they may be bound to carry out their research in selected areas.

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5. Further, the choice of theories depends on the guide as well as the researcher. They may have a preference for other literary concepts.
6. Given this, it was observed that naturalism, realism, humanism and modernism had been given a lot of importance in the Hindi and English departments.
7. Moreover, the analysis of the form/structure of a genre, study of folk literature, and thematic analysis of works were also prevalent.
8. Few theses were found in the area of aesthetics.
9. Comparative studies of authors/works emerged as a preferred area for many researchers.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that researchers when using ShodhGanga for finding theses should be careful about the date of completion. Also, multiple copies of the same theses were found. This also needs some attention. It is possible to extend this research to more language and literature departments and universities. Further, research with respect to how comparative literature - comparing Indian authors, comparing Indian with non-Indian authors, comparing texts across languages, etc. - is gaining momentum could be examined.

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