

ISSN NO: 2249-6661 (PRINT)

SAMBODHI

A Quaterly Peer Reviewed, Referred Research Journal
Volume: 43, Number: 4 (V) (October-December) Year: 2020
UGC Care Listed Journal

Lalbhai Dalpatbhai Institute of Indology

SAMBODHI

ISSN : 2249-6661

Impact Factor (IF) : 5.80

Editor in Chief

Dr. J.B. Shah

Published By

Lalbhai Dalpatbhai Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad

indologysambodhi.org@gmail.com

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(This is Refereed Journal and all articles are professionally screened and reviewed)

Published By : Lalbhai Dalpatbhai Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad
editorsambodhi.ugcjournal@gmail.com

Editorial Office: 120 Feet Ring Rd, University Area, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India
Printed By : Saha Publications Pvt. Ltd.

Office: M-194, Ground Floor, Century Market, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi, India.

INDEX

S NO.	TITLE	PAGE NO
1	Electrical Applications of Fly Ash based Zeolite <i>-A. N. Kalyankar, A. L. Choudhari, S.S. Jadhav</i>	1-2
2	Investors Awareness on Savings and Investment Including Capital Market Investments –an Empirical Investigation of Kerala Investors <i>-Shabeer K.K, Dr. G. Deepa</i>	3-8
3	Technology, New Media & ELT <i>-Dr Sudhir Narayan Singh</i>	9-14
4	Socio-Economic Dimensions of Sustainable Development <i>-Kranthi Kiran Talapaga, Dr G Sudha</i>	15-17
5	Evaluation of antagonistic activity of potential soil fungi against pathogen <i>-Vasanthakumari M.S, Latha.V</i>	18-24
6	Antipyretic, Anti-Inflammatory And Analgesic Properties Analysis By GC-MS, FT-IR And Phytochemical Screening Of <i>Carica Papaya (L)</i> and Nilavembu Kudineer Choornam <i>-A. Nicholas Daniel, Dr. Jeyaraj Mani</i>	25-37
7	Identity Crisis in Kiran Desai's The Inheritance of Loss <i>-Aradhna Kamra</i>	38-41
8	A Study of Financial inclusion through Digital Financial Service <i>-Dr. Y. M. Gosavi, Prof. Smita B. Pangavhane</i>	42-46
9	Review of HR Issues and Challenges and Research Synthesis of Auto Components Industries in Global Perspective <i>-Shashikant G Kurbetti, Dr Snehal Maheshkar</i>	47-56
10	Jandhan Yojana: A Boon For Beneficiaries In Lockdown Period <i>-Sandhya Ekbote, Dr. Vandana Pimple</i>	57-61
11	COVID-19 Global Impact and Effect on Human life <i>-Dr.V.N.Patil, Dr. Sudarshan Girmkar, Ms. Priti P. Patil</i>	62-66
12	BYOD Strategies for Libraries – An exploration <i>-Mr. Chetan Sudhakar Sonawane, Dr.A Thirunavukkarasu</i>	67-70
13	Challenges In Teaching / Learning Of English In An ESL Classroom <i>-Dr.Ch.Radhika, Ms. A. Satya Phani Kumari</i>	71-73
14	The mediating effect of organizational culture on the relationship between transformational leadership style and job satisfaction in Indian banking sector <i>-Dr. kavita Singh, Lalita</i>	74-80
15	Development of Semantic Enabled Load Sensor <i>-Srinivas Kumar P, Veera Sekhar K</i>	81-87

16	Regional Analysis of Urban-Rural Differentials in Literacy in Haryana <i>-Mamta, Dr. Sudhir Malik</i>	88-93
17	Legal Provisions for Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 read with The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, 2019 in India: An Appraisal <i>-Mr. Vikas Malik</i>	94-99
18	Role of Chandraprabha Saikiani in leading Women's movement in Assam <i>-Monika Gogoi</i>	100-101
19	Globalisation and Sustainability Of Traditional Assamese Culture <i>-Dr. Birinchi kr. Borah</i>	102-103
20	Study on Impact of Covid - 19 on Online Teaching with reference to Zoom App in the region of Thane <i>-Dr. Vinod Surenderkumar Chandwani</i>	104-107
21	S.W.O.C. Analysis of E-learning in the time of COVID-19 Era <i>-Anil Kumar, Dr. S.N. Haque</i>	108-112
22	Education and Women Empowerment: Experiences of 19th Century Kerala <i>-Sandhya M. Unnikrishnan</i>	113-115
23	Constructivist 7E Teaching And Learning Model of Algebra In Secondary School Level - A Thematic Approach <i>-Yudhisthir Mishra, Dr. RSS Nehru</i>	116-121
24	Financial Performance Analysis: A Comparative Study of NFL and IFFCO <i>-Rakesh Kumar Maurya, Dr. Shashi Kant Tripathi</i>	122-126
25	The Power of Knowledge as Portrayed in Umberto Eco's The Name of the Rose <i>-Maria Ponn Sindhuja. P, Dr. M. Sagaya Sophia</i>	127-130
26	The battle between the oppressed and the oppressor in The Space between Us by Thrity Umrigar <i>-G. Daryl Cressida, Dr. M. Sagaya Sophia</i>	131-134
27	Power Distance and Work Engagement <i>-S. Dayal Jeyachandran, Dr. F.R. Alexander Pravin Durai</i>	135-137
28	Phonological Skills In Young Adults With Spastic Cerebral Palsy <i>-Riddhi Mapari, Ravali P. Mathur, Ashleen Furtado, Sayyada Hashmani</i>	138-141

29	Game-Based Joyful Learning Method To Learn Chemistry Elements (1 To 30) For Secondary Level Students <i>-S.Sripriya,Dr. R. Ramesh</i>	142-149
30	Comprehensive Holistic Approach on Human Security <i>-Dr. I. Hiller Armstrong</i>	150-155
31	Education: An Apparatus for Economic Growth and Development in Karnataka <i>-Dr. Basavaraj S Benni, Kalakanagouda Po Patil</i>	156-164
32	Post Modern Trends in English Language Teaching <i>-Dr. Vinay Bhogle</i>	165-167

The battle between the oppressed and the oppressor in *The Space between Us* by
ThirtyUmrigar

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Abstract

This research is done in the select novel of ThirtyUmrigar, to portray the ongoing battle between the oppressors and the oppressed and how this oppression is more gender biased and is focused mainly on one gender and not both the genders. The paper sheds light on the various types of oppression and the major reasons for the cause of oppression. The major cause of oppression is classism and the research sheds light on the various types of classism and how this battle is not only about class conflicts but it is a gender conflict also. The research goes on to explain oppression does not only affect a particular class of one gender but the kind of oppression seen throughout the novel explains that it is a communal problem.

Keywords: ThirtyUmrigar, Classism, Diaspora

The term diaspora comes from the words *dia* meaning "away" and *speirein* meaning "scatter" or "sow." Connotatively, diaspora has been defined variedly. Initially applied to refer to the dispersal of Jews outside Israel, the term diaspora as per the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary now applies to "the movement of people from any nation or group away from their own country" (Hornby, 347). Diaspora Theory with its various features has influenced the literature of every language of the world. This literature is widely known as Expatriate or Diasporic Literature. It would be proper to examine features and aspects of such literature in which Indian Writing in English not only contributed greatly but also received international recognition and admiration in the past few years.

Diasporic Literature is a very vast concept and an umbrella term that includes in it all those literary works written by the authors outside their native country, but these works are associated with native culture and background. In this wide context, all those writers can be regarded as diasporic writers, who write outside their country but remained related to their homeland through their works. Diasporic literature has its roots in the sense of loss and alienation, which emerged as a result of migration and expatriation. Generally, diasporic literature deals with alienation, displacement, existential rootlessness, nostalgia, quest of identity. It also addresses issues related to amalgamation or disintegration of cultures. It reflects the immigrant experience that comes out of the immigrant settlement. Uma Parameswaran has defined it as follows; "first is one of nostalgia for the homeland left behind mingled with fear in a strange land. The second is a phase in which one is busy adjusting to the new environment that there is little creative output. The third phase is the shaping of diaspora existence by involving themselves ethno cultural issues. The fourth is when they have 'arrived' 42 and start participating in the larger world of politics and national issues." (Quoted, Parameswaran, 165). The immigrants, whatever their reason for migration be, financial, social, political, no matter whether they migrated for trade and commerce, as religious preachers, as labourers, convicts, soldiers, as expatriates or refugees, exiles (forced or voluntary), or as guest workers in search of better life and opportunities have shared some common things as well as differences which are based on their conditions of migration and period of stay in the adopted land. Mostly the migrants suffer from the pain of being far off from their homes, the memories of their motherland, the anguish of leaving behind everything familiar agonizes the minds of migrants. William Safran has observed that: "they continue to relate personally or vicariously, to the homeland in a way or another, and their ethnic-communal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship." (Quoted, Safran, 1991:23) The diasporic Indians too, do not break their relationship with the ancestral land. There is a search for continuity and "ancestral impulse", an effort to look for their roots. Settlement in alien land makes them experience dislocation. Dislocation can be considered as a break with the old identity. They experience the sense of loneliness in an alien land feel as they face non-acceptance by the host society and also experience ethnic discrimination. The immigrants attempt to assimilate, adapt and amalgamate with the society of their host country. Their attempts of adaptation and adjustment are not without their concern to maintain their original culture and identity. The marginal groups try to guard themselves against the dominant host group. The most important means used for insulation is the continuation of the cultural practices and social traditions. The first generation immigrants are always concerned with keeping the social, cultural baggage which consists of among other things their religion, language, music, art, dress, cuisine, etc. intact. Conscious attempts are made by the diasporic communities to pass their traditions to the future generation.

The experiences of these cultural elements have been varied in different diasporic situations. Some of these elements have vanished, some have persisted or survived, others have experienced assimilation, syncretism or change, and few elements might be rejuvenated. The immigrants in these situations are compelled to feel that they stand on the borderline belonging neither to their motherland nor their adopted country. In their attempt to integrate with the adopted culture while maintaining their inheritance, they develop a dual identity, and their culture becomes a sandwich culture. Their efforts for assimilation and failure to do so dishearten them. The feeling of rootlessness, alienation, confusion, nostalgia, dislocation and sufferings due to