

Fragmented Selves and Broken Homes: A Comparative Study of Existential Alienation in Nayi Kahani and Western Postmodern Fiction

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Abstract

The 20th century saw the rise of the existential alienation as a major theme of fiction that transformed Indian and Western literature. The Nayi Kahani movement in post-independence India highlighted the emotional and psychological concerns of the urban middle class, emphasizing the complexities of relationships, feelings of isolation, and identity struggles. In the same way, Western postmodern fiction was concerned with the themes of absurdity, divided consciousness, consumerism, and emotional detachment as expressions of alienation. The aim of this paper is to make a comparative analysis of selected works of Mohan Rakesh, Nirmal Verma and Rajendra Yadav with selected postmodern works of western writers like Samuel Beckett and Don DeLillo to explore the representation of existential alienation in the different socio-cultural context.

The study posits that alienation has been represented in both literary traditions as fragmented, and broken homes, but that the nature of alienation is vastly different in terms of its ideological and cultural base. Alienation frequently occurs in Western postmodern fiction as a result of capitalist modernity, technological growth and the breakdown of stable systems of meaning. Characters find absurdity, paranoia, and emotional emptiness in very broken storyworlds (McHale, 1987). By contrast, the alienation described in Nayi Kahani is an lived social reality of post-Independence India, especially the tensions arising from the process of urbanization, aspirations of the middle class, evolving gender roles and familial disintegration. Implicit in Nayi Kahani is a sense of existential anxiety, of failed communication, and of emotional isolation in domestic spaces, for the protagonists of Nayi Kahani often struggle with these themes through silence and failed communication (King, 2001).

This paper, by comparing Nayi Kahani with the works of other writers, argues that Nayi Kahani cannot simply be understood as an Indian postmodern version of fragmentation. Instead, it is a unique kind of existential realism based on the Indian socio-cultural experiences. While postmodern fiction in the West, in the tradition of postmodernism, seeks experimentation and ontological uncertainty, Nayi Kahani has a firm emotional and psychological realism with a strong emphasis on lived human suffering. The research also delves into the implications of urban loneliness and broken identities as a metaphor for wider disruptions in contemporary society. The loss of traditional family systems in both traditions is a result of individuals' inability to create a meaningful emotional bond in an ever evolving social landscape (Mishra, 2016).

In conclusion the research makes a contribution to the comparative literary research by situating Nayi Kahani in the global debate on existential literature and also highlighting its Indian specific aspects. It concentrates on the shift of existential issues into narratives that were 'socially conscious' and 'sensitized' in Hindi fiction, and explores the emotional intricacies of the post-Independence life through these stories. Indian and western depiction of alienation are compared and the universal nature of modern alienation is highlighted and at the same time the paper illustrates the significance of cultural particularity in literary expression.

Keywords: Existential Alienation; Nayi Kahani; Postmodern Fiction; Fragmented Identity; Urban Loneliness; Family Disintegration; Existential Realism

Introduction

In recent years, humanity's predicament, especially the feeling of isolation, disconnection, emptiness, has been a topic of growing interest in the modern world. Social, political and economic changes were unprecedented and had a profound impact on human relationships and personal identity in the twentieth century. Loneliness, fractured families and mental ambiguity became the theme for writers in both Indian and Western literature alike. The experiences were a major focus of existential and postmodern literature, in which the search for meaning in an unstable and emotionally detached world is an integral part of the narrative. The literary depiction of the fractured selves and fractured homes became a potent expression of the modern man's anxiousness (Childs, 2017).

A major feature of the post-independence India was the Nayi Kahani movement, which sought to redefine Hindi fiction and draw the reader's focus away from the collective nationalist themes to the inner lives of ordinary people. Authors like Mohan Rakesh, Nirmal Verma and Rajendra Yadav delved into the psychological dissonances of the middle class city dwellers and focused on issues of marital tension, emotional alienation and existential doubt. Nayi Kahani showed a realistic picture of the modern life where communication fails and relationships become devoid of emotional warmth which was not seen in the previous idealistic stories. The movement captured the social changes of a newly independent India dealing with a growing urbanization, changing moral values and the thrust of modernity. This led to existential alienation being firmly linked to Indian social and family norms, and not to philosophical speculation (Snead, 2019).

Meanwhile, Western postmodern fiction emerged from the aftermath of WWII, capitalist expansion and technological modernity. Amongst the writers of the time were Samuel Beckett and Don DeLillo who painted characters who were broken and emotionally removed from societies where stable meaning was lost, and where individuals felt feelings of absurdity, paranoia and a loss of stable meaning. Alienation is a common feature of postmodern stories, such as its use of disjointed narratives, chronological inconsistencies, and doubts about existence. The modern person is not only alienated from society, but also from language, memory and individuality. Consumer culture and the thrust of technological developments exacerbate the sense of emptiness, human relations are growing more shallow and precarious (Jameson, 1991).

This research paper provides a comparative study of existential alienation in Nayi Kahani and the postmodern fiction of the west, and analyses the nature of loneliness, broken relationships and crisis of identity in the two literary traditions. While both traditions show emotionally deprived people, their cultural roots are different. The emphasis on the absurd, ontological instability found in Western postmodern fiction, is not to be found in Nayi Kahani, which is strongly bound to social realism and the emotional lived experience. The paper proposes that Nayi Kahani should be regarded as an existential realism of India which is able to turn the existential anxiety into a socially anchored narrative, which is set within the middle class Indian life. The comparative approach aims at highlighting the universal condition of modern alienation and the culturally specific experiences of suffering, identity and emotional fragmentation reflected in literature.

Background of the Study

The psychological and emotional impact of the change in human society was most acute in the twentieth century and was most keenly felt in the medium of literature. The industrialization and urbanization, wars, technological progress and new values in society gave rise to a sense of insecurity and emotional isolation in people. The old forms of family, morality and community began to dissolve and modern literature began to explore existential crises, feelings of loneliness and split identities. The world of the writer was beginning to portray characters who had difficulty in finding meaning and stability in the rapidly changing societies. Existential alienation therefore became a primary topic of contemporary literary conversation as there was a greater sense of disconnection between people and their social world (Mansfield, 2020).

The post-Independent era in India was a time of promise and uncertainty. Independence brought with it a promise of national reconstruction and social progress, but it also had created new tensions in urban middle class life. The pace of modernization fast changed family configurations, relations between individuals and traditional moral frameworks. In this socio-cultural transition, a movement called the Nayi Kahani came into being, which brought the Hindi fiction in a direction of psychological realism and individualism. The emotionally troubled people who were caught in the predicament of broken marriages, urban loneliness and communication gap were represented by the writers like Mohan Rakesh, Nirmal Verma and Rajendra Yadav. They spoke of the fears of those who were experiencing emotional isolation, though they were not alone in the family or in society. Nayi Kahani, in contrast to previous idealistic literature, depicted ordinary life with realism and depth, creating an alienation theme as significant in literature and society (Orsini, 2021).

At the same time, Western postmodern fiction emerged in the framework of post-war disillusionment and capitalist modernity. Western writers delved into questions of the loss of certainty, the breakdown of identity, and the futility of living in technologically advanced societies. Characters in Samuel Beckett and Don DeLillo works tend to suffer from paranoia, lack of emotion and trouble with existential understanding. Postmodern literature is a world in which meaning is no longer secure and human relationships are not authentic in the face of consumer culture and hyper-individualism. Consequently, the sense of alienation typically takes the form of disjointed storylines and inconceivable scenarios in Western fiction which highlight the situation of modern life (McLaughlin, 2018).

Research Problem

As societies have become modern, they have created people who are isolated emotionally even with the advancement of technology and connectivity. Feelings of loneliness and existential anxiety have been exacerbated by the weakening of traditional relationships, an increase in city life pressures and changing cultural values. These experiences are reflected in the literature, in the form of disjointed identities, unfulfilled relationships and emotional isolation. This study aims to explore the difference in the representation of existential Alienation in Indian Nayi Kahani and in postmodern fiction of Western tradition in order to find out the difference in the literary works of these two traditions in the context of modern anxiety, and the role of culture in literary expression.

Research Objectives

The main aims of this study are to compare existential alienation in Nayi Kahani and Western postmodern fiction, examine the fragmented identities and broken family construct and to identify Nayi Kahani as a form of existential realism in the Indian context between social and emotional reality.

Theoretical Framework

Existentialism and Alienation

Existentialism first developed in the 20th-century as a philosophical reaction against the modern crises, especially the anxiety, isolation and feeling of meaninglessness that are common to individuals in fast-changing societies. Existentialist thinkers have stated that there is uncertainty in human life and humans must bring meaning to an indifferent world. Sartre stressed on the idea of freedom and responsibility of man, claiming that man is “condemned to be free” as he is responsible for making his own decisions rather than depending on any moral values or any truths that have been given to him. This liberty frequently leads to anxiety, loneliness and existential weightiness as humanity is responsible for finding their own identity (Sartre, 2007). On the other hand, Albert Camus delved into the absurdity of human life in which people are looking for meaning in a world that cannot provide them with answers. Camus believed that alienation was the result of the struggle between man's desire for order and the indifferent reality (Camus, 2013).

The ideas of meaninglessness, emotional isolation and existential anxiety became pivotal to modern literature as they mirrored the psychological state of people in the fragmented societies. Literary characters felt more and more alienated from their family members, society, and themselves. Existential alienation is therefore not only a philosophical uncertainty, but an emotional and social disintegration as well. This is an existential state that is represented in the Indian and western literary traditions by silence, by the inability to communicate and by the inability to maintain interpersonal relations.

Postmodernism and Fragmentation

The literary depiction of fragmentation and instability, already heightened earlier, was further accentuated by postmodernism. While postmodernism doesn't assume that there is meaning in a life that lacks certainty, it is radically questioning the very idea that meaning, identity, and reality can be stable. For postmodern theorists, the features of modern culture are now so

pervasive in society that they have undermined the formation of stable identities and emotions. According to postmodern theorists, postmodern society is now an emotionally dislocated society with fragmented identities, dominated by media culture, consumerism, and technological simulations. People don't have single selves anymore, identity is unstable, fluid and socially constructed. This situation creates feelings of isolation in the city and psychological disintegration, especially in capitalist societies where relationships are often defined by consumer culture and hyper-individualism (Baudrillard, 1994).

Another facet of postmodern thinking is the fall of stable meaning. The question of reality itself is called into doubt, with media images and virtual reality settings taking the place of real relationships. This hyperreality condition is a confusion between reality and representation. Thus, postmodern literature often employs narratives that are broken, running out of order, and absurd in the way it attempts to depict the instability of today's life. In postmodern literature alienation is thus tied not only to feelings of isolation but also to the loss of coherent meaning and identity.

Comparative Literary Theory

Comparative literary theory is a useful tool for analysing the similarities and differences between human experiences in different literary works from different cultures. Comparative methodology enables the study of themes, narrative technique, and philosophical issues in literature, making it possible to appreciate cultural specificity. Comparative analysis, in the scope of this work, assists in the exploration of the presence of existential alienation in Nayi Kahani and Western postmodern fiction, even though they are in different historical and social contexts.

Both cultures see loneliness, multiple identities and dysfunctional relationships as outcomes of modernity when analysed cross-culturally. But there are some significant differences too. While much postmodern fiction in the west places a strong focus on the absurd, fragmentation, and ontological uncertainty, Nayi Kahani is firmly grounded in social realism and the emotional lived experience. Comparative literary theory can thus be used to investigate the universal and culturally specific aspects of existential alienation in modern literature (Damrosch, 2020).

Historical and Literary Context

Nayi Kahani Movement

In the 1950s, a new literary movement called Nayi Kahani emerged, bringing about a radical shift in contemporary Hindi literature. The post-independence period of Indian society from 1947 onwards brought about swift political, economic and cultural transformation which significantly impacted the lives of the people. The happy freedom of free life was gradually replaced by frustrations, stress of the city, unemployment, and emotional disruptions in middle-class life. As a result of modernisation and urbanisation, traditional family systems and social structures started to show signs of weakening, as inter-personal relationships changed. The changing realities of the city were met head-on in the Hindi fiction with a focus on the psychological experience of individuals in fragmented social environments, moving away from nationalistic idealism and collective struggle (Narang, 2001).

The urban middle class was the focal point of the Nayi Kahani literature because it represented a generation that was in-between the two worlds – traditionalism and modernity. People felt

lonely, unable to communicate and emotionally isolated despite being in families and social institutions. Widowedness, marital tension, domestic discontents, and emotional disruptions were often featured in literary works. As opposed to the heroic and idealized characters of Nayi Kahani writers depicted common people facing anxiety, uncertainty and existential confusion. This movement set the tone for psychological realism in Hindi fiction, with its focus on inner consciousness, silence, and emotional complexity. The relationships between humans were portrayed as fragile and emotionally distant, symbolizing the new troubles of urban life (King, 2001).

One of the masters of this movement was Mohan Rakesh, who delved into themes of alienation and communication failures in his emotionally charged stories that accentuated the dissatisfaction of marriage and loneliness. Nirmal Verma infused a subtlety of psychology and existential sensitivity into the Hindi fiction, and frequently casted lonely characters looking for emotional connection. In the same way, Rajendra Yadav gave attention to the middle class conflicts, gender conflicts, and disintegration of family snags in the Indian society of modernity. In sum, these writers reshaped the nature of Hindi literature, giving rise to an existential anxiety and emotional realism that became key literary preoccupations.

Western Postmodern Fiction

Western postmodern fiction is the product of the post-Second World War era, when there was a sense of social disillusionment, technological growth and consumer capitalism. War destroyed both religion and rational progress and led to a crisis of faith in the traditional systems of morality. With the growth of industrial capitalism and mass media culture, people became more and more emotionally isolated and meaningless in highly mechanised societies. This state was captured in postmodern literature by narratives that are broken, unstable identities, and absurdity in the context of existence. With technology and consumerism taking over, there seemed to be no clear sense of reality in the world and people were finding it hard to keep up with keeping genuine human relationships. (Connor, 2015)

Consumer capitalism was turned into the cornerstone of Postmodern society. Media images, goods, and false desires began to take the place of solid values and norms in defining the human identity. Emotional distance was heightened by a technological modernity that substituted direct human experiences for mediated ones. In this way, the postmodern novel usually depicted characters caught up in paranoia, isolation and psychic disintegration. In modern life it seemed that there was no clear meaning, it was repetitive, chaotic, and existential absurdity became a strong literary theme.

Of these great writers, Samuel Beckett explored the meaninglessness and emptiness of human life in short plots and repetitive speech. His characters tend to be in limbo, lacking in certainty and feeling alone in their emotions. Similarly, Don DeLillo explored the influence of media culture, consumerism and technological anxiety on contemporary identities and relationships between people. The two authors uncover the ways in which postmodern culture deconstructs human consciousness and accentuates existential alienation.

Fragmented Selves: Identity Crisis and Existential Alienation

Alienation in Nayi Kahani

The Nayi Kahani movement literature is depicted by emotionally disturbed characters who feel lonely, silenced, and find communication between people to be problematic. Whereas earlier Hindi literature was centered around the collective social values Nayi Kahani was more concerned with the psychological state of the urban middle class after Independence. The emotional void in family life caused by the rapid urbanization and the alteration of values, left people feeling isolated even in close relationships. The dynamics of communication within the family often break down and silence is a sign of emotional isolation and sense of existential stress. The characters are unable to express their inner suffering, which creates a constant feeling of incompleteness and alienation (Lal, 2019).

Alienation is manifested in *Parinde* in the sense of emotional detachment, the lack of characters to have meaningful interaction. The loneliness is not a solitude of the self, but an emotional state, which is created by memory, silence and unfulfilled relationships. In the same way *Uski Roti* is about the emotional torment of a lady who is confined to a monotonous routine and unable to communicate with her husband. The situation seems to be a reflection of middle-class frustration and the quest for emotional identity in oppressive social routines. Alienation is not a philosophical abstraction in either text, but rather arises from realistic social conditions.

Alienation in Western Postmodern Fiction

Western postmodern fiction creates alienation in the realm of absurdity, disintegration of consciousness and uncertainty of existence. In a capitalist, media saturated, technologically advanced society, people can be exposed to postmodern life and thus become emotionally detached from their lives, making it difficult for them to find any sense of stability. Fear, paranoia and the loss of coherent identity further exacerbates alienation in these texts. Relationships feel hollow and distant and human life is seen as disjointed and insecure (Hutcheon, 2002).

The existential alienation of *Waiting for Godot* is represented by absurd waiting and repetitive dialogue as created by Samuel Beckett. The characters are in a meaningless world, where they can never get a word across and where no certainty ever comes. They wait and wait, a symbol of man's quest for meaning in a meaningless universe. Just as in *White Noise* by Don DeLillo, modern people are preoccupied with technological anxiety, fear of death and the saturation of media. The novel is an example of a fragmented consciousness with an unstable sense of identity in an environment saturated by consumer culture and hyperreality. Both texts show, in part, how postmodern life leads to existential insecurity and emotional fragmentation.

Comparative Analysis

Nayi Kahani, along with postmodern western fiction, delves into the themes of loneliness, identity crisis and existential suffering, but with different cultural underpinnings. The feeling of loneliness is inextricably linked to the family structures, the expectations of the middle class and the repression of Indian society, as seen in Nayi Kahani. Alienation is created by silence and domestic tension and by the lack of communication in "realistic" social situations. Western postmodern fiction, however, typically creates alienation in the form of absurdity, technological

fear and ontological doubt. Both the characters and the concept of reality itself becomes unstable, and fragmentation occurs on a philosophical level as well.

The postmodern fiction is more concerned with the disorientation of human consciousness and the breakdown of social roles or human relations, while the identity crisis in Nayi Kahani is closely connected with the social roles and human relationships. Yet, both traditions show the psychological effects of modern life and the universal human quest for meaning, connection and self-understanding in emotionally fractured societies (Waugh, 2013).

Broken Homes and Familial Disintegration

Family Crisis in Nayi Kahani

The Nayi Kahani movement has emerged as a visual representation of the emotional, communication and psychological turmoil of the modern Indian family. The modernisation of India after independence affected the traditional family system and relations as a result of rapid urbanisation and the development of middle-class lifestyle. The post-independence scenario in India has seen a shift in the traditional family system, along with a change in interpersonal relationships, due to rapid urbanisation and the rise of the middle class. The family system of living together became weakened, on one hand, and the modern desires and economic conditions increased the emotional distance between family members on the other hand. In this context, Hindi fiction during this period started to emphasize on broken marriages, frustration in domestic life and existential loneliness within the normal household life (Mehrotra, 2015).

The issue of marriage is a main theme in Nayi Kahani. Marriage is often a time of silence, lack of understanding, and lack of intimacy/close friendship between husband and wife. Mohan Rakesh and Rajendra Yadav are among the writers who portray marriage in a rut and mental strangulation. Emotional distance is more difficult to bear since characters live together physically without being emotionally connected. Domestic life is sometimes claustrophobic, the people feeling as if they are trapped by the society and middle class moralities.

Gender conflicts are also important in these tales. Despite the changed social situation of a woman character, they are still neglected, their freedom is limited, and they still have to perform traditional roles. Men, however, suffer from lack of confidence, frustration and inability to adapt to changing roles of women. Those traditional family values are in conflict with the modern individual desires and this instability in relationships is the result. This is how the home can become a place of anxiety, alienation and unspoken pain, a place that traditionally represented emotional security and belonging. Nayi Kahani thus creates a psychological topography of the interior spaces, a topography that echoes existential discontent, a discontent that brings up the subject of fragmented identities (Dharwadker, 2001).

Family and Isolation in Western Fiction

In the same manner, the collapse of family structures is also evident in western postmodern fiction, but the reasons and cultural setting may be different than that of the Indian. In a consumer capitalist, technologized and hyper-individualized postmodern society, family ties are often lacking in emotional connection and are broken up. Emotional and intimate connections are undermined by the rational self, the quest for material success and mediated experiences. The traditional nuclear family is eroded by the focus on personal freedom, material success and mediated experiences that make up modern life (Bauman, 2003).

In many western postmodern texts, the dysfunctionality of the family is evident due to people's inability to form emotional communication. Relationships become superficial, emotional intimacy is lost, and exist in isolation, feeling anxious and living in a consumer lifestyle. Technological modernity exacerbates the situation by further restricting authentic interaction, and enhancing psychological disconnection. The characters' feelings of loneliness not only exist among members of their own families but also in front of the family members, signifying the emotional emptiness of modern capitalist culture.

This is found in the emotionally fractured characters within unstable social settings of the works of Samuel Beckett and Don DeLillo. The house is no longer the place of a stable emotional core, but rather a sign of alienation, fear, and existential uncertainty in postmodern fiction. Consumerist modernity often appears as emotional disconnection in the family, highlighting the psychological impact of consumerism.

Comparative Reading

A comparative reading of Nayi Kahani and Western postmodern fiction indicates certain similarities as well as a few significant cultural differences in the representation of the alienation of the family. Even in Indian literature, family is a significant institution, morally and socially, so that the problem of the break down of family is very painful. Alienation is a result of the conflict between the old and the new. In spite of the importance of relationship in the emotional sphere, people find it difficult to maintain emotional connections in changing social contexts.

Western postmodern fiction, on the other hand, is the product of societies that are more individualistic and consumerist, with an emphasis on personal autonomy and independence, rather than familial identity. Emotional detachment becomes normal and technology mediated relationships and capitalist lifestyles make relationships weak. But while there are these cultural differences, both literatures have a sense of the house as a place of existential loneliness and psychological fragmentation. The family, instead of providing emotional support, becomes a place where silence, isolation and the lack of communication are faced.

So, in both traditions we find that the modern world has radically altered human relationships, producing emotionally disembodyed people locked into broken families. In contrast to Nayi Kahani's approach of social realism and emotional intimacy, western postmodern fiction tends to focus on absurdity, fragmentation and existential uncertainty. These literary traditions indicate the human need for emotional bonds amidst increasingly disaffectionate societies (Giddens, 1992).

Narrative Techniques and Representation of Alienation

Techniques in Nayi Kahani

The themes of the Nayi Kahani movement revolutionized Hindi fiction, but the storytelling approach of the Nayi Kahani movement also did that. Middle-class life was the subject of subtle literary techniques in portraying existential alienation, emotional emptiness, and psychological conflicts in this movement. One of the most important techniques used in Nayi Kahani is symbolism. Things that were mundane, domestic environments, silence, and repetitive actions can all serve as a symbol of lonely feelings and emotional oppression. What happens in reality gets expressed in the symbolic realm, and things that happen in the symbolic realm get

expressed in reality. All the things that writers experience in their reality get expressed in their symbolic reality and vice versa.

Another major technique employed by the writers like Nirmal Verma and Mohan Rakesh in order to showcase the disassembled inner consciousness of a character is interior monologue. Readers enter the emotional fears, which may not have been expressed verbally with others. This is a psychological realism, which makes Nayi Kahani different from previous idealistic Hindi stories. Minimalism is also used, a style of movement in which the words are simple and the activity outside the frame of the movement is limited, increasing the emotional content. The stories are not dramatic, but rather show subtle emotions and the moments when things fall quiet. In addition, open endings also add to existential uncertainty, as there is no resolution to conflicts other than the ellipsis, representing the incompleteness and ambiguity of life in today's world (Snell, 2011).

In spite of its psychological complexity, realist narration still plays an important role in Nayi Kahani. Stories are closely related to social reality, middle-class city experience, and domestic relationships. Alienation is thus presented, not in a fantasy or abstraction, but in emotionally realistic settings, based on a life that is normal in the Indian context.

Techniques in Postmodern Fiction

In Western postmodern fiction, alienation is expressed in very experimental and original storytelling techniques, that break with traditional methods. The stream of consciousness is often employed to convey disorganized thinking and unstable emotions. The memories and fears and fantasies and current experiences of the characters are intermingled without clear distinctions, as the modern consciousness is unstable. The narrative approach focuses on confusion, a sense of anxiety and emotional division in postmodern society (Brooker, 2017).

Another aspect of postmodern fiction is non-linear narration. Events are not presented in chronological order or in a logical sequence to cause confusion and disorientation to readers. These disjointed structures represent the loss of "stable identity" and "coherent meaning" in post-modern life. Metafiction too is an important method, with texts making explicit the artificiality of their being and doubt their narrative veracity. Self-conscious storytelling is a postmodern concept that assumes a fragmented reality and instability.

Communicative failure and the lack of meaning in human interaction are suggested by absurd dialogues, especially in the writings of Samuel Beckett. Communication can feel redundant, vacuous and out of place, with a focus on isolation and the limitations of language in offering meaning or reassurance. The narrative is therefore broken in several ways, and fragmented narrative structures thus are a literary expression of alienated modern life.

Comparative Stylistic Study

The narrative strategies of Nayi Kahani and Western postmodern fiction both portray psychological breakdown and existential alienation in innovative ways. In both Nayi Kahani and Western postmodern fiction, the narrative techniques express psychological breakdown and existential alienation in innovative ways. Silence, a lack of unity in the mind and trouble with communication reflect the emotional crisis of contemporary people in both traditions. Their stories, however, have different cultural orientations and stylistic intentions.

Nayi Kahani uses realism, symbolism and minimalism to represent alienation in common social and domestic settings. It has always been a middle-class Indian life lived through its narratives, which has enabled readers to see lived reality. Western postmodern fiction often employs the metatextual and the absurd as well as fragmentary structures to raise doubts about the very existence of stable meaning and coherent identity.

The two traditions teach that language and silence are existentially significant tools. In Nayi Kahani, the lack of sound means the lack of intimacy and emotional expression, while in postmodern fiction it is frequently the absence of meaning. Though there are some differences in style, both literary traditions reflect the difficulties of modern people in communicating, connecting and maintaining identity in emotionally divided and polarized societies (McHale, 2004).

Narrative Techniques and Representation of Alienation

Techniques in Nayi Kahani

The themes of the Nayi Kahani movement, however, were not the sole contribution to Hindi fiction; the movement also introduced new techniques of narration. The literary techniques used by writers of this movement were subtle and were used to illustrate existential alienation, emotional emptiness, and psychological conflict in the life of the middle class. Nayi Kahani is among the most significant techniques in which symbolism is used. The ordinary, the domestic, the silence and the repetitions are all symbols of loneliness and emotional suffocation. The everyday is translated into the communicative, the emotional, the alienation and the deeper psychological meanings is evident in the experiences.

Another important writing style adopted by writers like Nirmal Verma and Mohan Rakesh to make the characters' fragmented consciousness visible is the use of interior monologue. Readers get a glimpse into emotional fears that may not be expressed in social interaction, as they are reflected within the reader, and as they process the text silently. Nayi Kahani is a psychological realism which has set it apart from the previous idealistic Hindi stories. Minimalism is also used in the movement, where the language of the movement and the exterior action are both limited and draw out the emotional depth. The stories are not about grandiose events, but about the nuances of emotion and quiet moments. The trend of having 'open endings' adds to existential uncertainty as it leaves conflicts unresolved and underscores incompleteness and ambiguity of modern life (Snell, 2011).

Despite its psychological complexity, realist narration is at the heart of Nayi Kahani. The stories remain tightly linked to social reality, and to the experiences of the urban middle class and to domestic relations. The theme of alienation then is not presented in abstracted or fictionalized ways, but in emotionally realistic scenarios which have a basis in contemporary Indian reality.

Techniques in Postmodern Fiction

Western postmodern fiction exemplifies alienation by means of rather experimental narrative techniques, which break away from traditional methods of storytelling. Stream of consciousness is often used to depict an unstable psychological state and broken thought processes. Memory, fear, fantasy, and the present world of the characters are so intertwined that it is difficult to distinguish them from one another, suggesting the fluidity of consciousness in

the present day. This is a narrative form that focuses on the emotions of confusion, anxiety, and emotional disintegration in postmodern society (Brooker, 2017).

Another prevalent postmodern trait of the novel is non-linear narration. Events are not recorded in chronological order; they are presented in a disorderly manner, making it unclear and confusing for the reader. This disintegration of stable identity and coherent meaning in postmodern life is mirrored in these fragmented structures. Metafiction also emerges as an important tool in which texts become aware of their fabricatedness and doubt the credibility of the narrational reality. The postmodern notion that reality is fragmental and unstable is manifested in this self-conscious narration.

Lack of communication and meaninglessness of exchange are emphasised in absurd dialogues, especially those of Samuel Beckett. These discussions seem repetitive, vague, even irrelevant, and focus on the sense of isolation and lack of language that offers assurance or emotional satisfaction. Dislocated narration can then be a literary depiction of a disoriented modern life.

Comparative Stylistic Study

In both Nayi Kahani and the Western postmodern fiction, innovative narrative technique is used to represent psychological breakdown and existential alienation. The traditions share the same theme of silence, disintegration of thought and communication, which presents the emotional crisis of modern-day people. But their stories take different cultural orientations and stylistic agendas.

The themes of alienation in familiar social and domestic situations are highlighted in Nayi Kahani, in a realist, symbolic and minimalist manner. The stories are always deeply emotional and remain connected to the social context, enabling readers to understand the lives of middle class Indians. Western postmodern fiction, in contrast, often uses non-linear narrative forms, metafiction and absurdity to challenge the very nature of stable meaning and coherent identity.

Language and the absence of language are both vital means of existence in both traditions. In Nayi Kahani, silence is an expression of emotional repression and unfulfilled intimacy, while in postmodern fiction, it can be an expression of the lack of meaning. Despite the variations in style, both of these literary traditions show the difficulties of communicating, connecting, and maintaining identity in emotionally fractured societies as they relate to the modern individual (McHale, 2004).

Nayi Kahani as Indian Existential Realism

The Nayi Kahani movement can be considered a unique expression of Indian existential realism because it does not only offer an existential anxiety but also a socially grounded and emotionally realistic portrayal. As opposed to postmodern texts that are produced in the West which tend to dwell on the experimentation of narrative, the ironic and playful fragmentation, Nayi Kahani holds a close relationship with the lived experiences of human beings and to the actualities of post-independence Indian society. It depicts loneliness, alienation and identity crises not as philosophical states but as feelings arising out of the evolution of family structures, the pressures of living in the city, and the frustrations of the middle class (Mukherjee, 2018).

Whereas existential realism and postmodern playfulness have many similarities in their aesthetics, there is a fundamental distinction with respect to the nature of reality and human

suffering. Stable meaning is often called into doubt in postmodern fiction written in the west, by way of metafiction, absurdity, and disjointed narration. Unlike that, Nayi Kahani is emotionally authentic and has psychological depth and shows common people in a realistic social set up. Motives like domestic conflicts, inability to communicate, marital dissatisfaction and moral uncertainty in urban middle class life are the concerns of writers like Mohan Rakesh, Nirmal Verma, Rajendra Yadav. They don't feel alienated in strictly philosophical terms, but instead through silence, emotional repression, broken relationships, and more (Chatterjee, 2020).

One of the main strengths of Nayi Kahani is the fact that it is rooted in society. The movement is a reflection of the fears of a society that is neither traditional nor modern, but is in a transitional state, and where people feel a dilemma in maintaining emotional proximity in a context of profound transformation of values. Human suffering is depicted realistically and humanistically, and it is a real conflict of existence that is interconnected with the Indian cultural and social reality. Ethical and moral quandaries, emotional loneliness and psychological disintegration are inevitable byproducts of life, particularly in the stresses of middle-class living.

Thus, as presented in Nayi Kahani, existential anxiety is metamorphosed into a literary realism which is socially engaged and deals with the emotional sprawl of the modern Indian life. Its tales tell of alienation as not only an intellectual experience, but a profound, human experience that is formed by family, society and cultural transition (Riemenschneider, 2019).

Conclusion

A comparative analysis of Nayi Kahani and Western postmodern fiction shows that existential alienation is one of the dominant literary responses to the crisis of modern life from different cultural traditions. Both literary movements show a sense of fractured identities, emotional isolation and fractured relationships between people due to the changing social realities. The concept and portrayal of alienation is however different based on historical and cultural contexts. Existential anxiety in the Western postmodern fiction is worlds apart from Nayi Kahani, which seems to manifest in the latter through psychological realism and socially rooted narratives.

Mohan Rakesh, Nirmal Verma and Rajendra Yadav's works show the emotional challenges of the middle class life in India after Independence, where the transformation of values, lack of communication and family conflicts result in a sense of existential loneliness. Their stories are about a common person who finds themselves stuck in silence, in emotional voids and in broken relationships. Nayi Kahani is neither a postmodern text with its focus on philosophical uncertainty nor a postmodern experimental narrative, as is common in the West. So, the movement, which is based on the existential anxiety, takes the existential anxiety to a distinctly Indian form of existential realism, one based on family structures, moral conflict, and urban middle class realities.

In the same way, western authors like Samuel Beckett and Don DeLillo describe contemporary persons who find themselves facing an absurd life, and a panic of technology and dislocated mental states in capitalist societies. Their works demonstrate the increasing emotional isolation and lack of real interpersonal relationship in a world over consumed by consumerism, media culture and hyper-individualism. Although there is a difference between the cultures, both

traditions come to the same conclusion: that the search for identity, belonging and emotional stability is a universal human need in alienated modern societies.

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