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INDIAN CHICK LIT

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**Abstract:**

*Single career women filling reams with the sardonic and witty prose about the angst of their lives, loves and non-loves, create a space for female readers who are tired of romances that talk about the exotically beautiful and the perfectly endowed. Increasingly, women writers are willing to pen the trials of the real woman in a real world where Mr. Right may not exist. Chick lit romance is contemporary and true, with a sense of humour that stands the test of modern roles and expectations. The present research article attempts to unravel the attraction of this feel-good genre.*

**Key Words:** *Sardonic, witty prose, exotic, trials.*

Women in a career, penning down the realm of sarcastic and brilliant prose with respect to the anxiety of their lives, loves and non-loves, develops a space for women who are exhausted of a romance that speaks of peculiarly winsome and flawlessly equipped. Progressively, women writers are willing to write the attempts of a real woman in a real world where Mr. Right may not exist. The chick's romance is modern and real, with a sense of humour that is a test of contemporary roles and hopefulness.

When cosmopolitan women choose martini for kesar-pista milk, the face of the modern Indian women changes as does writing to keep up with the new form of liberalization by the West. Smoking out a trivial niche between ideally true literature and quixotic ideal romance, books depicting the lives and loves of young professional women, aka chicks, come as a form of salvation for an average woman who wants reality on the rocks with a bit of humour. Evenly, unraveling out the hefty, dejected monotony of philosophy and sarcastically slackening the fluffy, perfect fantasy, international chick lit queens like Helen Fielding (*Bridget Jones's Diary*), Candace Bushnell (*Sex and the City*), Lauren Weisberger (*The Devil Wears Prada*), and Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus (*The Nanny Diaries*) have set the standard for chick lit around the world.

Considering contemporary Indian women identifying themselves with these books, Indian writers habituated this space in the local context. Chick Lit writer, Kavita Daswani, hopes that a woman in whichever corner of the world is Bridget Jones, and her anxiety is not much different from the working middle class. Daswani indicates that today's woman anywhere in the world is probably looking for a boyfriend / husband, job satisfaction, good friends, pleasure; she has money problems, she is involved with the wrong men and can have conflicts in her family - all the things that every 20 or 30 women come across every day, in all the probabilities anywhere in the world.

Rajashree, a writer from Mumbai, is elated with the sameness. And that's how we find amused, unmarried women in a career, filling the pages with a sarcastic and brilliant fear of their lives, loves and non-loves, developing a space for an average woman who is tired of a romance that is exotically beautiful and well-endowed women and prepared to read about attempts of the real woman, in a realistic world wherein you will not find any sign of Mr. Right. Each feminine writer sells fantasy, can be more real in chick lit, where romance is modern and raw, with a humour that is a test of contemporary roles and

expectations, but no writer can finish the final chapter without the Mr. Right!

This person may be an unexpected springer from the side lines, obscuring the “perfect” man who most often turns out to be a bad guy, but the righteous person inevitably appears, satisfying every reader that although she is unhealthy, she can certainly hope that the man of her dreams would run by her street.

This is a real brand of hope for these Indian women who are struggling with the pressure of family expectations, arranged marriages and optimal working life, and are trying to find a way out of the clouded circles of society. Swati Kaushal, the author of the best-selling *Piece of Cake*, believes that the marital Indian scene is not so different from dating in western countries.

All said and done, arranged marriages (however similar to the Western dating culture) did not leave the lives of Indian women. It is hard to imagine that an Indian chick lit borne elements without the anxiety of arranged marriages in a tryst with the love lives of heroine. Rajashree believes that arranged marriages in Indian chick lit are equivalent to, what dating is to western chick lit - full of comic possibilities.

Although, *Piece of Cake* by Swati Kaushal supports the same topics in which the mother of the protagonist is constantly trying to get her marry a “right” man. *Piece of Cake* deals with this when Minal (the protagonist) appears on the pages as a character who avoids surrendering to infinitely great fears that she has no mind of her own.

Rajashree's *Trust Me* presents the subject of bad men, with a difference that she chooses the Indian film industry as a background to the subject, drawing on his own professional knowledge of Bollywood. In the end, we realize that despite the background of California, London or Bollywood - situations and themes are not very different, and men and women are the same everywhere. Now the writers want to create scenarios, characters and personalities that will stand out, if the chick lit, to be taken seriously.

Prof. Shefali Balsari Shah, head of the English Department of St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, held discussions with her students about chick lit as a form of popular culture. Considered as part of a study on romance genres or a feminist approach to popular culture, she warns against using simplified criteria to place a woman's novel, just like a chick. She, however, believes that the chick lit might lose energy and interest as it goes into repetitive and self-plagiarising mode. Where wit and humour work, she wonders if the writing will be able to survive.

Many writers on chick lit are not traditional writers by profession - they often come from different backgrounds and are inspired by stories or incidents from their personal life, they write successful chick lit novels. Because the chick lits are about professional women in the mid-20s or 30s who juggle a career, love life and social duties, it is not surprising that writers use empirical techniques in the form of a novel. Swati Kaushal, she herself has an MBA degree from IIM Kolkata and for many years has been working with MNC like Nestle and Nokia. Becoming acquainted with corporate culture has created her research and helped her thoroughly portray Minal's career in *Piece of Cake*. Rupa Gulab, the writer of the popular *Alone girl*, also draws on her own experience related to living in a hostel. Similarly, Rajashree, the author and director of films, decided to try her hand at the novels, placing her heroine within the domain of the Indian film industry. *Beyond Indigo* was practically an autobiographical novel for Preethi Nair, who experienced similar social and parental pressure to be in 'perfect' work culture and to find an 'ideal' man. She, like her heroine, Nina, managed to free herself from these commitments and managed to succeed in what she really wanted to do - take the less-traversed path.

Kaushal, reflecting on the influence of a chick lit, proposes that Indian society is changing quite fast when its economy is growing. Daswani, on the other hand, is more positive, claiming that the role of the chick lit is also inspiring, where many of these books are used for enlightenment, showing readers a life beyond what they know. Regardless of whether the life presented in these novels goes beyond reality, or fantasy, which is dressed in reality, books serve to brighten up the mood and temperament of professional women. Identification with real heroines brings empathy through pages, wit and humour to remind us to treat life not so seriously, the coming of age redefines our self-esteem, and more importantly, ending in the

book play their part in denying cynicism and shining with hope.

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