

EXTRA-MARITAL RELATIONSHIP AND INFIDELITY IN THE NOVELS OF VIKAS SHARMA

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Abstract

As our society has progressed and developed, people have somewhat left their ethics behind. And this has been a major cause of strained relationships. In today's world, relationships have lost their value in people's lives. Gone are the days when people used to devote themselves completely to their relationships. In today's time, it is hard to find people who stay true to their relationships. While it is true for almost all types of relationships, strained relationships are mostly found to be conjugal. Relationships between a husband and wife have suffered the harsh consequences of modernity that have caused people to become self-centered and insensitive to the needs of their partners among other people. This has been the reason behind the rising number of divorce cases in our country and the world as well. Marriages have lost their sanctity like they used to have in the past. Professor Vikas Sharma highlights the problems of married life through his novels and tells us the harsh consequences of a strained married life. People have lost their conformity to chastity and look down upon it as worthless and hollow. While it is true that imposing harsh and one-sided norms of chastity does no good to a society, we can not completely deny the need for this value in married relationships. A marriage is based on pure trust and connection between two people and this is what makes it work. However, if people are ignorant of these values and do not pay heed to them, it can ultimately fail a marriage. Most of the novels by Professor Vikas Sharma are based on our very own society. He often highlights the problems in our society, specifically in married couples and has even devoted a complete novel to understanding this complex institution of marriage. Among all this, he pays great emphasis on the causes behind a failed marriage and one common cause that is visible in almost all of his novels is extramarital affairs.

Keywords

Chastity, relationship, unfaithfulness, marriage, illicit, exploit, character.

Reference to this paper
should be made as follows:

Received: 25.06.2023

Approved: 29.06.2023

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*RJPSSs 2023, Vol. XLIX,
No. 1, pp.220-227
Article No.27*

Similarity Check: 1%

Online available at:

<https://anubooks.com/journal/research-journal-of-philosophy-amp-social-sciences>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31995/rjpss.2023v49i01.27>

Introduction

Professor Vikas Sharma has successfully authored many novels which include, *Love's Not Time's Fool*, *IAS Today*, *Medicine: Light in Twilight*, *Ashes and Fire*, etc. His novels have been well received by the young readers and students of our society and have left an impact on the readers. He is a renowned writer and his novels have also been included in the curriculum at many universities and colleges. His novels are known for their social character. He usually deals with the problems of the society and the newer generations. He comments on sensitive issues and brings them into the ambit of deliberation. One of the major issues that we find in his novels is related to relationships between humans. These include various relationships but the most evident of these is marital relationships. He highlights the problems in the marital relationships of today's age and talks about the increasing incidents of failed marriages and also deeply discusses the causes. He highly condemns the loss of morals and principles in this newer generation. He also talks about extramarital relationships very vividly in his novels and tells us how these become the reason behind failing marriages. His first novel was *Raah ke Pathar*, which was originally written in Hindi and later translated into English as *Never Together Never Apart*.

Unfaithfulness in a Failing Marriage in *Love's Not Time's Fool*

Love's Not Time's Fool is his first novel in English. It is the story of a young woman named Richa Pandit. While Richa is already married to Malya, she meets another man named Abhilash. Abhilash is a young student who appears to be very attractive to Richa. Richa is instantly impressed by his demeanor and falls for him. She talks to him and invites him over to her house where we see them spending quality time together. Richa is married to Malya. However, Richa's marriage with Malya is not a happy one and they basically have no relationship like that of a husband and wife. Malya is impotent and is hence unable to establish a relationship with his wife or satisfy her. This makes him unable to face her and he chooses to spend most of his time abroad on business deals. This somewhat makes Richa think that an extramarital affair would be justified. She falls for Abhilash and it is not something that the writer has tried to hide. Professor Vikas Sharma writes very clearly and explicitly about their relationship while Richa is already married. Richa and Abhilash fall in love with each other and start spending almost all their time together.

I said to myself- 'why do I recollect the theme of men's jeans or forgiveness while I am in the arms of Abhi? Will he forget me and doubt my integrity as Othello doubted the integrity of his virtuous wife Desdemona and killed her out of jealousy.

Will he give me up with the arrival of Malya? How will he react when I sleep in the arms of my husband? How will he tolerate the agony of separation from me after a week or so?’

But then there were no limits to my confusion and Abhi told me not to spoil the night meant for pleasure with worthless recollections. Pinched me and brought me back to my wholeself. Unfortunately or fortunately, the machine of mind wonders in the past, present and future without a system.

Abhi was saying rightly-‘you are to be in present enjoying with me and don’t bother for other factors troubling you. Life is how one takes it- a tragedy if one thinks too much of the negative aspect and a comedy if one enjoys the present lightly. You have studied a lot of literary authors and I think that you know about life more than I do. As a student of commerce, I am busy thinking of the rise and fall of the market price index and the result of inflation. But I am told that a student of literature is taught the true value of emotions, feelings and passions, and asked me to avoid the reason for pleasure.

(Love’s not Time’s Fool, 64)

Richa has already been in an illicit relationship before her marriage to Malya and it would be safe to say that the result of this relationship was not good. She got pregnant with her American boyfriend Robert Lee who soon abandoned her and she gave birth to a club-footed boy who she had to leave in America with a nanny. But this does not stop Richa from entering into another relationship and this time, it is an extramarital relationship. Richa does not treat this as a big issue and this extramarital relationship is only normal to her. The same applies to her brother-in-law, her sister’s husband, who keeps trying to woo her after the death of her husband. He does not hesitate to get into bed with the sister of his own wife as soon as Malya is dead. What he wants is to have both his wife and Richa. He does not think twice before he puts forward the proposal of an extramarital relationship in front of Richa. This shows the deteriorating moral character of the people of today’s generation.

Hope Against Hope: Pummy and Jag Mohan’s Extra Marital Affair as an Example of Unfaithful Spouses and Twisted Relationships

Professor Vikas Sharma advocates for chastity and it is not in the sense of subjecting the women to some inferior status, but what he comments upon here is the presence of basic faithfulness and loyalty in a relationship as pure as a marriage. In his novel, *Hope Against Hope*, Professor Vikas Sharma presents yet another story of people who are not respectful towards their married life and partners. In this novel, we come across the character of Jag Mohan. Jag Mohan is in love with a young woman named Minti. While he claims to love her with his whole heart, he

also has an illicit relationship with Pummy. Pummy is the wife of his own elder brother. Pummy is a very beautiful and intelligent woman. She is not satisfied with her own husband and hence, she finds it right to have an extramarital relationship. This shows how messed up relationships have gotten in the contemporary world. Jag Mohan is also alright with cheating on the girl he loves and having such a wrong relationship with his own brother's wife.

Pummy and Jag Mohan made love to each other in Gupta's farmhouse and relaxed there for three hours or so. In a light mood, she asked Jag Mohan- 'Do you like my younger sister?'

'Yes, She is OK.'

'Just OK? Or a good attractive companion for any young guy?'

'look Bhabhi. It all depends upon you as your mother has no interest in any particular girl. If you are in my loving arms the journey of life appears to be pleasant. But you will make love to me even if I marry Nanny?'

'Great. Jag Mohan. I promise to love you so long as you like!'. Then they kissed each other, made love vigorously, and then left for Aligarh.

(Hope against Hope, 105)

However, all this does not stop here, Pummy goes as far as getting Jag Mohan married to her own sister, Nanny. As one might feel, this could be the end of this extramarital affair. But this is not how things turn out. Even when he gets married, Jag Mohan still continues his relationship with Pummy. Both Jag Mohan and Pummy have stooped so low that they are willing to sleep with the spouses of their own siblings. This is a mere example of how crooked extramarital relationships get. Here, professor Vikas Sharma not only comments upon the unfaithful nature of these two but he also throws light on the deteriorating moral character of the young people. Blinded by the greed of money and lust, he forgets about Minti altogether, the woman he claimed to be in love with. Not only does he wrong Minti, but he does the same to Nanny as well. It seems like such people have no moral character left and extramarital relationships are no big deal for them. Sleeping around appears to be completely normal for them. Professor Vikas Sharma highlights how staying loyal and faithful is as rare as a black opal. Today's world has more than imaginable instances of extramarital affairs and Professor Vikas Sharma's novels are only a small example of it.

Sana: Impact of a Father's Extra Marital Affairs on His Daughter

Sana is the latest addition to the list of novels authored by Professor Vikas Sharma. It is the story of a young woman named Sana and throughout the novel,

Professor Vikas Sharma has attempted to analyze her character and bring out the parts of her identity that can be found in most of the young people today. Sana is happily married to a man named Brij Vrit who truly loves her and takes care of her. He makes sure that she never has to go through any sort of inconvenience. He takes care of her and looks after all her needs and demands. He is a very loyal husband and is true to their married relationship. However, unfortunately, the same can not be said for Sana. The first chance she gets in the absence of her husband, she starts making moves on his acquaintance named Pandit Revati. This shows her character which is not like what a faithful wife should do. It would not be wrong to say that Pandit Brij Vrit is a very good husband who goes out of his way to make efforts for his wife and keep her happy. But somehow, Sana is unable to see this and while she appears to be satisfied and happily married, she takes the first chance she gets to have an extramarital affair. Pandit Revati tries to resist her but she keeps making advances and ultimately he gives in to the attraction. He falls in love with her.

‘Promise me Pandit Ji, you’ll never take care of my beauty, youth, passion and obsession. Poor rejected woman as I am, I don’t want to lead the life of a Sannyasin. Loneliness, desperation and frustration soon lead a woman to dementia. But love and romance keep her gay and beautiful. Now all depends upon you- Whether you expect your Brijbala to be a Gopi or a Sanyasin?’ And she sobbed and sobbed.

(Sana, 14)

Sana is a very beautiful young woman. She starts spending time with him in the absence of her husband. While we can clearly see that Revati is deeply in love with her, it is hard to say that Sana feels the same. Revati tries to look for a job for Sana so she can put her degrees of M.Sc. and Ph.D. to some use. While both Revati and Brij Vrit are busy making efforts for her to keep her happy, she goes to Agra with Akshay Mohan to buy some equipment for the lab in the school she is willing to start. In Agra, she spends time with him and gets intimate with him.

As it was 12:30 p.m., she asked the driver to move towards Alka Hotel where she had stayed long back with her parents. First she ordered for coffee and checked in the room. She enter the washroom and took a towel to change her saree. Surprisingly she changed her saree in the presence of Mohan Akshay but saw his reactions stealthily. She noted that he looked at her hips and tried to find out the beauty of her mounts. After she had put on another blouse and saree, she asked him- How do I look now?’

(Sana, 76)

The thought of her husband or even her lover whom she willingly got into a relationship with, does not cross her mind even once. She knows that Akshay Mohan would not be a lasting affair and somehow, they both are okay with this fact and agree to spend little time with each other getting intimate and then simply moving on as if it never happened. This shows how the young generations are slaves to their physical needs. This makes them unfaithful partners in marriages and other relationships.

The same can also be said about Sana's own father, Naveen. Naveen is a self-made businessman and adultery is a daily affair for him. He has a wife named Kavya who has supported him throughout his struggle to stand on his own feet and build his business empire. But what she got in return was disloyalty and unfaithfulness from her own husband. Her husband, Naveen, keeps pursuing several young women to have a relationship with him.

She humbly follow the instruction and Naveen hugged her saying- 'Katty, you will be paid thirty thousand rupees per month from now onwards.'

'Thank you, Sir.'

Now he took her inside the restroom and told her-'you are an earthly angel ignored by me so far. You deserve a lot. If you work hard you will make your career. Of course you are a raw Diamond that needs polishing. By the cosmetics and clothes that appeal to your aesthetic sense. Here is the money for that.'

He gifted her 50000 in the envelope.

Katty's sensual feelings had been shared with him by Silky and he made sure shot and was welcomed.

(Sana, 69-70)

He goes as low as having an illicit relationship with his wife's sister. He has no remorse or guilt at all. When Kavya objects to the parties that he hosts where sex and alcohol both are served openly, he tells her that she had no other option but to accept it. He further tells her that if she still has some problems, she is more than welcome to go back to her room and rest but she should not expect him to stop. He keeps bringing women and having extramarital affairs with them all while his wife is still in the picture as if it is no big deal. The readers thus understand Sana's character better. The reason why Sana has no problem being with multiple men at once is probably because she saw her father do the same in the presence of her mother and she apparently finds it normal. This is not only the condition for Sana but a lot of other young people who see such extramarital affairs daily. They grow to get accustomed to it and when they do the same themselves, they feel no remorse or guilt because they consider it normal and their brains have adapted to it as ordinary.

Exploitation by Dr R. N. Aggarwal in Medicine: Light in Twilight

A similar trend can be noticed in *Medicine: Light in Twilight*. Here also, we find that Dr R.N. Aggarwal, who is a famous doctor and teacher, exploits young women. While he is married for years, he still goes on to pursue young women to be in sexual relationships with him. He forces a lot of young students including Kamyā, Vijay Lakshmi, etc, to get intimate with him and develop an extramarital affair with them.

In the meantime there was a knock at the door and the waiter reached there with a bottle of champagne, snacks, cutlets, almonds, cake etc. and left the room. Dr. Agrawal opened the bottle and offered one cup to her and took the other cup himself. But Kamyā told him-‘Sir, Sorry, I don’t drink.’

‘But champagne is not an intoxicating drink at all and taken on happy occasions. Are you not happy about my birthday? Will you not enjoy on this blissful day dear Kamyā? The girls of your class aspire to sleep with me any day I want. Come on Kamyā. Leave it if it tastes bad. OK?’

She had no alternative but to compromise in this unpleasant and uncomfortable situation. She took a few sips and ate almonds. He offered her a plate of snacks and she accepted with thanks. After she had taken two cups, he move towards her to overpower her. Spontaneously she surrendered herself for the M.D. seat, and enjoyed time with her Head of the Department. She had become a victim and Dr Agarwal a victimizer.

(Medicine: Light in Twilight, 74)

He is not the least worried about his wife or family and all he sees is money and sexual pleasure. This shows the character he holds. He is not a faithful man and the sole thing that drives him is materialistic pleasure and intimacy. He ruins the life of many young students to satisfy his own lust. He has many illicit relationships. When his students fall prey to his trap and agree to relationships, it becomes an extramarital affair and when they are adamant and do not give in to his ill intentions, he exploits them and molests them. He is a man of a very low character. All his life, all that he ever cared about was money and his own sexual pleasure. He does not even think of his wife while he has multiple extramarital affairs at the same time. He supports Kamyā till she gives in to his demands and the day she stops doing so, he is determined to make sure that he ruins her career and professional life. Kamyā is not the first one to face and unfortunately, not even the last. He ruins the life of multiple young and talented people all for his own greed and lust. Professor Vikas Sharma here tells us how his ill intentions and practices lead to his end where he gets shot by some gangsters when he refuses to make a false medical certificate for

them stating the gangster was being treated by him when he was actually not. Here, the author tries to tell us that evil dies its own death and its one's own deeds that end up taking or making his life.

Conclusion

To sum up, we can say that Professor Vikas Sharma has increasingly commented upon the deteriorating moral character of today's generation. While this generation is absorbed by many vices like greed, crimes, lust, etc, unfaithfulness is also one big problem in today's world. Extramarital affairs have become so common and this is something which is a very huge concern for our society. People have become so unfaithful to their spouse and they have become completely indifferent towards the purity of the institution called marriage. People do not respect this beautiful union anymore and extramarital relationships are treated as a normal part of life by a huge number of people and the amount of people who commit adultery is also very startling. Professor Vikas Sharma aims to bring to the notice of this generation that unfaithfulness and adultery might seem very good for a moment but their consequences are very harsh and harmful and last way longer than the pleasure. So it is only upon this generation to choose wisely.

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