



How far is LGBT Correct

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Abstract :- LGBTQ or commonly termed as LGBT is the study of works associated with sexual preferences and orientations different from heterosexuality. It is the part of Queer theory which gained popularity in 1990s and is taken from queer studies and women's studies. It has its affiliations with cultural criticism, women studies and postcolonialism as it studies the sexualities other than heterosexual as marginalized and oppressed. LGBT is not only about sexuality rather it is a point of view of the society towards sex and sexual preferences orientation; it is the study as what must be the factors that led people to adopt different sexual orientation and why some openly declare their sexual preferences and some conceal their sexual preferences and identities. Identity plays important role in the construction of social status. How society perceives one has been important from ancient times. It was the time when people were very much concerned their social status in comparison to the contemporary or modern scenario. LGBTs had not been given the due respect and honor in the society as they were considered against the set norms of the society because sexuality has been seen only in the form of man-woman relationship and if other type of relationship is there, it is considered wrong or forbidden. Hence, it was thought necessary by the authors to raise their voice and take up the issues related sexuality. Sex has always been considered as taboo and to talk about sex openly is not considered decent in Indian sub-continent compared to Europe or America. Since, English and American authors wrote the works related to homosexuality but Indian authors dared not to take up these issues for a long time. It became necessary to examine closely the socially constructed nature of sexual acts and identities in Indian society also. Vijay Tendulkar and Ismat Chughtai are some examples who dared to talk about the sex and sexuality but in limited manner. LGBT or queer theory is interconnected to feminism also and it provides a framework to explore these issues rather than as an identity to those in the community. 'Queer' is an umbrella term from those not only deemed sexually deviant, but also used to describe those who feel marginalized as a result of standard social practices. It is a "site of permanent becoming" (Giffney 2004). In addition, it is important to understand that this theory is not predominantly about analyzing the binary of the homosexual and heterosexual. There is an abundance of identities in which Queer theory not only recognizes but also breaks down in relation to other contributory factors like race, class, religion etc. I have tried to study the works of Indian authors from the perspective of LGBT to understand and bring out the dynamics of sex and sexuality with interconnected elements like feminism, culture and marginalization etc. Works of the writers like Manju Kapur, R. Raj Rao, Vijay Tendulkar and Abha Dawesar found relevant to study the Indian notion regarding the sex and different sexual preferences and orientations. It is not easy to choose contemporary writers because there is scarcity of critical studies on those writers. In this case critical material is available on Vijay Tendulkar in comparison to other writers. Scarcity of critical material is also a kind of advantage for a researcher. Researcher is given a chance to rely on his critical instincts. Something of this sort defines this study also. In this study I have relied on the close reading of the works. This is essentially a textual study though use of postcolonial critical tools can be detected at many places in the study. I have

mainly focused on text in this study considering that nothing is outside the text. A Rigorous analysis of texts was a very profitable experience for me.

Keywords :- LGBT, Queer, Sex and Sexuality, homosexual, heterosexual, Literature, GLF, GAA.

Introduction-Literature is the mirror of society and society must be reflected in the mirror. Keeping in mind the same idea, LGBT writers tried to treat the issues to sex, sexuality, sexual preference and orientation which used to be considered as taboo. Being a taboo, it has not been discussed openly in different literatures. It was 1960s and early 1970s which saw the movements related to same sex relations in the name of Gay Liberation Movement (GLF), Gay Activists Alliance (GAA) and other related movements for the cause of gays and lesbian who sought social freedom and rights. Before that gays and lesbian or same-sex relations or homosexuality remained closeted and the authors who tried to bring it to the public were blamed and action was taken against them. Ruchi Kumar argues regarding this as:

Simultaneously, the changing legal codes affected social ideas of morality, including literature. Despite colonial oppression and strong resistance, however, many local-language writers persisted, bringing LGBT and queer characters into fiction as far back as the freedom struggles of the 1920s. Prominent works from that era included books by Urdu writer Ismat Chughtai, which explore feminine sexuality and lesbian themes in 1941 *Bihar*, and Pandey Bechan Sharma, who in 1924, under the the pen name Ugra, published a book titled *Chocolate*, a reference to the term used for boys who had relationships with older men. These books created much furor among the public and the literary community. Sharma was arrested and charged with sedition shortly after the publication of *Chocolate*, though many suspected his nine-month prison sentence was related to his queer fiction writing. Later, in 1944, Chughtai was put on trail for obscenity charges stemming from her short story “Lihaaf,” which depicted lesbian themes and was banned across South Asia. (Kumar)

It was the time which saw shift from body to sexuality as a discourse and culture. Sexuality is seen as an identity and it is the identity for which people live. Ruchi Kumar quotes the verdict :

The first major step for LGBT rights in India came in 2009, when a Delhi high court revoked Section 377, pushing the cause into the mainstream. In 2013, however, a judgment by a three-member bench of the Supreme Court set back progress by upholding the anti-LGBT law, an action that threatened the lives of those who came out after the 2009 judgment. This regressive move pushed the queer community and its allies to fight the law more aggressively, initiating stronger debates and discourse on LGBT rights in the mainstream. (Kumar)

Like other identities, sexual identity is not disclosed and remained closeted. It was 1974 when a special issue on gay writing and politics got published. Sexuality is not seen as taboo no more and it becomes the part of literature which focuses on many issues and it becomes one of them. Queer literature gives space to the homosexuals who are considered as marginalized and oppressed who demands social justice and it is the need of the hour to raise their issue and it was raised not only by British and American novelist but Indian novelists who were writing in English and other languages.

To discuss the issues related to homosexuals, the term now commonly used is LGBT. All the literature related to gays, lesbians, bisexual and transgender fall into this category. LGBT literature seeks to analyze the dark world of their own which is not common and their problems are different from the mainstream society. Like other marginalized groups, LGBT is one them which is being marginalized and is not considered as part of the mainstream. Homosexuals are treated as 'others' and not given respect due to their physiology and sexual orientations. LGBT literature seeks to give them space and discuss the problems from their point of view as what are the circumstances that led them to perform in different ways. Ruchi Kumar argues :

Today, LGBT literary makers and readers alike agree that literature representing the LGBT community in India is making strides. "There is interest in creating new content targeted towards LGBT consumers, but in the regular books and movies, there has been very little change in how LGBT characters are represented," Juneja points out. She urges publishers and content creators to embrace the changes and evolve with them. "Don't limit us and slot us in one box or category. LGBT stories don't have to only be a genre on its own, but can intersect with so many other [forms of] literature," she says.

Akansha also hopes that the 2018 decriminalization will encourage more publishers and content creators to explore characters that reflect South Asian queer identities. "Unfortunately, when we talk to my generation, a lot of our information and understanding of sexuality comes from the American pop culture that we've been raised on," she says. "It is always a welcome and refreshing change watching characters that we can relate to and, in many ways, help the movement that is still fighting for social acceptance." (Kumar)

Queer studies intersect with postcolonialism as it is concerned with women studies also. To study the works related to LGBT, one needs to understand that somewhere the people of different sexual preferences are considered as marginalized in the main stream society. It is not about looking at the way people indulge in sex with each other rather it is required as why people have different sexual relationships other than heterosexual relationships.

While going through the homosexuality, many factors come light regarding the different sexual orientation and preferences. Class is also one of the factors which describe sexuality and behind class there comes the economic condition which defines and determines the class. There is hegemony of sex over the economic and social conditions. All the homosexuals are not only because of their preferences rather their economic conditions forced them to be of different sexual preference.

It would not be out of place to discuss some other works related to LGBT. Unlike today, it was only hinted and used in disguise to show the relationship between same-sex. Some of the works are as follows.

Eminent Outlaws: The Gay Writers Who Changed America by Christopher Bram and the more academic The Cambridge History of Gay and Lesbian Literature are two important works related to LGBT.

Joseph and His Friend: A Story of Pennsylvania by Bayard Taylor (1870) probably the earliest gay novel published in USA. This novel describes the relationship between two men.

Imre: A Memorandum by Xavier Mayne (1906) is an early novel about the two men of 30 years old and another 25 year old. There is portrayal of sympathetic gay love who met in a café.

The Counterfeiters by André Gide (1925) is considered as the book that paved the way for post-modern by fiction because of its complex and multiple plots. It is about the gay characters and their relationships.

The Western Shore by Clarkson Crane (1925) is about gay university life, which is full of heterosexual romances and sports. It came out from the experiences of the Crane who attended Berkeley.

The Well of Loneliness by Radclyffe Hall (1928) remained in controversies for portraying lesbianism. Its story revolves around an Englishwoman who finds love with same sex while serving as a driver.

Orlando: A Biography by Virginia Woolf (1928) is related to gender. It is about the adventures of a poet who meets historical figures by changing his sex.

Strange Brother by Blair Niles (1931) is about the relationship between a gay man and a heterosexual woman. It also highlights the many issues that people face while revealing their sexuality.

The Scarlet Pansy by Robert Scully (1932) is about the character Fay who is a man but referred to as 'her' throughout the novel because of feminine qualities and preferences. Fay had encounters at the nightclubs and street life.

Better Angel / Torment by Richard Meeker (1933) deals with the experiences of a young man's gay awakening who finds homosexuality rewarding rather than tragic.

Nightwood by Djuna Barnes (1936) is an example of early novel based on the theme of lesbianism and was critically acclaimed.

Two Serious Ladies by Jane Bowles (1943) is about two women who leave their traditional lives.

Quatrefoil by James Barr / James W. Fugate (1950) portrays gay men in positive light as two men become lovers.

The Price of Salt / Carol by Patricia Highsmith (1952) is a novel concerned with the lesbian relationship of two women.

A Room in Chelsea Square by Michael Nelson (1958) based on real people and takes the issue of homosexuality. It is about the poet Stephen Spender.

The Keval and Other Gay Adventures by Harry Otis (1959) is about the organization that promotes homosexual literature through its periodical named ONE and other ventures.

Desert of the Heart by Jane Rule (1964) deals with the lesbian relationship of two women which later becomes complicated.

Mrs. Stevens Hears the Mermaids Singing by May Sarton (1965) deals with the difficulties that the writer faced after revealing her own homosexuality.

The Lord Won't Mind by Gordon Merrick (1970) a popular gay novel, listed as bestseller in New York bestseller list in 1970. This novel is about the love story of two men Charlie Mills and Peter Martin.

Maurice by E.M. Forster (1971) written in 1913 and 1914, but got published after Forster's death. This novel deals with the story of homosexual love in the early 20th century.

Conclusion- The term LGBT is nowadays appropriate for the literary description of homosexuals. Before the 19th century, sexuality and homosexuality were seen in a very bad view and people also considered it wrong

to talk on this subject, but nowadays the time has changed. Homosexuality has got legal recognition. Now people openly talk about it. Even today old people in India consider it wrong to talk about this subject. The first major strides for LGBT rights came in 2009, when the Delhi High Court struck down Section 377, pushing the cause into the mainstream. In 2013, however, a decision by a three-member Supreme Court bench upheld the anti-LGBT law halted progress, an action that put the lives of those who came out after the 2009 verdict at risk. This regressive move prompted the gay community and its allies to fight the law more aggressively, sparking stronger debate and discourse on LGBT rights in the mainstream. Sexuality is no longer seen as taboo and becomes a part of literature that focuses on many issues and this becomes one of them. Gay literature gives place to those homosexuals who are considered as marginalized and oppressed who demand social justice and raising their issue is the need of the hour and it was raised not only by British and American novelists but also by Indian novelists who work in English language. writing in other languages. Hence the term now commonly used to discuss issues relating to homosexuals is LGBT. All literature related to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender falls into this category.

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