



Dynamics of Sports Narratives in Literature

1. Mr S.Gopinath, Research Scholar, The Gandhigram Rural Institute- Deemed to be University, Gandhigram, Dindigul, Tamilnadu
2. Dr.S.Balasundari., Associate Professor of English, School of English and Foreign Languages, The Gandhigram Rural Institute-Deemed to be University, Dindigul

Abstract

It is a truism that Sports literature is a representation of sports. It encompasses autobiography, biography, memoirs, poetry and novella. Through the lens of sports, a host of writers take tremendous interest in speaking about the binary between success and failure, friendship, chronological date of their matches, conflict with the coach, the role of mentors, and their personal branding. Sportsperson want to convey their personal odyssey in the dynamics of writing. This kind of writing revolves around only the world of sports-person. The primal urge to win is the main theme of their writing. They nominate some ghostwriters to talk about their sporting life. Sportspersons take immense delight in talking about their personal struggle, success and failure, achievements, and conflict with their coaches. Sports are generally recognized as a system of activities based on physical dexterity. Playing any sport gives not only well for health but also reduces mental strength. Sports literature offers microscopic view of sportsperson.

Key words: Sports, personal branding, success, failure and ghost writers.

Introduction

It is a truism that literature is a discipline that deals with the values of life. It reflects society. Every nation has its own literature. American literature is a body of writing that deals with the problems of suffering individual. Canadian literature focuses mainly on landscape and the question of survival. Australian literature focuses on survival against the harsh outback. Each literature has its own uniqueness. Indian literature is an expression of Indian sensibility. It continues to grab the prompt attention of reading community all over the English -speaking world.

Indian English literature at the outset was heavily influenced by British literature as well as American literature. It goes without saying that a major chunk of writers were inspired by the literary oeuvre of British and American writers. Imbued and impregnated by the literary learnings, Indian writers make an attempt to prove their scholarship in earnest with their writings. New crop of writers as cutely adopt new techniques to break through the glass ceiling by contributing something new in the form of writing. A paradigm just takes place in the golden realm of Indian English literature on the strength of their contributions. Indian writing in English gradually gain its momentum primarily because of some historical events as well as some historic personalities that open up new avenues for the sky rocketing growth of Indian English literature. It is interesting to note that Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Bengali and Marathi are of paramount importance in enriching the realm of Indian English literature. New league of writers are able to showcase their creative acumen in the various regional languages of India.

Indian writing in English mainly refers to literature written in English by Indian writers who view Indian language as their mother tongue. It also encompasses the body of work in English by Indian diaspora who are well settled in different parts of the countries like UK, Canada, USA, Germany, Australia and West Indies. Indian writing in English was said to be a marker of the newer creative urge in India-labelled as the literary Renaissance in India was initiated in the 19th century as a social movement. It explores the various facets of social evils like child marriage, dowry system, the institution of marriage, caste discrimination, law and order, social injustice and the polygamy. Writers of this era vehemently criticized the double standard of the government. Moreover, it was shown that they could make better contacts with the western world. The increasing extensive use of English as the medium of expression resulted in a prolific production of what is usually termed the Indo-Anglian literature. The production of such literature continues unabated. A few like Tagore, Aurobindo Ghosh, Sarojini Naidu and Mulk Raj Anand have made significant contribution to Indian literature. Indian writings in English or actually a product of the two cultures namely Indian and the western. This historical encounter continues for at least 190years. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was primarily known as the father of modern India's Renaissance. As social reformer he eradicates the purdah system and child marriage. She was one of the promoters of Indian English writing and he was a staunch supporter of Western education through the medium of English. Raja Ram Mohan Roy's "Letter on English Education" is one of the most significant documents of Indian educational history. Like Macaulay, he brought out a change in the domain of education. Being association and religious reformer of the 19th century, he inaugurated the idea of Western education in the country and the worked for the welfare of women freedom of press and English education.

The Evolution of Sports

I celebrate myself, and sing myself,
And what I assume you shall assume
For every atom belonging to me as good

Belongs to you.

-Walt Whitman

Sports literature exemplifies the above statement. Almost all sports narratives are about the celebration of life. Sports autobiography, sports memoir sports biography and sports journalism are considered to be uncharted territory. It lacks literariness. Sport literature in India reflects historical and aesthetic dimensions of sports and games. Cricket and hockey play a pivotal role in shaping national identity and community dynamics. It is full of the achievements of the sportsperson and their innermost struggles in life. It does not talk about any relevant topic. It invariably touched upon a single man's journey towards success. Moreover, it is written by ghost writer. Traditional games like Kabbadi and Galli danda clearly reflect Indian's sporting heritage. Sports literature is, in a manner of speaking, a body of writing that underscores the prime importance of sports. It actually takes layers and layers from the field of sports with a special view to conveying the values of life. It also throws a considerable amount of light on sports. Technically speaking, writers normally show their deep-seated reverence to the domain of sports. In presenting the various dimensions of sports, they make it a point to convey the admiration of sports. Sports literature, in general, depicts the concept of baseball, football, boxing, tennis, Cricket, bull fighting and other sports. These games capture the young mind.

It is interesting to note that Sports literature has its roots in the Western Culture. A host of literary writers develop a consuming interest in exploring the various facets of sports literature. To convey the values of life, writers tend to use fiction, poetry and essays. Ernest Hemingway, William Cather, Norman Mailer, Don De-lillo, Tom Stoppard. Joyce Carol Oates and David Foster Wallace have expanded the horizons of sports literature through their writings. They actually contribute a lot to the robust development of sports literature. The afore- mentioned writers take inordinate interest in pointing out the spirit of competition, personal struggle, challenges, success, disappointment, the importance of failure, pride and the notion of hope in their writings. Their writings do not merely contain sports alone. It talks about the inner meaning of life. These notable writers take delight in conveying the complexities of life through their writings. Sports play a remarkable role in society. It is different from age to age. During the Sixteenth century, violence was a part of sports where physical prowess was of paramount importance in conducting games. People changed their attitude towards sports in the Seventeenth century. With the passage of time, people changed their notion of sports. Eighteenth century was distinct in terms of sports. Sports were heavily divided by class, with the aristocracy favoring

horse racing, fencing, and hunting. Cricket gained popularity in England, while early forms of baseball and cricket appeared

Ashis Nandy in his book 'The Tao of Cricket' remarks,

Early cricket lovers in India were left in no doubt that cricket was the game of gentleman. Indians included in racially mixed games had to have gentlemanly style. In its absence, they had to have an aristocratic background and some western manners so as to pass as honorary members of the English gentry in India.”(77)

Sports in this period were largely unregulated in comparison with present-day rules and regulations. Animal sports gained momentum, with bear baiting and bull baiting remaining popular alongside cockfighting. Horse racing was very popular among the elite, while football became a common pastime.

Sports in the nineteenth century underwent a massive transformation from disorganized folk games to structured, codified, and commercialized activities. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, sports began to get attention from the public. The age also witnessed a massive shift toward structured and commercialized activities. The late nineteenth century witnessed the spread of sports across borders, with American baseball and German gymnastics becoming popular globally.

Twentieth century was a significant turning point in history. The rise of radio in the 1920s and television in the 1950s–70s transformed sports into entertainment, leading people to view sports as a leisure activity. As sports received more attention, stricter rules and regulations were implemented. Another important milestone of this age was the increased participation of women.

The Rise of Sports Culture

The evolution of sport is a journey from direct survival actions-“savage necessities- to virtualized entertainment. Sport transforms the raw, violent needs of humanity into ritualized entertainment. From hunting to videogames, sport has attained a complete transformation. As society became more organized, sports required standardized rules, moving from chaotic village brawls to structured competitions. Twenty first century, sport has become the focus of attention. It has moved from the physical arena to the virtual arena. People spend their qualitative amount of time in sports. Sport has gradually commercialized for various reasons. With the Industrial Revolution, Sports became entertainment for the masses rather than just the elites. The commercialization of sports in India started in 2008 with the inauguration of The Indian Premiere League(IPL) in Cricket. This was followed by an array of such leagues such as Hockey Premiere League, Indian Badminton League, Pro Kabbadi League, Indian Badminton League, Indian women’s League and so on. Most of these leagues are based on the francise format where each term is associated with a city or state

for example Jaipur Pink Panthers and Kolkata Riders. It is to be noted that film actors and some popular agencies involved in IPL match. Based on the performance of the players, they indulged in the process of auction. Though women began to enter into the arena of sports, Cricket still remained a male-oriented sport.

The language of literature sometimes offers a finer understanding of sport because it allows the reader to penetrate the consciousness of sportsmen through the artifice of fiction. Sport is generally recognized as a system of activities based on physical dexterity. Sport studies have investigated the relationship between sport and society, education gender and class. To look again at this relationship through the prism of literature enables us to change our focus or to assess the centrality of sport in culture. Playing any sports which invoke physical exercise is not only good for health but also reduces mental health.

Sports and literature are considered as culture- bearing activities. A sportsperson's lived experiences; different roles in the society, family, and nation make his autobiography often different from other autobiographical writings. Sport autobiographies seek to give a first- person account of the sport person's life and his/her struggles and can be understood as a cultural product on two bases. First, it is written in a time when the audience's mind is filled with their joyous victories and secondly because of stories of these stars influence the contemporary generation. Eventually, the publishers took interest in sportspersons and it became one of the reasons for their popularity. The surge of interest in various sports heightened the profile of leading performers. Increasingly, superstardom touched them and they became sensitive national character and mark of prestige.

Review of Literature

Idayarani's & Subbu Lakshmi in their research paper entitled, 'Tracing Sports Psychology in Sports Literature' has traced the psychology of sports. She also explored the various facets of sports. She also discusses how sports psychologists use different techniques to focus on numerous psychological attributes, including positive attitude, confidence, resilience, the binary between success and failure in life.

Findings and Discussions

Though Sports literature talks about resilience, the chronological date of the matches the, binary between success and failure, self- confidence, it lacks aesthetic quality. The language is simple and plain. Moreover, it is written from the utilitarian point of view. There is a school of thought that says literature should address the social issues. It does not address social issues but it promotes the personal branding of the players. It is not an authentic voice.

Almost all sports autobiographies, biographies and memoirs are written by ghost writers. Ghost writers are of vital importance. Most of the sports writings are written by ghost writers. One can learn many life lessons from the cricketers, tennis players and so on. The commercialization of cricket ruined the status of cricket. Everything in sports is viewed in terms of money. Cricket cultural economy shifted from the west in order to particularly develop nations due to globalization. Be it football, hockey, cricket, people in India support their team.

Conclusion

Sports act as a miniature simulation of life because they compress the essential struggles, emotions and lessons of human existence into a defined, manageable and time-bound arena. Just as in life, sports involve goal setting, facing obstacles, teamwork, and dealing with the consequences of wins and losses. Therefore, to achieve a goal in life, one should have the spirit of sportsmanship. People who lack sportsmanship are intolerant, narrow-minded, selfish and cannot have consideration for others they are jealous of them. A Sportsman should not feel depressed in defeat and lose his head over victory because it is an effort of the whole team not only one person

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