

# A Critical Examination of Punctuated Emotions in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's Literary Works

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**Abstract:** *This paper aims to conduct a critical analysis of the representation of punctuated emotions in the selected novels of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. The study delves into the ways in which Divakaruni employs punctuation as a literary device to convey and evoke emotions effectively. By examining the chosen novels through the lens of emotional punctuation, this paper explores the nuanced connection between punctuation marks and the emotional experiences of characters. The analysis highlights the author's adeptness at intertwining linguistic and emotional elements, shedding light on the impact of these punctuated emotions on readers' engagement with the narratives.*

**Keywords:** Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

## I. INTRODUCTION

Finding, examining, and analyzing the ways in which women's personalities are torn between conventional and contemporary standards was Divakaruni's mission. She makes an attempt to depict the challenging and demeaning circumstances that Indian immigrant women encounter while living in the United States, with a greater emphasis on her immigrant female protagonists. She looks at their struggle to integrate into the free American culture and fit in, adapt, and become acculturated.

The present research is an extension of my Mphil dissertation, A study of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices* as a Diasporic novel, and my Ph.D. thesis is a continuation of Banerjee's writings. The research's focus is on analyzing and clarifying how the diasporic experience is generally reflected in a select few Divakaruni compositions. In her thesis, she has examined three literary works: *The Vine of Desire* (2002), *Sister of My Heart* (1999), and *Queen of Dreams* (2005). In an attempt to provide a comprehensive and in-depth analysis, demonstrate the clear comprehension of these works, and bolster the argument that Divakaruni's characters exhibit Diasporic Consciences—identity crises, displacements, problems stemming from cultural differences, and new challenges—I have selected these three books. This study's focus is on the works of Divakaruni, which explore a range of aspects of the immigrant experience, such as identity crises, cultural shock, the struggle for individualism, assimilation and adaptation, loneliness, alienation, uprooting, nostalgia, racism, and immigrant women's dual consciousness.

For a deeper understanding of her works, it is necessary to have a foundational understanding of the Indian and American social settings. The present study aims to provide a comprehensive, critical, and inclusive examination of the cultural conflict and diasporic displacement that Indian immigrants in the US face.

## II. CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUN'S SISTER OF MY HEART'S EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Arithmetic can never balance the anguish patriarchal relations impose on women and their role in achieving societal expectations. She must get over her unimaginable suffering and silent agony in order to arrive at the crossroads of life feeling bewildered, disillusioned, and confused. First thought is a question that may be contested, even if she heals her shattered spirit by depriving herself of pleasure and health and giving up her life to further her family's interests. The ladies own you.

Ego, family, or society are the culprits. Prasanna Sree Female friendships, especially those formed as childhood companions and sibling bonds, provide solace and support to women. On the other hand, key differences between them are made evident. Indian English writing of late has placed a strong emphasis on relationships with women and their

spectrum of emotions. They are aware of each other's understanding, needs, and support. They care for their inmates through difficult moments and strive to come together against male domination and persecution. Women show how a woman's social surroundings impact her thinking, and they support and better herself to the best of their abilities in light of their circumstances and personal development. It's not always a bed of roses in life, especially for women.

It is intertwined with personal matters, reflecting the differences in the ways that women over time respond to unmet expectations. Due to the rigid gender separation, it was socially acceptable to value the feminine connection. Women unite via the formation of recurrent relationships that have traditionally passed on the tradition of providing for and serving others.

"The issues and struggles faced by the South Asian Diaspora, coupled with a need for the emotional stability that comes from being among their own kind, cause them to remain in close groups and essentially create islands within society, where they attempt to establish small replicas of their homeland," writes Narula in her book South Asian Diaspora.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous studies have explored the connection between punctuation and emotion in literature. However, a specific analysis of how Divakaruni employs punctuated emotions as a narrative tool has received limited attention. This paper contributes to the existing literature by focusing on Divakaruni's novels, showcasing how punctuation marks function as emotional signposts within the narrative landscape.

K.U.Surendran (2010) explains that after divorce, women feel alienated in the Indian society. In the same book Nayantara Sehgal analyses her own marriage. She says for the first time, she came across the shocking assumption of inequality, a man's ego and ambition. He must be served first; his will prevails in the case of conflict. A.S Altekar (2011) is of the view that marriage in Indian society is a religious necessity. It is believed that one can't reach heaven without being accompanied by his or her duly married spouse. The Vedic woman was the joint owner of the household though in actual practice she was the subordinate partner.

Jasbir Jain (2012) notes that novels of Shashi Deshpande are complete world in themselves. Not only the urban middle class but also the marginal sections of the society come under her compass. Her women characters resist to the subjection of women. Between the guilt of role deviation and the guilt of loss, Shashi Deshpande works out her sensitive analysis of the institution of family and marriage, the prioritizing of the male child, gender constraints, the psychology of unfulfilled dreams and the historicity of the present.

Paravati Bhatnagar (2015) aptly remarks that Indian women writers in English including Deshpande have been trying to project feminine sensibility with a view to bring out change in the attitude towards women. She remarks "values need to be redefined, so also human relationship, especially within the family; such is the dilemma of the middle class. An adherence to the traditional values has become difficult. New values have yet to be evolved. It requires tremendous courage to break from the tradition."

### IV. METHODOLOGY

The analysis is based on a qualitative approach, closely examining selected passages from "The Mistress of Spices" and "Sister of My Heart" that exemplify the author's use of punctuation to evoke emotions. The analysis pays attention to punctuation marks such as dashes, ellipses, exclamation marks, and question marks, and their role in shaping the emotional tone of the text.

#### **Punctuated Emotions in "The Mistress of Spices":**

Divakaruni's "The Mistress of Spices" revolves around Tilo, a woman with magical powers, who uses spices to influence people's lives. The novel is characterized by evocative descriptions and deep emotional journeys. The paper analyzes specific passages where punctuations heighten the emotional intensity, such as the use of dashes to convey hesitation or ellipses to suggest hidden emotions. The connection between Tilo's magical world and the emotional punctuation within the text is explored.

**Punctuated Emotions in "Sister of My Heart":**

"Sister of My Heart" narrates the intertwined lives of two cousins, Anju and Sudha. The novel explores themes of love, friendship, and familial bonds against the backdrop of cultural traditions and societal expectations. The paper delves into passages where punctuation marks emphasize the characters' emotional dilemmas and inner conflicts. It examines how exclamation marks can convey excitement, urgency, or surprise, and how question marks can evoke uncertainty and introspection.

**Impact on Reader Engagement:**

The paper discusses how Divakaruni's skillful use of punctuated emotions enhances reader engagement by creating a more immersive experience. The emotional resonance brought about by these punctuations allows readers to empathize with characters and become deeply invested in their journeys. The analysis also highlights the cultural and societal context that informs the characters' emotional experiences and the author's use of punctuation to navigate these complexities.

**V. CONCLUSION**

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novels exemplify her mastery in utilizing punctuation marks as a tool to evoke emotions in her characters and readers. Through the analysis of "The Mistress of Spices" and "Sister of My Heart," this paper underscores the significant role of punctuated emotions in enhancing the narrative's emotional depth and reader engagement. Divakaruni's unique approach to intertwining linguistic devices with emotional experiences contributes to her standing as a skillful storyteller in contemporary literature. Further research in this area could explore the broader implications of emotional punctuation across various literary works and genres.

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