



**The Impact of Kamala Das's Poetry on Female Students in the English
Department at Daffodil International University: Perspectives on
Rights, Awareness, and Identity Formation**

Submitted by

Nahida Islam

ID: 212-10-762

BA (Hons) in English Language and Literature

Department of English

Daffodil International University

SUPERVISED BY

Fatema Begum Laboni

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Daffodil International University

Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences

This Thesis report is submitted to the Department of English for the partial fulfillment of
the requirements of the BA (Hons) in English Language and Literature

APRIL 2025

Declaration

I, Nahida Islam solemnly confirm that this research paper, titled "**The Impact of Kamala Das's Poetry on Female Students in the English Department at Daffodil International University: Perspectives on Rights, Awareness and Identity Formation**" is the consequence of my research work and this study has been done under the supervision of **Fatema Begum Laboni, Assistant Professor, Department of English**, Daffodil International University. I attest that all borrowed/reproduced materials from published or unpublished sources have been properly acknowledged with citations and references. This paper contains no copied or plagiarized content from any source (s).

Nahida

Nahida Islam

Student ID: 212-10-762

BA (Hons) in English Language and Literature

Department of English

Daffodil International University, Dhaka.

Approval

I state that Nahida Islam (ID: 212-10-762), a devoted student of the BA (Hons) in English Language and Literature program, has successfully completed her thesis project titled “The Impact of Kamala Das’s Poetry on Female Students in the English Department at Daffodil International University: Enhancing Awareness of Rights and Identity Formation”, under my supervision as a part of her academic course ENG431. Throughout the research process, Nahida demonstrated exceptional commitment, intellectual curiosity, and a strong work ethic. She sought guidance frequently, engaged in critical discussions, and refined her work with diligence. I genuinely recommend this thesis for evaluation and wish Nahida continued success in her academic and professional pursuits.



Fatema Begum Laboni

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Daffodil International University

Acknowledgment

At the beginning, I would like to bow my head in gratitude to the Most Merciful Allah, who has given me the strength, wisdom, well-being, and perseverance to complete this thesis journey. Then my deepest thanks go to my parents and little brother, Nasib, whose steadfast love, sacrifice, and enthusiasm have been anchored. Their faith in me and their enthusiasm are helping me move forward in frightened moments.

I am profoundly indebted to my supervisor, Fatema Begum Laboni ma'am, whose guidance, patience, and insightful feedback shaped my work. Her expertise and willingness to go the extra mile- whether clarifying doubts, reviewing drafts, or offering motivational words – made all the difference. I also express gratitude and sincere appreciation to my other faculty members, whose support and resources were invaluable.

Finally, I am keen to express my appreciation to my entire batchmate (especially Jinnat Jahan) at Daffodil International University for their endless support during this journey.

Lastly, however, not least, I want to thank myself for not giving up. I was disregarded; I was treated badly; I was burned; I was disappointed; I was disconnected and disturbed; I cried a lot, but in the end, I completed it. Now, to myself: every challenge became a lesson, and every setback a stepping stone; these made me a better version of myself. And this accomplishment is as much yours as it is mine.

With a full heart of gratitude

Nahida

Nahida Islam

Dedication

I dedicate my thesis paper to my little brother, Nasib, and my parents, who have given me courage at every moment and inspired me to complete this paper. Whenever I gave up, I would say, I could not finish it, and my brother came to me and said, “Take some time and then try again; you can complete it”. I dedicate my thesis paper to Nasib, expressing my utmost gratitude and love for him. I also dedicate this paper to my parents for supporting and encouraging me in every situation. Without them, I would never have completed this paper.

Abstract

This study examines the impact of Kamala Das's poetry on the perspectives of rights and awareness among female students in the English Department at Daffodil International University. Kamala Das is a renowned Indian feminist poet, mainly known for her bold portrayal of female hopes, sufferings, desires, and sexuality. Through her poetry, she fights against patriarchal oppression. This study focuses on the direct impact of Kamala Das's poetry on Bangladeshi female students. While most feminist studies focus on Western perspectives, this study makes a change by focusing on young female Bangladeshi individuals. In this study, I use a mixed-method approach. For this study, I surveyed 20 female students in the English department. The findings of this survey reveal how transformative Kamala Das's poetry can be. 95% of participants liked Kamala Das's poetry, and they mentioned that her poetry influenced them to think about personal freedom and question societal expectations. 85% of participants mentioned that Kamala Das's poetry influences the sense of importance of female empowerment. This survey also reveals the emotional connections between Kamala Das's poetry and Bangladeshi female students. This study highlights the important role of feminist literature in education. It shows how Kamala Das's poetry creates an impact on female students to raise their voices against patriarchal oppression and reclaim their own identity and rights. However, this research has limitations, such as the small sample size and the avoidance of nuanced differences between Bangladeshi and Indian contexts. It could not focus on socio-economic perspectives and others. Future studies could expand to fill in all limitations.

Table of Contents

Contents	Page
Declaration	i
Approval	ii
Acknowledgment	iii
Dedication	iv
Abstract	v
Table of Contents	vi
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research problem	1
1.3 Background of the problem	2
1.4 Research objectives	2
1.5 Research questions	3
1.6 Significance of the study	3
Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	4
2.1 Introduction	4
2.2 Literature review	4
2.3 Research gap	5
Chapter 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	7
3.1 Introduction	7
3.2 Research design	7
3.3 Selection of the research area	7
3.4 Sample and sample size	7
3.5 Sampling technique	8
3.6 Purposive sampling	8
3.7 Data collection methods	8
3.8 Data analysis technique	9
3.9 Research ethics	9
3.10 Limitations	9

Chapter 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS	11
4.1 Findings	11
4.2 Results	12
4.2.1 Quantitative analysis	12
4.2.2 Qualitative analysis	18
4.3 Discussions	19
Chapter 5 Conclusion	21
Appendices	22
References	27
Library Clearance	29

List of Figures

Name of figure	Page
Figure 1: Percentage of participants based on their gender	8
Figure 2: Students' preference for Kamala Das's poetry	13
Figure 3: Statistics on students reading Kamala Das's poetry	13
Figure 4: Data of students' preferences about themes	14
Figure 5: Data on students' choice of literary devices	15
Figure 6: Data on influence empowerment	15

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

For a long time, scholars have considered gender representation in literature as a subject of interest. According to some studies, literature plays a crucial role in shaping a view of gender identity and social norms. Literature, such as poetry and fiction, helps readers magnify their ability to think. Studying poetry and fiction allows them to explore multiple perspectives through characters. This exploration helps to build the emotions of readers (Oatley, 2016). Literature can be considered a powerful medium that can give form to the mind. In gender issues, literature plays a crucial role by highlighting societal expectations and the suffering of a woman in a patriarchal society. Feminist writers such as Sylvia Plath, Kamala Das, and others represent societal expectations and the sufferings of women in their writings. For example, Sylvia Plath fights with patriarchal society, and she portrays her psycho-social suffering in her poetry (Mozumder, 2020). “Dress in sarees, be girl /Be wife, they said. Be embroiderer, be cook, /Be a quarreller with servants. Fit in” (An Introduction). Similarly, in “My Last Duchess,” Robert Browning gives a bone-chilling description of a woman’s life and portrays the objectification and control over women in patriarchal societies.

Kamala Das is a famous Indian poet and feminist writer. She is known for her bold exploration of female identity and sexuality. Among Indians, she raises her voice against the patriarchal society (Kakoty, 2020; Nimavat, 2014; Sha, 2024). Kamala Das breaks the silence of female sexuality and psychological struggle through her poetry (Nimavat, 2014; Kumar, 2022). South Asian women often struggle with societal expectations and face both physical and mental suffering. In “An Introduction”, “The Old Playhouse”, and others, Kamala Das represents the sufferings of South Asian women through her confessional tone (Nimavat, 2014).

1.2 Research problem

The world is developing with the equality and empowerment of women, but in Bangladesh, women still suffer and struggle with society’s norms and traditional expectations. They face

obstacles in creating their identity and cannot establish their rights (“The Struggle for Rights”). In a male-dominated society, women’s personal and intellectual growth can be hampered by norms and expectations (Valsecchi et al., 2023). In Bangladesh, a lack of awareness regarding gender equality and rights is responsible for women’s suffering. The context of Kamala Das’s poetry is quite similar to Bangladesh. This study tries to find out whether Kamala Das’s poetry can influence female English department students at Daffodil International University to break stereotypes of society and be aware of their identity and rights.

1.3 Background of the problem

For a long time, in literature, gender representation has been considered a powerful way of creating social consciousness and individual identity. Raw representations of women’s sufferings and struggles can be a source of inspiration that can help women create their identities. Kamala Das’s confessional tone and honest expression of female desires, struggles, and experiences challenge the roles and norms of a patriarchal society (Purshan & Vasudev, 2021). According to many critics and philosophers like De Beauvoir and Elaine Showalter, this kind of writing encourages women to question societal norms (Showalter, 1990).

Discussions about gender roles, women’s rights, and empowerment are ongoing in Bangladesh. Bangladeshi women have made significant strides in education, empowerment, and leadership; however, traditional expectations pose a barrier that creates limitations (Amin, 2024; Islam Parul, 2023). Inspiring literature can play an important role here. Kamala Das and her writings are included in the syllabus of many private universities in Bangladesh (such as North-South University, East-West University, ULAB, DIU, and others).

1.4 Research objectives

1. To examine whether Kamala Das’s poetry can influence the English department’s female students at Daffodil International University to be aware of their identity and rights and break chains of societal stereotypes.
2. To understand the influences of Kamala Das on female students.

3. To explore the role of Kamala Das's poetry in creating consciousness among female students.

1.5 Research questions

1. Does Kamala Das's poetry influence female students at DIU? If so, which aspects influence them most?
2. How does Kamala Das represent gender roles and female identity in her poetry? Does her poetry shape students' understanding of rights and self-identity? Do female students in the English department at DIU connect with her representation?
3. Does studying Kamala Das's poetry increase female students' awareness of their rights and social roles?
4. Does reading Kamala Das's poetry make female students question societal expectations?

1.6 Significance of the study

As this study focuses on whether Das's poetry can influence students to break down stereotypes of society and make them aware of their identity and rights, it can contribute to the growing field of feminist literary studies. It can provide valuable insights by analyzing the real-life impact of feminist literature on female students.

This study will help educators and curriculum designers understand the influence of Kamala Das's poetry on female students.

This study is particularly relevant in the context of Bangladesh. Gender roles and women's rights are ongoing discussions here. Though women in Bangladesh have made significant progress in education, employment, and leadership, traditional expectations still limit their full potential (Amin; Islam Parul). Literature that inspires self-awareness and empowerment can contribute to the broader movement for gender equality.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter quotes and reviews related works of content writers and researchers.

2.2 Literature Review

Literature plays a crucial role in cognitive and metacognitive development, as well as in enhancing social and emotional awareness (Dowty, 2021). Fiction helps readers understand social issues, the emotions of characters, and their own identity, making them more mature with foundational insights (Dowty, 2021). It encourages readers to question traditional gender roles. Literature allows readers to reevaluate conventional roles (Liwag, Ramirez, & Santiago, 2022). Strong protagonists who can defy traditional gender roles, like Bianca Pitzorno's characters, can influence female students. Strong characters can challenge the ideologies of a male-dominated society (Forni, 2020). Literature can question societal norms. Literature is a manifesto for a community that influences society's way of life and acknowledges society's change (Yesmin & Chawla, 2019). Different types of portrayals inspire young readers to question conventional societal norms (Ajmal, Gull, and Lodhi, 2024). Through literature, Pakistani female post-colonial writers successfully break the patriarchal societal norms (Yasmeen & Chawla, 2019). In "The Yellow Paper," the author Charlotte Perkins Gilman critiques patriarchal control through the narrator. Similarly, in "An Introduction", Kamala Das represents herself as a strong narrator and raises her voice against traditional norms. She openly rejects societal expectations (dressing, marital life, education, and others). In her poetry, she portrays her desires, hopes, and dreams (Nimavat, 2014). Psychology suggests that reading literature regenerates deep cognitive processes. Through organizing experiences into meaningful patterns, narratives help readers make sense of the world (Bruner, 1990). Literature can affect readers' views. According to a study on "Triggering Students' Critical Thinking through Literary Analysis", literary thinking allows

scholars to express their inner feelings, give opinions, and make arguments. Critical thinking helps to understand cause-and-effect relationships from literature to life (Ramadhana et al., 2023). Literature also assists readers in processing feelings like emotions, empathy, and others (Ahmadi, 2024). Fiction can make an impact on readers' emotions and help them understand others' situations. It can also create empathy for others (Mar et al., 2006). Modern literature encourages readers to reexamine societal gender roles (Ladzekpo, Attiye, and Davi, 2024). Kamala Das's poetry stands against conventional, idealized roles. Das's poetry becomes a battleground for a patriarchal society (Santhosha, 2019). Kamala Das's poetry smashes the silence of female psycho-social sufferings and sexuality (Kumar, 2022). Kamala Das can be considered a guide for women who fight for women's empowerment in a patriarchal society (Santhosha, 2019).

In ancient times, women were treated like gods, but with the change of time, they have become victims of gender oppression (Parvin, 2023). Most South Asian countries have been male-dominated since time immemorial. According to a study on "Double Colonization: A Postcolonial Feminist Study of Sia Figiel's 'Where We Once Belonged,'" in colonial countries, women are being colonized twice, first by colonial imperial power and another by the patriarchal society (Ahmed, 2019). In the colonial and post-colonial eras, women suffered from patriarchal norms, socio-political upheavals, and others (Yasmeen & Chawla, 2019). Kamala Das portrays the psychological and cultural divisional experiences in her poetry. Das writes, "I am Indian, very brown, born in Malabar, / I speak three languages, write in / Two, dream in one. / Don't write in English, they said, English is / Not your mother-tongue (An Introduction).

2.3 Research gap

Existing knowledge explores gender representation in literature and its influence on readers. However, these are insufficient to describe the direct impact on Bangladeshi female students. Previous research explores gender-neutral texts and feminist literature in Western contexts. The article "Gender Roles: A Critical Examination of Their Construction, Evolution, and Impact in English Literature" explores the influences of literature on readers to understand gender roles and societal norms and stereotypes by highlighting Western perspectives. Similarly, the "Cambridge Companion to Feminist Literary Theory" notes that in Western

contexts, studying feminist literature significantly influences readers (Cambridge University Press). They focus on Western feminist writers rather than any South Asian feminist authors like Kamala Das.

This study's goal is to bridge the research gap by focusing on female students of DIU.”

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The goal of this study is to explore whether Kamala Das's poetry creates any impact on female students in the English department, enhancing awareness of rights and identity formation. In this study, the researcher applied a mixed-method approach (combining quantitative and qualitative) and purposive sampling. This research ensures quantitative and qualitative data from survey responses where open-ended questions were included.

3.2 Research Design

This study builds on a descriptive and analytical research design to examine whether Kamala Das's poetry can influence female students in the English department. It examines reading habits, thematic preferences, literary understanding, personal connections, and self-realization. The researcher applied a survey-based method for data collection.

3.3 Selection of the Research Area

The researcher conducted this study on female students in the English department at Daffodil International University. A survey-based method was used to collect data. The research topic focuses on students of the English department at DIU, who have strong connections with Kamala Das and her poetry.

3.4 Sample and sample size

In a research study, a sample refers to a group of people who participate in the research and represent the whole (Scribbr). In this research, the participants were selected through a purposive sampling technique to ensure relevant perspectives. For mixed methods, qualitative focus, and homogeneous sample (female students), 15-30 participants are sufficient for the study survey (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Guest et al., 2006). Only female students in the English department at Daffodil International University participated in the survey.

According to an article from the Institution for Work & Health, sample size indicates how many participants or observations are included in a study. This study survey included 20 female students from the English department. Their responses help to examine whether Kamala Das's poetry can influence female students.



Figure 1: Percentage of participants based on their gender.

3.5 Sampling techniques

In research, sampling refers to the way of selecting a subset of the population of interest (Turner). There are many sampling methods, but this study is based on purposive sampling (non-probability sampling).

3.6 Purposive sampling

In purposive sampling, the researcher selects a sample by using their expertise that is most useful to the purposes of the research (Scribbr). The researchers used this technique to get participants.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

The researcher collected responses from participants by sharing a Google Forms survey. The survey forms consisted of: Closed-ended questions (multiple choice, Likert scale) to collect numerical data on reading habits and preferences. Open-ended questions explore the participants' understanding and personal reflections on Kamala Das's poetry.

This study mainly relies on primary data (students' responses). Secondary data is only used in the literature review section of this study.

3.8 Data Analysis Techniques

This study builds on a mixed-methods approach. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were applied.

3.9 Research Ethics

In this study, all participants were informed about the purpose of the study. The identities and responses of all participants were kept anonymous to protect their privacy. In this study, the researcher avoided sensitive questions so that no participant felt emotional discomfort. The researcher ensured honest reporting of data. To avoid plagiarism, the researcher ensured proper credit to all sources used in this study.

3.10 Limitations

The sample size (only 20 participants) of this study was limited, and it only focused on the English department at Daffodil International University. The researcher presumed all participants had a previous understanding of women's rights, empowerment, and violence toward women, as they are now in university stages and basic knowledge of these topics is part of the curriculum at primary and secondary levels of education in Bangladesh.

All responses of participants are based on their personal opinions, which may be biased. This study focuses on Kamala Das' poetry, and as she is not a Bangladeshi poet, her poems may not resonate equally with all Bangladeshi students, as there are some cultural differences. This study only focuses on one university; future studies should add other universities.

This study was conducted in a very limited time, and as a result, it may miss many ideas and impacts.

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Findings

This study reveals that Kamala Das's poetry creates a significant impact on female students in the English department by encouraging some feminist consciousness and challenging societal stereotypes. According to a participant's statement, she did not like one of her classmates from childhood, as she always behaved like an outsider in this society. But after reading Kamala Das's poetry "An Introduction", she felt changes inside her, she started to respect her classmates and considered that she has the right to live her life by her own choice, she does not need to behave like others or follow the conventional norms. That participant mentioned that "Kamala Das's Poetry has helped me go to the people by breaking the label (clothing, gender, class) of society. Her poetry has taught me to respect every man's struggle/self-identity". Quantitative data shows that 95% of the total participants like Kamala Das's poetry, and 85% of participants consider that her poetry influences them to think about the importance of women's empowerment. 75% of the total participants consider that Kamala Das's poetry helps them to increase their self-confidence. Qualitative responses highlight the emotional and intellectual impact of reading Kamala Das's poetry. One participant mentioned that when she read, "I have come with Hope to learn, /To live without joy, /without the kind of joy/That you could give, and/I have learned to expect nothing" she felt why woman empowerment is so much important, why creating own identity is so much important. Literature becomes more effective when readers can personally connect with it (Dowty, 2021). According to this study survey, 75% of participants can personally connect with Kamala Das's poetry. 90% of the total participants believe that Kamala Das's poetry challenges societal stereotypes. Forni (2020) argues that literature challenges social stereotypes and reshapes readers' perspectives. One participant says that for some reason, her aunt got divorced. Most of her family members blamed her aunt. That participant also thinks that her family is right, but after reading Kamala Das's poetry, her thinking changed. She starts to feel her aunt's mental suffering. Here, reading Kamala Das's poetry changes the reader's psychology, like the argument of Ahamadi (2024), literature can process readers' psychology, emotions, and empathy.

This study also emphasizes the relevance of feminist literature. Participants mention that Kamala Das's poetry encourages resistance to their feminist rules. These findings are similar to Showalter's (1990) argument, feminist texts empower women to reclaim their identities. However, the cultural differences between India and Bangladesh, and the small sample size (n=20) limit generalization, suggesting the need for broader research.

In conclusion, Kamala Das's poetry not only produces some feminist aspects but also acts as a catalyst for personal and social transformation among female students.

4.2 Results

This study explores whether Kamala Das's poetry can create any impact on female students in the English department to challenge societal stereotypes and become aware of their identity and rights. The researcher applied a mixed-methods approach to combine quantitative and qualitative data to analyze the impact of Kamala Das's poetry on female students. This study focused on students' reading habits, personal thoughts, and thematic preferences.

4.2.1 Quantitative Analysis

Twenty female students from the English department participated in this survey. According to the survey results, all participants (100%) had read Kamala Das's poetry, and nearly all participants (95%) liked Kamala Das's poetry. This percentage specifies students' deep engagement with Kamala Das's poetry.

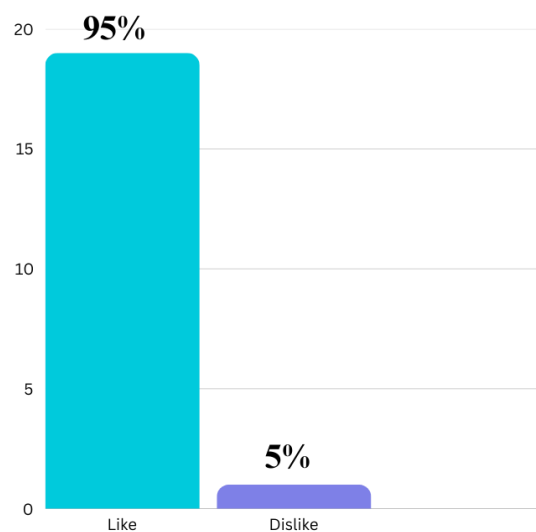


Figure 2: Students' preference for Kamala Das's poetry

According to this survey, students who read Kamala Das's poetry mostly like her writing.

Kamala Das wrote many poems. "The Old Playhouse", "An Introduction", "The Looking Glass", and "My Grandmother's House" are the most famous. Most participants mentioned that they read "An Introduction" and "The Old Playhouse", written by Kamala Das. 12 participants (60%) mentioned that they had read "An Introduction," and 10% of participants mentioned that they read "The Old Playhouse". Again, 10% of participants mentioned they read "An Introduction" and "The Old Playhouse". Other students read "My Grandmother's House" and "The Looking Glass" or both.

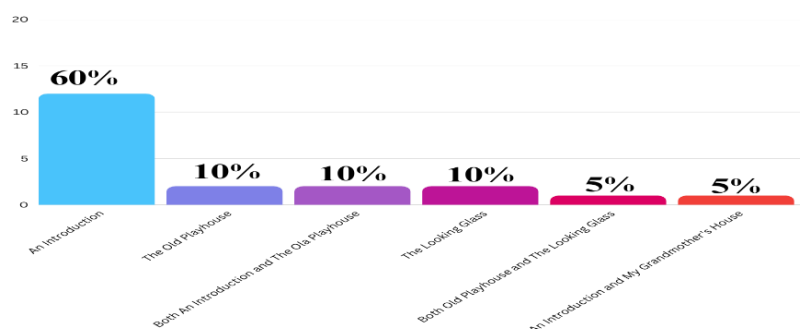


Figure 3: Statistics on students reading Kamala Das's poetry

Themes are the main idea, concept, or message of poetry that the poet wants to teach the readers. Kamala Das provides many themes in her poetry, such as female identity, the struggles of women in a patriarchal society, and others. Most participants (55%) considered “female identity” their favorite theme in Kamala Das’s poetry. The second majority of participants (30%) identified “struggles in a patriarchal society” as the most impactful theme in Kamala Das’s poetry. A few participants (15%) considered “love and desire” as their favorite theme in Kamala Das’s poetry.

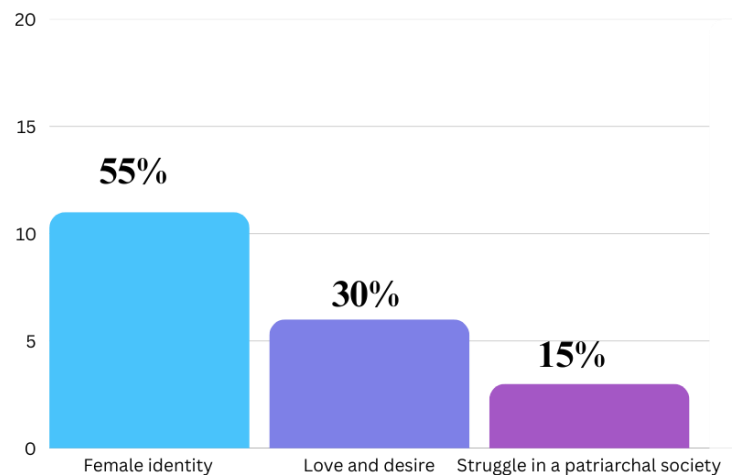


Figure 4: Data of students' preferences about themes

A literary device is a technique applied by authors to enhance their writing so that they can convey deep meanings or create emotions in readers’ minds (Eng, 2023). Kamala Das always uses a confessional tone in her writing (Nimavat, 2014). In this survey, 18 out of 20 participants (90%) agreed that the literary devices of Kamala Das’s poetry were impactful.

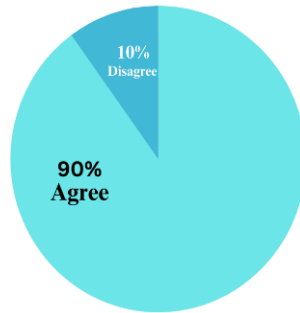


Figure 5: Data on students' choice of literary devices

Nearly 53% of participants considered that the confessional tone of Kamala Das's poetry creates an impact on them. Other participants thought that imagery (10.5%), free verse (21.1%), and metaphors (15.8%) were impactful for them.

Influence of Kamala Das's poetry

This survey included questions about whether Kamala Das's poetry can influence readers to break societal stereotypes, rethink their self-identity, and become aware of their rights. The results are overwhelmingly positive.

Empowerment and Awareness: 17 participants (85%) agreed that Kamala Das's poetry influences women to think about the importance of women's empowerment.

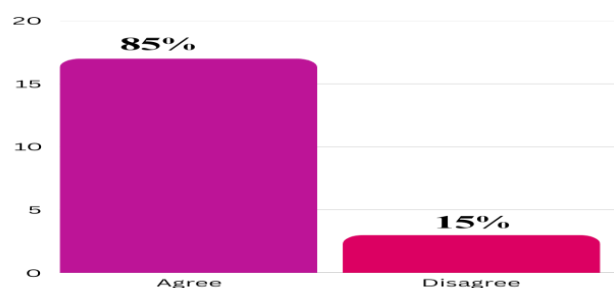


Figure 6: Data on influence empowerment

Most participants noted that her poetry influenced them to create their identities and raise their voices against patriarchal oppression. 75% of participants agreed that Kamala Das's poetry encourages them to create identity. However, some participants, nearly 10% of the total, strongly disagree with this. 15% of the total participants remain neutral about this.

Participants' opinion	Number of participants	Percentage
Strongly disagree	2	10%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	3	15%
Agree	11	55%
Strongly agree	4	20%

Table 1: Data on the influence on creating identity

75% of participants agreed that Kamala Das's poetry helps them develop self-confidence. However, 25% of participants considered that maybe Kamala Das's poetry helps them to build self-confidence. No participant mentioned that Kamala Das's poetry does not help develop self-confidence.

Social change

18 participants (90%) agreed that poetry could be a tool for social change. Most participants (60%) agreed that Kamala Das's poetry challenges the societal norms of a patriarchal society. They believe feminist poetry like Kamala Das's is requisite for social change, as it cheers female students to fight for gender equality and challenge traditional social norms. However, 30% of the participants disagreed with others. 10% of participants were neutral about this issue. The survey data suggest that most participants considered Kamala Das's poetry to challenge societal norms.

According to this survey, all participants (100%) agreed that Kamala Das's poetry breaks societal stereotypes and challenges traditional gender roles. Here, most of the participants (65%) considered that every time her poetry challenges conventional gender roles and breaks societal stereotypes, while one-quarter of the total participants (25%) argued that her poetry sometimes challenges traditional gender roles, but not always. 10% of the students considered that most of the time, her poetry challenged conventional gender roles. One participant wrote, "She always challenges the traditional role in patriarchal society and highlights the suffocation and loneliness experienced by women in her poem. She also suggests that women stand against this stereotypical situation".

Personal changes after reading Kamala Das's poetry

This survey explores whether students studying Kamala Das's poetry can be acquainted with any personal changes.

Increased awareness: 14 participants (70%) reported that Kamala Das's poetry makes them more aware of their rights. They already know about their rights as they consider that they have read other feminist writers like Emily Dickinson, Begum Rokeya, Sylvia Plath, and others, but reading Kamala Das' poetry makes them more conscious because Kamala Das uses a confessional tone in her poetry (Purshan & Vasudev, 2021). 95% of participants voted that Kamala Das's poetry influences them to question societal expectations. 65% of the participants strongly agreed that Kamala Das's poetry makes them aware of gender equality, and another 15% considered that Kamala Das's poetry influences their awareness of gender equality.

Encouraging the raising of voices

Self-confidence is the precedent for protests. According to this survey, Kamala Das's poetry helps all participants develop self-confidence, and 95% of participants observe changes inside themselves after reading Kamala Das's poetry. This survey finds that after reading Kamala Das's poetry, 95% of participants felt encouraged to shout against male dominance and violence toward women.

Emotional connection:

75% of the participants felt personally connected with Kamala Das' poetry. 85% of participants can relate Kamala Das' poetry to personal experiences.

4.2.2 Qualitative analysis

Themes of female identity and patriarchy

The qualitative response of this survey shows that female students feel very much motivated and like the themes of Kamala Das's poetry, such as female identity and the struggles of women in patriarchal society. Many participants mentioned that Kamala Das's poetry challenged societal norms and influenced them to raise their voices.

Female identity: Many students highlighted that Kamala Das's poetry helps them focus on creating their own identities. One participant wrote, "Kamala Das's poetry influences women to think about their freedom and identity."

Patriarchal oppression: Several students expressed that Kamala Das' poetry helps them be aware of patriarchal oppression towards women and shout against this despotism. One participant mentioned that "her work candidly addressed themes such as female identity, sexuality, and emotional freedom, challenging societal norms that suppress women. Through her bold, confessional style, Das critiques patriarchal structures and asserts the need for women's autonomy and self-expression."

Emotional and psychological impact

The qualitative data also focuses on students' emotional and intellectual impact of reading Kamala Das' poetry.

Empowerment and validation: Many students touch upon Kamala Das's poetry and feel motivated to stand up for themselves and demand their rights. One participant wrote, "Kamala Das's poetry significantly influences the sense of the importance of women's empowerment by boldly articulating female desire and discontent within patriarchal structures, thereby validating women's experiences and inspiring them to seek agency".

According to this survey, many students feel connected to Kamala Das's poetry and consider the poetry Kamala Das still relevant to Bangladeshi female students. Kamala Das's poetry demonstrated students' own experiences as women.

Role of Feminist Poetry in Education:

The qualitative data of this research reveal the importance of feminist poetry in education. Many participants mentioned that including Kamala Das's poetry in the curriculum can help

students build awareness about gender roles and rights. They agreed that male students can also benefit from reading Kamala Das's poetry. Participants consider feminist poetry, such as Kamala Das's, to have a crucial role in social change.

4.3 Discussions

The findings of this study suggest that Kamala Das's poetry has a notable impact on female students in the English Department at Daffodil International University. The quantitative data reveals that a large part of the participants are familiar with Kamala Das's poetry. It also suggests that Kamala Das's poetry inspires and empowers them to challenge societal stereotypes, encouraging them to become more aware of their identity and rights. The findings of this study are quite similar to existing knowledge of feminist literature. Literature reviews suggest that literature can be considered a catalyst for self-awareness and societal change (Showalter, 1990; Neruda, 1971). The quantitative data reveals that 95% of participants enjoyed Kamala Das's poetry and liked the themes of her poetry. 55% of participants mentioned "female identity" as their favorite theme. This preference indicates that the confessional tone of Kamala Das's poetry resonates among young readers.

The qualitative responses provide insights into how Kamala Das's poetry inspires female empowerment. According to existing knowledge, Kamala Das portrays patriarchal oppression and self-expression in her poetry (Kakoty, 2020; Nimavat, 2014; Kumar, 2022). Many participants mentioned that they feel an emotional connection with Kamala Das's poetry and its themes of patriarchal oppression and self-expression. One participant wrote that "Kamala Das's poetry influences women to think about their freedom and identity". The confessional tone of Kamala Das's poetry—considered impactful by 53% of participants—is similar to the findings of Nimavat, who highlights that Kamala Das's poetry portrays female desire and sexuality in her confessional tone and challenges the traditional societal norms (Nimavat, 2014).

The study considers the importance of feminist literature in education. Participants emphasized that feminist poetry like Das's should be included in the curriculum. According to some existing knowledge, strong protagonists who can defy traditional gender roles, like Bianca Pitzorno's characters, can influence female students. Strong characters can challenge the ideologies of a male-dominated society (Forni, 2020). According to the survey findings,

most of the participants read "An Introduction" by Kamala Das, and in this poem, Kamala Das portrays herself as a strong narrator (An Introduction). The participants (90%) overwhelmingly agree that poetry can inspire social change, and the literature review also suggests the same. Literature is a manifesto for a community that influences society's way of life and acknowledges society's change (Yesmin & Chawla, 2019).

According to survey findings, most of the students mentioned that Kamala Das's poetry influenced them to question societal expectations (dress-up, communication, education, marital life, and others) and norms. These findings are similar to poetry helps to process feelings and encourages questioning conventional norms (Ahmed, 2024; Ajmal, Gull, and Lodhi, 2024).

In conclusion, this study finds the transformative potential in Kamala Das's poetry. Her work not only portrays her experiences but also creates an important impact on readers. Her poetry also helps in the metacognitive development of readers. This study provides important insights into the influence of Kamala Das's poetry on female students in Bangladesh. Kamala Das's poetry not only helps to raise the voice against violence and injustice and create awareness about gender roles, but also empowers women to challenge societal norms and ensure their rights.

More research is needed to explore why some students remain neutral or disagree in some stages, though they consider the many positive sides and effects of Kamala Das's poetry. More studies are also needed to find out the impacts of Kamala Das's poetry on different socio-economic backgrounds.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS

This study has explored the deep impact of Kamala Das's poetry on female students of the English department at Daffodil International University. It focuses on the possibility of challenging societal stereotypes and encourages creating own identity in a patriarchal society. The findings of this study revealed that the confessional portrayal of Kamala Das's poetry inspires most of the participants. They can feel her poetry, they can connect with her writings. Participants mention that her poetry inspires them to question patriarchal rules. The majority of participants mention that Kamala Das's poetry helps them to be self-confident and raise their voices for their rights. They feel the importance of women's empowerment after reading her poetry. Themes of Kamala Das's poetry, like female identity and patriarchal oppression, mostly encourage them to break societal expectations.

This study examines the transformative power of feminist literature in education. It reveals that Kamala Das's poetry acts as a catalyst for readers' personal and social change. However, this study acknowledges its limitations (small sample size, ignoring the socio-economic perspective, and cultural differences between India and Bangladesh) and suggests the necessity of broader research in the future on this topic.

In conclusion, Kamala Das's poetry is not only a strong literary work, but it also plays an important role in shaping readers' consciousness.

Appendices

Questionnaires

1. Do you read the poems of Kamala Das?

(If you read, write down the name.)

2. Which theme of Kamala Das's poetry do you like most?

3. Do you think Kamala Das's poetry challenges societal norms?

4. Does Kamala Das's poetry influence your perspective on gender equality?

5. Does Kamala Das's poetry inspire you?

(If inspired, which of the following aspects of Kamala Das's poetry do you find most inspiring?)

6. Does studying Kamala Das's poetry make you question societal expectations of women?

7. Do you believe Kamala Das's poetry encourages female students to raise their voices against social stereotypes?

8. Is Kamala Das's poetry relevant to Bangladeshi female students? What do you think?

9. Reading feminist literature like Kamala Das's poetry should be mandatory in university courses. Do you agree with it?

10. Are the literary devices of Kamala Das's poetry impactful to you?

(If yes, then which literary device of Kamala Das's poetry is most impactful to you?)

11. Can you relate Kamala Das's poetry to your personal experiences?

12. Do you think Kamala Das's poetry breaks societal stereotypes?

13. Have you read any other feminist poets?

(If yes, write down the names.)

14. Do you think Kamala Das's poetry influences the sense of importance of women's empowerment? Why or why not?
15. Does Kamala Das's poetry influence you to think about personal freedom?
16. Male students should also study Kamala Das's poetry. Do you agree?
17. Do you think Kamala Das challenges traditional gender roles?
18. Did you see any changes inside you after reading Kamala Das's poetry?
19. After reading Kamala Das's poetry, do you feel encouraged to shout against male dominance?
20. After reading Kamala Das's poetry, do you stand against any violence towards women?
21. Does Kamala Das's poetry encourage you to create your own identity?
22. Does reading Kamala Das's poetry influence your awareness of gender equality?
23. Is Kamala Das's poetry relevant to the struggles faced by Bangladeshi women?
24. Does Kamala Das's poetry make you more aware of your rights as a woman?
25. Does Kamala Das's poetry help you develop self-confidence?
26. Kamala Das's poetry promotes gender consciousness among students.
27. Feminist poetry is necessary for social change. Do you agree?
28. Kamala Das's poetry should be studied more deeply in the English department.
29. Have you ever felt personally connected to Kamala Das's poetry?
30. Do you believe poetry can be a tool for social change?
31. Would you recommend Kamala Das's poetry to others?
32. Do you think Kamala Das's poetry is still relevant today?
33. Do you believe male students can also benefit from reading Kamala Das's poetry?
34. Have you discussed Kamala Das's poetry with your peers outside the classroom?
35. Do you think reading feminist literature should be encouraged in universities?

36. How can you understand that reading Kamala Das's poetry makes any impact on you?

Can you explain?

37. Can you share any example where you do not like anyone or a characteristic of anyone, but after reading Kamala Das's poetry, your idea has changed?

Do you think Kamala Das's poetry influences the sense of importance of women empowerment? Why or why not?

17 responses

Yes

Because her poetry can be tool social changes

Yes

Yes , because women have the right to lead their own life according to their choice and without males control over them .

It mainly works to create identity. Besides Kamala Das try to create own identity and own power. Which impacts women power

Yes I strongly believe. Because every woman has to be the freedom of independent.

Yes, Kamala Das's poetry significantly influences the sense of importance of women's empowerment by boldly articulating female desire and discontent within patriarchal structures, thereby validating women's experiences and inspiring them to seek agency.

Because she asks every women to speak up, and then she mentioned about female desires.

Yes, Kamala Das's poetry influences the sense of importance of women empowerment cause most of the women face such like harrasment but they can't speak out about their pain. After reading her poems they will get the strength of expressing their problems also.

Yes, Kamala Das's poetry empowers women by giving voice to their suppressed emotions, desires, and struggles, challenging societal norms. Her candid exploration of identity and sexuality promotes a sense of independence and self-expression, vital for women's empowerment.

Yes, Kamala Das's poetry significantly influences the sense of importance of women empowerment. Her works candidly address themes like female identity, sexuality, and emotional freedom, challenging societal norms that suppress women. Through her bold, confessional style, Das critiques patriarchal structures and asserts the need for women's autonomy and self-expression. Her poems resonate with the struggles and aspirations

of women, inspiring them to embrace their individuality and demand equality. Thus, her poetry serves as a powerful tool for raising awareness about women's empowerment.

Yes. She always challenges the traditional role in patriarchal society and highlighted suffocation and loneliness experience of women into her poem. She also suggests women how to stand against this stereotype situation.

Yes. The presentation of female identity

Yes because she talks about women's rights

Yes. Because Kamala Das's poetry influence women to think about their personal freedom.

References:

- Ahmed, S. M. (2019). Double colonization: A postcolonial feminist study of *Sia Figiel's Where We Once Belonged*. *Scholaria Jurnal Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*, 2(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.24946/jj.2.2019.v2.i1.jp.1.0>
- Ahmadi, A. (2024). Students' strategies in reading literature: Literary study in the EFL, phenomenological psychology perspective. *Language Related Research*, 15(3), 25–48. <https://doi.org/10.29252/LRR.15.3.2>
- Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning* (p. 43). Harvard University Press.
- Dowty, D. (2021). The effects of fictional literature on real-world perceptions of students (Undergraduate honors thesis). University of Mississippi. https://egrove.olemiss.edu/hon_thesis/1597
- Eng, E. (2023, September 26). How can a literary device affect your writing? Admissionsight. Retrieved from <https://admissionsight.com/how-can-a-literary-device-affect-your-writing/>
- Forni, D. (2020). Breaking female stereotypes: Bianca Pitzorno's girls and the power of literature on gender socialization. *Journal of Literary Education*(3), 62–79. <https://doi.org/10.7262/j.iss.2.15998>
- Islam Parul, S. (2023, March 4). The struggle for rights. *Samakal*. <https://samakal.com/probas/article/160472/অধিকার-আদায়ের-সংগ্রাম>
- Kumar, A. (2022, February). Poetry of Kamala Das: A voice for individuality and self-identity. *Journal Global Values*, XIII(Special Issue), 180–185.
- Ladzekpo, G. K., Owusu, A. B., & Mensah, M. (2024). Exploring gender roles and stereotypes in literature: An analysis of contemporary works. *International Journal of Gender Studies*, 9(2), 25–40. <https://doi.org/10.47604/ijgs.2782>
- Liwag, M. J. D., Ramirez, D. M., & Santiago, G. S. (2022). Challenging gender stereotypes through the selection of gender-neutral texts in the Philippines school context. *International Journal of Academic Multidisciplinary Research*, 6(6), 275–286.
- Mar, R. A., Oatley, K., Hirsh, J., dela Paz, J., & Peterson, J. B. (2006). Bookworms versus nerds: Exposure to fiction versus non-fiction, divergent associations with social ability, and the

simulation of fictional social worlds. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 40(5), 694–712. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2005.08.002>

Mozumder, S. C. (2020). Marital suffering in Sylvia Plath's poetry: A feminist reading. *American, British and Canadian Studies*, 34(1), 124–146. <https://doi.org/10.2478/abcsi-2020-0008>

Nimavat, S. B. (2014). Reflection of feminine sensibility in Kamala Das' poetry. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Management (IJRSML)*, 2(4), 61–65.

Oatley, K. (2016). Fiction: Simulation of social worlds. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 20(8), 618–628. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2016.06.002>

Purushan, A. R., & Sangvikar, N. V. (2021). Feminism in the writings of Kamala Das. *Elementary Education Online*, 20(4), 3632–3640. <https://doi.org/10.17051/ilkonline.2021.04.400>

Ramadhana, R. N., Maryani, N. A., & Istiqomah, F. (2023, May 31). Triggering students' critical thinking through literary analysis. In *International Seminar on Education, Technology, and Art* (pp. 222–230). <https://doi.org/10.33644/ietra.v1i0.1701>

Sah, R. K. (2024). Breaking chains, crafting words: Feminist themes in Kamala Das's poetry. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR)*, 11(4), e427. <http://www.jetir.org>

Santhosha, H. M. (2019). Identity and self-expression in the poetry of Kamala Das. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews (IJRAR)*, 6(1), 220–224. <http://www.ijrar.org>

Turner, D. P. (2020). Sampling methods in research design. *Headache*, 60(1), 8–12. <https://doi.org/10.1111/head.13707>

Valsecchi, G., Riva, P., Prati, F., & Sarrica, M. (2023). Men's gender norms and gender-hierarchy-legitimizing ideologies: The effect of priming traditional masculinity versus a feminization of men's norms. *Gender Issues*, 40, 145–167. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12147-022-09311-z>

Yasmeen, R., & Chawla, M. I. (2019). Representation of women in postcolonial literature in Pakistan. *South Asian Studies: A Research Journal of South Asian Studies*, 34(2), 617–627.

Library Clearance:

212-10-762

by Nahida Islam

Submission date: 21-Apr-2025 09:45AM (UTC+0600)
Submission ID: 2651928091
File name: 212-10-762-thesis-chapter-01.docx (669.01K)
Word count: 5829
Character count: 34276

212-10-762

ORIGINALITY REPORT

14%

SIMILARITY INDEX

12%

INTERNET SOURCES

4%

PUBLICATIONS

10%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	dspace.daffodilvarsity.edu.bd:8080	3%
	Internet Source	
2	Submitted to Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam	1%
	Student Paper	
3	www.iprjb.org	1%
	Internet Source	
4	jurnal.minartis.com	1%
	Internet Source	
5	lnu.diva-portal.org	1%
	Internet Source	
6	Submitted to Sim University	1%
	Student Paper	
7	Submitted to columbancollege	<1%
	Student Paper	
8	repository.up.ac.za:8080	<1%
	Internet Source	
9	ojs.uv.es	<1%
	Internet Source	
10	Submitted to Georgia Northwestern Technical College	<1%
	Student Paper	
11	sloap.org	<1%
	Internet Source	
12	stmlportal.net	<1%
	Internet Source	

13	Submitted to Washington State University System Student Paper	<1 %
14	Submitted to ULACIT Universidad Latinoamericana de Ciencia y Tecnología Student Paper	<1 %
15	Rizka Norsy Ramadhana. "Triggering Students' Critical Thinking Through Literary Analysis", Lentera: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan, 2022 Publication	<1 %
16	Submitted to University of Leeds Student Paper	<1 %
17	pjsr.com.pk Internet Source	<1 %
18	www.thefreelibrary.com Internet Source	<1 %
19	www.ilkogretim-online.org Internet Source	<1 %
20	Submitted to BRAC University Student Paper	<1 %
21	Submitted to Durham Technical Community College Student Paper	<1 %
22	Submitted to Sultan Qaboos University Student Paper	<1 %
23	eprints.ru.ac.za Internet Source	<1 %
24	Submitted to Ashesi University Student Paper	<1 %
25	ijses.com Internet Source	<1 %

26	www.jetir.org Internet Source	<1 %
27	es.scribd.com Internet Source	<1 %
28	ncr.christuniversity.in Internet Source	<1 %
29	Cavela, Manuel Zangado. "Participação e Ativismo Político nos Estudantes Angolanos do Ensino Superior", ISCTE - Instituto Universitario de Lisboa (Portugal), 2024 Publication	<1 %
30	essay.utwente.nl Internet Source	<1 %
31	Ting Liang, Charanjit Kaur Swaran Singh, Dodi Mulyadi, Tarsame Singh Masa Singh. "Enhancing EFL Writing Through Online Peer Feedback: A Systematic Review of Higher Education Studies", Journal of Curriculum and Teaching, 2025 Publication	<1 %
32	core.ac.uk Internet Source	<1 %
33	etheses.whiterose.ac.uk Internet Source	<1 %
34	Debdas Roy. "Space in the poetry of Kamala Das: a critical exploration", GeoJournal, 2025 Publication	<1 %

Exclude quotes Off
Exclude bibliography Off

Exclude matches Off