

**Female Agency and Pro-Feminist Discourse in the novel *Love Is Not Time's Fool (2021)*"**

---

**Dr. Prashant Connodgia**

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Shree Dronacharya P.G. College,  
Dankaur

Mail ID-: [mail2gandhig@gmail.com](mailto:mail2gandhig@gmail.com)

---

Paper Received on 15-03-2026, Accepted on 28-04-2026  
Published on 30-04-26; DOI:10.36993/RJOE.2025.11.01.268

---

**Abstract:**

Professor Vikas Sharma is a well-known figure in the world of English literature. He writes poems, novels, and works for political change. In a short amount of time, Professor Sharma has become a well-known writer with more than a dozen novels to his name. His writing career started with the Hindi novel *Raah Ke Pathar (2021)*, which means "Never Together, Never Apart." After that, he began to write novels in English the right way. Sharma is a key figure in the field of literary studies in India and General Secretary of the Association for English Studies of India (AESI). he is a champion of women's right and uplifter of their education. mostly his novels tell the story of educated, open minded women, free from traditional boundaries, quite untraditional and unconventional as Richa Pandit who belonged to an upper-middle-class family and married with Malya Vaidik, a successful businessman of Agra. Their marriage, which lacks warmth and closeness, is a lot like the emotional distance that many modern relationships have. The story of this novel reminds several texts such as *sonnet 116*, *The Wast Land*, *Sons and Lovers* and pro-feminist ideologies. This paper underscores that the pro-feminist ideology in the novel extends beyond the empowerment of female characters to encompass a critique of male attitudes and the overarching socio-cultural frameworks that promote gender inequality. The text adds to the growing conversation about gender and identity in modern literature through its use of narrative techniques, character development, and themes.

This paper will be an effort to show that *Love Is Not Time's Fool* is a good example of modern fiction that supports pro-feminist ideas by encouraging women's independence, questioning traditional ideas of love, and giving a more complex picture of modern relationships.

**Key words:** Rationality, Modernistic attitude, subversion of patriarchal notion, and Gender equality.

**Introduction:** The present article, "Female Agency and Pro-Feminist Discourse in the Novel *Love Is Not Time's Fool*," conducts a critical analysis of gender dynamics, moral consciousness, and socio-economic realities as shown in the works of Professor Vikas Sharma. Professor Sharma is a unique figure in modern Indian English literature because he writes about socially relevant stories that deal with moral issues, family problems, and the changing role of women in a society that is changing. His literary vision embodies a fusion of pedagogical purpose and narrative authenticity, transforming fiction into a vehicle for storytelling, social intervention, and reformative dialogue.

Professor Vikas Sharma's literary contributions may be contextualized within the expansive realm of socially engaged writing, where literature is intricately connected to life experiences rather than existing in isolation. His works always reflect a deep concern for marginalized groups—such as widows, orphans, the elderly, and economically disadvantaged individuals—while also critiquing the systems that sustain injustice and mental distress. In this sense, *Love Is Not Time's Fool* is an important book that sums up his literary philosophy by combining narrative involvement with moral thought.

The title of the book comes from the famous phrase "Love is not Time's fool" in Sonnet 116 by William Shakespeare. This statement brings to mind the idea of love that lasts and never wavers. Sharma, on the other hand, puts this principle in a modern social and cultural framework, when love is affected by things like consumerism, desire, cheating, and emotional distance. Through this intertextual allusion, the author creates a conversation between classical ideals and current realities. In the end, the author says that true love, which is based on commitment, sacrifice, and moral integrity, may go beyond time and place.

This research centers on the notion of female agency, defined as women's ability to act independently, make sovereign choices, and establish their individuality within a patriarchal context. In Sharma's narrative world, female characters are not passive recipients of fate but rather active agents in determining their futures. The

heroine, Richa, demonstrates this autonomy via her intricate and frequently ethically ambiguous choices. Her actions—encompassing her acceptance of her physically challenged son Amitabh and her financial support of Nora for his care—exemplify a complex interaction of parental obligation, societal apprehension, and individual fortitude.

Richa's character defies basic classification. She conceals substantial realities from her husband Malya, participating in ethically questionable actions; nonetheless, she demonstrates amazing endurance and compassion, notably in her steadfast dedication to her kid. This dichotomy illustrates the overarching feminist preoccupation with the intricacies of women's lived experiences, whereby agency does not invariably correspond with moral purity but is frequently enacted among limits and paradoxes. Consequently, Sharma's depiction of Richa enhances a pro-feminist narrative that recognizes the flawed yet empowered essence of female subjectivity.

The phrase “pro-feminist” in this study signifies a supporting position toward gender equality and women's rights, without conforming to a strict ideological framework. Sharma's tale does not explicitly promote feminist philosophy; instead, it subtly supports the tenets of dignity, autonomy, and fairness for women. His focus on women's rights is apparent in his highlighting of concerns such as widowhood, economic reliance, and social shame. Through the depiction of sympathetic characters and scenarios, the author encourages readers to empathize with women's problems and acknowledge the imperative for societal transformation.

The socio-economic aspect of the work amplifies its significance in current discussions. Sharma depicts a society contending with swift transformation, whereby ancient values coexist discordantly with contemporary ambitions. The portrayal of extramarital relationships, lustful flirtations, and the deterioration of familial connections illustrates a moral crisis that follows material advancement. However, the tale does not yield to pessimism; rather, it presents a redemptive vision in which authentic love and moral devotion finally triumph.

Malya epitomizes masculine fragility and societal force. His accidental harm, ensuing impotence, and unwavering commitment to his employment in the footwear industry underscore a combination of personal anguish and economic obligation. His

subsequent demise in the United States highlights the fragility of life and the uncertainty of human existence. Sharma attacks social expectations imposed on males through Malya's trajectory, while also highlighting the emotional consequences of these demands.

Malya's demise, Richa's remarriage to Abhilash signifies a turning point of transition and renewal. This narrative decision contests the conventional stigmatization of widow remarriage in Indian society, ultimately bolstering the novel's pro-feminist stance. Richa's choice to adopt a new life is depicted not as a betrayal of her past, but as an affirmation of her entitlement to joy and connection. In this regard, Sharma accords with progressive societal principles that promote the dignity and liberty of women across all life phases.

The novel notably addresses the global pandemic of the COVID-19 epidemic. By integrating the catastrophic impacts of COVID-19 into the tale, Sharma contextualizes his work within a distinct historical period, so augmenting its reality and immediacy. The epidemic acts as both a background and a trigger, exacerbating the individuals' struggles while simultaneously showcasing their tenacity and adaptation. The comprehensive depiction of this crisis elevates the novel to a wider "critique of existence," resonating with Victorian critic Matthew Arnold's notion of writing as a mirror and assessment of human experience.

Moreover, Sharma's storytelling technique underscores the significance of patience, determination, and an optimistic perspective when confronted with challenges. The novel's instructive tone is apparent in its effort to motivate readers to address social and economic issues without yielding to hopelessness. This ethical aspect corresponds with the history of Indian English literature that aims to merge aesthetic enjoyment with moral education.

The thematic examination of love in the novel holds particular significance within the scope of this inquiry. Sharma delineates a range of love, encompassing both shallow, self-serving relationships and profound, lasting connections. The ubiquity of insincere affection, shown by extramarital liaisons and transient infatuations, critiques modern social conduct. Nonetheless, the ultimate victory of authentic love reinforces the potential for moral restoration and emotional satisfaction. This contrast improves narrative complexity and emphasizes the novel's primary

argument: that true love, rooted in sincerity and dedication, can endure the trials of time and circumstance.

In conclusion, the opening to this research study positions Professor Vikas Sharma as an author whose oeuvre surpasses simple narrative to address significant societal concerns and ethical dilemmas. *Love Is Not Time's Fool* serves as a profound book for analyzing female agency and pro-feminist rhetoric, providing insights into the intricacies of gender, love, and social transformation. The work significantly enriches the discourse on women's rights and human resilience by its intricate characterisation, authentic depiction of modern situations, and inherent moral perspective. This research aims to expand on these discoveries by utilizing a critical framework that emphasizes the interconnections of gender, agency, and social transformation in Sharma's work, so positioning it within the wider context of contemporary literary and cultural studies.

Professor Sharma's approach is feministic in this novel. His heroines are aware of the demand of time. They are far from the social conventions, traditions and free rational thinkers. When Richa is ignored by her husband, she does not take stress but tries her best to refresh her mind with the friendship of a young college student named Abhilash by helping him in purchasing some books for I.A.S. preparation. Gradually Richa started friendly with him. She smelled the ambition of an overambitious young college student.

'If you wish to be a national player, I may help you.' I said with a smile. How can you help me in this project?' 'Well, the only thing I can do is to manage your entire tennis coaching. You can call your coach if you have his address. There is nothing to worry about.' I assured him. (*Love's Not Times Fool* 8).

Through this exchange, it is clear that the female character of Professor Sharma is not weak, poor, low in confidence, or hesitant. This is something that can be rather easily comprehended. They have the ability to enjoy male companionship since they are financially powerful, beautiful, and intelligent. One of the things that sets Sharma apart from his contemporaries is the fact that his novels include this extremely unique characteristic. An admirable trait that places him on the list of pro-feminists is the fact that, in contrast to his contemporaries, he places his female character at the centre of

the story. As an example, she provides Abhilash with the opportunity to fulfil his goal to play a tennis match on her own shore. Through this exchange, it becomes evident that the female character of Professor Sharma is neither weak nor lacking in confidence; rather, she embodies authority, independence, and self-assurance. Her ability to guide and support Abhilash reflects a reversal of traditional gender roles, positioning her as a figure of control and empowerment. As it stated, "Feminism is a belief in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes. It seeks to empower women by validating their experiences and placing them at the center of narrative authority" (hooks 7). This theoretical framework clearly aligns with Sharma's portrayal, where the female character assumes a central and active role in shaping the narrative. Furthermore, her financial independence and intellectual strength resonate with Virginia Woolf's assertion that "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction" (*A Room of One's Own* 4). Thus, Sharma distinguishes himself from his contemporaries by foregrounding a female protagonist who is capable of enjoying companionship without dependency and who actively facilitates male success, as seen when she enables Abhilash to pursue his ambition of becoming a national tennis player.

This novel is a break of patriarchal construction of female sexuality as passive and objectified. The free choice of Richa Pandit to offer her company to a young college student for bathing together proves the phrase my body, my choice which is the sign of active feminism:

I took his hand and asked him to have a bath together. After a mild hesitancy, he started enjoying my company and then I even applied soap on his body. That turned him on and I could see his erection in full glory ... He clasped my waist and embraced me tightly and then kissed my bosoms and the moderately ... He wished to be in the tub with me but I ignored him (*LINTF* 9-10).

Although the situation seems physically personal, the power dynamic is retained by Richa, who eventually dictates the extent of the contact, disregarding the boy's subsequent desires. This underscores that female sexuality is not governed by masculine expectations but is rather self-determined. A woman's autonomy over her body is fundamental to her identity and strength. This corresponds the famous assertion "the female is considered a sexual object for the use of others. She must

reclaim her sexuality” (Greer 326). women should reject being objectified for male pleasure and instead reclaim their sexuality as a source of empowerment Richa’s activities signify a repudiation of conventional moral restrictions imposed by patriarchy and an advancement toward sexual self-definition. Not only Richa but also other female characters of Professor Sharma are self-made woman who know well how to stand well even in opposite circumstances. They are beauty with brain who know to take right decision on right time and enjoy their life without any stress, anxiety and tension.

**Conclusion:** Love Is Not Time's Fool by Professor Vikas Sharma foregrounds female agency, questions patriarchal structures, and reimagines the ethical contours of love and relationality in a rapidly changing socio-cultural milieu, making it a significant intervention in contemporary Indian English literature. It participates in pro-feminism and reconfigures it through a complex and contextually based depiction of women's lived experiences. Richa Pandit, the main character, exhibits a "complex subjectivity," where empowerment and contradiction coexist and autonomy is expressed within societal expectation. Her character breaks the literary gender dichotomy of virtue and transgression. Richa rejects the sacrificial, subservient woman stereotype by making ethically problematic but self-determined decisions. Modern feminist philosophy emphasizes that agency is the ability to make decisions within constraints, not moral perfection.

The narrative's focus on female sexuality also breaks with patriarchal views of women as passive objects of male desire. Richa's claim to physical autonomy and frank embracing of her impulses rewrites sexual subjectivity. The poem contributes in a “discursive reclamation” of the female body, opposing the male gaze and situating women as active agents of their own pleasure and identity. This transition is especially noteworthy in India, where moral conservatism and societal shame limit talks about female sexuality. Sharma destabilizes traditions and challenges readers to rethink gendered behavior by showing a protagonist who controls her sexuality.

In addition to exploring human agency, the book critiques socio-cultural mechanisms that perpetuate gender inequity. Marriage, widowhood, and remarriage are used to question institutional barriers to women's autonomy. Richa's remarriage challenges widow stigma and validates their goals and objectives. This narrative decision emphasizes the novel's pro-feminist stance on women's rights throughout

life. It also represents a progressive reworking of societal norms that recognizes personal fulfillment as a human right rather than a tradition.

Malya's relationship with Richa alters the story's gender dynamics. His journey shows masculinity's stresses and weaknesses, showing that patriarchal structures oppress women and men. Malya's emotional remoteness, professional focus, and death show the fragility of economic success and societal expected masculinity. The novel presents a diagnostic criticism of patriarchy that reveals the structural factors that shape and control human behavior across gender boundaries. This balanced perspective deepens the text's ethical depth, making it a work that aspires to comprehend and change.

### **Works Cited**

- Abrams, M. H., and Geoffrey Galt Harpham. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Cengage Learning, 2012.
- Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Viva Books, 2018.
- Dahiya, Bhim S. *Literary Theory and Criticism: A New Perspective*. Doaba Publications, 2025.
- Garg, Poorvi. "The Complexities of Love and Desire in Vikas Sharma's *Love's Not Time's Fool*." *Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, vol. 16, no. 1, Feb. 2025, p. 66.
- Greer, Germaine. *The Female Eunuch*. Harper Perennial, 2008.
- hooks, bell. *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*. South End Press, 2000.
- Kumar, Shailendra. "The Motif of Love in Vikas Sharma's *Love's Not Time's Fool*." *Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education*, vol. 21, no. 7, Oct. 2024, p. 3.
- Sharma, Vikas. *Love's Not Time's Fool*. Diamond Books, 2023.
- Sudheer, and Surekha Ahlawat. "Richa Pandit's Acts of Transgression in Professor Vikas Sharma's *Love's Not Time's Fool*." *Research Journal of English*, vol. 10, no. 1, Jan.–Mar. 2025, p. 43.
- Wagh, Patricia. *Literary Theory and Criticism*. Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own*. Hogarth Press, 1929.

**RESEARCH JOURNAL OF ENGLISH (RJOE)**

[www.rjoe.org.in](http://www.rjoe.org.in) | Oray's Publications | ISSN: 2456-2696

*An International Approved Peer-Reviewed and Refereed English Journal*

**Impact Factor: 8.373 (SJIF) | Vol. 11, Issue 2 (April/May&June;2026)**

**How to Cite this Article:**

Connodgia, Prashant. "Female Agency and Pro-Feminist Discourse in the Novel Love Is Not Time's Fool (2021)." Research Journal of English (RJOE), vol. 11, no. 2, 2026, Oray's Publications, pp. 260–268. DOI: 10.36993/RJOE.2025.11.01.268.