

**International Conference – 2025: Developed India @ 2047****Charting Multidisciplinary and Multi-Institutional Pathways for Inclusive Growth and Global Leadership held on 4th & 5th April, 2025****Organised by: IQAC - Gossner College, Ranchi****Role of Literature in Nation Building****Dr. Priya**

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Abstract

The history of any national literature mixes up with the history of its nation. One of the reasons lies in the fact that, during the process of building a nation, the issue of standard language emerges and literature plays a decisive role in the formation of both national state and standard language. Literatures and their respective contributions to the formation of the identity. The present paper entitled “Role of Literature in Nation- Building.” Literature can be defined as the study of works of literary arts whether in the form of poetry, prose, story, drama, novel and many more. Literature mirrors down the life of a people, a race, community or nation at a point in time. It is most often an applied art because in literature art is used to tell story, portray an era or teach a lesson. Literature has a very high potential of serving as an instrument for nation building or as a weapon of formation. Of society and self determination. Literature has an immense effect on formation of any society. Literature is one of the major factor in building of a nation. It's roles are many and varied Literature plays a crucial role in nation building by shaping a nation's identity, fostering a sense of shared history and culture, promoting unity among diverse populations, and providing a platform to explore and address critical social issues, essentially contributing to the collective consciousness of a nation through its stories, language, and themes.

Keywords: *Literature, Nation, Language, Society, Impact, Role.*

Introduction

Language and literature is important in building a nation. Language and literature play a vital role in developing the nation. Nation- Building is depend on national identity using the power of the state. Literature had a major effect on the developing society. It has shaped civilisation, changed the political system and exposed injustice. Literature gives us a detailed preview of human experience, allowing us to connect on basis level of desire and emotions. Even Education is believed to be an instrument for the promotion of peace, integrity and unity. Therefore, the language education can be used as a roadmap to national development and democratic greatness. Literature warns people of danger and instruct by opening people's eyes to a wide range of experience and a deeper understanding of these experience. Literature has been commonly used since the eighteenth century, equivalent with the French “*belles lettres*” mean “*fine letters*”, to designated fictional and imaginative writing- *poetry, prose, fictional and drama*. In an extended use it designated also any other writing including philosophy, history, science, social science etc.



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According to ancient linguist of India “Patanjali”

“Language is that human expression which is uttered out of speech organs”.¹

Language is a form of expression, emotions, love, sorrow, happiness and emotional. Language is a gift of God to mankind. Without language human civilization as we now known it, would have remained an impossibility. Language is *ubiquitous* means it is present everywhere in our thoughts, dreams, prayers, meditation, relations and communication. Language is present in our Sanskaar and ritual. Language is present everywhere is accurate; language surrounds us in our daily lives, whether through spoken words, written text, signs, or even body language, making it a ubiquitous part of human interaction and society. Through print, speech, and sign, we use language to interact with the world around us. Language provides the labels for the social categories we use to describe the world.

A. H. Gardiner in his book “Speech and Organ” defined language as:

“language in its widest sense means the sum total of such signs of our thoughts and feelings as are capable of external perception and as could be produced and repeated at will”.²

Language is a structured system of communication that consists of grammar and vocabulary. It is the primary means by which humans convey meaning, both in spoken and signed forms, and may also be conveyed through writing. Human language is characterized by its cultural and historical diversity, with significant variations observed between cultures and across time. Human languages possess the properties of productivity and displacement, which enable the creation of an infinite number of sentences, and the ability to refer to objects, events, and ideas that are not immediately present in the discourse. The use of human language relies on social convention and is acquired through learning. It's beautiful, and it's also systematic. Yet it's so ubiquitous we often take it for granted. Language may refer to the cognitive ability to learn and use systems of complex communication, or to describe the set of rules that makes up these systems, or the set of utterances that can be produced from those rules. Collective consciousness are shaped by its literature, Which acts as a mirror reflecting the cultural, social, and political landscape of that country. Literature Transmits and preserves the histories, values, and beliefs that unite a people through narrative, poetry, And prose. Furthermore, literature has the ability to provoke thought, upend conventions, and increase Empathy, all of which help to build a society that is more inclusive and united. The transformative Potential of literature in the process of nation-building is explored in this abstract, which Emphasize how It may empower, educate, and unify people from a variety of backgrounds. Any country's literary history Is intertwined with that of that country. One of the explanations for this is that standard language Becomes a crucial issue when a nation is being built, and literature has a significant influence on the Creation of both the national state and the standard langue sense of community and common cultural, historical, and social traits that Unite people as citizens of a country are referred to as national identity. It includes shared beliefs, Customs, language, symbols, and historical accounts that set one country apart from another and foster a Feeling of pride and belonging among the populace. A



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common strategy for the importance of literature in the formation of any nation is at stake, the thing that must be taken into account is that nation, as we know, is a very recent phenomenon in history. Historical accounts, archaeology and literature inform us that the parole of former societies was rather different than the ones of each modern state. The conception of modern state goes back to European Renaissance when nations, such as France and England, achieve a certain unity that allow them to forge their national identity based on some convergent facts like territory, language, political ideology and religion. Yet it is literature the institution that joins them together raising the national spirit.

William Wordsworth in his book “The Perlude” once make a statement about literature:

“Literature is a creative expression of ideas that provides an emotional experience”.³

Literature is an art made up of language, which has its formal and social constituents transformed to generate the writing craft. As a social institution, a national literature emerges from daily activities of the people who live in a particular area. Owing to this evidence, social institutions and individual psychology are elements ready to be represented by literary forms and contents. This prerogative allows literature to play an important role and, in some cases, a decisive one in the formation of a nation. It is known that any country faces a struggle, normally a war, in its process of independence and, once independent, it starts dealing with those social institutions appointed above in order to ignite the process of building its cultural identity. In doing so, the rise of a national literature becomes paramount to full the collective desideratum. Notwithstanding, a national literature does not grow divorced from the previous matrix of the newly born nation. Thus, when we put the English and American experiences into historical perspective, we see that both took some time to develop the suitable forms to express the contents related to their nature, urbanity, religiosity, individual and social psychologies and other manifestations. Therefore, the following lines aim at pinpointing the most important landmarks of English and American histories recorded in literature or otherwise how literature has been contributing to shape England and America al integration, it is fair to state that literature is on the basis of both standard language and the formation of a nation. Taking England as an example, the three different phases of its language correspond to the gradual development of the country we know today.

William Wordsworth in his book The Lyrical Ballad quoted that:

“Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful passion”. Internal feelings of the poet proceeds poetry. It is a matter of feeling and temperament. True poetry cannot be written without proper mood and temperament. It cannot be produced to order”.⁴

Old English” (A.D. 600-1100) or “Anglo-Saxon” was the predominant dialect of a rising country, which was, indeed, an amount of small towns, courts, villages and hamlets. The literature of that time gives us glimpses of the psychology of the English people, their way of life and gives form to religious writings, which, in turn, are other important factors of national integration. When it comes to military deeds or warfare, literature portrays creating a feeling of national Identity, uniting the populace, and strengthening nationalism is the use of literature. Cultural Representation Literature serves as a window into a society's



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collective psyche by reflecting its values, customs, and aspirations. In order to strengthen a sense of collective identity, authors frequently incorporate historical figures, national mythologies, and cultural symbols into their writing.

These are Some Important Aspect of Literature on Nation Development:

1) Language and Identity

National literature contributes to the standardization and spread of a nation's major language, hence enhancing linguistic unity and identity. It is frequently written in that language.

2) Historical Narratives

Countries create stories about their pasts through plays, poetry, and novels. These stories highlight important historical episodes, heroic characters, and turning points that foster a sense of The text discusses the role of Indian literature in shaping national identity, highlighting its importance as a repository of knowledge and a tool for reflecting society's evolution. It emphasizes Indian literature's impact during colonialism, partition, and post-independence, and its continuing relevance in modern India, tracing its roots to ancient texts that have significantly influenced the Indian subcontinent's culture and consciousness. Indian literature is rooted in ancient texts in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Tamil, including the Vedas, Upanishads, epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana, and the Parana's, which have deeply influenced the culture and consciousness of the Indian subcontinent and laid the foundation for a shared cultural and spiritual identity among Indians.

Ved Vyas in his Mahakavya The Mahabharat quoted that:

“When duty is neglected, calamity follows like a wheel of a cart.”⁵

The Ramayana and Mahabharata, with their profound philosophical, moral, and cultural teachings, have been integral in shaping Indian values, social norms, and collective identity, reflecting the struggles between dharma (righteousness) and adharma (unrighteousness) and contributing to the development of a pan-Indian identity, showcasing the diversity of Indian society while promoting unity through shared values. Continuity and pride in one's history. By exposing a variety of viewpoints and encouraging empathy among various groups within a country, literature helps heal social divisions. Literature may foster social cohesiveness and solidarity by addressing shared challenges, goals, and ideals. Authors frequently utilise literature as a forum to discuss and debate popular beliefs, advocate for social change, and critique established political institutions. This has the power to sway public opinion and spark discussions about the country's future.

Swami Vivekananda in his book My Idea of Education pointed that:

“Education curricula incorporate literature as a means of fostering patriotism, instilling national values, and building state allegiance”.⁶

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Literature can also be used by governments as a tool of propaganda to sway public opinion and uphold official ideology.

3) International Image

A country's image abroad is shaped by its national literature, which acts as a cultural ambassador. Works that receive international praise can increase a nation's soft power and influence. In general, literature has a complex function in nation-building, interacting with politics, culture, and society to create a shared sense of identity and togetherness among the populace. Through their literary works, a number of Indian writers have made significant contributions to the conversation of nation-building. Among the noteworthy instances are: Indian literature, which reflects the nation's many cultures, languages, and customs, has contributed significantly to the nation-building process. India's rich history, mythology, and ethos have all been celebrated, which has contributed to the development of a shared identity. Moreover, Indian literature has addressed social, political, and economic challenges, promoting unity, empathy, and understanding among its people. Through its stories, poetry, and essays, Indian literature continues to inspire dialogue, critical thinking, and progress, contributing to the ongoing development and enrichment of the nation.

Renowned Indian poet and philosopher Rabindranath Tagore in his book Gitanjali remark that:

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high; Where knowledge is free; Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls".⁷

Rabindranath Tagore highlighted the need of spiritual and cultural cohesion in the process of constructing a nation. He felt that a country's shared ideals and cultural legacy should define it more so than its political borders. In addition to encouraging people to express their own identities, Tagore promoted an inclusive society that celebrates difference and helps people feel a part of the greater community. He placed a strong emphasis on education as a way to foster empathy and understanding between individuals from various backgrounds, which will ultimately contribute to national cohesion and advancement. Rabindranath Tagore's writings, including "Gitanjali" and "The Home and the World," delve into topics of Nationalism, Patriotism, and the core of Indian culture. He underlined the significance of encouraging an Indian community spirit of togetherness and accepting diversity. It is true that Rabindranath Tagore's "Gitanjali" aids in the development of the nation, if in a more oblique and philosophical way. "Gitanjali" is essentially a collection of devotional poems that convey Tagore's profound spiritual insights and meditations, but its themes of love, connectivity, and universal humanism also speak to the values that guide efforts to establish nations. One may interpret Tagore's examination of the divine within oneself and the interdependence of all creatures as a plea for human harmony and togetherness, which are necessary components of constructing a strong and peaceful nation. Furthermore, his focus on the wonders of nature and the celebration of diversity speaks to a larger idea of tolerance and inclusivity, all of which are necessary to build a sense of national identity that cuts beyond linguistic, religious, and cultural divides. In addition, Tagore's



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impact on India's intellectual and cultural milieu was crucial in forming the nation's identity throughout its independence movement. His support of indigenous arts and crafts, educational reform, and efforts to close the divide between the East and the West helped the Indian people regain their cultural identity and self-assurance—two essential components of nation-building. As a result, even though “Gitanjali” doesn’t directly address political or social issues associated with nation-building, its underlying themes and Tagore’s larger contributions to Indian society undoubtedly resonate with the values of inclusivity, unity, and cultural revival all of which are crucial for the development of a powerful and cohesive nation. Mahatma Gandhi: Though most recognised for his political leadership, Gandhi was also a Prolific writer whose writings, such as “Hind Swaraj” and a plethora of articles and essays, promoted Nonviolent resistance as a means of achieving India’s freedom. His words had a significant influence on the nationalist movement as well as the concepts of independence and community building. Mahatma Gandhi’s “Hind Swaraj” is considered a seminal book in the nation-building framework, especially in Relation to the Indian independence movement. In addition to outlining Gandhi’s concept of self-reliance, Non-violence, and spiritual regeneration as necessary components for obtaining true freedom Gandhi’s book “Hind Swaraj” Criticises contemporary society and promotes a return to Customary Indian beliefs and Decentralised self-government. Gandhi sought to strengthen local Communities and in still a feeling of communal responsibility in the populace by advocating for simplicity, Village-based economies, and a rejection of industrialization and Western materialism. The concepts expounded in “Hind Swaraj” functioned as a model for Gandhi’s tactics during the Indian liberation struggle, impacting movements like the Civil Disobedience Movement and the Non-cooperation Movement. In addition, the book continues to stimulate conversations on grassroots Democracy, ecological development, and cultural renaissance in modern India and elsewhere.

Famous Writer and pioneer in literature Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in his book Anandmath once quote that:

“The Motherland Is our only mother. Our Motherland is higher than heaven. Mother India is our mother. We have no other mother. We have no father, no brother, no sister, no wife, no children, no home, no hearth — all we have is the Mother”⁸

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay’s book “Anandmath” is regarded as Foundational piece of Indian literature and was instrumental in the rise of nationalism. As a catchphrase For Indian independence, “Vande Mataram” (Hail to the Motherland) gained Popularity. In the Framework of Indian nation-building, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay’s “Anandmath” is regarded as a Foundational work. The novel, which was first published in 1882, had a profound impact on the Development of Indian nationalism during the colonial era. The Sanyasi Rebellion’s battles against the Harsh British rule in India are depicted in the novel. It honours the spirit of selflessness, nationalism, and Love for the homeland. “Anandmath” promoted solidarity and struggle against colonial oppression while Fostering a sense of pride in Indian heritage and customs through its characters and story.



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“Anandmath” is well remembered for introducing the song “Vande Mataram,” which later Served as a rallying cry for the Indian independence movement. Readers found great resonance in the Novel’s depiction of the interplay between religion, nationalism, and social reform, which in turn fuelled the Growing sense of Indian identity and unity. All things considered, “Anandmath” was a work of literature That was also a driving force behind the Indian nationalist movement, motivating a number of generations of rebels and influencing the mind set of a country that was fighting for Independence. Sen Amartya: Sen’s publications, such as “The Argumentative Indian,” explore India’s rich Cultural and intellectual legacy, despite his primary focus being on economics. In nation-building, he Highlights the significance of democratic values, social fairness, and inclusive growth. The phrase “Argumentative India,” coined by economist Amartya Sen, highlights the role that public discourse and Dissent have in determining the course of India’s growth and nation-building. The key is to recognise and value different points of view in order to promote a discourse, critique, and discussion culture. This Strategy has bee crucial in forming public policy, encouraging social inclusion, and fortifying democratic Principles—all of which are necessary for constructing a nation. Argumentative India supports a strong and inclusive national identity that reflects the diversity and vibrancy of Indian society by promoting free Discussion and tolerating opposing viewpoints. Arundhati Roy themes of caste, class, and politics in India are covered in Roy’s book “The God of Small Things”.

Arundhati Roy in her book *God of Small Things* note that:

*“The secret of the Great Stories is that they have no secrets. The Great Stories are the ones you have heard and want to hear again. The ones you can enter anywhere and inhabit comfortably. They don’t deceive you with thrills and trick endings. They don’t surprise you with the unforeseen. They are as familiar as the house you live in. Or the smell of your lover’s skin. You know how they end, yet you listen as though you don’t. In the way that although you know that one day you will die, you live as though you won’t. In the Great Stories you know who lives, who dies, who finds love, who doesn’t. And yet you want to know again”.*⁹

She contributes to discussions on India’s road to development and nation-building With her essays and speeches, which frequently criticise government policies and promote social justice And environmental sustainability. Despite being essentially a work of fiction, Arundhati Roy’s “The God of Small Things” provides significant insights into the intricacies of Indian society and its historical and social Dynamics. The novel explores topics like gender inequality, caste discrimination, colonial legacy, and Political upheaval through its complex narrative and vivid character portrayals. These themes are Essential to comprehending the struggles and aspirations of a nation that is still developing. “The God of Small Things” offers a sophisticated perspective of the factors influencing India’s identity and progress by Emphasising the complexities of interpersonal relationships and societal structures. It challenges readers.



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Key Aspects of Literature's Role in Nation Building

1) Cultural Preservation and Transmission

Literature acts as a repository of a nation's customs, traditions, and values, passing them on to future generations through stories, poems, and folklores.

2) National Identity Formation

By depicting significant historical events, figures, and landscapes, literature helps people connect with their shared past and develop a strong sense of national identity.

3) Language standardization

Literary works often contribute to the development and refinement of a nation's standard language, promoting communication and unity across different regions.

4) Social Commentary and Critique

Literature can serve as a powerful tool to highlight social injustices, inequalities, and issues that need addressing, prompting societal change and debate.

5) Promoting Patriotism and Unity

Many Indian work present past and present of the nation. By promoting introspection, empathy, and a revaluation of long-standing Norms and beliefs, the book thereby adds to a larger conversation on nation-building. A nation benefits from literature in many different ways. In addition to fostering national identity and cultural heritage preservation, it offers insights into contemporary concerns. It also entertains, motivates, and enlightens So enhancing humankind's experience as a whole Moreover, the worldwide praise and acknowledgment Have contributed to the Globalisation of Indian literature, promoting mutual understanding and admiration Between cultures. The novel illustrates the richness and complexity of India's cultural history while enhancing the conversation on nation-building through its examination of global themes within a distinctively Indian setting. In addition to many others, these authors have engaged with the intricacies of nation-building in India by using their literary talents to provide a range of viewpoints and insights into the political, social, Patriotic narratives and literature can inspire citizens to feel pride in their nation and work towards collective goals.

A great writer William B. Yeats in his creation *Autobiography* view that:

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire".¹⁰

6) Reflecting Diverse Perspectives

By presenting a range of voices and experiences from different social groups, literature can foster understanding and inclusion within a nation.



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7) Epic Poems

National epics like "The Iliad" in Greece or "The Mahabharata" in India often depict foundational myths and heroes, contributing to a shared national identity.

8) Novels Exploring Social Issues

Novels addressing issues like colonialism, class struggles, or racial discrimination can spark conversations and movements for social change.

9) Poetry as a Tool for National Integrity

Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found words. Poetry can be used to express dissent against oppressive regimes and mobilize people towards activism.

Conclusion

Literature also has an important role in giving the reader hope. It can be used to get them through difficult times by letting the reader relate to their life with the piece of work they are going through to be written by an author who is using the book as a way of telling their own account. It shows how this has affected them and could help people going through this with the role of literature in society is there – irrevocably and irreversibly – without any alternative – Not even history – because literature is an aspect of truth which defines – being, explicate trends About that being and analyze important issues of society. So, literature will tell about how a people came to their current position, their journey's and toil – for self-realization, identity and the very literature creates the imaginary worlds, imaginary ideas, thoughts and wisdom. These aspects become embodiments of the dramatic experience. The reader of literature partakes of these embodiments and explores the basic fundamental rules that govern human nature and also the structure of the world. The wise litterateurs of yore had understood that fundamentally the affairs of mankind, the basic good in man asserts itself thus through religious values and system with which they created structures in society, so that mankind would not stumble about in the darkness and destruction but world spent its time on future research and analysis for the betterment of the society. Literature appeals to both the heart and soul of the people hence it can be a powerful tool for change. The change can be both positive and negative. We see today those Nations that do not have high value literary traditions are the most stringent warmongers of the world. A society or a group always needs norms and rules to sustain its ideologies and cultural. Literature is described as an imitation of life and events, a creative expression of ideas, language that draws attention to expression, and writings that interpret nature and life with charm and power.

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