

DOI: 10.22363/2312-9220-2025-30-2-310-320

EDN: JLIWYV


UDC 821.111(411)

Research article / Научная статья

Child and Family: A Perspective on R.K. Narayan's *The Dark Room*

Sundar Singh , Roland Rencewigg P  , S Pressila Daissy 

SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur, Tamil Nadu, India

 rencewigg@gmail.com

Abstract. In *The Dark Room*, the children – Kamala, Babu, and Sumathi – play a pivotal role in shaping the protagonist Savitri's decisions. While the novel explores themes of patriarchal oppression and female agency, it is ultimately Savitri's emotional bond with her children that compels her to return home after leaving in protest of her husband's infidelity. Thus, the children serve as emotional anchors, reinforcing the theme of familial obligation and the societal expectations placed on women, particularly mothers, in traditional Indian households. Through the lens of childhood interactions, the paper illuminates Narayan's perspective on family structures, traditional values, and the developmental roles assigned to children, particularly in relation to parental authority and social expectations. This study provides a critical perspective on how Narayan uses children to subtly critique societal norms, portraying them as both products and critics of the family's internal dynamics.

Keywords: children character, family dynamics, Indian English fiction, gender role, patriarchy, childhood representation

Author's contribution. Development of the idea – Sundar Singh; research data collection & analysis – Roland Rencewigg P; analysis data, manuscript writing and editing S Pressila Daissy. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Conflicts of interest. The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Article history: submitted May 14, 2024; revised June 20, 2024; accepted September 20, 2024.

For citation: Singh, S., Rencewigg P, R., & S, Pressila Daissy. (2025). Child and Family: A Perspective on R.K. Narayan's *The Dark Room*. *RUDN Journal of Studies in Literature and Journalism*, 30(2), 310–320. <http://doi.org/10.22363/2312-9220-2024-30-2-310-320>

Ребенок и семья в романе Р.К. Нараяна «Темная комната»

Сундар Сингх^{id}, Роланд Ренсвигг П^{id}✉, С Прессила Дэйзи^{id}

Институт науки и технологий SRM, Каттанкулатур, Тамил Наду, Индия

✉rencewigg@gmail.com

Аннотация. В романе Р.К. Нараяна «Темная комната» дети – Камала, Бабу и Сумати – напрямую влияют на решения Савитри. Несмотря на то что в произведении исследуются темы женского угнетения в патриархальном обществе, именно эмоциональная связь с детьми заставляет главную героиню вернуться домой, отказаться от своего протеста. Через призму детских взаимоотношений раскрывается взгляд Нараяна на структуру семьи, значение традиционных ценностей, связанных с детьми, особенно в отношении родительского авторитета и социальных ожиданий. В результате делаются выводы о специфике мировоззрения писателя, о месте детского мира в контексте принятых социальных норм, месте семьи в жизни общества.

Ключевые слова: детский персонаж, семейная динамика, индийская английская художественная литература, гендерная роль, патриархат, репрезентация детства

Вклад авторов. Разработка идеи – Сундар Сингх; сбор и анализ исследовательских данных – Роланд Ренсвигг П; анализ данных, написание и редактирование рукописи – С Прессила Дэйзи. Все авторы прочли и одобрили окончательную версию рукописи.

Заявление о конфликте интересов. Авторы заявляют об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

История статьи: поступила в редакцию 14 мая 2024 г.; отрецензирована 20 июля 2024 г.; принята к публикации 20 сентября 2024 г.

Для цитирования: Singh S., Rencewigg P R., S Pressila Daissy. Child and Family: A Perspective on R.K. Narayan's *The Dark Room* // Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов. Серия: Литературоведение. Журналистика. 2025. Т. 30. № 2. С. 310–320. <http://doi.org/10.22363/2312-9220-2025-30-2-310-320>

Introduction

Indian English literature, though considerably inspired by Western models, has quickly adapted itself to the Indian cultural milieu and gained a distinct flavor. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar implies this Indian capacity for absorption, adaptability, and transmutation in his observation that Indian English literature is “a tree that has sprung on hospitable soil from a seed that a random breeze has brought from afar” (Iyengar, 1983, p. 15). Meenakshi Mukherjee terms the Indian novel in English a twice-born fiction (Mukherjee, 1974).

It is an undeniable truth that R.K. Narayan is one of three literary stalwarts or, as Geoffrey Kain describes, three principal trailblazing Indian novelists writing in English (Kain, 2004, p. 1) – the other two being Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao – who have enriched and energized Indian fiction in English with their significant

literary output in different ways and with different perspectives. Anand is overtly and vocally supportive of the socially marginalized and economically exploited; Raja Rao is specifically metaphysical. Narayan, on the other hand, is neither socially vituperative nor specifically metaphysical or persistently pedantic or doggedly doctrinal. He does not teach or preach but instead reaches the hearts of readers through a different comic route and treats them to a wholesome fare of delightful tales.

Narayan is essentially a storyteller par excellence, with a critical understanding of human nature. Human absurdities, stupendous stupidities, pious frauds, carefully cultivated hypocrisies, duplicities and deceptions, eccentricities, and obsessions all divert this minute observer of men and matters. Narayan weaves his comedy out of these human “oddities and angularities” (Iyengar, 1983, p. 360).

It is an accepted fact that the novels of R.K. Narayan often deal with intricate family dynamics and gender-influenced hierarchies, highlighting both traditional and modern perspectives in the context of Indian society. While the previous research has focused on Narayan’s depiction of the dominance of patriarchy and female subservience, especially through the character of Savitri in *The Dark Room*, it is understood that there is only limited focus on the role played by children in shaping and showcasing family conflicts. Children such as Babu, Kamala, and Sumat in *The Dark Room* play important roles in portraying the subtle dynamics of parental governance, gender expectations, and enculturation of values within a traditional Indian family. Through these children characters, Narayan offers a persuasive perspective to analyze how the children engage themselves not only as passive participants but also as unobtrusive challengers to conventional standards, moulding the family’s internal relationships and sometimes entangling the relationships among adult characters in his novels.

Results and Discussion

This study adopts a qualitative approach, having a close reading to assess the portrayal of children characters and their influence on household dynamics or family relationships. Textual analysis is employed to carefully study the dialogues among the characters and the usage of narrative techniques that showcase the multifaceted role of children within the realm of *The Dark Room*. Scholarly analyses, critical essays, and secondary sources that are about Narayan’s works have been incorporated in order to provide wider context for comprehending how the various roles played by children echo and question the societal norms. The study also considers the cultural and literary perspectives of India to examine the social expectations imposed on children within the family system. The study is based on two primary theoretical approaches: Feminist literary criticism and studies on childhood. Feminist literary criticism paves way for an examination on how Narayan depicts power and control within the family, with a special focus on the male-dominated or male-centric structure that often imposes restrictions on both women and children. Moreover, the studies on childhood offer a lens by which one

can interpret the novelist's portrayal of children as both products of and participants in the ideological structure of the family. Studies in childhood within literature permit for a comprehensive understanding of children as narrative instruments that exhibit the cultural dissemination of values and gender-based expectations.

Chakladar (2012) analyses *The Dark Room* within the milieu of modernity and the issue of women's rights or 'women's Question' in the late colonial Indian society. He strongly believes that this novel beautifully critiques the norms of the Indian society and the autonomy of women, highlighting the unsettling contradiction or tensions inherent in the Indian society. As the novel is published in English, accessibility to it has become easy for larger audience. The novel also has intertwined both colonial and gender-based issues. S. Suganya (2013) has compared *The Dark Room* and Anita Nair's *Mistress* to probe how women are able to challenge the expectations of the society in Indian Literature. This comparative examination highlights the oppressive and dominating elements of Indian culture and how women are forced to undergo the struggles within the context of marriage. She goes on to analyze the themes of matrimonial discord and women empowerment as these are indeed the central themes in the narrative of R.K. Narayan.

Trivedi and Soni (2014) delve deeper into the transformation of Savitri who is the protagonist in *The Dark Room*. The authors also examine how Savitri becomes an empowered woman from being a submissive wife. The authors of this paper have not failed to highlight her decision to desert her husband and walk out of the house, demonstrating autonomy defying traditional or conventional gender roles and responsibilities. This novel, without any doubt, is a reflection of women's fight for autonomy, quest for self-determination within the restrictive social structures. Y.K. Kumari (2017) holds the idea that *The Dark Room* is an ideological critique targeting systemic patriarchal injustices and oppression against women in the pre-independence India. According to Kumari, Savitri who is the protagonist of *The Dark Room*, symbolizes or illustrates the predicaments of the middle-class women in their marital relationships. The novel argues in favor of women's liberation or emancipation and uncovers social inequalities and systemic injustices through the painful journey of Savitri. Kabir (2020) has attempted a comparative study of Syed Waliullah's *Night of No Moon* and Narayan's *The Dark Room*, assessing cultural, social and thematic aspects of both novels. This examination puts a spotlight on the shared focus on social structures, reformative insights, although both the authors come from different historical and cultural backgrounds. By thorough investigation or exploration of themes, portrayal of characters, social and cultural norms, the study has established an exquisite and stunning cultural bridge between the works and highlights the flaws of the society with valuable recommendations for improvements. S. Singh (2020) gives a special focus on the narrowed prospects for women empowerment in the pre-independence India as presented in *The Dark Room*. In this article, he compares the lives of women to a "dark room" reflecting indifference and subjugation in the patriarchal society. This study examines the resistance of Savitri to the betrayal of her husband and her striving for personal esteem and protection. R.P. Adhikary (2020) explores the internal conflict between

the traditional marital duties or wifely roles and a growing sense of self-awareness of Savitri in *The Dark Room*. The way Savitri defied the norms of the society shows a shift toward women empowerment, in spite of her struggles within the cruel or unkind patriarchal structures. The study also showcases the contrasting women characters like Ponni offering varied viewpoints or insights into gender dynamics. G. Madhavaiah (2022) evaluates the portrayal of women characters shedding a light on middle-class women in *The Dark Room*. He assesses the realistic approach of R.K. Narayan to depicting the joy and hardships faced in south Indian society, with a focus on the resilience of female characters. The relatable narrative of Narayan indeed connects with middle-class audiences, making his work significant and impactful.

S. Roy and D. Mahavidyalaya (2022) look into *The Dark Room* through the lens of marginalized or subaltern female perspectives, analyzing the individuality. The way Savitri defied the patriarchal dominance symbolizes resistance against ruthless marginalization-imposed women by the society. Further the study reveals her transformation from a submissive and timid “old subaltern” to an assertively empowered “new subaltern”. A.K. Biswas (2022) scrutinizes how the novel *The Dark Room* negotiates patriarchy and tries to bring attention to the marginalized or subaltern female experience. Nobody can deny the fact that the defiance of Savitri against the traditional norms mirrors a broader critique of gender dynamics in south Indian society. The paper contextualizes the narrative of Narayan within Subaltern studies, asserting women’s counteraction to marginalization.

However, it is noteworthy that these studies have largely overlooked the children who play a vital role in the thematic development of the novel. Hence this article aims to address this gap by critically examining the depiction of children characters in *The Dark Room* highlighting their role in the family drama and their dialogues with grown-up individuals. As a result, this paper seeks to broaden the comprehension of how the treatment of children by Narayan adds value to the broader themes of power, societal norms, and individual autonomy.

All most all critics agree that Narayan is one of the finest Indian English novelists. They explore and examine with discernment the varied facets and variegated dimensions of his novels from different angles with different perspectives. Some critics are obsessed, along with R.K. Narayan, with “a philosophy of Woman as opposed to Man, her constant oppressor” (Narayan, 2003, p. 119) – the basic theme that is found in *The Dark Room* (1938) – the basic theme that is found in *The Dark Room* (1938).

William Walsh posits that Narayan’s main focus is on the family and the family relationships in the context of his treatment of themes in different novels but, somehow, he chooses not to include *The Dark Room* in his list. He observes, “The family indeed is the immediate context in which the novelist’s sensibility operates, and his novels are remarkable for the subtlety and conviction with which family relationships are treated – that of son and parents, and brother and brother in *The Bachelor of Arts*; of husband and wife, and father and daughter in *The English Teacher*; of grandmother and grandson in *Waiting for the Mahatma*” (Walsh, 1977,

p. 124). This remark may tempt one to say that Narayan is a ‘family-artist’ in the sense he fictionalizes domestic comedies and tragedies with amazing skill, though he views the oddities, angularities and unusual eccentricities, female assertions and male aggrandizement, conflicts and complications with a pleasing and teasing detachment laced with genial humor and irony, with a marked and much praised objectivity which leaves critics like Kirpal Singh, somehow, quite unsatisfied. He is smart enough to discover in Narayan’s objectivity “an aloofness which prides itself” (Singh, 1993, p. 135). But there is no such ‘aloofness’ but an amiable, tongue-in-cheek objectivity in the delineation of the children, Babu, Sumati and Kamala in *The Dark Room*.

What strikes a careful or casual reader about Narayan’s oeuvre is that there is no novel without the presence and presentation of children or casual or deliberate references to them. In his first novel *Swami and Friends* (1935) Narayan gleefully narrates the ‘boyish adventures’ of Swami and his school mates. This ‘story or chronicle of childhood’ may remind one of *Huckleberry Finn*, but it is different in the sense that it has a texture that is peculiarly and charmingly Indian. In *The Dark Room* Narayan limns in limpid style not the mischievous external adventures but the delectable and amusing internal bickering of the children and their unconscious involvement in the more serious cold war and confrontation between their father Ramani and mother Savitri. It is notable that the novel begins in an abrupt but simple manner with the illness of Babu that obliquely hints at the fact that all is not well in the house and there prevails an unhealthy domestic atmosphere, an uneasy calm and reluctant compliance that portends and predicts a stormy weather, a potential threat to the family relationship. Narayan begins the novel thus: “At school time Babu suddenly felt very ill, and Savitri fussed over him and put him to bed” (Narayan, 1938, p. 1). It is Babu who gives a ‘feverish’ push or pitch to the story to proceed on a track that straightaway intrudes into the prohibited area under the jurisdiction of Ramani, the masterful master of the house. He contemptuously rejects his wife’s unsolicited appeal on her son’s behalf, refuses to believe that Babu has fever, and reacts in his characteristically aggressive male fashion: “No, he hasn’t. Go and do any work in the kitchen but leave the training of a grown-up boy to me. It is none of a woman’s business” (Narayan, 1938, p. 1).

Narayan reveals a surprising penetration and insight into a woman’s miserable and complex life. Ramani’s remark has several implications which have a striking relevance to the core theme of the novel. His gender-based segregation or signification of duties and responsibilities and areas of operation exhibits in a crude manner the male assumptions and attitudes towards women and brings into agonizing focus the insensitivity, rigidity and inflexibility of the patriarchal system which has a strangle-hold over women and vigilantly keeps women under constant supervision and permanent and persistent subjugation. The woman has been confined to the kitchen which is the only arena where she can operate with considerable freedom. It may not be out of place to refer to the emotional but sarcastic reflection of Janaki, the female protagonist of *Janaki Vimukthi*, a Telugu novel by Renganayakamma on the inevitable subservient place and position of

a woman/wife in the male domain: “Who is a wife after all? She is a lifetime prostitute plus a lifetime slave girl plus a lifetime cook-woman” (Renuka, 2001, p. 73). But it is male prerogative to train the boys in a disciplined, military fashion with absolutely no space or leeway for freedom of choice and expression and prepare them with meticulous care and attention to discharge their duties in a manner worthy of their male-superiority, honor and dignity. This male-oriented thinking or concept is reiterated in other places. Babu, forgetting for a moment that he is a boy, takes special interest in the arrangement of the platform for the dolls for *Navaratri* festival much to the dismay of Sumati and Kamala. Narayan’s irony is at its full display here. The girls themselves endorse the gender distinction and are eager to maintain and safe-guard the female-preserve and unwilling to allow him to have a part in the arrangement of the dolls. They resent male encroachment on the female rights. They do not want to wait for Babu and express their impatience openly: “It is not a boy’s business. This is entirely our affair. Why should we wait for him” (Narayan, 1938, p. 30).

The girls jeer at Babu: “Are you a girl to take a hand in the doll business? Go and play cricket. You are a man” (Narayan, 1938, p. 30). Ramani, a fanatical male-chauvinist himself, repeats this observation with greater emphasis in an intimidatory and indignant tone, as he severely rebukes Babu for his shameful ‘womanly’ conduct in associating himself with the doll-arrangement, a purely female affair, and meddling with electrical bulbs and, consequently, throwing the entire house into darkness, a symbolic precursor to Savitri’s dark room-episode.

Then Ramani thrashes Babu and furiously demands a reply to his questions: “Who asked you to go near the doll’s business? Are you a girl? Tell me, are you a girl?” (Narayan, 1938, p. 38). Ramani is really shocked by Babu’s act which is unbecoming of a man. He seems to feel that what Babu has done is a sacrilege, a gross violation of the sanctity of male morality. Again, Ramani resents Savitri’s solicitude for Babu, which, in his view is a direct interference in his rightful exercise of his duties as a father. Ramani’s rather ruthless handling or ‘manhandling’ of Babu is appreciated and defended by the cook who finds fault with Savitri: “It is no business of a wife to butt in when the father is dealing with his son. It is a bad habit. Only a battered son will grow into a sound man” (Narayan, 1938, p. 40). There is a further endorsement of this view from Janamma who observes: “After all they are better trainers of children” (Narayan, 1938, p. 46).

Apart from revealing Ramani’s blatant, undisguised demonstration of his traditional male mindset and superiority-complex, the dolls’ scene unfolds and marks another significant development in the novel. Ramani’s mindless and, somewhat, disproportionate punishment to Babu with little respect to the feelings of his wife drives her into *The Dark Room* – the silent but strong protest of a very docile and submissive wife registered for the first time in her fifteen-year old wedded life against her husband’s habitually rude and impervious behavior. It is also worth noting that the *Navaratri* festival with its inseparable and distinguishing grand show of dolls offers Savitri a chance to travel down memory lane. It is human nature to recall and recapture the joys and sorrows of childhood days and instinctively

contrast them with those of the present. It is a characteristic aspect of Narayan's art to fill his fiction with memories of childhood which provides psychological solace to his characters. Savitri recollects with joy her Navaratri days at her mother's home and her quarrel with her sister over the dolls and their arrangement. In *The Painter of Signs* Raman's aunt Laxmi is never tired of narrating her girlhood days.

The relationship between the children and their parents and between themselves is normal as well as complex. The children play 'negative' and 'positive' roles. Babu's illness and his wanton intervention in the female-related dolls' business are his inadvertent 'negative' postures against his father's ideological stance which produce positive results, activating 'motherlove' and 'mother-petting'. The girls' impatience and vigorous protests against Babu's unbecoming and unintentionally vicious attitude are 'negative' factors that finally end on a 'weeping note'. Babu's 'unconventional' intervention, denying the girls their customary and traditional freedom in the dolls' affair sows the seeds of estrangement and alienation in Savitri. But the children play a very positive and crucial role in forcefully drawing their estranged and enraged mother back home. Here, they nullify, negate the 'negative' sentiments in their mother and bring about reconciliation and rapprochement between their father and mother – a positive end achieved much to the joy and jubilation of the children, though Savitri views her return as a disgraceful defeat.

As a traditional woman and wife in the Indian cultural milieu, it is not easy for Savitri to live in isolation and lead an independent life away from her home, children and husband like Nora of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. Or it requires the extraordinary courage and resoluteness of MulkRaj Anand's *Gauri* to sustain her independence and self-identity. The children are an emotional and sensitive bond which a mother cannot so easily dispense with. Here, Narayan portrays in Savitri an agonizingly authentic picture of the distressful plight of an Indian woman in relation to her children and home.

P.S. Sundaram has rightly remarked that "Ramani rules his household like a dictator" (Sundaram, 1988, p. 33). His dictatorship is all pervasive and all encompassing. He keeps his wife, children and servants under his thumb. He is an example of how a husband and father should not be. As has already been pointed out, Ramani is a formidable patriarch, and, as a father, he is strict, stringent and exacting, and demands unquestionable compliance with his commands. He frequently bullies his children and his wife and finds fault with his children's manners and behavior. Instead of blaming himself, he blames Savitri for not training the children in a decent, dignified and proper manner. Even the minor lapses on the part of the children infuriate him. When Kamala sets the lamp on the floor, he thunders at her: "Bad training, rotten training... Don't you know when you bring a lantern you have to bring a piece of paper to keep under it? When will you learn all this?" (Narayan, 1938, p. 37). Later, he advises Kamala to comb her hair neatly. He comments reprovingly: "Your hair is standing on end, and you look like a sick person" (Narayan, 1938, p. 53). When Babu protests mildly against his father's suggestion of carrying a small tiffin packet to the school, Ramani scowls at him saying, "I know what is best for you. Don't contradict your elders" (Narayan, 1938, p. 114).

But Ramani is not always scolding, faulting and bullying his children. He can be jovial and amiable on occasions. “With elaborate mischievousness” (Narayan, 1938, p. 13), as Narayan comments, Raman speaks in a pleasant mock-serious tone, first, to Kamala, “...You are a great woman. Didn’t you hear your father come home? ... That’s all you care for us poor folk” (Narayan, 1938, p. 13). Then he turns to his first daughter Sumati and remarks with pretended respect and reverence “What about you, lady? ... Ah, how serene you look!” (Narayan, 1938, p. 13). This unexpected conviviality and geniality of their father’s pleasantly surprise the girls; and they are happy: “The children giggled and looked at each other and giggled again” (Narayan, 1938, p. 13).

Another interesting development takes place in the house when Savitri leaves home. It is the perceptible and delightfully ironic reversal of roles assumed by Ramani and Babu. Ramani suppresses or suspends temporarily his natural, autocratic, egoistic, explosive temper and is indulgent with the children and even takes them to the film-show which they enjoy very much. He assumes this role of ‘substitute mother’ to make the children forget their mother and impress upon them that their mother is not an indispensable person. Babu quietly steps into the shoes of his father and gives himself male airs. He acts the part of Ramani, the bully with aplomb. Imitating his father’s dominating and hectoring propensity, he shouts at his recalcitrant Kamala who refuses to oblige him: “Don’t be impertinent. Learn to behave before your elders” (Narayan, 1938, p. 150). The children even boldly pressurize Ramani to make efforts to trace their mother. Babu asserts himself like his mother in the later stage, and makes a defiant decision that he would report to the police if his father gets angry with him or beats him at the mention of his missing: “If he did, Babu would wrench away, run out of the house, and tell Chandran to tell the police” (Narayan, 1938, pp. 154–155).

Narayan is quite aware that providing higher education to women is more important than marriage. It would make them self-reliant and free them from slavish dependence on men. Savitri whose thoughts invariable revolve around her children reflects significantly on the education of her girls: “Sumati and Kamala must study up to the B.A. and not depend for salvation on marriage” and “must take their university course and become independent” (Narayan, 1938, p. 93).

With his descriptive and evocative power and instinctive understanding of child- psychology, Narayan presents before the readers an enchanting world of children. The way Narayan relates the petty quarrels and clashes among the children, Babu’s wild and frightful fancies about the fate of their mother “She might have been carried away by robbers or eaten by lions or tigers” (Narayan, 1938, p. 154), their superstitious beliefs and supernatural terrors is realistically accurate and enthralling. The magic of his creative faculty finds full and spontaneous expression in his inimitable description of children’s universe in which Narayan merrily traverses as a humorous and genially ironic observer, a fascinating narrator, and a charmed partaker enjoying the harmless pranks and prattle, the cheery chatter and tittle-tattle and the delectable and innocent bragging.

Conclusion

In conclusion, one may reiterate that Narayan interweaves the children and the theme in *The Dark Room* with astounding and extraordinary creative brilliance. He suggests with exceptional foresight that children are a prized treasure to be preserved with great care. He insists upon the need to higher education to girls, to maintain domestic harmony, to nurture the children with all love and tenderness, in a congenial, stress-free atmosphere at home in order to ensure their future growth as responsible citizens of India. A happy child means a happy home and a happy home means a happy child.

References

- Adhikary, R.P. (2020). Existential maturity of Savitri in *The Dark Room* by R.K. Narayan. *UJAH: Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 21(1), 138–155.
- Biswas, A.K. (2022). “Obliged to no man”: Negotiating patriarchy and female subaltern voice in R.K. Narayan’s *The Dark Room*. *RAY: International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 7(1), 6–19.
- Chakladar, A. (2012). Garbo and Kuchela at the Palace Talkies in Malgudi: Women and modernity in R.K. Narayan’s *The Dark Room*. *Studies in the Humanities*, 33(1), 113–131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02759527.2012.11932866>
- Iyengar, K.R.S. (1983). *Indian writing in English* (3rd ed.). Sterling Publishers.
- Kabir, K.W. (2020). Toxic masculinity in *The Dark Room* by R.K. Narayan and *Night of No Moon* by Syed Waliullah: A comparative study. *Educational Research (IJMCER)*, 2(4), 152–159.
- Kain, G. (2004). R.K. Narayan. In P.P. Piciucco (Ed.), *A companion to Indian fiction in English* (pp. 1–31). Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.
- Kumari, Y.K. (2017). R.K. Narayan’s *The Dark Room*: A critical approach. *Labyrinth: An International Refereed Journal of Postmodern Studies*, 8(1).
- Madhavaiah, G. (2022). Portrayal of women in R.K. Narayan’s *The Dark Room*. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 6564–6567.
- Mukherjee, M. (1974). *The twice born fiction*. Arnold-Heinemann Publishers (India) Private Limited. (Original work published 1971.)
- Narayan, R.K. (2003). *My days: Autobiography* (Reprint of 1974 edition). Indian Thought Publications.
- Narayan, R.K. (2004). *The Dark Room* (Reprint of 1938 edition). IndianThought Publications.
- Renuka, E. (2000). Three women at the crossroads: Man-woman relationship in R.K. Narayan’s *The Dark Room*, Mulk Raj Anand’s *Gauri*, and Renganaya Kamma’s *Janaki Vimukthi*. *The Commonwealth Review*, 11(1), 170–174.
- Roy, S., & Mahavidyalaya, D. (2022). Plight and suffering of pre-independent Indian women in R.K. Narayan’s *The Dark Room*. *Creative Flight*, 3(2), 102.
- Singh, K. (1982). The ordinary and average as satiric traps: The case of R.K. Narayan. In V.A. Shahane (Ed.), *Explorations in modern Indo-English fiction* (pp. 131–140). Bahri Publications.
- Singh, S. (2020). R.K. Narayan’s *The Dark Room*: A study in feminist perspective. *Research Review: The Refereed & Peer Review International Journal*, 7(91).
- Suganya, S. (2013). To relegate the fringes of marginalized women in the social milieu: A comparative study of R.K. Narayan’s *The Dark Room* and Anita Nair’s *Mistress*. *International Journal of English Language, Literature, and Humanities*, 1(2), 21–32.
- Sundaram, P.S. (1988). *R.K. Narayan as a novelist*. B. R. Publishing Corporation.

- Trivedi, R., & Soni, M.N. (2014). R.K. Narayan's *The Dark Room*: A thematic study. *Research Scholar: An International Refereed e-Journal of Literary Explorations*, 2(4), 412–417.
- Walsh, W. (1977). Sweet mangoes and malt vinegar: The novels of R.K. Narayan. In K.K. Sharma (Ed.), *Indo-English literature: A collection of critical essays* (pp. 121–140). Vimal Prakashan.

Bio notes:

Dr. Sundar Singh, Assistant Professor, Career Development Centre, Directorate of Career Centre, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur, 603203, Tamil Nadu, India. ORCID: 0009-0006-9196-5634.

Roland Rencewigg P, Assistant Professor, Career Development Centre, Directorate of Career Centre, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur, 603203, Tamil Nadu, India. ORCID: 0000-0002-4686-1557. E-mail: rencewigg@gmail.com

S Pressila Daissy, Assistant Professor, Department of English and Foreign Languages, College of Engineering and Technology, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur, 603203, Tamil Nadu, India. ORCID: 0009-0008-0971-8963.

Сведения об авторах:

Доктор Сундар Сингх, доцент Центра развития карьеры, Управление Центра карьеры, Институт науки и технологий SRM, Индия, 603203, Тамил Наду, Каттанкулатур. ORCID: 0009-0006-9196-5634.

Роланд Ренсви́гг П, доцент Центра развития карьеры, Управление Центра карьеры, Институт науки и технологий SRM, Индия, 603203, Тамил Наду, Каттанкулатур. ORCID: 0000-0002-4686-1557. E-mail: rencewigg@gmail.com

С Прессила Дэйси, доцент кафедры английского и иностранных языков, Инженерно-технологический колледж, Институт науки и технологий SRM, Индия, 603203, Тамил Наду, Каттанкулатур. ORCID: 0009-0008-0971-8963.