

## Think India (Quarterly Journal)

ISSN: 0971-1260 Vol-22, Special Issue-05

ONE DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR

ON

DISABILITY, REPRESENTATION AND LITERATURE

held on 03 October 2019 and Organised by P.G. & Research Department  
of English

S. T. HINDU COLLEGE, NAGERCOIL-2, Tamilnadu, India



### Redefining Parenthood: A Psychoanalytic Study Of Shilpi Signodia's

#### *Innocentwings*

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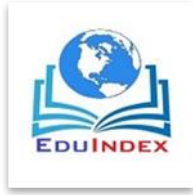
(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University)

#### Abstract

Disability Studies concentrates on the struggles of the person who are differently abled from others. The term “Disability” can be regarded as either physical or psychological illness. In society, people treat those disabled persons with sympathy which make them feel inferior. The paper entitled “Redefining Parenthood: A Psychoanalytic Study of Shilpi Signodia's *Innocent Wings*”, highlights the dilemma of a dyslexic child and his mother's effort to bring out the child from its impairment. Dyslexia is a learning disorder characterized by difficulty in reading, writing and spelling. It also includes late talking, learning new words slowly, struggle to pronounce easy words and delay in learning to read. This paper attempts to enunciate the fact that children with learning difficulties are not ignorant. They are restricted by their impairment in expressing their talents. Upbringing of a child is an art and the parents' role as a mentor and soulmate occupy a vital space in this entire process. The novel depicts the real life incidents of a mother and her struggles in making her son, Rudra lead a normal life. Imposing elders' dreams upon a child, can have an adverse effect of transforming a child from differently abled to disabled. The ground level work in the life of these little ones enriches the future of the children and the society.

**Keywords:** Disability, Dyslexia, Learning Disorder, Impairment, Parenthood.

Disability Studies is a new area in the field of literature which exposes the dilemma of the disabled people in the society. It emerged during the period of late twentieth century. Disability Studies portrays the physical and psychological problems of the people. It splits into two different concepts like impairment and disability in which impairment means illness of a person's mind or body whereas disability is a



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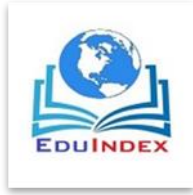
social construct. The main aim of this studies is to improve the social status of the disabled people. Disability can also affect the person due to their genetic disorder that affects the mental and physical health. The person who suffers with disability are not completely disabled but they are differently abled. According to the article on *A Guide to Disability Studies*:

While this studies focuses on the physical and mental issues and disabilities, it also looks for the way to broaden the views and perspective of literature, culture, history and policies at the national as well as international level. This will be helpful in developing the field of study and learning about disabilities from the experiences of different places gained in different times and situations. (np)

The novel *Innocent Wings* (2018) chosen for this presentation is the case study of a Dyslexic child, a four-year-old little boy, Rudra, son of Asha and Harish. The family lives in Hyderabad. Rudra is in his Grade One who is affected by Dyslexia with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder simply known as ADHD. Dyslexia is a learning disorder characterized by difficulty in reading, writing and spelling. It includes delayed speech, struggle to pronounce simple words, slow learning and reading. With these difficulties, one cannot judge them ignorant. Dyslexic person sees the world entirely different from others. The society cannot say that they are disabled only because they think differently.

Shilpi Signodia narrates the real life experiences that happened from 2014 in the life of Rudra. The novel depicts the struggles of a mother who detects her son's disability in his reading as well as in writing and the difficulties in her journey to bring her boy lead normal life like other children. The writer wants to bring Asha, Rudra's mother as an example for other parents in the society in handling and understanding the minds of the affected young wings. She also expresses how a mother should take care and behave softly with those up growing buds. This book is a short fiction which beholds the struggles of a child, Rudra affected with Dyslexia and the efforts of his mother, Asha.

The aim of this paper is to bring out the lapses on the part of the parents in the art of bringing up a child and the nuances that they should keep in their mind while



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moulding them. The behaviour of a child gets shaped by its parents and social experiences. In the article *Psychodynamic Perspectives on Personality* says, according to Sigmund Freud, “During each stage, a child is presented with a conflict between biological drives and social experiences; successful navigation of internal conflicts will lead to mastery of each developmental stage, and ultimately to a fully mature personality” (np). Asha, mother of the dyslexic child attempts to be an exemplary mother in this novel. In one of the Parents Teacher Meeting, Rudra’s class teacher complaints to his mother about Rudra’s lack of performances in academics and his frequent use of washroom in order to skip his class hours. It is the first incident Rudra’s mother understands that her child, Rudra is psychologically not well and that there are some problems in him. Rudra’s father, Harish also suffers from dyslexia and it seems to be a hereditary disorder. Without knowing this fact, the parents and the teachers blame the children for their lack in academic performances.

Every child is unique in its way. The parents cannot force them to be like other children. Usually the children with Dyslexia are smart as their peers. But they struggle more in academics, which does not mean that they are not interested in their studies. The parents are also assumed that their children are not performing enough in their academics. In the review, *Innocent Wings: Shilpi*, the reviewer emphasizes, “Don’t assume that good grades and benchmark performances in the academics is the only parameter to define the capability of your children, let their innocent wings fly, let them to be from no one to only one in their schools” (np). Normally, mothers of the young children are living under pressure. If they commit any small faults in their children’s life that will totally destroy the future of their own children. So these pressure get increased when their get low marks in their academics. The same thing happens in the case of Rudra’s mother, Asha. Her tantrum and yelling make Rudra to feel emotionally sick. And it increases when his class teacher, Meenu continues to scold him. The beginning of the children’s life should be more pleasant and they should not be pressurised by academic success.

In the life of Rudra, his problem becomes more visible only after his younger brother, Karthik’s birth. The little boy starts to feel as left alone by his own mother and father. Rudra wants his mother’s attention. This is normally occurring in the mind



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of the children when they have their new siblings. Asha knows that her son, Rudra needs her more. As a mother, she should pay equal attention to both her children. The support of the mother boosts up the child like Rudra, and helps them for speedy recovery.

The author genuinely expresses through the depiction of Asha's efforts in interviewing the school faculties, physicians, psychologists and also the parents whose children have also been diagnosed in early stage of Dyslexia. In the result of those interviews, the parents and the school faculties are ready to understand the seriousness of the child's problems and take immediate measures to cure the affected children. She clears out a point that children are freshly heated clay and better results are in the hands of the parents, teachers and also the society to mould them. Ignorance, isolation and harsh behaviour towards a child makes the unimaginable effects in them. Slow learners, Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, ADHD and many more disabilities are there which are not much given importance. If anyone find out these difficulties at the right age in a child, it will be easy to cure at that initial stage. Even child's shyness to talk before the people other than its family also a noticeable thing. These kind of things are noticed more when Rudra promoted to Grade two, where his new teacher, Shina helps him and suggests Asha to consult their school counsellor.

The innocent children may be affected by one of those difficulties which are not their mistakes. Because, these disabilities are linked to their genes or the over possessiveness of the parents or any shocking incidents happened to the child. The child undergoes lot of psychological disabilities. Even punishing or beating the affected child does not make any sense and make the case even more worse. So being a parent, they should understand their child's sufferings, but in most of the cases parents fail to understand them and they force them to live like other persons in the society. Instead of understanding their children, the parents expect their children to understand them. For the sake of a child, the parents have to sacrifice their anger, rudeness and violence. Little harsh arguments between parents can also create a great impact in the minds of the children.

Rudra also undergoes the same situation. The young innocent minds are stressed by both its parents and teachers. The present educational system also



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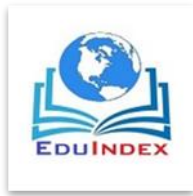


pressurises the minds of the children. If a day begins with negative comments, their mind will slowly lose its confidence which will automatically affect the body as well as their mind. The author wants to advise her readers through the mother character in the novel as:

Every child possesses his own identity, he has his own views and demands. We as parents cannot rule them because they are dependent on us, but instead, we need to stand with them when they need us. We are being offered a duty to take care of the child by the Almighty, but we mistakenly consider it to be a right. The results could be harsher than what I have faced. (Shilpi, 33)

The child easily absorbs the environment without knowing the goodness or bad impact in it. It is the duty of the parents to create a peaceful environment to these nurturing buds. Because the child's only hope is its mother and father. It is better to prevent first than healing the wound. If a child finds some difficulties or loses its confidence in certain things, they will never do it again. The elders are responsible to build confidence in a child. They have to keep the little one stayed up with positivity. The present world runs behind money and in search of time to fulfil others' dream project. They even do not understand, for whom they are saving money. Man expands his needs beyond his ability, to get it he starts his rat race. In between this, the innocent souls are the one who suffers a lot. If any child has problems like Rudra's, they are ignored by their working parents. At last, the children lose their self-confidence, it tortures their performances.

When the child undergoes some struggles in its action or in its health, the parents are the one who suffers a lot. It becomes unbearable situation, when they see their child is incapable to act as others. It shatters the parents' hope for their children and they undergone depression. In this competitive world, mothers like Asha, forget that their children might have some unique talents. The only mentality of these parents are like other children, they want their children to live their life which are suitable to social norms. If the child like Rudra behaves different from other, the parents and the society stamped them as disabled child. Until the parents make sense about the abilities of their children, both the parents and their children will lead the



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life with depression. In the situation of Asha, she is lucky to get some good people which changes the life of Asha and Rudra. Arrival of Shina teacher in the life of Rudra brings the turning point. At this critical situations, the grown-ups also need some solace. Both Asha and Harish are lucky to have some people like Ms. Shina mam, Shivani, Dr. Priya, Dr. Reddy and Dr. Divya. These persons have created an impact in the life of Rudra which decides his better future. Dr. Divya is the child psychiatrist whose counselling classes made great impact in Rudra as well as Asha. Asha also learnt the method of parenting and at last she proved herself as a successful mother.

There is no child in this world born without talents. Building a paradise is not an easy task. Likewise, bringing up a child is also given more importance. Instead of discouraging a child, the parents and the teachers have to understand their abilities and one should believe in their talents. Parents are the powerful beings in the life of their children who make their life either heaven or hell. If the parent helps them in a right path they will not enter into the pathetic world of stress. The children will lead a free life and consider their parents as treasure. Parents have to do some basic works in the life of these little ones which enriches the future of their children and the society. The author also requests the parents to let them fly freely in their own paradise.

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