

# A STUDY OF LITERARY CREATIVITY IN ENGLISH IN RELATION TO DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES LIKE GENDER AND SUBJECT OF SPECIALIZATION AMONG DEGREE STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** Creative activity is goal-oriented and the creative act of writing self-evidently involves; making connections, meaning, composing and communicating. Writing is shaped through the generative and reflective processes of production, as writers create and critique their compositions, both consciously and unconsciously, as they write. The present study aims at studying Literary Creativity in English in relation to certain demographic variables like gender and subject of specialization among degree students. The study concluded that there was significant difference in the literary creativity of male and female students except in originality. It was also found that the students belonging to the Humanities group have more literary creativity than the students of the Science group except in the case of originality.

**Index Terms:** Literary Creativity, Demographic variables

## I. INTRODUCTION

Literary creativity can be thought of as independent of facts, giving free play to imagination and self-expression, characterised by fluency in symbols. It is thought of as a fancy-free realm, where intellectualised abstraction plays no part. Creative writing springs from this desire of the writer to express himself, and will be original in that it is based on his own thoughts and feelings (Jones, 1972). Both include spontaneous self-expression involving the writer's thoughts, imagination and feelings. Creative writing can be recognized, by its expression of an acutely personal viewpoint or idea, so that a highly conscious reaction to a given subject is sharply focused in the writer's mind and set down in a noticeably individual manner (Grady & Wilcockson, 1976).

Creative writing is characterized by a genuinely personal relationship between the subject and the writer. In creative writing, the writer's attention has been raised above its ordinary and most commonly observed associations, to a level which commands our respect for it and enhances our appreciation of its worth. This act of writing involves us in communication, conveys meaning to ourselves and others and subsequently refines our thinking and reshapes our views (Grainger et al., 2005).

In the present educational scenario, all students should be encouraged to come up with new and original ideas, progressing beyond their understanding or use of language. The aesthetic dimension of value forms a criterion for evaluating the quality of writing. It also requires confidence and persistence to see a creative literary piece through to completion, and a sense of fair-mindedness and a respect for other's opinions, views and ideas. Considering the importance of the topic, creative writing by its very nature, invites a better response on the student's part. Teachers of English should feel the need to enhance literary creativity of students through their instructional practices.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Considering the relevance of the ability to think and write creatively, the investigator has designed the present work to make a study of Literary Creativity in English in relation to select demographic variables among degree students. The problem for the study has the title: '*A Study of Literary Creativity in English in Relation to Demographic Variables like Gender and Subject of Specialization Among Degree Students.*'

## III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following were the objectives formulated for the study:

- (1) To compare the Literary Creativity in English of students grouped on the basis of certain Demographic Variables such as:
  1. Gender
  2. Subject of Specialization

#### IV. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following were the hypotheses framed for the study:

- (1) There will be significant difference in the literary creativity of male and female students.
- (2) There will be significant difference in the literary creativity of students belonging to Humanities and Science groups.

#### V. METHODOLOGY IN BRIEF

The present study used normative survey as the major method of approach supported by appropriate statistical design. The study has been envisaged on a sample of 854 Degree students attending 11 colleges in Thiruvananthapuram and Kottayam districts. The sample was selected by stratified sampling technique giving due representation to certain demographic variables like Gender and Subject of Specialization. The rejection of incomplete cases reduced the final sample to 720. The tools were used for the collection of data were the Literary Creativity Test in English for Degree Students and General Data Sheet. The statistical techniques used in the present study were the Test of significance of difference between means (critical ratio test) and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

#### COMPARISON OF LITERARY CREATIVITY IN ENGLISH OF STUDENTS CLASSIFIED ON THE BASIS OF CERTAIN DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

The total sample of students was classified on the basis of the select demographic variables such as gender and subject of specialization. The mean literary creativity of these groups were compared in order to analyse whether there exists any significant difference in the literary creativity of these groups. The details are given below:

##### 5.1 Test of Significance of Difference between Means in Literary Creativity among Sub-groups Classified in terms of Gender

The mean difference in Fluency, Flexibility, Originality and Total Literary Creativity of male and female students were tested for significance. The mean, standard deviation and critical ratio obtained are given in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1  
Data and Results of the Test of Significance of Difference between Means in Literary Creativity of Male and Female Students

Creativity Variable	Gender	Mean	Standard deviation	Number	Critical ratio
Fluency	Male	271.8	190.9	318	3.55**
	Female	334.3	264.2	402	
Flexibility	Male	35.2	17.5	318	2.98**
	Female	39.5	20.2	402	
Originality	Male	14.9	10.0	318	0.06
	Female	14.8	11.9	402	
Total Literary Creativity	Male	321.9	213.5	318	3.41**
	Female	388.6	292.3	402	

\*\*Significant at 0.01 level

From Table 5.1, it is seen that there was significant difference between male and female students with regard to their Fluency, Flexibility and Total Literary Creativity. The critical ratios obtained for Fluency, Flexibility and Total Literary Creativity were significant at 0.01 level. But no significant difference was observed between male and female students with regard to Originality.

The critical ratios for the components of Literary Creativity which revealed significant difference are the following:

Fluency (CR= 3.55)

Total Literary Creativity (CR= 3.41)

Flexibility (CR= 2.98)

Since the mean values of Fluency, Flexibility and Total Literary Creativity were high for the female group, it can be interpreted that female students were more creative than the male students. It is also noted that the Originality component of Literary Creativity for both male and female students were almost equal.

Hence it can be inferred that there was significant difference in the literary creativity of male and female students except in Originality. The general feeling that females are more inclined to take part in literary activities is supported in this study. Gender as a variable seemed to affect the literary creativity of students. This finding was contrary to the studies made by Gong (1990) and Hoff (2003) which revealed that gender is not a significant factor on creative thinking.

##### 5.2 Test of Significance of Difference between Means in Literary Creativity among Sub-groups Classified in terms of Subject of Specialization

The mean difference in Fluency, Flexibility, Originality and Total Literary Creativity of students belonging to Humanities and Science groups were analysed using critical ratio test. The means, standard deviation and critical ratio are provided in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2

Data and Results of the Test of Significance of Difference between Means in Literary Creativity of Students belonging to Humanities and Science Groups

Creativity Variable	Subject of Specialization	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number	Critical Ratio
Fluency	Humanities	347.5	275.3	324	4.24**
	Science	273.3	193.4	396	
Flexibility	Humanities	40.9	21.1	324	4.28**
	Science	34.8	17.0	396	
Originality	Humanities	15.3	13.0	324	0.98
	Science	14.5	9.2	396	
Total Literary Creativity	Humanities	403.8	305.1	324	4.17**
	Science	322.6	215.0	396	

\*\*Significant at 0.01 level

Table 5. 2 shows that there was significant difference between students studying in Humanities and Science groups with respect to their Fluency, Flexibility, and Total Literary Creativity. The results showed that Fluency, Flexibility and Total Literary Creativity discriminated between students studying in Humanities and Science groups at 0.01 level. But no significant difference was observed between students studying in Humanities and Science groups with regard to Originality.

The critical ratios for the components of Literary Creativity which revealed significant difference are the following:

Flexibility (CR= 4.28)  
 Fluency (CR = 4.24)  
 Total Literary Creativity (CR= 4.17)

The mean values of Fluency, Flexibility and Total Literary Creativity were higher for the students studying in Humanities group. Hence it can be interpreted that there was significant difference in the literary creativity of students belonging to Humanities and Science groups except in Originality. It can be also noted that the Originality component of students studying in Humanities and Science groups were more or less identical.

It can be inferred that the students belonging to the Humanities group have more literary creativity than the students of the Science group except in the case of the component Originality. This difference in means may be attributed to the fact that the nature of the subject of specialization creates more interest among students of the Humanities group to engage in literary activities especially creative writing activities. In this context, teachers have a major role in motivating students to pursue literary activities. The findings by Wiggins (2010) indicated that specific instructional practices, on the part of teachers, influence writing success by creating an open and creative environment.

## V. CONCLUSION

The teacher has a major role to play in developing the creative writing skills of learners. He must keep firmly in mind certain things that are vital to successful progress in creative writing, irrespective of the gender or subject of specialization of the learners. First, he should build upon the pupil's initiative and self-confidence by trying to subordinate his role as teacher to that of assistant and guide. This can be accomplished by suggesting, more than by openly directing; by stimulating and encouraging, without commanding; and by offering criticism tactfully, in a spirit of helpfulness. The teacher should also show that he has an implicit faith in the creative potential of each and every pupil. He should try to expand each pupil's power of thinking, feeling and expressing, so that eventually they include fresh vistas of experience not consciously encountered previously.

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