Introduction

India has had a very rich dramatic tradition in the pre-Islamic times. The classical dramatists like Kalidas, Bhavibuti, Bhasa and Harsha and few others had taken Indian drama in Sanskrit to the glorious heights. The Islamic power structure proved rather baneful for the existence of the classical drama in India. The folk dramas somehow managed to survive against all odds. The rise of the British power and introduction of English education opened a new world of the European drama for the Indians, which in turn, gave a momentum to the development of drama in regional languages.

Despite the spread of English education, very few Indian playwrights, except Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath Tagore, tried to write plays in originally in English during the pre-Independence times. In the post-Independence times also even in the wake of the governmental encouragements, drama in English could not flourish much, though some playwrights like Assif Currimbhoy, NIssim Ezekiel, Lakhan Deb, Gurucharan Das, Mahesh Dattani, Manjula Padmanabhan and few others, wrote their plays in English.

English translations of the rich plays written originally in the regional languages form the major corpus of Indian English drama. The deliberate efforts and contributions of the playwrights like T. P, Kailasam, Girish Karnad, Badal Sircar, Mohan Rakesh and theater personalities like Alaque Padmasee, Ebrahim Alkazi, Vijaya Mehata and few others boosted Indian drama in English and brought it international recognition. However, Indian English drama had not claimed attention of the Indian academic scholarship for a long time. Aparna Dharwadkar, Girish Karnad, Tutun Mukherjee and others are some notable exceptions to this. In the academic scholarships, Indian English drama is the paradise where researchers fear to travel.