CHAPTER – I
INTRODUCTION

‘Campus Novel’ or ‘Academic Fiction’ is an interesting genre that has gained worldwide readership. Campuses spread throughout the world provide rich productive raw material for fiction. The trend of campus novels started back a century ago in European countries. David Lodge is one of the most popular contemporary writers of this genre in Britain. Even before him came novels like *Pnin* (1955) by Vladimir Nabokov and *Lucky Jim* (1954) by Kingsley Amis, that had the characteristic features of campus novels. However, David Lodge, who is also an acclaimed critic, considers *The Groves of Academy* (1952) by Mary McCarthy, as the first classic campus novel. Even before this genre of modern literary fiction was identified and named, it gained popularity, because of its subject matter and setting.

The trend of Campus Novels in India started recently with the phenomenal success of Chetan Bhagat’s *Five Point Someone* (2004). This novel, based on the student days of three IIT scholars, was followed by many similar writings. Before plunging into a bird’s eye view of various Campus Novels of the world, it is essential to have an understanding of the term ‘Campus Novel.’

Campus novels are also called “Academic Novels” since these novels focus on the academy. Academy is a place that attracts most people because of its imaginary idealistic notions. It is in fact thought of as a paradise of learning where the inmates dedicate themselves to lofty pursuits. Teachers here are thought of as sculptors who with the provided raw materials called ‘students’ create sculptures. These notions juxtaposed with reality provide a rich source for parody, satire and irony, since some of the people inside it struggle between reality and intellectual pretensions. It is quite intriguing to bring to the fore the happenings that take place
during the struggle. Academic novels are interesting since they exploit the tension between idealism and corruption. Janice Rossen, a commended Campus Novel Critic, points out in her book, *The University in Modern Fiction* (1993) that the primary issue that these novels engage is the interplay between fiction and fact.

There are many novelists who have taken up the task of highlighting the lives of students or teachers within the university or any similar seat of learning. They either devote the entire novel for the task or just include a few chapters dealing with campus life, although it may not be the main theme.

Before plunging into an elaborate analysis of the selected campus novels, it is important to look at the definition of the word ‘Campus’ and then the term ‘Campus Novel.’ Lodge in his article “Nabokov and the Campus Novel” (2008) examines the word “campus” and finds that it is of Latin origin which meant “field” (par. 3), to indicate the physical space occupied by a college or university. It is a word that was synonymously used for university by the Americans from the beginning of the 19th century and was later used by the British also. Now the term commonly applies to any seat of learning – a university or any other educational institution.

*The Oxford Companion to Twentieth-Century Literature in English* (1996) elaborates on Campus Fiction as follows:

Campus Fiction is a term describing a particular genre of novels, usually comic or satirical, which have a university setting and academics as principal characters. An early example was Kingsley Amis’s *Lucky Jim* (1954), which is set at a midlands red-brick university and features the comic escapades of a junior lecturer; other notable examples include Malcolm Bradbury’s *Eating People is Wrong* (1959) about life at a provincial
university, and *The History Man* (1975), a satirical novel set at a new plate-glass university, which concerns the rise of an unscrupulous Professor of History.

Chris Baldick in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (1990) defines the genre thus:

Campus Novel is a novel, usually comic or satiric, in which the action is set within the enclosed world of university (or similar seat of learning) and highlights the follies of academic life. Many novels have presented nostalgic evocations of college days, but the campus novel in the usual modern sense dated from the 1950s: Mc Carthy’s *The Groves of Academy* (1952) and Kingsley Amis’ *Lucky Jim* (1954) began significant tradition in modern fiction including John Barth’s *Giles Goat-Boy* (1966), David Lodge’s *Changing Places* (1975) and Robert Davis’ *The Rebel Angels* (1982) (30).

Siegfried Mews in his article “The Professor’s novel: David Lodge’s *Small World*” (1989) quotes Kramer’s definition of campus novel which says that campus fiction “incorporates an institution of higher learning as crucial part of its total setting and … includes among its principal characters, graduates or under graduate students, faculty members, administrators, and/or other academic personnel” (714). Stating this, Mews moves on to say that the definition proceeds from a sociological approach, ignoring the narrative aspects altogether.

Janice Rossen, in her book *The University in Modern Fiction* (1993) calls campus novels as “social documents” which consist of a complicated web of “several disparate but related threads” (3). She opines that campus novels bringing in the play of fact and fiction are interesting to both writers and readers since they revel in the joy of knowledge of the insiders. She feels that the campus novelists are heavily influenced by the subject itself.
These definitions and explanations of Campus Novels, however, suit all the campus novels including the novels taken up for the present study. All the campus novels, as the definitions require, have a university or a similar seat of learning as its setting or background and consist of academics as principal characters. They portray the happenings that take place in the small-enclosed world of the campus. Most of the campus novels are critical of one or the other aspects of life and are usually comical or satirical.

Satirical elements creep into the academic novels since the authors both consciously or unconsciously break the traditional idealistic notions of academicians and try to portray the insider’s real experiences. They try to reflect the reality of the academic world and in this endeavour, the follies and foibles of the academic life get highlighted.

Although campus novels are usually, written by academicians who are either teachers or who have had a first-hand experience of having taught in some educational institution, it is not the case with all Campus Novel writers. However, it could be said, that with famous campus novelists like David Lodge, Malcolm Bradbury and Vladimir Nabokov who themselves were teachers this genre started flourishing. In fact, being teachers was an added advantage to them to make successful portrayals of this microcosmic world – the university. Even some of the Indian campus novelists like Anuradha Marwah Roy, Prema Nandakumar, Meena Alexander, Rani Dharker, Shakuntala Bharvani, Panjangam and Raj Gauthaman were teacher-novelists who excelled in this genre of novel writing.

Most of the campus novelists are not interested in portraying an ideal or false image of teachers and students who immolate themselves for the cause of education. They attempt at focusing upon the struggles the academic characters undergo when caught between practicality and idealism. Practicality forces them into pretensions and this paves way to satire and irony.
The writers of Campus Novels satirize the usual glorified image of academicians. Teachers particularly are portrayed as comic, ridiculous figures who are less interested in matters relating to scholarliness and academy. Academy is shown as a place of intellectual squabbles, where little intellectual work takes place. The institutional men and women are portrayed as normal human beings who are not different from ordinary people. They are depicted as selfish power mongers who possess their own desires, ambitions, and selfishness and are keen on their own self-development. Their flaws and hypocritical nature are mercilessly brought out in these novels.

The power politics and the various mechanisms that are employed by the academicians are explicitly upheld by these writers. The academicians, with their hypocritical behaviour, serve as the butt of ridicule and are put to sheer shame when the masks of intellectuality that they wear are torn off.

Campus Novels, departing from the routine portrayal of the university as a respected seat of learning, depict the conflicts and illegal practices that are associated with the university. They embark upon showing the universities as “the most unliterary places in the world” and the “most purely barbarous in spirit” (qtd. in Lyons 138). Elaine Showalter, a well-known critic of Campus Fiction views the University as a place of cloistered intrigue.

Some campus novels highlight the unintellectual interests of the professors and bring out their keen interest in politics rather than in the development of literary activities. They show how academicians who occupy unambiguous hierarchies in the University set up are involved in various mechanisms of power politics. The university’s clear power relationships like teacher-student, tenured professor or scrabbling lecturer that Aida Edemariam mentions in her
article “Who’s Afraid of the Campus Novel?” (2004) provide much scope for campus feud and power faction.

David Lodge is of the opinion that “the high ideals of the university as an institution – the pursuit of knowledge and truth are set against the actual behaviour and motivations of the people who work in them.” He says that they too possess, “the same ignoble desires and selfish ambitions as anybody else” (qtd. in Edemariam). Understanding the fact that the academic intellectuals are not different from ordinary human beings, the writers of campus novels satirize academic manners and present the absurdities inherent in the academic setup. Satire is used in these novels in order to present the University as “an absolute web of pretence” (qtd. in Lyons 161) in which all are caught.

Through ironic and satiric kinds of portrayals, the writers try to show that there is little hope for education. Education has become more and more business-like and materialistic desires have engulfed the minds of the academics.

Before plunging into a study of the Indian novels and novelists taken up for study, it is important to know in detail, about the precursors of this interesting genre. An enormous output of campus novels mainly came from European countries like Britain and America. Elaine Showalter considering Campus Novels as “reflections of reality” in Faculty Towers: The Academic Novel and its Discontents (2005), has made an interesting study of novels exhibiting the characteristic features of academic fiction of the past fifty years preceding her book and has come out with stunning findings. Although campus novels have flourished as a genre only since 1950, Showalter traces its ancestry to the times of Aristophanes. To prove this she quotes Sansford Pinsker who in Who Cares if Roger Ackroyd Gets Tenure? asserts that “the general form is as old as Aristophanes’ The Clouds. There Socrates was held up to ridicule as a man
riding through the heavens in a basket; and the label of dreamy impracticality stuck not only to him, but also to all the befuddled academic types who have followed” (qtd. in Showalter, *Faculty Towers* 2-3).

Showalter brings in the nineteenth century precursors of campus novels and shows how their novels serve as models to later academic fiction.

Anthony Trollope, the famous 19th century novel writer wrote his comic masterpiece *Barchester Towers* in 1857. As Showalter suggests in her article “Campus Follies” (2005), this novel, though is about the fight between provincial Anglican clergy and evangelical reform serves as a wonderful “ur-narrative” that exemplifies the politics of academy (par. 19). The rivalry and squabbles that take place among the Victorian clerics remind one of the squabbles that exist among the academicians. Another attractive precursor of this genre is *Middlemarch* (1872) by George Eliot where Mr. Casaubon is portrayed as “the most haunting spectre of the academic, as grim pedagogue, the scholar as the spirit of all that is sterile, cold and dark” (Showalter, “Campus Follies,” par. 20). If Showalter attempts at sketching out the forerunners of British Campus Novels, Lyons was interested in doing it for American Campus Novel tradition. Lyons views Hawthorne’s *Fanshawe* published in 1828, to be the first Campus Novel. He highlights the elements of Campus Novels in *Fanshawe* in his book, *The College Novel in America* (1962).

Willa Cather’s *The Professor’s House*, written in 1925 displays the life of a male academic Godfrey St. Peter. It portrays the conflict between the ideal and the material that takes place in the mind of Professor Godfrey St. Peter. Through him, Cather has depicted the conflicts, ambitions and the hypocrisies of the university that existed in the age. Her major contention in the novel is that people, especially academics, struggle hard to keep up pretences
and go out of the way for materialistic comforts. They try to keep up appearances but their talk revolves around inconsequential matters, such as who gets the latest promotions, what is the salary of their co-workers and what constitutes the wardrobe of others’ wives.

Cather is especially stunned by the ways education was being cheapened by the overwhelming spread of commercialism. She shockingly brings out the fact that the university professors are self-interested and their activities are unhappily motivated by the same mundane ends that existed in the commercialism of industries and business places. She is shocked to see that the students are impelled to go to the college, “because a college degree was negotiable in dollars and cents” (qtd. in Mani 133).

The established tradition of the academic novels, as Lyons suggests, portrayed students as roisterers and the professors as pedants. However, later, as he says that there was a change in this depiction and the portrayal of students as rowdies was rejected. An attempt to portray the professor as the complete antithesis of a pedant came into existence and this contributed much satire and comedy in the novels.

A few novels like Irving Stone’s Pageant of Youth (1933), George Weller’s Not to Eat, Not for Love (1933), Mary Jane Ward’s The Professor’s Umbrella (1948) and Martin Larson’s Plaster Saint (1953) followed the traditional romantic pattern, where a young teacher with high ideals about teaching, would fight the hoary traditions of the school or college, and finally, unable to be successful would leave the profession. This kind of ending only propounds the unintellectual ways of educational institutions that leave little hope for education. Instead of suggesting ways to improve the educational set up, the authors only disillusion the readers with such endings.
Zoe Flannagan’s *Grey Towers* (1823) is one such novel that portrays a young female teacher’s enthusiasm in improving her Alma Mater, being suppressed. The novel shows how the university prioritizes business motives above its own integrity.

*Chimes* (1926) by Robert Herrick, consists of gentle satire and general criticism on the aims of the University. The university aims at raising the moral and economic standards of the nation by giving education to all. In this attempt, the rules that are laid by the administration and the university officials, overburden the lecturers. Clavercin, the protagonist of *Chimes*, for instance, feels exhausted about the university and its ways, and feels that the universities that gave so much attention to the teaching and investigating of literature were really the places that harbour ignorance and unscholarly tendencies. He feels that the very sight of a dissertation or thesis as “an attack of mental nausea” (qtd. in Lyons 137). These make him frustrated and lose interest in his research area. He strongly expresses his dislike and opposition to research for the sheer sake of publication or as a method of teaching. He also feels that a university should not be allowed to be run by donors or benefactors because it might lead to the domination of conservatives or middle class well-to-do citizens. In contrast to Herrick’s view, is the view of Dorothy Canfield Fisher. Fisher in her novel, *The Bent Twig* (1922) expresses the view that a university could be run more efficiently by donors from the same university community.

In *The Lone Voyagers* (1929) by Wanda Fraiken Neff, there is the portrayal of Keith Lamberton, an eighteenth century scholar who comes from Harvard to Chippewa University. Lamberton feeling disillusioned with Chippewa University, hopes to change the attitude of many students by talking to them. Neff, in this novel, shows that a majority of academicians are interested only in talks concerning students and faculty politics and a few others in discussing only the current events and the latest theatre shows. He points out satirically that only a few are
really interested in their subjects, and it is only these few who are concerned about the growth of the university.

Some novelists show teaching to be a mere burden where the protagonist hopelessly accepts it for his survival. *Of Time and the River* (1935) by Thomas Wolfe falls into this category. Eugene, an artist, considers teaching as a terrific job and a hindrance to his artistic production. The very thought of the class he has to engage makes him shiver. He not only detests his students but also his colleagues who are shown to be mean hacks. They are described thus:

They wasted and grew sick with hate and poison because another man received promotion, because another man had got his poem printed, because another man had eaten food and swallowed drink and lain with women, and lived and would not die; they sweltered with hate and fear against the professors who employed them… They greeted him with sly humility and a servile glance, but they snickered obscenely at him when his back was turned. And they smiled and sneered at one another… they never struck a blow but they spoke lying words of barbed ambiguity, they lied, cheated and betrayed, and they sweltered in the poisons of their hate and fear, they breathed the weary hatred-laden air about them into their poisoned lungs (qtd. in Lyons 142).

The students too in the novel are portrayed in a negative picture. They are shown as being shallow, gossiping females who readily flaunt their flesh before overeager men. Eugene, in the end of the novel, expresses that education has done little good for the student community.

Watkins’ *Geese in the Forum* (1940) brings out the many evil aspects of educational progressivism. It portrays the life of John Burgess who attempts to improve the university and who refuses to accept any favours from the trustees of the university. His wife, frustrated by his
ethical activities, leaves him and elopes with a novelist. The novel projects the flaws inherent in the university and makes us ponder over the present educational set up. The faculty wives are projected as incorrigible gossips and the President of the university as a swindler who swindles the university funds for his own use. Another such novel that shows its protagonist’s attempts to improve the university is Robert Gessner’s *Youth is the Time* (1945).

Everett Marston’s *Take the High Ground* (1954) suggests the submission of intellectuals to the forces of power. Giles Harmony, the protagonist of the novel, comes to Chase College from the University of Chicago. He falls into an affair with his Chairman’s intellectual wife and hates the President of the college who is keen on introducing professional courses. The President starts a new business school and Giles feels that these administrators scarcely know the students and are underrated by them. He hates the cringing nature of the President and detests the boorish benefactors who know nothing about education but are given the right to frame the college rules (Lyons 150). They use their material possessions to gain power and respect in the society. Giles is frustrated with the teaching profession since he is not able to overcome the rich and feels that he has not accomplished anything in life. He feels teaching to be a nebulous endeavour and says, “that just by standing and lecturing before a group of kids for hours together, we cannot claim to have imparted knowledge. For all that we may know they might have been day dreaming, by striking a pose of listening” (qtd. in Mani 12). Thus, the author not only brings in the conflict between power and intellect but also seems to suggest that the students, instead of being silent listeners should also voice out their opinions on education.

Lyons, in his book *The College Novel in America* (1962) also talks about certain Campus Novels that deal with racial intolerance. One such novel is *Village Chronicle* (1936).
by James Mc Connaughey. This novel brings out the cruelty of the University administration that refused to favour a bright, creative Negro student and cancelled his admission since it was against the state regulation laws. This led to the suicide of the black student. Lyons observes that since the novel only presented the problem of the black student without delving deep into it, it has failed to create the desired effect. Many campus novels depict the hypocrisies inherent in the academic set up, but because of the episodic treatment of the subject, they are not very pungent.

Hester Pine in *Beer for the Kitten* (1939) relates many issues, sometimes in a highly satiric tone and at other, merely touching upon it. The novel categorizes college faculties into social termites, academic guppies, intellectual poor white-trash, (and) literary stumble burns and collegiate zombie (quoted in Lyons 155). Although the novel contains best satire, it does not impinge itself upon the readers since the episodic treatment and the shuttling forth from one issue to another is ineffective. Some novels suggest the view that the greater the degree a teacher obtains, the lesser the communication between the student and the teacher. Lyons gives instances of some novels that seem to express that getting a doctorate is hardly the best preparation for teaching. He also brings in some novels that examine the very process of examination.

George Stewart’s *Doctor’s Oral* (1939) is one such novel that devotes nearly forty pages to portray the examiner’s nervousness and their thoughts and the “conflicting personalities of the examiners” (qtd. in Lyons 157). This novel also defends the process of getting a doctoral degree.

Certain novels like *Pictures from an Institution* (1954) by Randell Jarell, Mary McCarthy’s *The Groves of Academy* (1952), Shirley Jackson’s *Hangsaman* (1951) advocate the
principle of progressive education. All these novels portray a “crusade against the rest of the educational world” (Lyons 158).

*Pictures from an Institution* projects the college as a liberal world and when the characters in it move out of this into the illiberal world outside, they are not accepted by it. Their lives disintegrate after being dismissed by the complacent outside world.

Stringfellow Barr’s *Purely Academic* (1958), through its protagonist Professor Schneider, shows the university set-up to be a web of pretence in which all are caught. Professor Schneider is frustrated with academy and all the time speculates over who is going to be the next President. He feels that the whole process of decently dressed boys and girls breaking their heads over the ghastly textbooks and finally getting a grade which lead to a diploma to be a frustrating long process. He leaves the teaching profession at the end exclaiming that he could not take campus life any more.

Bernard Malamud’s *A New Life* (1961) deals with the life of a young instructor Levin, who wants to bring about certain educational reforms at Cascadia State College. However, his earlier alcoholic life and his present love affairs – one with a faculty wife and another with a student – makes the administration sack him and throw him out to repent for his carnal sins. The novel is also notable for depicting the dissatisfaction a humanist would feel at a technical college.

Lyons, having made a thorough analysis of campus novels produced in America comments in one of his chapters that most of the campus novels depict “the abuse of reason in the academy and the absence of common sense in high places” (164). They do not commit themselves in offering solutions to the problems they portray. They remain uncommitted
portraying their teacher candidates as leaving the institution frustrated. Hence, they fail to create an everlasting impression on the minds of the readers also.

Some of the campus novels deal with academic freedom. In such novels, the teacher protagonist is punished either for violating religious or set rules or for holding liberal views.

John Goodrich’s *Cotton Cavalier* (1933) is one of the earliest novels that addresses the question of academic freedom. T.S. Stribling’s *These Bars of Flesh* (1938) deals with the life of a protagonist, Andy Barnett, who favours spiritual individualism as opposed to materialistic collectivism. He is ostracized by his colleagues as a traitor. Many of these campus novels have characters who, frustrated and angry with the hoary practices of academy, fight with and are fired since their views do not correspond to the spirit of the times.

There are also characters in these novels who are shown as being liberal and who fight with a conservative President or a Board of Trustees. These characters evince sympathy from both the author and the readers.

Mary McCarthy’s *The Groves of Academy* (1952) comes under this category. May Sarton’s *Faithful are the Wounds* (1955) also focus on academic freedom. The protagonist of the novel, Cavan wants his colleagues to expand the frontiers of intellectual freedom instead of becoming victims of intellectual complacency.

Some campus writers are interested in writing about the sexual encroachment of the teaching faculty who chase female students. For instance, Philip Roth in his series of novels starting with *The Breast* written in 1972 to *The Human Stain* (2000) is found to be constantly engaged in depicting the conflict between the moral and the sexual. Roth’s *The Professor of Desire* (1977) shows its protagonist David Kepesh to be in conflict with himself. He discovers that his intellectuality and his sexuality are at odds with each other. Throughout his life, David
Kepesh fights a recurring battle between reason and passion, duty and pleasure, dedication and lustful self-assertion, both as a teacher and a scholar. While his intellectuality frustrates him and steels him towards freedom from the restrictions of society, sex seems to be a liberating phenomenon from civilized inhibitions. In Roth’s *The Dying Animal* (2001), Kepesh is shown to be old. Nevertheless, even after turning 70, Kepesh gives top priority to sex. Despite his senility, his libido remains intact. Once, when he is engaged in giving a seminar in Practical Criticism at a New York College, he finds lots of scope to move about with vulnerable sex partners.

Roth’s another novel *The Human Stain* uses the campus setting as a way to vent his rage against practical correctness. It preys on stereotypes of the academy. It describes an incident where Coleman Silk, a Classics Professor is charged with racism and is essentially run off the campus as he has used the word ‘spooks’ for describing the two black students who never show up for class. The novel also brings in satirical portrayals of deans who are beset by trials for denying salary raises and parking spots and who also turn down promotions and many such requests.

*Goodbye Columbus* (1959) by Roth too shows its protagonist Neil Klugman being in a conflict between his public and private lives. On the one side, he seems to exhibit an idealistic nature and on the other, unrestrained – self-gratification.

Saul Bellow, another well-known academic fiction writer came out with his academic novel, *Ravelstein* (2000). Like his earlier novels, *Herzog* (1964), and *The Dean’s December* (1982), *Ravelstein* too has an academic for its protagonist. *Ravelstein* has often been compared with Philip Roth’s *The Human Stain*. The protagonists of both the novels are old men who have sexual liaison with much younger women. To these writers, sex signified life and not death.
Francine Prose is yet another novelist who has dealt with the problem of sex in her novels. Prose in *Blue Angel* (2000) tells how a temptress leads a smug professor Ted Swenson to humiliation and ruin. Ted Swenson, the professor who teaches Creative Writing at Euston College in Vermont is obsessed with a bizarrely dressed, dishonest Goth girl, Angelo Argo. This girl uses him for her own ends and finally leads him to face a ‘campus judicial hearing’ that gets him sacked for his sexual misconduct.

J.M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace* (1999) too portrays a situation with a professor in it. It is the story of David Lurie, a South African professor of English who loses everything because of having seduced one of his students. Lurie is dismissed from his teaching position and is put to severe disgrace. Shown as an intellectual snob who is contemptuous of others in the beginning, Lurie allows himself to be punished. Alan Charles Kors, commenting on the novel, especially on the professor’s stupidity in having allowed himself to be lured by the temptress, says that there are a few cunning professors who “lay in wait for unwary, dewy creatures who yield to their guise,” but there are also “the ordinary souls who somehow stumble their way imperceptibly into sexual… and thus, in these times, institutional and personal disaster” (Kors 71). This novel is termed as being “opportunistic and shallow” by Kors since some of the characters and their actions do not represent the actual university set up.

*The Rebel Angels* (1981) by the Canadian writer Robertson Davies has a university setting and follows several faculty and staff of the fictional college of St. John and Holy Ghost.

Sir Malcolm Bradbury, a successful campus novelist wrote the most famous work, *The History Man* in 1975. It deals with the carnal desires of the people occupying various hierarchical positions in the university. It particularly deals with Howard Kirk, a lecturer in Sociology, at the local university. During his student years, he and his wife were religious and
were hopeful of improving their educational opportunity. However, later when they got married, they resorted to activities, which are not approved. Any female student who comes to them is ruthlessly made to baby-sit and perform domestic chores. Barbara, Howard’s wife, during Howard’s stay at the university as a lecturer, has spontaneous sex with an Egyptian student. Shocked at first, Howard soon gets over it and associates himself with all kinds of radical people. He has many sexual partners, all of whom are associated with the university as either faculty members or students. The Kirks also throw parties now and then and allow their guests to have sex in the many rooms they provide for that. Finally, at one point in the novel, Howard’s amorous practices land him in trouble and he is told that he might be fired for “gross turpitude” (Bradbury). Barbara, despite being admired by their friends, for having a stable yet advanced marriage commits suicide. The novel, thus, is a harsh indictment on the university and its inhabitants’ ways of living.

*Zuleika Dobson* (1911) is the only novel written by Max Beerbohm and is well known for its satire of the undergraduate life at Oxford. The eponymous character Zuleika Dobson, being a conjurer by profession, is also an attractive woman. She manages to enter the prestigious and all-male domain of Oxford University with the help of her grandfather, the warden of Judas College. There, she entices the undergraduates with her manners and looks but rejects her suitors since she feels that she cannot love anyone unless he is impervious to her charms. Almost all rejected suitors commit suicide and it is a shame that the university’s academic staff fail to notice that all their undergraduates have vanished. After Zuleika took full toll, she gets ready to move on to her next target, Cambridge.

Kingsley Amis’ *Lucky Jim* was published in 1954 and the novel is well known for having shown the campus as a microcosm, a place where humanity plays out its obsessions and
discovers what makes life bearable. It serves as an ideal atmosphere for satire and explores the human condition in all its weaknesses. The eponymous character Jim Dixon is a young lecturer who anxiously waits for tenure. He is dominated and treated as insignificant by the professorial charlatans and working under the department’s head, an inane and ridiculous person, Dixon seeks refuge in booze and love affairs. When he begins his career, he is portrayed as an aspiring person who takes efforts to come up in the academic world. He attempts writing articles since he lives in a publish-or-perish environment.

However, appraising his work, he feels a hypocrite and fool. His feelings of himself worsen and this forces him to be disheartened and drunk.

A.S. Byatt’s Possession (1990) was an academic best seller. Her novel The Biographer’s Tale (2000) revolves around a graduate student who sets out to write a biography of the biographer. It begins with an epiphany where a doctoral student of English literature, Phineas Nanson, sitting in a seminar, discussing Lacan’s theory of Morcellement decides, all of a sudden, that he cannot go on with the world of academia.

Another sub-genre/branch of Academic novels is academic murder mystery or campus mysteries. These novels avoid explicit violence but pave the way for satire and to the question of who did it. Almost all academic mysteries take a keen look at the follies and eccentricities of those in the academy. Some of the murder mystery novels include Gaudy Night (1936) by Dorothy L. Sayers, School for Murder (1984) by Robert Barnard, Book (1992) by Robert Grudin and Michael Innis’ Death at the President’s Lodging (1936).

Gaudy Night by Dorothy L Sayers can be considered as the first campus murder mystery. Written in the year 1936, the novel interweaves a love story with the struggles of women to achieve some independence and status within the social climate of England of the
1930s. Harriet Vane, the protagonist of the novel is a mystery writer who is invited to her Alma Mater, Shrewsbury College, to attend ‘gaudy’ celebrations. Instead of enjoying the celebration, she is forced to investigate the mystery that takes place in the college. Harriet, during the course of her inspection, examines her ambivalent feelings about love and marriage along with her attraction to academic as an intellectual and emotional refuge. The novel brings to the fore the hypocrisies, greed and vanity that exist amidst the female community of the college. It also portrays the conflict between the material and the spiritual. It includes the usual academic pleasure means like gossips, fashion, food, and drink.

There are some academic novels that discuss the question of women and education or women’s role in academic or campus fiction. Such novels are not only interesting but also provide a good scope for researching on women-related issues and their experiences on the educational front – both as powerful faculty members and as students.

Thus, the brief study of some of the British and American campus novels shows that the production of campus novels in Western countries is enormous and there is not a subject untouched by them. The study also shows that campus fiction, with its huge output, has almost reached a saturation point. However, even at this stage, in the genre of campus fiction, some countries show relatively scarce production of campus novels. India for instance, despite its richness in literature, is still in the growing stage with regard to the release of campus novels and it is a general charge that campus novels are not a favoured form among Indian writers.

Nonetheless, in the beginning of the twenty-first century, modern Indian writers, with their keen interest in inquisitively exploring innovative themes, have started proving their might in this genre also. Modern Indian writers are no more bothered about the western audience they used to be conscious of. These writers have turned introspective and have started
speaking to an exclusive Indian audience about themselves in unpretentious English. They carve a niche for themselves by trying their hands at various genres.

These writers probe into the many Indian issues and explore a variety of themes that are contemporary and very Indian. Among the much sought-after genres of the recent times, attraction is recently towards the genre of college fiction, which again has a few other sub-genres.

Careful research shows that Indian novelists too have been acutely conscious of the academic situation and we now have a few writers who are overtly conscious of this kind of fiction.

Indian English novelists like R.K.Narayan, Prema Nandakumar, Anuradha Marwah Roy, Anita Desai, Rita Joshi, Meena Alexander, Kaveri Bhatt, Ranga Rao, Rani Dharker, Chetan Bhagat, Amitaba Bhagchi, Srividya Natarajan, and some of the Tamil writers like Prabhanjan, Panjangam, Balakumaran, Jaisakthi, and Raj Gauthaman have contributed to this genre. Of these, this research will concentrate on the writings post 1980, penned by Prema Nandakumar, Anuradha Marwah Roy, Rita Joshi, Rani Dharker, Prabhanjan, Panjangam, Balakumaran and Jaisakthi.

These writers reveal the conflicts, desires, ambitions and hypocrisies inherent in the academic set-up. They try to portray the insider’s real experience and perception. Some novels present the academicians as being the complete antithesis of a pedant. Laundering the students, they show them as fighters of good and just causes and they show them rejecting the role of roisterers.

Some academic novels portray professors with idealistic notions who crave for academic freedom to bring in academic excellence. They inanely assume the university to be a
place of intellectual adventure and are disappointed due to its unintellectual practices. They leave the institution frustrated and move on in favour of a better intellectual quest, which, they feel would not be found in academia. Prabhanjan’s novel *Kagitha Manidargal* (1995) exemplifies this. It deals with a Vice-Chancellor, Subramanian, who sincerely does his job but is forced to leave due to some mitigating circumstances.

Academic novels in India date back to R.K.Narayan’s period when he wrote his *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937). This novel that appeared in India at an early stage cannot be labelled as a full-fledged campus novel, since it, though with academic setting in the first part, takes on a personal flight in the latter. The novel devotes the first few chapters to the protagonist’s college experience and then moves on to his love and familial life. This is the state in most of the Tamil novels that have university or college as their setting for a few chapters, and then move on with a different purpose, thus neglecting the seriousness of academy. According to Lyons, such novels that lack serious treatment of higher education, though contains students or professors as characters, cannot come under campus fiction category. He, in his introduction to *The College Novel in America* (1962), clearly states his criteria for considering a novel, a college novel: “I consider a novel of academic life one in which higher education is treated with seriousness and the main characters are students or professors” (Lyons xvii).

Upholding Lyons’ views, and also going after Lodge’s proposition that “the novel of a young man’s emotional and psychological development from youth to maturity” (Lodge, “Nabokov,” par. 2) could better be grouped under the German criticism *Bildungsroman* than ‘Campus Novel’, *The Bachelor of Arts* and similar such novels like Narayan’s *Swami and Friends* (1935) can just be considered as novels that sowed the seeds for writers becoming conscious of the campus setting, rather than as full-fledged campus novels.
R.K.Narayan’s *The English Teacher* (1935) has Krishna, a sensitive and sincere teacher working at Albert Mission College, Malgudi. In the beginning, we see him as an enthusiastic teacher who avidly teaches literature to his students. He is also portrayed as an affectionate and protective father of Leela. But after his wife Susila’s death, he is tortured by feelings of loneliness and lives a mechanical life attending college and looking after his daughter. He is forced to face the harsh realities of life and is tempted to commit suicide. However, the thoughts of his daughter stop him and he continues to live an existential life. The novel concludes with Krishna resigning his post as English teacher and reuniting with his dead wife through his psychic communion.

There are a few Indian English campus novels that were written before the 1980s. But these novels were eclipsed due to reading audiences who were not impressed by them. *The Vermilion Boat* (1953) by Sudhin N. Ghose is in three parts and recounts the college education of its hero. His college days are just a part of his growing up. The novelist concentrates more on his relationship with a Eurasian girl Roma than on his college life or campus events. *The Flame of the Forest* (1955) by the same writer too provides a campus setting and it contains “a fine satirical picture of the avaricious college professor, who prescribes his worthless anthology as a textbook for monetary gains” (Narayan 153). The novel brings out the sycophantic nature of the teachers whose aim is academic excellence through attendance of the Vice Chancellor’s Durbars and not through their scholarliness and intellectuality.

*The Long, Long Days* (1960) by P.M.Nithyanandan is a nostalgic account of college days in South India. *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960) by Raja Rao recounts the life of a young research student who devotes little attention to his studies. Rama Sarma’s *The Farewell Party* (1976) is a reverie of a senior professor on the day of his retirement. Anita Desai’s *In Custody*
published in 1984, presents the world of Deven Sharma, a poorly paid Hindi lecturer in a provincial town. His stay away from the university, in order to safeguard Urdu poetry, is not very successful, and he is thought of by his fellow professors as having a break, enjoying romantic affairs. *Miracles Happen* (1985) by D.R.Sharma comes under the category of campus novels written during the 80s.

Prema Nandakumar, can be considered as the first Indian writer who has written a full-fledged campus novel focusing on the activities of the academicians. Her novel, *Atom and the Serpent* (1982), which will be referred to extensively in this research, serves as the best example of Indian English Campus Fiction.

*Nampally Road* (1991) by Meena Alexander is yet another novel that has for its protagonists, teachers who are involved in political activities. Meena Alexander, basing her own experiences on *Nampally Road* narrates the story from the point of view of its female protagonist, Mira Kannadical. After having been a student in England for four years, Mira returns to India as an English Professor at Sona Nivas College in Hyderabad. There she witnesses political turbulence and unrest and is deeply moved by the problems of the people. She joins hands with her lover Ramu who drags her into politics and tries to define herself by getting involved in the society around her. Her relationship with Ramu enhances her social and political awareness and she tries to re-contextualize her teaching and writing. This novel is not a campus novel since the setting and background is not the university but the city as a whole. Moreover, the political problems of the city have gained dominance and there is no question relating to higher education or aspects relating to it.

Anurag Mathur born in Delhi has experiences of having been educated at American universities. He graduated at St. Stephen’s College, Delhi and at the University of Tulsa,
Oklahoma, U.S.A. He is a journalist in the print and electronic media. He has to his credit two bestselling novels, *The Inscrutable Americans* (1991) and *Making the Minister Smile* (2002). *The Inscrutable Americans* is highly comical and humorous and narrates the fun-filled adventure of a naïve 20-year-old boy who lives all alone in the U.S. Gopal Kumar left his native town Jajau in Madhya Pradesh to do a one-year in-depth course in Chemical Engineering in a small town university in the U.S. His family has been in the hair oil business for decades and is used to vegetarian food. Gopal is also instructed by his mother to have vegetarian food cooked by Brahmins only and to keep himself away from beef. His life at Eversville is hilariously brought out by the novelist. Gopal is befriended by Randy who introduces American ways to him but he takes everything in his stride. Randy attempts several times to make him lose his virginity but fails and finally Gopal returns to India.

Ranga Rao’s *The Drunk Tantra* (1994) is a campus novel that satirizes the involvement of politics and politicians in the affairs of the university. It shows the interest of the inhabitants of the university in promotions, not based on merits but on contacts. It shows how the pretentious intellectuals of the academy debase themselves by going out of the way and involving themselves in cheap practices in order to climb the academic ladder. *The Drunk Tantra* tells the story of its protagonist, Hari Kishen (justifiably nick-named “Hairy”) who despite his amorous and inefficient teaching practices is able to succeed in reaching the top hierarchical position as a Principal and later also tries for the post of Vice-Chancellor.

Shakuntala Bharvani, a college teacher, wrote the novel, *Lost Directions* (1996), portraying a college teacher who tries to come to terms with her need for companionship. The novel presents the predicament of the narrator using a variety of narrative techniques like letters, folk tales and short stories.
Kaveri Nambisan, who penned her first novel, *The Truth about Bharat, Almost* (2002) under her maiden name of Kaveri Bhatt began her creative writing by contributing stories for children’s magazines. She wrote several stories to the now obsolete children’s magazine *Target*. Some of her notable books apart from *The Truth about Bharat, Almost* are *The Scent of Pepper* (1996), *Mango-Coloured Fish* (1998), *On Wings of Butterflies* (2002), and *The Hills of Angheri* (2005). She is a surgeon who practices in rural India and at present works as a surgeon and medical advisor at the Tata Coffee Hospital in Kadagu, Karnataka. She has created several programmes for child immunization and faulty planning for the rural communities.

Her first novel *The Truth about Bharat, Almost* is a story about a rebellious young medical student’s escapades. He goes to Kerala on his motorcycle through Central India and Mysore. His peripatetic adventures help him towards maturity where he learns that running away is not a wise option, and hence, returns home. His picaresque adventures and his growth towards maturity adds to the aspect of calling the novel a *Bildungsroman*, rather than a campus fiction.

Chetan Bhagat, a recent famous campus novel writer, wrote his grand *Five Point Someone – What not to do at IIT* in 2004. He also authored three other famous books namely, *One Night @ the Call Centre* (2005), *The Three Mistakes of My Life* (2008) and *Two States: The Story of my Marriage* (2009).

*Five Point Someone* is a grand campus novel set in the IIT Delhi campus. It is the story that narrates the tale of three friends who find it difficult to improve their grades. Despite being intelligent, they mess up their grades. They try hard to cope with the heavy workload and with heavy competition.
The story is narrated by one of the three friends, Hari, who is smart and bright. His two other best friends are Alok and Ryan, and all the three stay in the IIT hostel. The novel is highly interesting with the three friends fighting with one another occasionally and for portraying the various encounters with their Professors. Hari is even in love with one of his professors’ daughter, which makes things even more complicated. The novel with its many incidents is a hit, given the present dismal side of educational institutions. It abounds in sarcasm and harsh criticism.

Abhijit Bhaduri is another Indian English campus fiction writer who wrote the novel Mediocre but Arrogant (2005). Bhaduri currently works as a Human Resources professional in the U.S. He is a man of many interests and loves theatre. He is an accomplished cartoonist and has illustrated several books. His debut novel, Mediocre but Arrogant, is set in a Business School campus and is a blend of fun, frolic, sadness, romance and reflection. It is a funny story of how an unambitious undergraduate from Delhi University lands up in the highly competitive Management Institute of Jamshedpur (MIJ), India. The novel is about the protagonist’s life in the campus and the change that his campus life brings about in his relationships, in his dreams, and for that matter in his life itself. It is about the growing up of the undergraduate student. It again could under Bildungsroman category.

Sudeep Chakravarti’s Tin Fish (2005) is a look at the adolescent years of four boys as they grow up in a public school. Barun Ray nicknamed as Brandy has a pleasurable time with his friends Fish, Porridge and PT Shoes at the hostel. His father, having witnessed a shootout at the hostel opposite their house is appalled and hence admits Barun in a boarding school at Mayo College in Ajmer, Rajasthan. The novel has in its backdrop the political change in India.
Tin Fish is sometimes funny, sometimes sad, and takes the readers on an exciting read about adolescent lives.

Anything for You Ma’am: The Love Story of an IITian (2006) is a novel by Tushar Raheja, an IIT graduate. The novel goes off like a love story where Tejas, an IIT Delhi student, who, in his final year of Industrial Engineering is in love with his sister’s friend, Shreya. Shreya lives in Chennai and Tejas in Delhi. He lies to his parents and Professors, skips out off his Industrial visit and tries to leave for Chennai to see Shreya. But his plans are intervened by Prof. P.Sidhu who smells something fishy. Prof. Sidhu is determined to annihilate Tejas’ plans.

Above Average (2007) by Amitaba Baghchi is an interesting campus tale – a tale of a middle class teacher in Delhi yearning to be a drummer of a rock band. Although Arindham Chatterjee, (or Rindu as he is called), the protagonist of the novel is good in Maths and Science, his mind is on the IIT Rock Fest. The novel set in Delhi, highlights the follies of academic life. It is made up of a series of anecdotal stories that tears off the masks of affectation of the academicians, and brings out the hypocrisies and snobbishness of the protagonist’s college friends. Although he was a seven pointer in the department, he was not taken seriously, academically, by his classmates or by his professors. He feels bewildered and shaken when his professor Kantikar rejects him and selects another student with a lower CGP than him for Ph.D. The author brings to light the fallacious standards of judging the academic worth of students. He finds the university a place of betrayals, jealousies and losses and is always reminded of his inner ordinariness.

Everything you Desire – A Journey through IIM (2007) is a novel that reflects the student life of its author, Harshdeep Jolly. Jolly is an alumnus of the Indian Institute of
Management, Bangalore and the book is an interesting insight into the emotions, aspirations, trials and tribulations of an IIM student during his stay in the place.

*Joker in the Pack – An Irreverent View of Life at IIMS* (2007) is a novel by Neeraj Pahlajani (alumnus of IIM Bangalore) and Ritesh Sharma (alumnus of IIM, Lucknow). The novel describes the student life of Shekhar Verma, a middle class boy growing up in urban India. He is pressurized by his parents, relatives and neighbours to take life seriously and to do his studies well. Although he is immensely interested in cricket and Bollywood, he considers pursuing a career in Information Technology. Hence, he decides to graduate in IT, but gets disheartened when the IT field deteriorates and its professionals’ salaries, crash. However, he makes up his mind to do an MBA and joins IIM Bangalore in order to get his dream job. The novel, progresses making him more mature and successful in the eyes of the society.

*Three Makes a Crowd* (2007) by Kaushik Sirkar is a narrative on hostel life at Dehradun’s Rashtriya Indian Military College. It is a story of three friends, Arnab, Saurav and Bhaskar and their escapades at the IMA.

Karan Bajaj, the young writer of the novel *Keeping off the Grass* (2008) is an alumnus from IIM Bangalore, and was selected as one of the top ten young business leaders of India by the Aditya Birla Foundation. *Keeping off the Grass* is a novel that keeps us hooked to the life of the protagonist. The protagonist, Samrat Ratan, son of second generation U.S. immigrants, leaves his plum job of an investment banker on Wall Street and comes down to Bangalore to join the IIM. Though finding his roots is his main aim in coming down to India, he gets addicted to smoking marijuana and undergoes a mix of bizarre experiences.

Namita Gokhale’s *The Book of Shadows* (1999) revolves around the life of a 34-year-old college lecturer, Rachita Tewari. Tewari suffers at the hands of her fiancé’s sister who
mutilates her face by throwing acid on it. This story deals with ghosts and is a chronicle of displacement, strangeness and exile. It is a narrative that is deeply compelling and disturbing and leaves in the readers deep shadows from the past.

Soma Das is another noteworthy, contemporary campus novel writer who has set her debutant novel *Sumthing of a Mocktale* (2007) in the famous JNU campus. Soma Das is a teacher at New Delhi’s Miranda House. *Sumthing of a Mocktale* is based on similar lines as other campus novels and has a lengthy title, *Sumthing of a Mocktale at JNU where the Kurta fell in Love with Jeans*. It poignantly highlights the flaws and hypocrisies within the university and also has taken enough care to portray its virtues. Soma Das, in this novel, has brought in the personal and intellectual journey of three students of JNU; Kaya, Shubhra, and Ragini towards maturity. The three friends after going to JNU find themselves misfits in the campus and their escapades into the many adventures of the campus are highly entertaining.

*No Onions Nor Garlic* (2008) by Srividya Natarajan is a charming campus novel that is set in Chennai University. Natarajan is a talented creative writer and a teacher at the University of Ontario. In this novel, she humorously satirizes the caste stratifications that exist in educational institutions. She shows how the academy, instead of breaking away and destroying social stratifications, serves to stabilize it through the ill practices of academicians. The novel wittily deflates the sanctimonies of the academicians and harshly criticizes the prevailing caste system. It shows, humorously, how intellectual gatherings like seminars and conferences take a secondary interest when it comes to sex and shopping. In fact, the novel mocks at the very seriousness of conferences and the author shows her familiarity with famous academic novels like *The Groves of Academy* and *Small World*. 
The novel opens with Professor Ram (short for Pattabhiraman), a hard core Brahmin involved in remaking Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. The notion behind his remaking the play is to restore the Traditional Order of Hinduism. He uses his students Amandeep, Murugesh, Rufus and Sundar as the fairies of the play. These four students who involve themselves in dirty talks are not happy with their roles and are mainly unhappy because the roles that they thought would be played by the ladies were given to them to be performed.

Professor Ram is a person who dislikes people who belong to the so-called lower castes, especially the *dalits*. He feels that these lower caste rubbles as he calls them, should find no place in the university, and hence, is against the University’s Reservation Policy. He also sees to it that he and his Brahmin friends stop lower caste candidates entering the university at the entry level itself by a severe scrutiny of applications. His enemy in the department is an attractive woman, Professor Laurentia Arul, who represents the lower caste and they are in a constant fight with each other. Professor Ram incites his Brahmin students to have a check over the *dalits* and he fixes responsibility on Sundar, his student, to hold a demonstration against a Dr. Ambedkar statue that has been installed in the college premises. He also adopts shameless measures in getting his son Chunky the post of Lecturer in the Drama and Folklore department.

The novel is a biting scorn on those who believe in entrenched inherited status and it criticizes the unsympathetic research supervisors who cruelly exploit and victimize students for their selfish concerns.

*The Funda of Mix-ology: What Bartending Teaches that IIM Doesn’t* (2008) by Mainak Dhar is again a novel that could enter the compartment of campus fiction since it is the story of a young man, an IIM passed out alumnus, who is working in a firm called Dynamix. He has a high paying, high stress job and is immersed in his work. After a few years, he ponders over his
mad pursuit of academic excellences at IIM and realizes that his IIM education did nothing to make him compete with the rat race of his job and the drudgery that characterized his day-to-day life.

_Bombay Rains Bombay Girls_ (2008) by Anirban Bose is set in a medical school where Adi, a small town eighteen year old comes to study medicine. When he joins, he suffers from severe inferiority complex. However, as days pass, he makes friends with Pheru, Harsha, Rajeev, Sam and Toshi, a motley crew. His success, which he thinks has come to him by fluke, makes him act as a leader. His friends regard him as a born leader. He gains confidence because of various incidents. The author, through the life of Adi, has created a campus life with a bunch of quirky characters, campus ragging and campus politics, together with the challenge of learning the mysteries of human anatomy, discovering love and heartbreaks and interpreting new meanings of friendship.

Another campus novel that projects features of campus novels is _A Sunny Shady Life_ (2009) by Sachinn Garg. Garg is a Delhi-based novelist who graduated from Delhi College of Engineering in 2008. He has worked in a university in Paris and in a top financial firm in Delhi. _A Sunny Shady Life_ starts in a college campus with stereotypical ragging. It revolves around the story of Sunny, a teenager from a middle class background. He lands up in a reputed engineering college and undergoes a lot of hardship at the hands of the clerical staff and faculty. When he joins college, he is hopeful of having a successful life. But soon realizes that there is much more to it with all the loopholes in the Indian system of education. In his quest for success and idealism, he is helped by Vartika, his ladylove who is also a successful professional. It is Vartika who helps him during his testing times; he is suspended from college for a week and his life is transformed as he goes from being an idle to an ideal individual.
Now that an overview of some of the Indian English novels that have campus elements or settings have been given, the thesis will concentrate on the writers whose works have been taken up for study in the present research.

Prema Nandakumar, the writer of *Atom and the Serpent*, a magnum opus of Indian English Campus Fiction, is the daughter of the renowned Prof. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, the first biographer of Sri Aurobindo and the author of *Indian Writing in English*. Her father’s research on Sri Aurobindo instilled in her an interest in Aurobindo’s writings and she made a thorough research on Sri Aurobindo’s epic poem *Savitri* (1950). She obtained her Ph.D. in 1961 for having made a study on it. It can be said that hers was the first in-depth study of *Savitri* that helped subsequent scholars working on *Savitri* or *Savitri* related subjects. Nandakumar’s postdoctoral research was on the comparison of Dante and Sri Aurobindo.

Due to her colossal research on Sri Aurobindo, she began disseminating Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy and writings to audiences the world over. Nandakumar is also a well-known biographer of the famous Tamil poet, Bharati. She has written the biography of Bharati and also has biographies on the Mother and Sri Aurobindo.

Nandakumar is a frequent contributor to several Ashram-related journals including *Sri Aurobindo's Action*, *Mother India*, *The Advent* and *The Call Beyond*. Her familiarity with Aurobindo’s writings provoked her to come out with a three-year series of articles on “The Evolution of the Aurobindonian Heroine” for the journal *The Advent*. She has also planned to come out with a new series on *The Book of Fate*. Out of her interest in Mahasaraswati, she wrote her latest series of articles with Mahasaraswati as the main theme and for this, she has drawn on sources as varied as the Vedas, *the Mahabharata*, Kannada literature, and Bengali poetry.
Nandakumar is also an acclaimed critic and translator and has received several awards for her contributions to Indian literature. She has translated poems of the great Tamil poet Subramania Bharati into English. Added to this, she has also translated Akilan’s Tamil novel *Chittirapavai* (1981) into English and Chaman Nahal’s English novel *Azadi* (1988) into Tamil. Seetalai Sathanar’s Tamil verse *Manimekalai* was translated by her into English. *T.V. Kapili Sastri* is yet another translated work of hers.

Prema Nandakumar is a frequent contributor of literary essays, reviews and short stories (in Tamil and English) to various publications in India and abroad.

Her novel *Atom and the Serpent* is a severe indictment on the academy and its practices. Her sharp satirical pen has not failed to touch upon any of the unpleasant or unpleasing activities of the academicians. In fact, the novel is out and out satirical that makes one wonder whether it is written for pleasure reading or for merely recording things, leaving the reforming of the present squalid academic situation to the readers. This novel presents the academy as being too busy with internal squabbles and shows how academicians fight for funds and foreign assignments. It also portrays Indian universities as places where little true research takes place.

Rani Dharker, the author of *The Virgin Syndrome* (1997) is a full time writer who left her job as Professor of English Literature at the Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda. She has written many short stories and articles that have appeared in a number of magazines and journals. She has written and illustrated a book for children called *Champagner and The Magic Mountain Pavagadh* (2002). For eight years, she wrote a column for the *Baroda Times* called “The D(h)arker View.” She was an Assistant Editor of *Arre Magazine*, and is Text Editor of *24K*, a magazine for NRIs. She has acted in and directed a number of plays. She is an activist for animal rights and the environment.
Her novel *The Virgin Syndrome* published in 1997 received critical acclaim and was short-listed for the Commonwealth (Euro-Asian) Awards. Written in the first person narrative, from the point of view of the unnamed female protagonist, the novel deals with female sexuality. It is about the heroine who is unable to come to terms with her sexuality. Possessing a strange inability to take a relationship to fulfillment, she is often stalled by the virgin syndrome that stops her from consummating any relationship. Her maverick idealism and artistic sensibility do not allow her to continue in any profession. She begins her career as a school teacher and frustrated at the teachers’ superstitious and narrow-minded nature quits. She next works as a copywriter in an advertising agency and not being able to continue resigns. Later, she serves as a temporary university lecturer but is sent away from her job after five years, since she joined hands with some of her colleagues to oppose the Vice-Chancellor. Only a few pages of the novel are devoted to the narrator’s experiences in educational institutions. However, what little is found is quite contributory to type the novel as an academic fiction type. Like David Lodge’s *Small World*, this novel too contains some enjoyable satire on college life and seminar circuits.

Rita Joshi is another Indian English writer who is interested in the genre of campus novels. Her first work of fiction *The Awakening: A Novella in Rhyme* published in 1992 is out-and-out a campus novel that describes the professional life of its heroine JR. The author inspired by Vikram Seth’s style of writing, has written this novella in rhymed couplets.

JR is portrayed as an idealistic lecturer working in Supreme College in Delhi. The novel satirizes the various aspects of college and highlights the ambitions and hypocrisies that prevail among the academicians. The novelist freely uses abbreviations as is common in colleges and does not fail to portray the petty politics there. Besides displaying the unpleasant and unethical
practices of academicians, he humorously points out how guidebooks are popular among students and how young girls take up literature as their study for wrong reasons: “An English literature type is thought smart/ and so good for the marriage mart” (ANR 14).

Anuradha Marwah Roy, the author of *The Higher Education of Geetika Mehendiratta* (1993) was born in 1962. Taking to creative writing even at a tender age of ten, Marwah Roy has written many poems and short stories. It is with the birth of her second son that she keenly felt she should assert her identity as a writer, and hence, put her hands to novel writing. She wrote *The Higher Education of Geetika Mehendiratta* in nine months and the novel exposed her erudite nature. It is a remarkable novel that touchingly tells an attractive story about the growing up of a young woman. In fact, apart from considering it as a female *Bildungsroman*, it can be considered as the first campus novel that brings in the campus life from both student and teacher’s viewpoint. Prema Nandakumar’s novel deals exclusively with teachers, whereas Anuradha Marwah Roy’s with both teachers and students.

Coming from a bilingual background, Anuradha Marwah Roy opted for English for her creative writing and proved to be a natural storyteller. She is at present an English teacher at Zakir Hussain University in New Delhi. Her experience as a teacher has taught her to speak with authority. She exhibits her authority in her second novel *Idol Love* (1999), where she shows sensitiveness to societal issues like ill-treatment of women and lower class people.

Marwah’s third novel, *Dirty Picture* (1999) brings out the sexual exploitation of young women by politicians and the law in small towns. She bases this novel on a real life incident that took place in her hometown, Ajmer, in the early 90s. Marwah, having read a sexual victim’s story in the local newspaper felt the need to earnestly portray the macabre realities. By
doing so and empathizing with the victimized protagonist so well, she has brought out a novel that is highly moving and engrossing.

Indian English fiction writers, although aware of the academic situation, and have contributed a little for academic fiction, are yet to produce in larger numbers, teacher-narrated or professor’s point-of-view campus fiction. Of course, there has been a flush of student point-of-view campus novels, especially at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Unfortunately, Indian English fiction, although abounding in campus fiction, is yet to have academic mysteries proper. Nevertheless, what little production it has made in the area of campus novels, has certainly provided fertile ground for research work.

Tamil literature, although rich in its literary production, has not contributed much to this genre – Campus Fiction. Campus fiction in Tamil is still in its infancy stage. However, how much so ever marginal its production is, it is still noteworthy. There are so many Tamil novels that consist of university or college setting but not all of those can be termed as campus fiction since the campus would have been used only as a background to bring out some other domestic or non-domestic stories or aspects. But with the few real campus novels like Prabhanjan’s *Kagitha Manidargal* (1995), Balakumaran’s *Snehamulla Singam* (1991), Pajangam’s *Oru Dalit, Oru Adikari, Oru Maranam* (2005), Raj Gauthaman’s *Kaala Sumai* (2005) and so on, campus fiction in Tamil too proves that it is aware of the academic situation. Some Tamil novelists, conscious of the happenings within the University, and realizing the campus to be a microcosm of the world, have written novels with the campus as their background. Many characteristic features of campus novels that encompass British, American, and Indian English are present in Tamil academic novels also.
Like Indian English campus novels, some Tamil campus novels too either dedicate the entire book to portraying the happenings in the university or any educational institution or dedicate only a few chapters to talk about the academic situation. The best example for the former kind of Tamil campus novel is Prabhanjan’s *Kagitha Manidargal* and for the latter, Panjangam’s *Oru Dalit, Oru Adikari, Oru Maranam* (2005). The book *Tamizh Naavalgal: Ore Arimugam (Tamil Novels: An Introduction)* (1979) by K.V. Geetha talks about certain Tamil novels that consist of academic situation. She cites some of the novels of Mu. Varadarajan like *Mann Kudisai* (1980), *Nenjil Oru Mul, Vaada Malar*, and comments that these novels talk about the change that is needed in the present educational system. These novels also interestingly seem to comment that there is no use in acquiring marks by merely mugging up things.

The novel, *Ponn Vilangil* talks about the evil effects that occur because of outside people’s political influences. Another novel that portrays the dangers of the intrusion of politics within the campus is *Satya Vellam* by Na. Parthasarathy. This novel has Pandian as the student leader and shows how some students, due to the bad political influences turn into terrorists and involve in murders. This novel describes how the Vice-Chancellor, Principal and the teachers of the college and university, despite being learned, and knowledgeable behave like ignorant fools who lack wisdom.

Rajam Krishnan’s novels *Verukku Neer* and *Roja Ithazhgal* too show how the youthful students fall into political gutter and lose their powerful and attractive fragrance. The novel *Teacheramma* (2001) by Ravindran explicates the kind of satisfaction teaching gives teachers.

The novel *Kaala Sumai* (2005) by Raj Gauthaman narrates the story of a lecturer, belonging to the *dalit* community. His days at Arignar Anna Government College as an
Assistant professor and the unpleasant experiences he faces there are portrayed in this novel. Though a few pages talk about his marital life, the author, in the beginning itself states that the protagonist Siluvai prefers to share his professional life alone with the readers and not his personal. Hence, the novel keeps itself to narrating the experiences of Siluvai as a *dalit* professor.

It is interesting to make a comparative study of Indian English and Tamil campus fiction since the study shows that despite the varied diversities in languages and regions, experiences within the educational institutions world over are the same. The campus novels bring out the human reality as set against intellectual pretensions.

The present research has taken the campus novels of Prabhanjan, Panjangam, Balakumaran and Jaisakthi for study.

“Kalaimamani” Prabhanjan is a rare phenomenon among the contemporary writers in Tamil. Born in Puducherry in 1945, Prabhanjan started writing at the early age of sixteen. He is a versatile writer who has tried his hands in several areas, ranging from short stories and historical fiction to playwriting and essays. He has written more than 100 stories and three novels. Prabhanjan had his primary education during the French rule. His early life was influenced by the French rule and he in fact based his two monumental novels on the early period of it. His *Vidvan* course at Tamil College of Karanthai, Tanjavur shaped his artistic mind and moulded his style of writing in chaste Tamil. It was in the year 1965 that he discovered his talent for creative writing. So far, Prabhanjan has written more than 300 stories and his early writings show his leftist leanings. His two major novels, *Manudam Vellum* and *Vanam Vasappadum* (1984) won him the *Ilakiya Sindanai Award* and the *Bharatiya Basha Parishad of West Bengal* in 1985. His first collection of short stories, *Oru Ooril Irandu Manidargal*
(1982) won him the Government of Tamil Nadu award for “Best Collection of Short Stories.” His other novels *Mahanadhi* and *Kagitha Manidargal* were equally successful.

Prabhanjan’s *Kagitha Manidargal*, written in 1995 upsets the traditional notions of the University. Through an ironic portrayal of the University, Prabhanjan shows it to be a place that no longer serves as a place of knowledge but one that harbours ignorance, manipulations, foolishness, selfishness and superstitions. He brings out the weaknesses of the academicians in this novel and shows teachers’ lack of interest in widening their knowledge.

He has an intelligent and service-minded Vice-Chancellor, Subramanian, as his protagonist in *Kagitha Manidargal*. Subramanian is straightforward and embarks upon removing the ugly practices of the academicians. He is severe on lecturers who are lecherous and corrupt. Lustful Lecturers hate and despise him and wait for a moment to pull him down, and thus settle scores with him. Vice-Chancellor Subramanian is also tough on teachers who are notorious for cutting classes and ignoring the welfare of the students. He takes them to task when they delay the valuation of M.Phil. and Ph.D. dissertations-related work. He lashes out at them knowing that they expect something from the students for valuing them.

Prabhanjan criticizes the very process of Ph.D. where students involve themselves in plagiarism. Prabhanjan does not fail to note the lowest means to which Ph.D. scholars are thrown to by their guides. He shows how the scholars are forced to do household chores for the wives of the professors and how they even go to the extent of serving their professors sexually in order to get their Doctorates.

Professor Azhagesan is one such professor in the novel, who makes his student Sudali do all sorts of odd jobs for him and his family. He also threatens his other students like Manimegalai to comply with his sexual desires. He urges his another sexual victim Nachellai to
persuade Manimegalai. When Nachellai refuses, he blackmails her with charges of evidence-filled corruption and threatens her stating that it would be brought to the light.

Prabhanjan derisively portrays the ways in which seminars and conferences are ritualized by teachers. He mockingly states that the seminars and conferences are transformed into luxurious salaried holidays by professors. He shows lecturers touring the world with their concubines under the pretext of attending intellectual meetings. Moreover, if a lecturer is invited by another lecturer for a conference, with return flight charges taken care of (although they travelled by train or bus) the same is reciprocated by the other lecturer when any conference takes place in his institution. By showing this, Prabhanjan attacks the callousness and self-centered nature of the teachers who never fail to grab the bounteous benefits provided by the U.G.C.

The novel also laughs at the way in which professors are used as puppets by the politicians. Vice-Chancellor Subramanian is asked by the Chief Minister to confer an Honorary Doctorate Degree on him. The straightforward Vice-Chancellor refuses to do so and hence plans are devised to charge him with corruption.

Knowing the plans of the Ministry and some of his selfish colleagues who are lustful for power, the Vice-Chancellor resigns. Considering the power politics of the teachers and their jealousies against one another, Prabhanjan compares them to crabs put in an uncovered basket. Just as the crabs pull down its own which are trying to escape, so are some teachers who are jealous of one another. They would always try to pull down the other and manoeuvre to rise to a higher position. This squabbling for power is ridiculed by Prabhanjan.

Prabhanjan is also sensitive to the problems faced by women students and faculty. He shows how a Ph.D. scholar, Ratna, in spite of being educated, is no better in fighting against
fraudulent men or rather her fraudulent teacher. The novel’s other female characters too, like Nachellai, Manimegalai, Gomathy and many more are at one point or the other shown as the professors’ sexual targets. Varied female students with different attitudes are portrayed in the novel. There are some scholars, like Nachellai, who comply with the sexual allurements of the Professors. There are some others who oppose, but finally fall a victim. Some students, seeking power and glory, fall a prey themselves.

Prabhanjan shows that the most powerful Vice-Chancellor himself seems to be powerless. He shows the administration as being silent on the victimization of students, since the teacher is valuable to them.

Professor K. Panjangam is a voracious reader and a prolific writer. He is a contemporary writer who is well versed in post-modern theories and has contributed a great deal to the development of postmodernism in Tamil. He is at present a Reader in the Department of Tamil, Kanchi Mamunivar Centre for Post-Graduate Studies, Govt. of Puducherry. He has received a number of awards and has so far produced seven Ph.D.s. and fifty M.Phil. graduates. He has written around twenty-seven books in Tamil that includes six creative writings and the remaining, research publications. His novel *Matthiyillulla Manidargal (Men in Between)* (1982) portrays the mental distress of a married woman who could not live with her husband due to the abounding love she has for her father. His book *Mahakavi Bharati: Feminist Essays* (2000) received Puducherry Government's prestigious Kamban award, meant for literature.

Panjangam’s *Oru Dalit, Oru Adikari, Oru Maranam* (A Dalit, An Officer, A Death) (2005) is a novel that brings out the problems faced by the Dalits in India. It is a novel that
brings out the insults, rejections, and inhuman atrocities encountered by a Dalit officer in his urban setting.

Panjangam, through his protagonist, conveys to the readers the message that the life of a literate Dalit is full of hardships and insults than that of an illiterate dalit. His protagonist Balan begins his career as a teacher, progresses to the post of an IAS officer and loses his life due to the immense struggles, tortures and insults faced by him due to his identity as a dalit.

The novel devotes half a dozen of its chapters to talk about the life of Balan, an educated dalit teacher. The author being a postmodernist inserts the flashback techniques. When the novel opens, news about the demise of Balan comes to the narrator, Balan’s close friend.

Chapter II of the novel describes Balan’s life as a teacher in a college and it is here that the author drops bitter sarcasm on the institution and its inhabitants.

The narrator, Balan’s friend in college, is reminded of an incident where Balan was insulted by a student. The student hints at Balan’s belonging to an inferior caste and disobeys him thinking himself superior. Unable to bear the insult inflicted on him, Balan throws him out of the class.

The Principal and some other pro-principal teachers who all belong to the upper caste frown at his severe action against the student. They take this as a chance to put him down. They get a written complaint from both Balan and the student and express their dissatisfaction towards Balan.

Panjangam here shows teachers as sly and manipulative people who are always supported by power-dominated people like the principal. The principal also uses them as necessary tools to manipulate the institution’s affairs.
These upper caste teachers feel that the lower caste *dalit* teachers, like Balan, have no right to rebuke the upper caste students. Balan’s other *dalit* colleagues too are disappointed at Balan for having created a ruffle without adjusting with the student’s misbehaviour. They frown at his immediate severe action against the student. They tell him, that as *dalits*, they had no right in scolding or correcting the students and that they have to silently bear the insults thrust upon them by their students.

Panjangam, in this novel, sardonically comments that although jealousy is a common thing among co-workers everywhere, it is only in the educational institutions, especially with teachers, that it comes out more forcefully. He also says that the teachers go beyond their limits to please the students, since the Principal is scared of teachers who are supported by students’ strength. He also ironically points out that only such teachers will be considered for any Governing Committee decisions.

Panjangam through various incidents shows how teachers pretend to be the ‘know-alls’ and ‘well-learned’ people. He dryly says that ‘know-all’ tendency is natural in teachers who, even if they knew less, will show themselves as ‘well-learned’ people.

He also humorously states that only among teachers is found a habit, where if a teacher talks on some topic, the others too would immediately comment about their experiences regarding the same. He contemptuously says, that there are some teachers, who, without reading any books, would manage their classes with information collected through such talks. He cleverly shows the indifference in teachers in intensifying their knowledge.

Panjangam through this novel brings about the fact that educational institutions and the people serving in them serve as major factors in endorsing and increasing casteism in society.
He also shows how the *dalit* students are given ‘special’ treatment by the other students in the classes and in the hostel.

Panjangam also criticizes the ways in which students and faculty involve themselves in politics. In the novel *Matthiyillulla Manidargal* too, Panjangam highlights the problems of politics, both among the teachers and students. This novel like his *Oru Dalit, Oru Adikari, Oru Maranam* uses the flashback technique for narration. The protagonist and his wife as college teachers serve to group this novel under the campus novel category. It shows how self-financing colleges appoint lecturers based on recommendations. The novel also pictures the students’ strike, which is partially encouraged by some of the teachers themselves. It also satirically criticizes the pretensions of teachers when it comes to the publishing and presenting of papers.

Balakumaran’s *Snehamulla Singam* (1991) is yet another novel in Tamil that could be brought into the frame of academic fiction. It is about the story of a student who turns into a murderer because of involvement of politics on campus. The very opening chapter of the novel shows the corrupt practices prevailing on campus.

The peon standing in front of the Principal’s chamber receives bribes from the visitors in order to allow them to meet the principal. The students are also shown as being roisterers and only pretend to be scared of teachers. The teachers are shown as absent-minded persons who are less interested in students’ welfare and who make no attempt at continual intellectual improvement.

The students are shown as being boisterous, full of zeal and gusto but do not know to channelise their fervour to proper use. Balakumaran, through his character Manjula, portrayed
as a creative writer, calls the students “mentally sick” (SS 80). The novel is a classic example to show that things will turn awry if politics or politicians are allowed to enter the campus.

Jaisakthi’s *Kanindha Mana Dheepangalai* (2008) is a novel that portrays the love life of two History lecturers. In the attempt, it partially contributes to exhibiting the characteristic traits of campus fiction. Unlike the earlier mentioned Tamil campus novels that are satirical portrayals of campus life, this novel pictures two idealistic teachers who are efficient and actively involved in research work. However, the author also juxtaposes these idealistic lecturers with the practical or realistic teachers showing them as having little inclination towards dedicated teaching and true research. Hence, it could be inferred that the author, in order to create a positive image of the protagonists have made a utopian portrayal of them.

The novel opens with the protagonist Kunthavi’s appointment as History lecturer. Her first meeting with her colleagues begins on a humorous note, although, she later on understands the hypocritical behaviour of the teachers. Gossips and backbiting abound in the department. But the protagonist unmoved by all those efficiently executes her duties as a teacher. She voluntarily initiates the functioning of the General Knowledge Club and acts as its Coordinator. It is this that throws her and the equally efficient, research inclined Sivanadhan together, and they fall in love.

Sivanadhan is shown as transforming students towards studiousness and his helping tendency shows itself when he helps teachers in moments of distress. Apart from traversing on a personal love story between these two lecturers, the novel disperses a few characteristic traits that belong to campus novels. It brings out the practices of nicknames in colleges and shows them enjoying unexpected holidays on some pretext or the other. It brings out the pretensions
of the teachers when some of them are shown as suppressing their negative emotions in order to safeguard their intellectual image.

The college novel is in itself highly interesting since it deals with the academic life, which of course is part of our lives. The College Novel or Academic fiction, as discussed earlier, can deal either with faculty members or with students, or even with both. The interplay between faculty members who belong to the permanent category and the students who are temporary would make an exciting reading but unfortunately most of the campus novels exclusively deal with either students only or Faculty alone. Nevertheless, whatever may be the subject of the academic novel it serves as an attractive one and immediately grasps the reader’s attention. As evidenced earlier, good number of academic novels has been produced in Western countries, especially in Britain and America. John O. Lyons, in his attractive study of American fiction, *The College Novel in America* (1962), states that the elements of campus fiction began to appear in novels, in the early 19th century itself. His chronological bibliographical list of novels shows campus novels to be produced as early as the 1800s. In the Preface to the book, written by Harry T. Moore, Moore states that Lyons could have still gone farther back to Plato’s period where Plato’s *Dialogues* could be considered as a real college novel. However, since Lyons’ concern was American campus novels, he begins with Hawthorne’s *Fanshawe* (1828). He has touched upon most of the elements of college novel and the very documentation and fine study challenge one to look at one’s own nation’s output in this interesting genre.

India is a land of varied diversities and languages, and Tamil as such, is a language rich in its literature. Tamil being the researcher’s mother tongue, she found the need to contribute to the growth of academic fiction in it, which right now is in its infant stage. Hence, the thesis attempts at a study of Indian campus novels, particularly Indian English and Tamil campus
fiction. It embarks upon an analysis of Indian academic novels dramatizing the workings of power within the academe. She concentrates on how Indian academic novels particularly concentrate on bringing out the unidealistic and unpleasant elements of academic characters. It makes a comparative study of these two, and brings out interesting similarities and contrasts between them.

On a wider perspective, this innovative study would contribute to an understanding of world’s ‘College Literature’ or ‘Academic Fiction,’ how much so ever narrowed the study is. A study of this would create interest in research scholars to perform many such comparative studies of academic novels belonging to different regions and languages. The study, with its fragile endeavour to bring in similarities and contrast, occasionally from British and American novels too, hints at the various prospective future studies.

Indian English and Tamil campus fiction, like their British and American counterparts, aim at portraying the inside of the academy. They picture the happenings within the academy and in the endeavour, the insiders’ experiences are depicted. As happens in most campus novels, the academics, whether students, faculty members, or administrative staff, it is their follies and foibles that are showcased. Their petty politics, stupid squabbles, and intriguing incidents are forayed and this itself satiates the curiosity of the readers about the academy. Academy being a closed world is most often viewed as an intriguing household and at the same time an idealistic place because of its closedness and far-off view. However, with the academic novel writers’ aims at disposing off this closedness, the readers are exposed to the struggles that the academicians face. In this perspective, both Indian English and Tamil campus writers are set upon exposing the follies and foibles of the academicians. In doing this, they are sometimes
critical and satirical, sometimes humorous, and most of the times just record things in an uncommitted manner.

Campus novels in general tend to propound the hypocrisies and pretensions of the closed world of the campus, and thus, present the academicians in the darker light. They show the academicians as being ambitious and lustful. This ambitious and lusty nature of the academicians is brought out in almost all novels taken for study.

Another common thing found both in Indian English and Tamil campus novels, for that matter even in British and American novels, is a satire on publications. Campus novelists show the universities as the most unintellectual places where the academicians fail to give due importance to research and teaching. In addition, the necessity in participation in seminars and conferences and the weight-age given to publications force them to indulge in unethical practices. They indulge in somehow writing something and succeeding in getting those published.

Campus novelists are interested in showing teachers as possessing little knowledge or sometimes even in showing them as being ignorant of their subjects. This aspect is found both in Indian English and Tamil campus novels. Another common aspect deciphered is that both these groups regard the teaching job as more convenient with less number of working hours and many salaried holidays.

A point of variation in Indian English and Tamil Campus Fiction is that the production of teacher-oriented campus novels is less in Tamil literature, when compared to the production of Indian English campus novels. In addition, the humour that is reflected in Indian English campus novels is deficient in Tamil Campus Fiction.
A marked difference between Western and Indian English Campus novels is the treatment of sex. Sex is not the blatant topic or even for that matter a much sought after theme in Indian campus novels. The main reason may be the cultural background of the countries. Like some of the Western Campus novels, Indian English Campus Novels too show the protagonist’s growth towards maturity or artistic maturity which could respectively be called as bildungsroman or kunstlerroman. However, no such novels are present in Tamil Campus fiction.

Indian English campus novels are superficial and they have not gone deep into the psyche of any techie character as some of the western novels like The Professor’s House (1969), The Professor of Desire (1978) have done. In other words, there are no novels that trace the stream-of-consciousness of any professorial characters, both in Indian English and Tamil campus novels. This element is found in abundance in western campus novels.

Like some western novels that are conscious of racial discrimination factors, some of the Indian English novels also exhibit the consciousness towards discriminating elements. This aspect is reflected in Tamil campus novels also. For instance, like Srividya Natarajan’s No Onions Nor Garlic being conscious of caste factor, so is Panjangam’s Oru Dalit, Oru Adikari, Oru Maranam.

At this point of the thesis, it is essential to draw attention to the research work done earlier in connection with the present area of study. An assessment of some such works done so far would not only throw light on the various novels taken for study and the critical analysis made on them, but would also hint at the pioneering nature of the present study.

Elaine Showalter, in her book Faculty Towers: The Academic Novel and Its Discontents (2005) expresses her passion for academic fiction. She calls it her favourite genre because of
the narcissistic pleasure she has for it. She claims to have appeared as characters in some of the academic novels although she hesitates to name the novels. She opines that since campuses provide all sorts of care including housing meals, medical care and social life, they actively foster personal relations between students and faculty. She confesses that although there are many campus novels about students, coming-of-age narratives, Bildungsroman etc., she is interested in campus novels about ‘the lifers’, – the faculty - what a critic called “Professorromane” (16). Showalter, in fact, credits academic novel with ‘genre’ status and clearly states that she will not support the views of some critics who find academic novels as “mind-bogglingly repetitive” (3). She has divided the book into six chapters based on chronology with proper Introduction and Conclusion. She provides insightful analysis of individual novels starting from the 1950s to the beginning of the Twenty-First century, and asserts that campus novels have “offered a full social history of the university, as well as a spiritual, political, and psychological guide to the [academic] profession” (145).

She treats academic novels as reflections of reality and engages in frequent speculations about actual institutions and people upon which fictional settings and characters are based. She concludes the book by stating that academic novels are rarely in synch with their decade of publication and that a general reading of academic novels “from 1950 to the present gives an overview of the way the academy and its scribes have moved from hope to endurance to anticipation to cynicism and around to hope again” (15).

Janice Rossen’s book The University in Modern Fiction: When Power is Academic (1993) is a remarkable one on “Campus Fiction.” Incepting with a comprehensive Introduction, the book is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter entitled “Exclusion: Outside University Walls” analyses the characters like Jude Fawley of Jude the Obscure, who are
excluded from the university. The second chapter “Resistance: Women at Oxbridge” addresses the subject of women in academe, particularly in Oxbridge, and discusses the strategies women adopted in dealing with resistance that they encountered. The third chapter, “Marginalization: Men of the Lower Classes” deals with the politicization of literary studies as related to class-consciousness within the University. The next chapter, “Enclosure: Undergraduates” makes a detailed examination of insiders in the academic world, with a study of novels about privileged undergraduate men at Oxbridge in the early decades of the twentieth century, and the effect of the enclosed, nurturing environment on these heroes. Chapter Five, “Masters, Fellows and Dons” analyses the inner workings of the Senior Common Room in C.P. Snow’s novels about academic politics in a Cambridge college. The next chapter “Competition: Scholars and the Global Campus” enlightens on the academic power structure that is charged with competitiveness. The last chapter, “Creativity: Novelists in Academe” looks at the uneasy coexistence of creative writing and the University, as portrayed in fiction about novelists.

The article “The War Against the Academy” by Leslie A. Fiedler published in 1964 calls Academic Novel as a “Tale of Terror with appropriate comic overtones” (5). Fiedler uses the term “anti College Novel” (6) for some books with academic settings for holding Marxian or Popular Front view, of the relationship between professors and administrators. He explains that anti-college-novel fails because failure is its very subject. He talks of middlebrow and highbrow forms of College Novel, wherein the middlebrow novels are vulgar and deal with teachers as either liberals or innocent victims of social repression, or lechers and guilty seducers of the young. Lowbrow fantasy conceives College as a place where atheism and communism are taught. He also touches upon the passionate relationship of teachers towards students and their political relationship towards administrators. Fiedler has taken up
McCarthy’s *The Groves of Academy* for analysis and for putting forth his views on Campus Novels.

The article “College and University Presidents in Fiction” by John E. Kramer published in 1981 is an interesting one to understand the images created of administrative staff like Presidents in colleges and universities. In this article, Kramer explores the ways in which College and University presidents are depicted in American Academic Novels. He discusses his propositions under the subtitles “Vanity and Ambition,” “President and Academic Leadership,” “Dealing with Crisis Situations” and “Sex and the Presidents,” and arrives at the conclusion that most academic novels being novels of manners are often satirical. In their attempts to expose foibles and frustrations of academic existence, many academic novel writers have depicted negative pictures of Presidents. A dislike for administrative authority has made some campus fiction writers attack the Presidents who embody that authority in an allegorical manner.

There are a number of essays that concentrate on the images of characters present in academy. They take some novels for analyzing this and come out with good findings. The article “Faculty Images in Recent American Fiction” (1983) by Frances K. Barasch analyses the characters in some of the American Campus Novels written between 1952 and 1980. He comes with stunning findings on the various images created of the faculty, both men and women, and concludes the essay stating that in the 80s there is a new pace coming in, where introversion recede paving way to social consciousness. Another essay that concentrates on academic images is “Academic Images: Public and Private” (1976) written by Philip G. Altbach. Altbach is a little sympathetic towards the professoriate and hence focuses his attention on the misinformation and misperception that abounds in Campus Novels. He
concentrates on the bases for popular perceptions of the academic profession since he believes that some of the public images of academic profession are derived from them.

Siegfried Mews in his article “The Professor’s Novel: David Lodge’s Small World” (1989) quotes John E. Kramer’s definition of Campus Novel and introduces a type of fiction called “Critifiction” (qtd. in Mews 714). He calls Lodge’s Small World as a metafiction of Campus Novels where Lodge, in the guise of romance has questioned the purpose of literary studies and the institution of academic criticism itself. Mews states that this novel offers easy readability and the discussion of serious issues in contemporary criticism in an interesting fashion.

The article “Interpreting Academic Identities: Reality and Fiction on Campus” (2002) written by William G. Tierney is an interesting essay that is published in The Journal of Higher Education. The article disagrees with Benjamin De Mott who wrote, “no novel of academe has ever produced a believable professor” (qtd. in Tierney 245) and emphasizes that some of our most celebrated academic novel writers have portrayed “painfully believable professors of the late 20th century” (245). Tierney has taken three British Campus Novels namely Ravelstein (2000) by Saul Bellow, The Human Stain (2000) by Philip Roth and Francine Prose’s The Blue Angel (2000) for analysis, and concludes that these novels have treated higher education with seriousness and have concocted entirely believable academic identities.

In another article, entitled “Academic Freedom and Tenure: Between Fiction and Reality,” published in 2004 in the same Journal, Tierney discusses the concepts of academic freedom and tenure. He considers academic novels as moral tales about academic life. He argues that academic novels could be thought of as ways to structure academic life and to create constructive change. He opines that most of the academic novelists have resorted to
comedies and express their views using irony as a primary method. He concludes, after a fairly worthy judgment of some of the campus novels produced during the last few decades of the twentieth century, that intellectuals have become submerged in campus politics and sexual high junks, and that the academics have become corrupted by personalities, egos, and political correctness.

The article “Nabokov and the Campus Novel” by David Lodge published in 2004 is an important article that enlightens the readers about Campus Novel. Beginning the essay with a definition of Campus Novel and defining the term “Campus”, Lodge entrusts *Lucky Jim* (1954) with the state of being the first English Campus Novel of real significance. However, he professes Mary McCarthy’s *The Groves of Academy* as the first classic Campus Novel. He gives a sociological explanation for the emergence of campus novels in both Britain and America simultaneously, almost during the same period. He also states that Campus Novel is an exclusively Anglo-American genre and is often comical and satirical. He gives high claim and credit to Vladimir Nabokov, the author of *Lolita* (1939), *Pnin* (1955) and *Pale Fire* (1962). He discusses in detail *The Groves of Academy*, Randall Jarrell’s *Pictures from an Institution* (1954) and Nabokov’s novels that could be brought under the banner, “Campus Novel.” In the process, he enumerates some of the characteristic features of campus novels. This essay is an interesting one in that it educates the readers on Campus Fiction.

In the article “It’s a Small World, After All: Assessing the Contemporary Campus Novel” (2004), Robert F. Scott offers a wide-ranging assessment of contemporary Campus Novel. He highlights the salient features of Campus Novel, examines its recurring character types, and accounts for its wide appeal to academics and non-academics alike. He also contests
the claims of those critics who have asserted that Campus Novel is presently in a state of stagnation or exhaustion.

The article “Who’s Afraid of Campus Novel?” was published in 2004 in *The Guardian*. This article is a research made by Aida Edemariam on the appeal campus novel has. She discusses the various elements of campus novel and writes that campus novel in America has become a way to measure the state of the nation. She also comments on the campus novels having touched upon many themes in a comical, satirical tone, have also taken on the elements of classical tragedy.

A Ph.D. dissertation, produced in India, entitled “Ambition and Hypocrisy in Academe: A Study of Selected American Academic Novels” (2004), is written by Usha Mani, and is divided into eight chapters. This thesis analyses Barth’s *Giles Goat-Boy* (1987), Fitzgerald’s *This Side of Paradise* (1960), McCarthy’s *The Groves of Academe* (1952), Roth’s *The Professor of Desire* (1978), Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951), and Cather’s *The Professor’s House* (1969), and brings out the conflicts of academy as portrayed by the Campus Novel writers.

An M.Phil. dissertation by Partha Protim Sarmah, entitled “David Lodge as a Critic of Fiction”, written in 2004, produced in CIEFL, Hyderabad, India, is a thesis that uses some of David Lodge’s campus novels to bring out the greatness of Lodge as a critic of fiction.

A B.A. research work entitled “Reflections of British Society in the Campus Novel” written by Irena Zamachova appeared in April 2006. This work shows the interrelation between society and literature through the study of some of the campus novels like *Lucky Jim* (1954), *The History Man* (1975) and *Nice Work* (1988).
Peter Szekely’s Ph.D. thesis “The Academic Novel in the Age of Postmodernity: The Anglo American Metafictional Academic Novel” that appeared in 2009 in Budapest states that academic fiction is a homogenous body of literature which has little to offer beyond its referential reading. The writer reexamines some of the Anglo-American campus novels of the post-1950s and suggests that instead of applying stasis to characterize academic fiction, it is development and change that should be applied to it, especially to the novels produced during the 1950s. The thesis is structured in three parts with a division of ten chapters. The first part of the thesis introduces and discusses the mimetic approach to interpreting academic novels. The second part discusses the transitory phase between the mimetic and the meta-fictional phases of the academic novel. The third and last segment of the dissertation classifies and investigates the various manifestations of the metafictional of academic novel by using thirteen representative novels for illustration.

The thesis “An Analysis of David Lodge’s Changing Places: A Tale of Two Campuses and Small World: An Academic Romance in the light of Friedrich Nietzsche’s Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None” by Sevinc Celik submitted for the M.A. degree to the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University aims at analyzing Lodge’s campus novels in the light of Nietzsche’s ideas. It concentrates on the aspect of nihilism dealt with, in the modern academic world, through the study of the main characters in two of Lodge’s campus novels. The thesis aims at uncovering the ways in which Lodge’s main characters recover from the negative effects of futility and depression caused by nihilism in the modern world.

The article “The Higher Education of Geetika Mehendiratta and other Campus Novels” written by Shyamala A. Narayan was published in the book The Postmodern Indian English
Novel: *Interrogating the 1980s and 1990s* edited by Vinay Kirpal. This article is a seminal one for those interested in Indian English campus novels since it traces briefly the Indian English campus novels that have a campus setting. It also interestingly brings in certain British novels that could possibly be compared with a few Indian English novels. Like Lyons, the author of *The College Novel in America* (1962), Shyamala A. Narayan too traces the growth of Indian English campus novels beginning with *The Vermillion Boat* (1953) by Sudhin N.Ghose that have the elements or the characteristic traits of campus novels. She opines that only with the appearance of Prema Nandakumar’s *Atom and the Serpent* (1982), D.R.Sharma’s *Miracle Can Happen: A Campus Novel* (1985), Rita Joshi’s *The Awakening: A Novella in Rhyme* (1992), Anuradha Marwah Roy's *The Higher Education of Geetika Mehendiratta* (1993), Ranga Rao’s *The Drunk Tantra* (1994) that real campus novels that truly deal with life in Indian universities or colleges appeared. The author also focuses on a few comparative elements with British campus novels that would incite the curiosity of researchers. Shyamala A. Narayan points out that humour seem to be a major difference between Indian English and British campus novels.

The article “Power of the Glory: A Thematic Analysis of Prema Nandakumar’s *Atom and the Serpent*” written by M.G. Hedge and published in 1995, in the book *Indian Women Novelists: Set III: Volume II* edited by R.K.Dhawan is an article that guidelines and offers parameters to the novel *Atom and the Serpent*. It analyses the various themes projected in the novel and concentrates on the ironic and satiric import of it. Particularly, the politics of the campus is subjected to a detailed study. A little importance is given to the analysis of Raj – Satya story too. The article gives the greatest attribute to the novel by considering it as a trendsetter for Indian English campus novels.
The review of *Atom and the Serpent* by S., published in *The Journal of Indian Writing in English* in January 1985, reads the book as a campus novel that projects the politics, violence and sterility of life on campus. It specifically concentrates on the demonstrations and gheraos that take place on campus and points out at the surfeit of frivolities and rascalities that one can witness on campus. The political intrigues of the campus as portrayed in the novel are effectively brought out.

The review by Usha Pandey published in *Pratibha India*, July-Sep. 1989, focuses on the author’s unflinching faith in Indian culture and literature, through her portrayal of characters like Rajeswara. Usha Pandey brings out the author’s view that drastic steps have to be taken to change the present educational system. She probably highlights the optimism that Prema Nandakumar holds in view of education through her attempts at exposing the malaise that is eating up the present-day academia.

K.Chandrasekaran in his review of *Atom and the Serpent* in *Triveni*, published in 1984 considers the novel as a novel with novelty that interests the readers with a sequence of events, inventiveness of plot, and suspense element. He credits the book with an intellectual stimulating aspect, which adds to a feeling of completion in the reader.

M.K. Naik’s Review of *Atom and the Serpent* that appeared in *The Journal of the Karnatak University: Humanities*, in the year 1982, views the novel as a remarkable first novel that will have worthy successors in the years to come. He calls this novel as a “welcome addition to a sparsely cultivated field” after quoting a few early campus novels like P.M.Nityanandan’s *The Long Long Days* and K. Bhaskara Rao’s *Candle against the Wind*. He shows Prema Nandakumar’s illustration of most of the seven deadly sins stalking the campus, and thus, makes an interesting study of the novel, *Atom and the Serpent*. 
The article entitled “Atom and the Serpent: An Analysis” was published in the book *Indian English Literature* edited by A.S. Ratnam. This article categorises the characters in *Atom and the Serpent* in two distinct categories, namely, people who represent darkness in different degrees and people who struggle to emancipate themselves from darkness. The different characters in the novel are analysed by the author and also an analysis of the narrative structure of the novel is made.

The article “Rani Dharker’s *The Virgin Syndrome*: Challenging the Karpur, Escaping the Chakravyuh” written by Mala Pandurang is an exciting study of *The Virgin Syndrome*. Published in the book *Native Responses to Contemporary Indian English Novel: The Inside View* in 2003 this article analyses the novel in two parts. The first part is a feministic analysis of the novel and the second one elaborates on the metaphor of the chakravyuh that is focused upon by Rani Dharker in Chapter Three. This article does not focus upon the elements of campus novel found in the novel.

The article entitled “Vibrant Cameos” by Anupama Prabhala Kapse is published in *The Book Review* in July 1998. This article is a critical review of the novel *The Virgin Syndrome* where Kapse comments that the novel despite its hardly innovative stylistic attempts is a largely cold and insipid experience. It is a yet another plain feministic reading of the novel.

“Of Fallacies, Phalluses and Falsehoods” is a short review of *The Virgin Syndrome* written by Neelum Saran Ghour. It appeared in *Indian Review of Books* in March 1998. It comments upon the wide range of subjects dealt with by the author in the novel. The critic is also conscious of the novel exhibiting campus novel elements like the superficiality and mediocrity paraded in academic conferences. The article is appreciative of Dharker’s special outrageous, cranky-wonky style.
The two reviews of *The Awakening: A Novella in Rhyme*, one that appeared in 1993 in *Indian Review of Books* by Visa Ravindran and the other that appeared in *The Journal of the Poetry Society India* written in 1994 by Ashok Paul are worth mentioning. Ravindran, pointing out a few mistakes in expression made in the novel proclaims that the novel is far from being “the emblem of the dialectic between power and individualism” that the novel’s blurb claims to be.

Paul in his review of the book highlights the author’s criticism of the deplorable condition of the college library and uninterested students. He brings in the exploitation of the teachers by the bossy principal and also highlights the author’s intention in showing the present examination system collapsing. Ashok Paul is not happy with the title ‘The Awakening’ since he feels it inappropriately named for a novel that shows the resignation of the heroine at the end of the novel. This article is significant since it broadcasts the academic setting of the novel true to its spirit.

The above articles and reviews show campus novels viewed in different perspectives and analysed in different ways. Nevertheless, the present dissertation is innovative since it not only garners the characteristic features of campus novels as elicited from a study of the Indian English campus novels but also makes a comparative study between the campus novels produced by two distinct languages viz., Indian English and Tamil that are giants in the field of literature.

The present work is a comparative study of select Indian English and Tamil campus novels. It aims at studying the struggle of the academicians when caught between reality and intellectual pretensions. It brings out the authors’ focus and their means in trying to portray this.
The second Chapter with the title *Hypocrisy in Academe* brings out the novelists’ focus on the behaviour and idiosyncrasies of the academy through their academic characters. It focuses on the idealistic notions of teachers and at the same time presents the authors’ portrayal of them. This Chapter shows how the authors portray the academicians in their true light with their normal human desires, ambitions, selfishness and hypocrisies. The novelists, Prema Nandakumar, Anuradha Marwah Roy, Rita Joshi, Rani Dharker, Prabhanjan, Panjangam, Balakumaran and Jaisakthi foreground the inmates of their campuses as ordinary human beings with no extraordinary qualities that usually put them on a high pedestal and treat them as demi-gods. The authors selected for study tear off the masks of intellectuality and superiority that the academicians wear and nullify their opinions or views that everything is fine within the academy.

These writers show the follies and foibles, frailties and weaknesses, ignorance and narrow-mindedness of the academicians. They not only bring out the flaws and hypocrisies of the educational institutions but also show the University as behaving in a manner that is opposed to its original intentions and ideals. These writers show the universities as the most unliterary places in the world, which give the least importance to teaching and research, engulfed by its own laziness. They bring out the pretentious steps taken by the Professors and students towards false advancements of knowledge. Their hard work towards knowledge is not for knowledge for knowledge’s sake but for achieving materialistic gains.

The Chapter exclusively propounds how the campus novelists selected for study highlight the academicians’ capabilities of sinning – sinning in a sophisticated manner.
Chapter III entitled *Campus Politics* is wholly devoted to the various kinds of politics or political practices portrayed in the various academic novels taken for study. After an attempt at defining the term ‘politics’, the chapter moves on to examine the politics that exists among teachers, between teachers and students, between teaching staff and administrative staff and between the academicians and the outside world’s politicians. On the whole, it discusses three different kinds of politics, namely, teacher-oriented politics, student-oriented politics and caste politics, and shows the various phenomenon involved in it.

Chapter IV entitled *Exploitation and Victimization in Academe* attempts at foregrounding the different kinds of exploitations and victimizations that the academicians inflict upon the weaker sections within the academy. Embarking upon a definition of the two terms ‘exploitation’ and ‘victimization’ the chapter moves on to show how these two traits of the academicians add to their deviation from their idealistic state.

The Chapter identifies different kinds of exploitations and victimizations within the academy and categorizes them into four groups, namely, monetary or material exploitation, physical exploitation, sexual exploitation and intellectual exploitation.

The last chapter *Summing Up* sums up the findings of the earlier chapters and proposes further scope of study in this area. It shows how campus novels are highly resourceful and open up to many aspects that could be taken up for further research.