CONCLUSION

The present research work is divided into six chapters and the first chapter is an authentic analysis of Indian English Novel. It consists not only the historical development of the novel as a genre, but also includes aims and objectives of the research, research methodology, scope and limitation. More effectively, it draws the attention to the conceptual framework of the study and defines the focal term ‘cultural conflict’ towards the end of the chapter. It is observed that cultural conflict occurs or happens because of a state of opposition, disagreement or incompatibility with regard to their respective value systems between two or more people or groups of people. Although ‘conflict’ is a common term in psychology which refers to the differences in ideology of the people, their actions and ideas. Conflict can be between two people, two groups and two countries, or even within one and the same person. It is observed that it is a clash or struggle between opposing forces in a crisis or at any stage of human life.

The second chapter of the present research work is titled the “Biographical sketches of the Fictional Writers: Mahasweta Devi and Bapsi Sidhwa.” The present chapter contains their birth and life, literary career and major contribution to the contemporary literature, etc.

The third chapter of the present research work is titled as “Cultural Conflict in the Novels: The Pakistan Bride by Bapsi Sidhwa and Rudali by Mahasweta Devi.” Between Mahasweta Devi and Bapsi Sidhwa, there are some similarities as well as dissimilarities as far as thematic analyses of their novels are concerned. The present study provides some insight into how culture determines the lives of men and women and shapes the influences on them at each step of their lives and how it directly creates conflict into the day-to-day life. Mahasweta Devi and Bapsi Sidhwa encourage their readers to recognize and acknowledge both the similarities and differences that define the role of culture in the lives of women inside their domestic and cultural spheres. This study has endeavoured to discuss the role of culture in the lives of human beings, especially women in India and Pakistani society. It is observed that women irrespective of their belonging to this country or that suffer from the patriarchal culture and often conflicting ideologies and the value systems that govern their lives. It is noted that women are inseparable from culture and its impact. Tahira Khan asserts:
While analyzing women’s situation in Pakistan, it needs to be remembered that despite cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity, the patterns of agriculture based tribal, feudal, clan systems and kinship networks are strikingly similar. Consequently, familial relationships and women’s status and roles in the family are also not very different in all the four provinces (of Pakistan). (Khan, 2006: p. 145)

Extending Tahira Khan’s statement on Pakistani women, it is observed that anywhere in the world, women have to suffer from cultural as well as ethnic diversities. It is this diverse portrayal of women, marked by similar debilitating structures that bring close together Mahasweta Devi and Bapsi Sidhwa in a unity of purpose.

Both the female fictional writers offer an exploration of this systematic cultural oppression of women that occurs regardless of their class, caste, region and language that bring their female characters under the common umbrella of cultural victimization. While the works of both writers display a critical awareness of the religious, political, economic and socio-cultural factors that bind and oppress the women, these writers refrain from positing the subjects of victims of a patriarchal culture. Both women writers raise their voice against the exploitation of women in the name of traditions, the eroticization of their bodies under a male gaze and the objectification and exploitation of women in and through marriage. More interestingly, both these women writers have displayed a consistent commitment to comment or write about the social and cultural taboos that restrict the lives of women. Through issues such as marriage, childlessness, rape, adultery, the struggle for education and divorce, these writers explore how their female figures struggle to construct and define their socio-cultural standing and identity. The novels discussed throughout this study present women displaying all sorts of abilities, courage and confidence in the face of the most oppressive of circumstances. Mahasweta Devi and Bapsi Sidhwa, though united in their purpose to better the situation of women, differ in their approaches towards possible resistance as shown by the trajectories of their characters.

Mahasweta Devi’s novel *Rudali* and Bapsi Sidhwa’s novel *The Pakistani Bride* throw light on the repression of women in a patriarchal culture. The protagonist Zaitoon is trained as an obedient Muslim girl. By portraying Zaitoon’s character,
Sidhwa emphasizes the fact that in matrimonial affairs, the cultural backgrounds of the bride and the bridegroom must be kept in mind. Zaitoon’s marriage fails, because she and her husband represent two totally different cultural backgrounds and, therefore, cultural conflict occurs in their lives. Zaitoon also shares same characteristic features with Sanichari and Parbatia from the novel Rudali by Mahasweta Devi. Both the novels The Pakistani Bride and Rudali have highlighted the role played by culture and social institutions like marriage, along with cultural customs and traditions, in establishing and sustaining male hegemonic control over the women’s bodies. Zaitoon and Carol, Sanichari and Parbatia have suffered because of the caste, class and gender to which they belong. The women in Rudali are widows and wives belong to the lower caste, while the characters in The Pakistani Bride are taken from a rising lower middle class and elitist group in Pakistan. Spatially, Rudali’s action takes place in the west Bengal, whereas, in The Pakistani Bride, the story moves between the Northern tribal culture of Kohistani and the urbanized culture of Lahore, Punjab. It is observed that, in spite of significant differences in class, religion, geography and times, the women in both the novels share common experiences of patriarchal hegemony. The commonalities or resemblances found in the experiences of these characters are important, because they are reflective of Mahasweta Devi’s and Bapsi Sidhwa’s own feminist consciousness or standpoint.

The masculinity, on the other hand, as exemplified by the characters of Ramavtar Singh, Lachman Singh, Sakhi and Farukh in Rudali and The Pakistani Bride is characterized as meaning sexual virility, physical strength or power, ability to mark and defend one’s territory but, more importantly, to have complete control over women’s bodies. It is pointed out that masculinity in any culture is defined to a large degree in terms of men’s power and ability to control women’s morality and dominate them in the name of tradition and culture. Both Rudali and The Pakistani Bride expose the double standards of morality in the cultures, which expect women to be modest, exhibiting control and discretion in the expression of their desires. While such morality or culture allows men to commit adultery and infidelity by having pre-marital and extra-marital relationships, it is observed that the culture imposes restrictions on women, whereas it offers freedom to the men. Both the novelists have tried to attack the dual nature of culture Sidhwa’s Zaitoon in The Pakistani Bride, Mahasweta Devi’s Parbatia in Rudali display the most courageous and life-risking act
of running away from her husband’s tribe in the mountains, whereas Parbatia, Sanichari’s daughter-in-law, who also runs away from her home after the death of her husband. It is noted that both the characters belong to the different socio-cultural contexts and are unable to adjust their restricted cultural values and therefore, rise in revolt against it.

Both the novelists’ analysis of a woman’s position in the patriarchal culture remains most important and thought-provoking. They display a social and cultural hostility towards women who attempt to defy their traditionally endorsed image of passivity. Sidhwa explores the issues of marriage in greater details as the title of her novel *The Pakistani Bride* reveals a great deal about the possible subject-matter of the novel.

Zaitoon’s journey as a bride in her husband’s territory runs parallel to Carol’s experience with her husband. The novel ends with both of the brides, Zaitoon and Carol refusing to bow to their expected roles of submissive brides. However, we come across the floating head of a bride in a river which indicates the harsh consequences for brides who dare to challenge their roles as submissive wives. Through such characters as Sanichari, Parbatia, Zaitoon, Carol and many others, both the novelists point out the physical, psychological and emotional punishments women are subjected to as a routine part of their daily lives. These punishments are often given on the pretext of offences, insults and even imagined infidelities. Women can be subjected to a range of physical violence as the Major in *The Pakistani Bride* informs Carol, “It happens all the time. Women get killed for one reason or the other...imagined insults, family honour, infidelity... Chopping off women’s noses in the Punjab and here they just kill the girl.” (223) As pointed out by the Army Major, punishments given to women may vary according to the differing geographical locations within the same country depending on the emphasis given to female in its association with honour. Carol, who falls in the love with a Pakistani soldier, stays with him against her parents’ permission, because they fear that she gets converted to Islamic culture and may not able to adjust to the highly conservative culture and tradition. She has experienced, in this culture, “a man may talk only with unmarriageable women, his mother, sisters, aunts and grandmother.” (113). It is observed that even though Zaitoon’s marriage is arranged by her father, she finds herself unable to adjust just like Carol in this discriminative culture, whereas Carol
fails to understand this distinction of gender and cultural difference and keeps on following her western ways. All these experiences reveal the true condition of women. It is noted that women are tortured, tormented and then killed at the hands of their male counterparts in the name of culture, tradition and honour. It is observed that there are different codes of conduct for males and females in the culture. Therefore, it focuses on different ideas that how they suffer cultural conflict at many levels such as physical, psychological and moral.

Mahasweta Devi and Bapsi Sidhwa have been spending their energy for the same in order to show marginal and suppressed voices from the cultural and socio-economic peripheries. It is observed that the problems of Sanichari and Zaitoon are the problems of their caste, class and gender. Unlike any romantic writers both the authors are hardly interested in portraying the physical appearance of their protagonists. It is noted that physicality of the female characters, the very vehicle of the authors creative trope, is absent in Mahasweta Devi’s *Rudali* and Bapsi Sidhwa’s *The Pakistani Bride*. Their major concerns are the social, political, cultural and economic ‘down and out’ ness of a sect which is inseparable from society. The author’s concentrate more on the pangs of the female protagonists who echo the agonies of womankind in the texts. In fact, Sanichari and Zaitoon belong to the socio-cultural marginality, which remains far-off from the social, cultural and economic focus. Their marginality becomes graver, as both of them are female and further dominated by the males of their own caste, community, and culture. It observed that Sanichari and Zaitoon’s life is a series of struggles, labours and tensions throughout the life; both of them face odds in various forms. They are made socially, culturally and economically powerless and, therefore, depend on their fathers, husbands and sons. It means that patriarchal culture governs their private and public lives, resulting ultimately in the conflict. It is concluded that Mahasweta Devi and Bapsi Sidhwa have presented a realistic picture of human relationships that shows disintegration of the socio-cultural world. Mahasweta Devi and Bapsi Sidhwa through their novels like *Rudali* and *The Pakistani Bride* have established that not only the low caste women but even the high caste women are also exploited and marginalized. Rajput women in *Rudali* have no opportunity to voice their opinion in making any decision. They are expected to fulfill just two obligations-housekeeping and child nurturing within their cribbled, cabined and confined existence. Sanichari and Zaitoon, both of them
continuously struggle to liberate themselves from the censors of the patriarchal and cultural bounding. Therefore, both the novels are seen depicting the psychological as well as the cultural crises that encompass the lives of their protagonists.

The fourth chapter of this research work deals with the “Cultural Conflict in the Novels: Bapsi Sidhwa’s An American Brat and Mahasweta Devi’s Mother of 1084.” This research provides some insight into how the identity of a woman is shaped and influenced by disparate cultural factors and how the characters face cultural conflict at the each step of their lives. Both the women writers raise their voice against the exploitation of women in the name of tradition and culture. More interestingly, both these women have displayed a consistent commitment to comment and write about the social and cultural taboos that have enwrapped their lives. Bapsi Sidhwa has highlighted the role of culture and such social institutions as marriage, family, etc. along with cultural customs and traditions, in establishing and sustaining male hegemonic control over women. Mahasweta Devi is a committed social activist, who portrays the role of culture and corruption in the society. Bapsi Sidhwa’s An American Brat and Mahasweta Devi’s Mother of 1084 constitute an exploration of the nature of the cultural and social construction of female identity and behavioural patterns of a daughter, wife and mother. It projects a multitude of women’s problems, dilemmas and frustrations because of their cultural marginalization.

Mother of 1084 is an English translation of Mahasweta Devi’s Bengali novella Hazaar Chaurashir Maa, Mother of 1084 by Devi in 1973-74 and translated by Samik Bandyopadhyay in English in 1997, whereas Bapsi Sidhwa’s novel An American Brat (1993) brings forth the sentiments of the Parsi community and their struggle to find a niche in a restrictive Muslim society. Both the novels are about cultural crises of an uprooted community, whose identity is cultured and nurtured in each different milieu that relate to their exile. The protagonist of the novel Mother of 1084 is Sujata Chatterjee a middle-aged woman who belongs to a bhadralok, bourgeoisie Calcutta family. She was born into a conservative, affluent family. Later, she gets married to Dibyanath Chatterjee, a Chartered Accountant, whereas Feroza is the protagonist of the novel An American Brat. The novel chronicles the adventures of a young Pakistani-born Parsi girl who has migrated to America. Feroza’s mother Zareen decides to send her to America, because she fears that she will become more conservative in Pakistan. It is observed that the two protagonists belong to different
socio-cultural contexts as well as different age-groups but they have shared the same issues of cultural monopoly, which bring their lives to subjection, oppression and suppression. It is noted that Bapsi Sidhwa intends to suggest, through the novel, the clash between the different ways of the individuals, groups and society as a whole. Though the novel depicts the difficulties of passage in and out of Pakistan and America, it points to bridges that cannot be built between the three cultures. It is observed that, Feroza’s journey through three cultures: her own community Parsi culture, her country Pakistan’s Islamic culture and the Western culture of the United States of America, it divides her identity and life, and therefore, creates cultural conflict in her life.

Both the authors, while writing these subalterns novels, have fulfilled their self-declared activist aims of recording history and giving voice to the voiceless. It is noted that Sujata and Feroza are victims of the politics of gender, class and caste played at various levels of social relationships. It is a study in brutality and degradation wrought on women for centuries in the name of culture. It is noticed that one can find out some similar and dissimilar aspects in the present novels, even though their aims and objectives are the same or similar to serve the cause of humanity and particularly that of the women. Bapsi Sidhwa has contended how the whole Pakistan’s tide of fundamentalism, during the reign of the late president Zia-ul-Haq, makes young generation conservative and utterly traditional, whereas Mahasweta Devi has depicted one of the major historical phases in the history of Bengal. The naxalite movement of the late 1960’s was a leftist militant movement that had started in the west Bengal beginning as a rural revolt of landless workers and tribal people against the landlords. It attracted student’s participation in the socio-political struggle, led by the Naxalite Brati Chatterjee, the younger son of Sujata, an idealistic youth and intellectual leader. His commitment to the revolutionary and communist movement has labelled him as a rebel and is killed ruthlessly by the police. It is observed that such events have marked the psyche of Sujata and sets out a journey to discover the reasons behind his death. Bapsi Sidhwa’s character Feroza challenges the traditional views, static orthodoxy and grows beyond the confines of community and norms of a patriarchal society. So, it is pointed out that Sujata’s self-realization and self-awareness that she acquires after her son’s death ironically isolates her from her own family and society, whereas Feroza’s self-realization and
self-awareness that she acquires on her stay in America ironically isolates her from her Parsee culture and family. Here, it is noticed that the conflict between the two cultures is discernible not only on the social plane but also on the personal level leading to a quest for identity.

It is observed that Feroza’s journey to America serves the novel in two ways; it is her journey towards self-discovery, practically it turns out to be a journey from innocence to experience. It happens in her life, because now she has totally assimilated into a new culture of America. Mahasweta Devi’s Sujata is set as a strong contrast to her materialistic husband, Dibyanath Chatterjee in whose view it would be a matter of shame for them to go to the police station to identify their son’s dead body. Her husband was already dead for Sujata. It is noted that Sujata is caught in the conflict within herself between a sympathetic mother and a silent protester against the immoral life in her household. Mahasweta Devi has explained the transformation and self-liberation that Sujata undergoes in the course of the novel’s action. It is observed that she becomes a socially and politically conscious member of the society. It is noticed that Dibyanath is an honest representative of the male-dominated society. He was a great womanizer, who never showed any respect and regard for his wife. Sidhwa has presented the protagonist of the novel, totally changed in her perception and caught between different views i.e. now she has metamorphosed into a very different cultural being. It is observed that the timid Feroza has grown into a confident creature. Whenever they discuss the subject of marriage, there is a conflict between the mother and the daughter. Zareen represents traditional, conservative views, whereas Feroza becomes a voice of modernity. Therefore, there is a conflict between tradition and modernity. While analyzing the novel, the two things become more and more discernible: identity crisis in the Parsee psyche and the influence of a patriarchal society. It is noticed that the novel features the conflict between the Parsee Pakistani identity and their fascination for the Western modes of living.

While studying Feroza and Sujata’s characters, it is observed that there are dual moral standards: one rule for woman and the other for man. Sidhwa has exposed the discriminatory aspects of the laws of the Parsee community showing gender bias towards women. While men are allowed to marry outside their community and can retain their right to freely practise their faith but the same law does not hold good in the cases of Parsee women. If a Parsee girl marries a non-Parsee, it is tantamount to
her committing a cultural suicide. It is projected through Sujata’s character that women are always considered inferior human beings having no choice of their own, dependent, obedient to their husband and other family members for every decision of their life. Her family treated her life like that of an identity-less creature, but they had no idea that, as a human being, she had an identity and wanted her own space. Sujata, Feroza and Zareen represented the oppressed and marginalized section of this society, in short, the subaltern life and culture. It is observed that at every step, Sujata, a subjugated woman, had to take permission from her husband; she did not even have the right to buy a sari of her choice as long as her mother-in-law was alive. When Feroza announced about her love affair with David a Jew and future planning the whole situation turned against her. That is why in the name of culture, Zareen wanted to protect her daughter from David by hook or crook. It is important that David too became conscious of the dissimilarities between the two cultures. It is observed that Feroza rises above the restraints and confines of the patriarchal Parsee society in Pakistan, dares to question, if possible, to revolt against the traditions that bind her to her community, and denies an arranged marriage at last.

Sujata’s and Feroza’s transformation from a weak-willed, hopelessly dependent, and a non-assertive moral coward to a morally assertive and a socially defiant individual is impressive. Both the novels conclude with their vowing to right against injustices, whenever they find them. Feroza’s self-discovery leads her commitment to the social world as she is now a changed woman like Sujata’s. Both of them started to become ideologically dislocated within their culture. An anonymous writer has rightly mentioned about the roles of a woman: “She is a daughter, a sister, a wife and a mother but never an individual in her own right.” It is observed that finally she realizes how she is chained everywhere and how she fails miserably to rid herself of the constraints of the culture of society. It is pointed out that the novel ends with a different message to the reader. It ends with the various questions raised in the minds of protagonists. Mahasweta Devi’s novel Mother of 1084 ends with the protagonist’s death. It is observed that, she continuously refuses to get operated and ultimately it bursts out in the end and she meets her unfortunate fate. It is noted that it is not an accidental death rather a self-chosen fate to get relief from all the pains and sufferings of the world.
It is observed that both the protagonists have announced the revolt against the patriarchal culture. So, it is concluded that, irrespective of the fact whether society as the Indian, she is destined to go through cultural conflict that is inevitable in any society.

**The fifth chapter** of the present research work deals with “Cultural Conflict in the Novels: *Ice-Candy-Man* by Sidhwa and *Aranyer Adhikar* by Mahasweta Devi.” Like Bapsi Sidhwa, Mahasweta Devi’s narrative *Aranyer Adhikar* documents most authentically the tribal movement, i.e. Munda rebellion (1874-1901). Sidhwa’s *Ice-Candy-Man* and Devi’s Sahitya Akademi award-winning novel *Aranyer Adhikar* (Rights of the Forest) both the novels examine the issues of identity, culture and socio-economic condition. Devi and Sidhwa have narrated how the tribals and the partitioned communities lost their homes, culture and basic human rights. The triple burden of caste, class and gender discriminate them from each other.

Through the novel, it is noticed that *Ice-Candy-Man* is a shaping force in the evolution of consciousness of Lenny, the handicapped child protagonist. She becomes an eye-witness to and a victim of a topsy-turvy world. The author has confessed in her interview that the incidents, characters and their traits are a reflection on her own experiences of the people she has known. It shares autobiographical elements; one of the greatest incidents that Sidhwa faces as a child, devastating enough to leave its imprint on her mind, was that of India-Pakistan Partition. In fact, it was one of the most blood-drenched episodes, a mockery of humanity in the entire history of mankind. Like Bapsi Sidhwa, Mahasweta Devi makes an accurate portrayal of the harsh realities of poverty, exploitation and struggle for cultural preservation. It is observed that, Mahasweta Devi’s writings on the tribals can be divided under three major themes: tribal history, tribal culture and the tribal struggle for existence. Both of them work as activists writers who have used their pen to raise awareness against social injustice, discrimination and poverty. The novel *Aranyer Adhikar* is an unconventional narrative documenting most authentically the tribal movement. Munda rebellion (1874-1901) was ignored, completely in the history accounts or books and *Ice-Candy-Man* deal with the theme of the partition of India in 1947. Needless to add that it is a drama of absolute anarchy, decadence of Indian homogeneity and disgrace of human values and rules, showing how the minds of the masses have been poisoned by the dogma of the two-nation theory. There are so many
events in the novel which show male domination in the society, for example, Lenny’s
disability and sexual maturation in a patriarchal world. Papoo’s maltreatment and
forced marriage and Ayah’s sexual victimization and Lenny’s mother’s silent
suffering in the face of her husband’s infidelity shows the violent oppressions women
suffer in a patriarchal culture. It is well established that Lenny’s journey of realization
and awakening is restricted not merely to her conscious awakening in a male
dominated world, but also to the harsh realities of a conflicting and dangerous world.
It is observed that such Partition in multicultural India has affected mostly in the
main, three cultures Hindu, Muslim and Sikh. It is reported that it has faced migration,
death, destruction and loss.

Mahasweta Devi and Bapsi Sidhwa do not represent in their novels a
romanticized picture of the Munda tribe and division of the India. It is observed that
we have here a brilliant picture of the poverty-stricken, insecure lives of the tribals
where ‘rice remained an eternal dream,’ where life meant wandering from one village
to another due to their ceaseless eviction by the dikus.”(22)

To sum up, Mahasweta Devi and Bapsi Sidhwa have depicted the triple burden
of caste, class and gender, discriminate and marginalize the people in modern India. It
is observed that tribals are deep-rooted in their culture and tradition following certain
myths, worship their particular gods and goddesses. It is noticed that, with the
Partition of India begins a new chapter in the lives of the culture oriented people such
as the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs etc. It is a revolt against preservation of
culture, identity and finally their entire existence. All these novels have presented the
struggle facing unbearable torture, bloodshed and countless deaths creating a new
history of sacrifice their lives that involved conflicts for nation and culture. It is
observed that the tribal community or people were gripped in conflict of two different
type of oppressions i.e. on the one hand, starvation, absence of medical facilities or
minimum amenities required for civilized life and, on the other hand, constant
exploitation termination and death due to ruthless inhuman torture—all these cast a
dark shadow of gloom on the entire region.

Sidhwa highlights how the political and religious conflict that resulted into the
1947 Partition divides people into religious identities. The protagonist observes how
the people in her neighborhood, immediate and distant, suddenly become conscious of
their religious identities. The entire tragic drama is based on religious discrimination
and cultural disparity. It is noted that there is chaos leading to a great upheaval political and social life result in some kind of negative energy giving rise to an anti-wave of hatred, malice and ill-will.

It is observed that violence inflicted upon women during the partition could be seen as violation of all the established norms of the society. The study reports on the Partition establish the fact that women are the major victims of partition compared to men. He says:

The novel presents women as a twice apprised category on stage firstly as human beings suffocated by violence and secondly, as women burdened by the bond and imposition of a patriarchal society. (Piciucco, 2014)

Mahasweta Devi and Bapsi Sidhwa have presented that the millions of victims of the Munda revolt and the Partition of 1947 pay a terrible price for freedom and that price would leave its bitter imprint for years to come. All the characters from both the novels have experienced a sense of the loss of identity in their own motherland. Through the novels Aranyer Adhikar and Ice-Candy-Man, it is observed that every character or community wanted to organize or reconstruct the socio-cultural life on the proper lines, for it was already disintegrated. It is noted, in the final analysis, how and why conflict has been a major part of their life and existence. The study, however, paves the way for the unity of man and the federation of the world through the Hegelian processes of human development i.e. the thesis, juxtaposed by the anti-thesis, and resulting, finally, into synthesis of culture.