Chapter V

Conclusion
Women have made remarkable contribution to poetry and fiction in Indian English literature. After Second World War women novelists of worth and quality began enriching Indian fiction in English. Women novelists have emerged outstandingly in Indian English literature in last two decades. They have made a praiseworthy contribution to this genre of literature. The present study promotes a better understanding of the novels of Namita Gokhale and Dhiruben Patel from a general comparison. Comparative Literature provides an opportunity for interesting and interdisciplinary studies. It includes folk, vernacular, oral, translation, cultural, media, film and many other studies. The huge and ancient country like India with diverse cultures, traditions and languages provides a great scope for comparative studies. The present study makes it clearer that Indian literatures are a product of a multiracial and multicultural socio-historical concoction. There are multiple threads of unity in our multilingual and multi religious culture. And it is through Comparative literature that we can better understand them.

Namita Gokhale and Dhiruben Patel, both are living and contemporary writers and still they have been writing. This study offers interesting insights into their novels. The research work also contributes to two different literatures, Indian writing in English and Gujarati literature. Both Namita Gokhale and Dhiruben Patel have presented contemporary society in their novels. Both focus on women and condition of women in society. Both of them have portrayed some memorable women characters. Dhiruben and Namita both have lived in Mumbai. There are some similarities as well as dissimilarities in the novels of these
two contemporary outstanding women novelists in their respective literatures; Indian English literature and Gujarati literature.

A successful novel manages to express the spirit of its times. A novelist is a miniaturist, an observer of life. There is an abiding contemporarity about the novel, a sense and substance of the present. A novel is a triumphant example of panoramic scale combined with a sense of immediacy, urgency and dramatic compression, and it encompasses almost the entire range of human emotion. The finest example is War and Peace by Count Lev Nikalaevich Tolstoy (1828-1910). Another great novelist is Charles Dickens (1812-70) who made a profound impression upon the sensibility of his times. Novelists are simultaneously custodians of culture and emissaries of change in the interaction between an ancient culture and a rapidly evolving new world. Through their novels Namita Gokhale and Dhiruben Patel have tried to present the contemporary social milieu and touched the pulse of the society. In real sense of the term they are the representatives of their ages. They have attempted to diagnose the contemporary society. Through their novels, these women writers have tried to present the contemporary society with a neutral approach.

Though the condition and social status of women have increased in last some decades with spread of education and economic independence; they have a vacuum within themselves. To maintain the equilibrium of life; along with the juxtaposition of social reform, relationship should also be revived. Then only we can expect of a hale and hearty and harmonious man-woman relationship to thrive. Both the novelists have tried to focus on such relationships. Regarding the issue of extra marital relations, Namita tries to warn the society that the unfulfilled sexual
desires of a married woman lead her to fulfillment from any safe partner. In *A Himalayan Love Story*, Parvati finds a safe ally in her young brother-in-law and becomes a prey to her instincts.

All her novels explain Namita’s obsession with love, lust and death. She also uses mysticism quite liberally in her works. She broods over life and death. Many critics find autobiographical elements in her characters. The character of Ruchita is completely modelled upon the personal experiences of Namita. In fact, Namita also admits that *The Book of Shadows* has some resemblances with her own life. Whereas Dhiruben Patel prefers social themes for her novels; her novels focus on love, marriage, marital relations and condition of women in society. She has human sensitivity. Sanskrit literature, Indian scriptures and Indian culture have deep impact on both these women novelists and their novels. Dhiruben has interest in human relations and grass root realities of life. Woman is at the centre in all her novels except *Aagantuk*. But women play important role in this novel.

Dhiruben’s women are from traditional and conventional milieu. Yet if required, they break the conventional traditions and head in the reverse direction. Vijaya freely opposes her own son and asks her daughter-in-law to tear up the tie of marriage and pregnancy that makes her helpless. Panna is not ready to tolerate a mistress and she leaves her husband within no time. But all the women of Dhiruben respect the moral boundaries that are set by the society; whereas the women of Namita believe in a free and emancipated life. They are allured to the glory of hedonistic life. Contrasts to the women of Namita, the women of Dhiruben comply with the social codes and respect the moral values of life in general and traditions and Samskaras of Indian culture in particular.
Except *Aagantuk* Dhiruben’s all other three novels focus on matrimonial affairs, conjugal life and man-woman relationship. In case of Namita Gokhale, all her novels deal with love, sex, married life and man-woman relationships. In the novels of both the novelists, the main as well as the minor characters seem to be in search of a ‘Home’ where life is lived happily, joyfully and peacefully. But all of them are not fortunate to achieve it. In the novels of Namita, the setting is the hilly Kumaon area of Himalayas while Dhiruben has Mumbai and some other cities in her novels. In the novels of Dhiruben, we find Gujarati environment and culture reflected through the language, themes, characters, and their ways of life. Namita represents a world of Kumaoni hills and the cities of Mumbai and Delhi. Namita takes the reader to river banks, forests, haunted houses, caves, dilapidated temples and hills while Dhiruben has completely household atmosphere. She is interested in life amid the four walls of house. Namita deals with several deaths and mysterious and unusual events.

Dhiruben creates typical social characters while the characters of Namita are abnormal and love obsessed. We find a similarity in the creations of both the writers is that woman is at the centre in their works. Namita has woman and her condition at the centre. Dhiruben also has woman at the centre in all her novels except *Agantuk* yet women characters play praiseworthy role in this *central academy* award winner novel. Dhiruben portrays the most honoured image and position of a woman- that is of ‘mother’. The creation of Vatsala is the finest example in *Hutashan*. The depiction of such great motherhood is missing in Namita. Yet the character of Paro is an exceptional one by Namita. She is not a stereo type woman who always needs male protection and guidance.
The character of Vijaya by Dhiruben is truly a New Woman in Gujarati literature.

Sanskrit is the base of all Indian literatures irrespective of language, region and even religion sometimes. Both these writers present our customs, ceremonies, rituals, fairs and festivals in their novels. Various allusions from Mahabharata, Ramayana and other Indian scriptures are cited by both the novelists. Both of them create a complete picture of Indian people and their ways of life in their novels. Both have feminist concerns in their novels but none shows any extremism in presenting them. Though their novels are advocacy of women and their situation, neither Namita nor Dhiruben shows any intolerance against men. They nowhere portray male characters with any kind of resentment or detestation.

Both the writers are contemporary writers contributing to different literatures; have presented social realities of life; portrayed women and their condition from their perspectives. A touch and glimpse of Indianness is seen thoroughly in their novels. Both present the ways of life and the religious fervour prevailing in present Indian society irrespective of region and language. Some powerful women characters are portrayed by them like Vijaya, Kadambari, Vatsala, Gudiya, Ammi and Phoolwati who struggle and try to find a way out of unfavourable circumstances. There are also some ordinary and typical women characters in their novels. In 21st century with tremendous development of science and Information technology, in the age of Globalization, the educated New Woman has emerged with economic independence and a search for identity. She does not belong to either of her two former categories-Brahmavadini or Sadyobadhu. Namita Gokhale warns the
modern woman for her allure to shine and the so called freedom of life. Paro is representative of such metropolitan women of Mumbai and Delhi. Here the writer has tried to be realistic in presenting the contemporary metropolitan culture where live-in-relationship is going to become a common practice in recent times. Even the Supreme Court of India has recently declared that premarital sex between mature is not a crime. Of course it can not be a crime but it is immoral and unacceptable in all religions and countries. The new generation wants to live life fully and freely. In such a fashion and passion they are crossing the boundaries of values and morality. Live-in-relationship can not be an alternative for the age-old institute of marriage. Paro has affairs and sexual relations with many men. It shows that the society is under flux. She belongs to a new category, more down to earth, more human.

Dhiruben tries to emphasize on Indian culture, values and the Samskaras in life. The character of Anil in Kadambarini Maa points out modern man’s lust for wealth and deterioration of our family bonds. Aagantuk also throws light on so called practical man’s selfishness and cunningness in modern times. Dhiruben worries for parting joint families and focuses on significance of it. She also conveys the message that man is always not responsible for the pathetic condition of woman. She has concern of woman at centre. But her approach towards man is not callous. According to Dhiruben sometimes it is woman who turns to be a woman’s enemy. Both these women writers are not armed with any blatant feminist political propaganda but they strongly show concern for women and their condition.

Dhiruben also draws attention to hypocrisy of the so called modern-practical man through the characters like Arnav, Ratilal,
Ashutosh, Shalmali and Rima. She also bothers for the need of values and samsakars in life. Degradation of human values and human relations are the nucleus in her creations. Can the society bear an honest and complete gentleman? Can this world show forbearance with thorough gentlemanpersons? And in search of such person she wrote the wonderful novel - *Aagantuk*. Thus to designate Dhiruben merely a feminist will be an injustice to her. She is a thorough humanitarian writer. With the creation of more than twenty one literary works, her contribution to Gujarati literature is immense.

In modern literature myth is becoming a powerful instrument of literary structure and creation. India has a rich treasure of myths and legends. Namita Gokhale uses myths and legends in her novels. Dhiruben also has many mythological allusions and references from *Puranas*, *Mahabharata* and other Hindu scriptures.

Namita is a pure artist. Her vision is essentially comic. She believes in ‘art for art’s’ sake, but it doesn’t mean that she is a writer without any vision of life. Her novels are free from all didacticism. In fact she is a sharp analyst of human passions and human relationships, especially relationships centering round sex and aspirations. Life must be accepted and lived, despite its many short comings, follies and foibles. This may be said to be the vision of life for Namita. Her novels give an essential message that life of hedonism is not a solution to the problems life provides with.

Dhiruben also always sees the bright side of life. She has an optimistic view for life. The spirited vision of Dhiruben is reflected in her novels. She believes that life does not have miseries and sorrows only.
Every problem has solution a in this world. It may look difficult, but it is there…we should find out. She broods over the aim of life. Freedom and self-esteem is the only emancipation for her. She also favours inevitable revolt against the injustices in life. The life is worth living. According to Dhiruben life is not despicable, it is not so narrow, it is grand. It is a part of the universe and it has its meaning.

The novel is the one literary form capable of absorbing all others, it has no limits regarding style or subject, for it is tolerant and all-encompassing. The world changes, but human nature does not, and the novel will never go out of style. The challenges of technological evolution bring with it dazzling technical potentialities of interactive novels and virtual fiction, for the novel is, after all, always something everlastingingly new. This study of these two novelists can be a point from where further future comparative studies can be extended. Namita Gokhale can be compared to various other Indian and non-Indian women writers. This study is a general comparison of their novels. A separate comparative study on women in their novels or thematic concerns is also possible. By placing them together it is hoped that the ocean of comparative Indian Literature will be richer by a little addition.