Chapter - 5
CONCLUSION
Indian English literature has carved a widespread reputation in the international circle in the recent times. Indian English novelists are being recognized among the great novelists of the world. Meanwhile Indian English women novelists have given a new dimension to the Indian English literature. These women novelists describe the whole world of women with stunning frankness. Their writings give glimpses of the unexplored female psyche, which had no accessibility earlier. So I have chosen Manju Kapur's novels for my research work. Manju Kapur is a prominent post-colonial woman novelist writing in English. She has written five full length novels to this date viz. Difficult Daughters, A Married Woman, Home, The Immigrant and Custody. The present study examines Manju Kapur's five novels with images of women reflecting on them. Her female protagonists are fighting hard for their rights in a patriarchal society. Her women protagonists are struck between tradition and modernity. The study explains Manju Kapur's indubitable ability to explore the psyche of the present day urban, educated middle-class women.

Manju Kapur has portrayed memorable women characters. All her novels consist a variety of women characters as well as her all novels are women character centric. Her women characters bring forth the various shades of the lives of women. Through her women characters, she shows a mirror to the society saying what the condition of middle class women is in a patriarchal society. It also traced that the
many women characters are autobiographical. In the first phase of Indian women novelists, the major focus was on social reformation. The second phase of Indian women novelists is more focused on the challenges and predicaments of women. Among many leading Indian feminist women writers writing in English, Manju Kapur is one who has created absolutely different pattern of female characters.

In the changed cultural circumstances, Manju Kapur’s women characters do not largely become the victims of their male counterparts of patriarchal society but they are shown with their own new problems as new responsibilities, availability of equal opportunity, social limitations and new freedom etc.

The first chapter entitled Introduction presents the recent Indian English literature scenario. It also throws special light of the history of women writings in Indian English literature and its development to this date.

The second chapter entitled The Study of Images of women in Indian English Literature focuses on many memorable images of women created by different Indian novelists writing in English.

The third chapter entitled Manju Kapur: Her Life and Works presents brief biographical sketches of Manju Kapur. It presents novelist's vision of the society. Manju Kapur's novels have been discussed briefly in this chapter.

The forth chapter entitled The Study of Images of Women in the Novels of Manju Kapur focuses on the fact that her novels have been centered on women oriented theme. All female protagonists of her
are self reliant. A very striking feature of almost all her female protagonists is that they hold education at the highest pedestal with no air of superiority or contention. The very feature that differentiates Manju Kapur's female protagonists is their attitude towards tradition and modernity. Manju Kapur's female protagonists have daring and desires. They can go to any level to fulfill their desires although they pay heavy price for their desires. They want to live their life freely. They face trials and tribulations. They are full of self confidence. All the images of female protagonists are compared with each other to find varieties in images portrayed by her. Her female protagonists Virmati in Difficult Daughters, Aastha in A Married Woman, Nisha in Home, Nina in The Immigrant and Shagun and Ishita in Custody are studied in detail. Manju Kapur portrays secondary women characters very aptly. Her images of men are weak but done vividly.

Virmati, the protagonist in *Difficult Daughters*, is presented as positive and courageous woman in a particular society. The novel is set on pre independent India, 1940 and at that time Virmati opposes the tradition of arranged marriage. Then she gets education with a hope of living her life in her own ways. But as it happens with Manju Kapur, the crisis come when she falls in love with a professor and at last, out of compelling circumstances gets him married being a second gender. This is what Manju Kapur. Primarily focuses on the portrayal of her women characters with their new conditions and their new problems. The story moves further bringing in the daughters of Virmati, Ida,
who reflects the image of Women's condition but by denying to be like her mother.

In the similar way, Astha in 'A Married Woman' represents the journey of women through hope and despair. It is a journey of Astha from being only a wife to having an independent identity. She is married to Hemant and settles in New Delhi. Initially she is happy even gives birth to two children. But after some time, she feels alone and need to explore life in Hemant's timeless situation. Meanwhile, she comes in contact with Pipee, a widow, and their loneliness turns into an intimate relationship. After sometime, she feels, as it, caught in a traumatic situation of not being able to remain on any of the sides. Hense, here the journey of Astha is shown in a change circumstances with her own problems.

Based on the problem of the women characters their solution, their struggles one can say that Manju Kapur has created a pattern of new women characters reflecting their new problems. In her works, the problems of women are not product of partiarchal system but individual. It a story of Misha, who ties to make her life on her own way but her parents do not allow her. A long background of Misha's family has been described beginning from Banwarilal. Once she is sent to her relative Rupa's house. There she falls in love with Suresh, a boy from low caste. Due to the caste of the boy, Suresh, she is not allowed to marry him. Then after being failing to find a suitable Mangli boy for her, she starts her own business. Mean while, a Mangli suitable boy, Yashpal is found and married to her. Misha continues her business
after marriage but soon she gets pregnant and leaves business. Here, Manju Kapur comes with a new set of characters with new problems like inter-caste marriage, finding a Mangli suitable boy within a caste, running business by a woman etc.

The protagonist Nina's emigrant experience has been narrated in 'The Immigrant'. The novel begins and ends with a same point of Nina's life. Here, Mina's journey has been shown in three stages where in first stage she falls in love with Rahul. Then she marries Anand and both of them migrate to Canada for their new life. They have sexual conflicts both fall in love with other characters, Anand with Mandy and Minar with Anton. It is shown that in her all experiences, she is treated as an object and misused. At the and she returns back to her home in India. This novels depicts life of Nina in a Modern situation, having freedom or taking freedom to have many relationships but ultimately being despaired.

While the novel 'Custody' depicts the lives of two couples Ashok - Shagun and Raman- Ishita. Where in earlier Shagun and Raman are married but later get divorce and then the story of the custody of their children takes place. Here, Kapur comes with all together, different characters and situations. This is how various women characters as protagonists in the works of Manju Kapur are depicted. All these characters create various images of women in Indian past and present society.

Her women protagonists show the courage to be independent but at last surrender themselves to male dominane. Here, though the
women characters are not in the direct violent conflict with the male, it shows how slowly but cruelly the patriarchal system is in its effect. Astha realises her own identity, and becomes rebellious for creating her own independent identity. While Misha too wants to rebel against society for getting married to a lower caste boy but eventually when she fails, she constructs her identity through her own business.

Studying the novels of Manju Kapur, it can be canceled that she has drawn a range of images of women in her novels. Her novels present the women as protagonists with their own problems like the problem of Womans independent identity, taking decision for their own lives, having freedom of love, caste system, infertility as a curse, divorce, extra merital affair in want of love, economy independently etc. The large panoramic view of women in her novels is mirror to society. The range of images reflected in her works may help the people to understand their society in a better way.