CHAPTER-2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The present chapter surveys the literature and works done on the Comparative Literature, Diaspora Literature and Women’s literature. By doing so, an attempt is made to make a list of works and researches already done in this field.

2.1 Review of the related Literature

(1) **Sumana Das Sur** in her research paper has compared two women writers of the Bengali Diaspora, Ketki Kushari and Dilara Hashem.

The main objective of the research (in her words) is,

“To examine and analyse the thinking of such people as reflected in what they write and thereby to construct a map of the mental world of diasporic Bengalis since the second half of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century to the 21\textsuperscript{st} century”.

(Sumana, pg 2)

Interestingly Sumana observes,

“Among Bengalis who have received acclaim for their fiction written in English from locations outside the homeland are first-generation migrants such as Amitav Ghosh, Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni, Sunetra Gupta, and Amit Chaudhuri who shares his time between India and England, and the next generation such as Jhumpa Lahiri and Monica Ali. Writing in English, they do often deal with the lives of Bengalis living at home or abroad, or use Bengali details or associations to give an exotic flavour to their narratives. Alongside such writers there are those who continue to write in Bengali from a diasporic position. It is not an easy task to carry on writing in the mother tongue in a completely different
environment and while immersed in the currents of a different language, but for those who do it, the task is an essential part of their sense of identity and self-esteem.” (Sur 06)

Although both the selected writers have extensively written poetry, fiction, plays, literary criticism, translation and research based scholarly papers; Sumana has selected one representative novel of each for the purpose of the study.

Drawing similarities between two, Suman points out,

“Both Ketki and Dilara are indeed very conscious of their identity as diasporic writers and confident about it. Perhaps women do have an intrinsic power to strike roots in a new environment, to extend kinship and to make something unknown their own. Without going into any ‘-ism’ or theoretical elaboration, one can say that the gaze with which these two view the world around them is a woman’s gaze. Whatever emerges from their writings or what they consciously depict therein, from managing the household to research or other intellectual pursuits, their identity as women is never denied.” (Sur 08)

Highlighting the differences in the writings of both the authors, of the same generation, Sumana comments that their methods of production in their fictional works are dissimilar. Dilara’s reputation stands on creating immaculately neat plots. Ketki’s interest does not rest on the plots and stories as she does not find life as simple as a story with a good plot. Accordingly, she is more interested in discovering historical, social and political skies on the intellectual wings of her characters.

In Dilara’s fiction, the surroundings keep shifting, where as Ketki, without changing the locations of her main characters, show others through their eyes – people who have come from other corners of the globe, with different languages and cultural diversities.

This paper gives an extraordinary comparison of two Diasporic writers. Yet there is a
Vijay Mishra in his monumental work ‘Literature of the Indian Diaspora: Theorizing the Diasporic Imaginary’ (Routledge 2007) discusses in detail the works by renowned Indian Diaspora writers like V.S.Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, M.G.Vassanji, Shani Mootoo, Bharti Mukharjee, Rohinton Mistry and Hanif Kureishi. He makes a distinction between old Indian Diaspora and their reasons after leaving the country as well as new Indian Diaspora subject and their reasons for preferring to settle in other land. Mishra rightly states that a full understanding of the Indian Diaspora can only be achieved if the attention is paid to the particular location of both the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ in nation states. He examines the works of key writers, many now based across the globe in Canada, Australia, America and the U.K. He studies the works of V.S.Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, M.G.Vassanji, Shani Mootoo, Bharti Mukharjee, Rohinton Mistry and Hanif Kureishi to show how they exemplify both the diasporic imaginary and the respective traumas of the ‘old’ and ‘new’ Indian diasporas. Mishra in this book emphasizes the importance of understanding the history and background of a writer if one is to relish the book produced by that writer. Mishra discusses almost all the important texts by Naipaul and Rushdie and tries to state how Diasporic experiences shape their imagination and plots.

This book by Vijay Mishra is aptly defined as ‘possibly the best work so far on the literature of Indian diaspora. Mishra’s own statement “All diasporas are unhappy, but every diaspora is unhappy in its own way” speaks a volume about unhappy state of life of diasporas. He observes,

“All diasporas are unhappy, but every diaspora is unhappy in its own way. Diasporas refer to people who do not feel comfortable with their non- hyphenated identities as indicated on their passport….They are precariously lodged within an episteme of real or imagined displacements, self-imposed sense of exile; they are haunted bybyspectres, by ghosts arising from within that encourage irredentist orseparatist movements.” (V. Mishra 01)
Mishra defines diasporic imaginary as “any ethnic enclave in a nation – state that defines itself, consciously or unconsciously, as a group that lives in displacement.” (Mishra 14) Mishra seems to use the word ‘diaspora’ skeptically only. Immigrants, trans-nationals or global people can not be synonyms for the word ‘diaspora’ because, according to Mishra, this term is reserved for an unhappy breed whose growing fortune can not compensate for the pain they continue to suffer due to dislocation.

3) Malti Agrawal in her edited volume ‘New Perspectives on Indian English Writings’ (Atlantic Publishers and Distributors (P) Ltd., 2007) (Agrawal) provides a collection of thirty eight research papers on various fictionists, dramatists and poets of Indian origin. These papers study the major works of the pioneers as well as emerging Indian authors writing in English. These scholar writers and researchers include Kamala Markandaya, Jhumpa Lahiri, Shashi Deshpande, Nayantara Sahgal, Girish Karnad, Manju Kapur, Bharti Mukherjee, R.K.Narayan, Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Gita Mehta, Kamala Das, Nissim Ezekiel, Ruth Prawar Jhabvala and many others.

This book studies that how Indian writers writing in English have attempted all major literary genres and how fiction and poetry have dominated the Indian scenario. Malti Agrawal rightly supports in the ‘Editorial’ Section of this book the urge of the writers for writing in their mother tongues. Most of these Indian writers are bilinguals and are sometimes nostalgic for their mother tongue. The literary gamut of these veteran writers is the most impressive, outstanding and enduring. Their contribution in indianizing the English language is commendable. These writers have at times used native idioms and also words from their own vernacular to capture the true picture of the Indian society. These research papers touch the most sensitive issues such as social dichotomy, cultural hegemony, clash between ethnic groups, and conflict between eastern and western ideologies. Some of the papers of the book study in depth the poem of Kamala Das who is chiefly known for raising a voice of protest against exploitation of women. The book brings in limelight the voices raised by Indian women writers writing in English against gender bias and male chauvinism. This edited volume is of great help to the students and researchers who want to take a deep plunge into the ocean of Indian English Writing.
Though the book is of great help, it does not include the critique of great writers from Indian regional languages.

(4) **R.K.Dhawan and D.K.Pabby** in their edited volume ‘*Multiculturalism –Canada and India*’ present essays on immigrant literature, native writing and cross-cultural studies. Various essays reveal the rich diversity of Canada and India. The issue of multiculturalism has acquired importance and urgency in the world where people of different ethnicities and religions live and work together. The present volume offers many interesting articles on The South East Asian Diaspora in Canada, Woman as a victim of marriage, The Dilemma of Being an immigrant, what is writing? Critiquing patriarchy, role of women in Development in Canada and India and many more. R.K.Dhawan rightly puts,

> “Every nation has a distinct culture of its own. But when an independent country becomes a colony, the native culture undergoes a radical change. This is true of countries like Kenya, Nigeria and India. When these countries came into contact with western culture, a process of change was initiated, and this process in the course of time, destroyed their traditional cultures.” (D.K.Pebby & Dhavan, 03)

This volume greatly helps in enhancing our understanding about lives of Indians in Canada.

(5) **Jyoti Singh** in *Indian Women Novelists- A Feminist Psychoanalytical Studies* (Rawat Publication, 2007) (Singh) has minutely studied the six novels by contemporary Indian women novelists, namely Shashi Deshpande – The Dark holds No Terror (1956), Shobha De’s Socialite Evenings (1989), Gita Hariharan’s The Thousand Faces of Night (1992), Mrinal Pande’s Daughter’s Daughter (1993), Manju Kapur’s Difficult Daughters (1998) and Arundhati Roy’s God of Small Things (1997). Jyoti Singh has brought together these six women writer with an aim to focus on the experiences of women as women in the contemporary Indian Society, which is in an intermediary phase – in-between the traditional norms like being a faithful and obedient wife and caring mother and inclination towards modern essentials like materialism, being shopaholic and sticking to
the feminist customs. Here, an attempt is exercised to record faithfully the psychological complexities of new women.

(6) **Malti Agrawal** in *English Literature – Voices of Indian Diaspora* (Atlantic Publishers & Distributors (P) Ltd.; 2009) (Agrawal) presents a useful collection of twenty-two research papers on the literary works of various eminent diasporic writers. They all voice the anguish of the people, living far away from their native land and being discriminated on the grounds of race, colour or creed. The writers included in this list are A.K.Ramanujan, Uma Parameswaran, Vikram Seth, Anita Desai, Bharti Mukherjee, Jhumpa Lahiri, Robinton Mistry, Kiran Desai and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. Besides having these stalwarts in the field, this volume also includes papers on the works of some emerging writers like Iqbal Ramoowalk, Yasmine Goonernet and Ann Bhalla. This volume combines a variety of research papers on the literary works of such diasporic writers with the articles on theoretical aspect of diasporas. Malti Agrawal provides authentic information useful to the teachers and students of English literature. Though this book immensely helps the researchers of Indian Diaspora writers writing in English, it lacks the inclusion of Diaspora writers who have preferred writing in the native language.

(7) **Julie Brown** in the edited volume “*American Women Short story writers – A collection of critical essays*” (Psychology Press, 2000) presents a book length critical investigation of the short stories written by American women. An anthology of women’s short stories is not something new in the field of literature. But this book explores the special role that the short story form has played in the lives of women readers and writers. Quite interestingly, this book explores the history of the publishing of women’s stories along with the history of women as short story writers and readers.

In the introduction of this book, Julie Brown said,

“Feminist criticism has devoted itself to helping us understand the poems and novels that women have written, but curiously little scholarship has been written about the woman’s short story, and what scholarship does exist is scattered…. But to my knowledge, there has not yet been a systematic book-length evaluation of
the contribution that American Women have made to the short story genre.’’
(Brown 21)

Interestingly Brown explores some fundamental questions like, ‘can the same definition for women and men short stories be used? What is the origin of woman’s short story? What is the history of female story telling tradition? How women’s use of language affects the way our stories are narrated? How women have used and altered the short story form to suit women’s purposes? How race and ethnicity have influenced women’s short stories? How women writers have influenced or have been influenced by male writers? Why women write stories?’’ (Brown22) are best answered with illustrations of women’s stories.

The author of the book, while discussing female history of writing, told,

“The names of many of the first women story tellers have been forgotten but women writers have their own rich and important tradition. A shared fund of secrets, silences, surprises, and thus belongs to those who have experienced growing up female in a world. Where the experience is erased, written over or devalued. Therefore, we might also view the short story as the byproduct of communal living, a craft, developed and practiced by people who had something important to say to each other.”
(Brown 22)

Julie Brown explored many topics, useful for the students and researchers of American English Literature.

(8) **Jasbir Jain** in *Writers of the Indian Diaspora* (Rawat Publication – 2003) (Jain) presents essays on diasporic writings which raise questions regarding the definitions of ‘home’ and ‘nation’. Both the Indian and foreign contributors represent their perspectives located in different cultures. Ashish Gupta and Uma Parameshwaran write from their personal experiences of migration. Gurbhagat Singh explores the theoretical formulation. David Stouck’s is mostly concerned with reading and reception theories. The writers like Shyam Asani, P.A.Abraham, Rajul Bhargav, B.R.Nagpal and Jasbir Jain develop their arguments through comparative perspectives. The volume presents a new paradigm to post colonial evaluations and critiquing of diasporic writing. Yet a little attention is paid
to those writers who have not accepted English as their medium of expression.

(9) **Gauri Shankar Jha** in ‘*Current Perspectives in Indian English Literature*’ (Atlantic Publishers and Distributors (P) Ltd., 2006) has attempted to present the different genres of Indian writing in English. The book aims at tracing its distinctive features, such as cultural alienation, romanticism, realism, naturalism and modernism. Jha studied the works from Nehru and Tagore to Amitav Ghosh, Shashi Tharoor, Arundhati Roy, Shiv Kumar and Dattani who have stirred the west with their great works.

In an interesting article “Indian Diaspora Fiction in English”, Jha makes an interesting remark,

> “Normally diaspora fiction lingers over alienation, loneliness, homelessness, existential rootlessness, nostalgia, questioning protest assertion and quest of identity: it also addresses issues related to amalgamation or disintegration of cultures, discriminating margins of two different social milieus, internalizing nostalgia and suffering a force amnesia—we may call it a salad bowl where identity of each ingredient is under question”. (Jha 97)

The book discusses at length “how Indian Diaspora fiction in English coming out of writers settled in different countries focus the same pattern of content, which appears to be repetitive, monotonous and insignificant though they expose their genuine experience.” (Jha 114)

(10) **Sunita Sinha** in “*New urges in Post colonial literature*” (Atlantic Publishers and distributors (P) Ltd., 2009) gives an anthology of scholarly articles which range from hybridization and subaltern voices to decolonization and multiculturalism. The book discusses the issues of empowerment and disempowerment, tensions between modernity and traditions, race, gender, caste and subalternity. The twenty-one scholarly papers explore a wide range of Anglophone post-colonial writing. It is a comprehensive collection spanning the literatures of Australia, Africa, Canada, India and America. The
book is a useful attempt to focus on the emergence of many innovative non-European English language writers originating from former British acolonies.

In one of the thought – provoking papers, ‘The Idea of Selling Idea of India in recent Indian English Fiction’, Shubha Tiwari penned a point,

“We all know and accept that Premchand is a great story teller or Jai Shankjar Prashad is a great poet. But the game of language is such that these literary stalwarts are not in limelight. Salman Rushdie, Kiran Desai and others are at the centre of attention. The obvious conclusion is that English as a language is dominating the scene. The question arises that if one language is leading, are there certain ideas also that are catchier than others? When an Indian writes a novel, she is expected to write about India. Now what kind of ideas about India sell and what kind of ideas don’t”. (Tiwari 214)

This paper attempts to narrate the kind of India that is reflected in the recent English fiction.

Rightly narrated by Srutimala Duara in Immigrant Experience and Pain of Exile in Jhumpa Lahiri’s The Namesake,

“The Namesake continues to develop further the themes of cultural alienation and loss of identity that the immigrant faces in making a new home in foreign country. Jhumpa introduced us to people who left behind family and friends and the familiar heat and bustle of India to build a new life in America- a cold, bleak land of strangers and new customs.” (Duara 154)

She demonstrates how much of a struggle immigration can be. Other papers mostly narrate fascinating subjects of Postcolonial studies.
Though this volume is rich in issues discussed and its treatment, there remains a scope of inclusion of great Indian writers writing in regional languages.

(11) Sandra Ponzanesi (Suny series explorations in post-colonial studies) (Ponzanesi) gives an innovative contribution to understanding the contradictions of contemporary post-colonial culture in the text *Paradoxes of Post-colonial culture – contemporary women writers of Indian and Afro-Italian Diaspora*. The author compares the works of established Indian writers including Bharti Mukherjee, Meena Alexander, Sara Shleri and Sunetra Gupta to New writings by such Afro-Italian immigrant women as Ermiina dell’Oro, Maria Abbeba, Riblea Sibhatu. Sandra’s analysis highlights a set of asymmetrical relationship that is set in the context of different imperial, linguistic and market policy. By dealing with issues of representation linked to post-colonial literary genres, to gender and ethnicity questions, and to new cartographies of diaspora, this book instills the post colonial debate with a new perspective.

(12) Jancy James, Chandra Mohan, Subha Dasgupta and Nirmal Bhattacharjee (James, Chandra and Dasgupta) in the edited volume *studies in Comparative Literature, theory, culture and space* (in Memory of Sisir Kumar Das) try to bring together a collection of useful critical essays related to literature and culture. There are articles on contemporary Indian criticis, Indian literature, the novel as a genre in India, of literary history and of post colonial studies. All these articles lead to a comprehensive theory of studies in Comparative Literature. In one of the essays, ‘A changing world : Women and National Identities Emerging Through shifting Geographic Spaces’, Damayanti Chakrabarty rightly claims,

“The women from lower to middle class families were expected to be nothing but exemplary wives and mothers. The revolutionary acts of nation-building occurred beyond their limited private sphere and they were exposed to the struggles, achievements and failures only when circumstances compelled them to face the outer world.” (Chakrabarty 43)

This volume brings together different essays on cultural studies and contemporary
literary criticism.

(13) **Prashant Karhade** in anthology of short fiction stories **Ripples: Short stories by Indian women** (Karhade) writers presents the writings of 26 exceptionally talented Indian women writers. This anthology showcases superior creative writing and is a great representative of contemporary Indian women’s writing. Though the stories vary greatly in genre, style of presentation and length, the issues and choices faced by the protagonists of the stories are exemplary in their portrayal of the duality of the contemporary world. Written with great skill and sensitivity, these stories are sure to leave the lasting ripples on the minds and hearts of the readers. These stories contain the writings from international award winning writer as well as the new comers in the field. Undoubtedly, it is a great attempt to bring together skilled women writers, yet there stays a scope of insertion of regional women writers.

(14) **Rita Kothari** in **Translating India** (Foundation Books Pvt. Ltd. 2006) gives an account of the specialized and the general sphere of English translation in India. Ms. Kothari offered historical, disciplinary, economic and sociological contexts that may explain the rise of the English translation in India. In an addition to the chapters like **English Translations in Colonial India, The Two Worlds Theory (Mother Tongue and Other Tongue), English Studies, Feminism, Post-colonialism, The Cultural Economics of English Translation, Do Translations sell?**, She has devoted a particular chapter on ‘The case of Gujarati’ in which she has discussed Linguistic framework, Translation in Gujarat, Publishing, and Socio-historical background in detail. In her own words,

“The difference between what has gone out of Gujarat into other languages (including English) and what has come into the Gujarati language from outside source is staggering. Surveys undertaken by research students conclude that approximately thousand works from Indian and some European languages exist in Gujarati translation. In contrast, very little from Gujarati literature has made inroads into other languages, particularly English, perhaps because English poses its own set of problems and has its own dynamics….. Most of the translated works
remain unread and unnoticed. They have interested only bibliographers and researchers. In contrast the year 1998-99 alone witnessed the production of eight English translations from Gujarati and marked an “an unprecedented event” in terms of quantity and competence”. (Kothari Translating India, 75)

The book is a truthful record of publishing scrutiny of the case of Gujarati works in English translation. The book also views the situation of Gujarati in relation to some of the other major languages in India. Though, this volume discusses some of the best works by native writers in translation, it does not make the internal comparison between the writers writing in regional languages and those Indian writers writing in English.

(15) **Susie Tharu and K. Lalita** in their edited volume *Women writing In India* (Oxford India Papers Backs, Oxford University Press, New Delhi,1993, Volume I & Volume II) offer a selection of writing in ten languages. These writings illuminate the lives of Indian women over a period of great social and political change. This book provides a collection of writing that illuminated women’s responses to historical development and ones that gave insight into the dimensions of self-fashioning and the politics of everyday life as they affected women. The book pays special attention to the writers who had been underestimated or whose works ought to be far better known. In the words of editors,

“What we have tried to do is to create a context in which women’s writing can be read, not as new monuments to existing institutions or cultures but as documents that display what is at stake at the margins of patriarchies reconstituted by the emerging bourgeoisies at empire and nation. The attempt is to search out the connections between political and cultural economists, for these are connections that illuminate what is at stake in women’s writing. We are interested in how the efforts of these women shaped the worlds we inherited. We also ask, what was the price they paid in these transactions and how did those costs and those concessions affect our inheritance?” (Tharu and Lalita 10)
The book offers a detailed study of women writing in India. Especially volume II of the book presents 200 texts from eleven regional women writers. It is an excellent collection of information on the writings by Indian women. Yet there remains a good scope of comparison among women writers writing in various languages.

(16) **Arvind Krishna Mehrotra** in his edited volume *An Illustrated History of Indian Literature in English* (Permanent Black, 2003) provides twenty four chapters, written by India’s foremost scholars and critics. Each chapter is devoted either to a single author (Tagore, Aurobindo, R.K.Narayan) or to a group of authors (Novelists of 1950 and 1960s, Nature Writers, the Indian Diasporic writers of the twentieth century) or to a genre (Poetry since Independence, beginnings of the Indian novel etc). The book also provides rare photographs and drawings which contribute in making it an interesting reading. The volume covers a wide range of writers, issues and genres of literary significance that have happened in India. It provides a vivid and detailed study of Toru Dutt, Bankim, Tagore, Kiplng Naipaul G.IV. Desani, Raja Rao, R.K.Narayan, Nirad Chaudhry, Gandhi, Nehru, Mulkraj, Khushwad Singh, Ved Medla, Salim Ali, Jim Corbelt Nissim Ezekiel, Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Amitav Ghosh, religious thinkers, drama translations and of many more. Aptly described by Mehrotra in the Preface,

> “Written by specialists, this is a book for non specialist readers …. An international border is rigorous but literary borders are porous, ill-defined and overlapping, especially if the literature is new and has a colonial past. Often its writers, to their discomfiture, fall in two, sometimes more, literary territories”. (Mehrotra 05)

In one of the most impressive papers on Indian Diaspora, ‘From Sugar to Masala – writing By the Indian Diaspora’, Sudesh Mishra wrote,

> “The movement from Seepersad Naipaul to Meera Syal suggests an important rethinking of the concept of ‘home’ within the diaspora…. Whereas for the sugar diaspora ‘home’ signifies an end to the itinerant wandering in putting down of the roots, “home” for the masala diaspora is
linked to strategic espousal of rootlessness, to the constant mantling and dismantling of the self in makeshift landscapes.” (S. Mishra 294)

This interesting volume offers informative and analytical insights into the rich world of Indian English Literature. Yet there is a scope here for the discussion of the great legacy of Indian Literature in its native languages.

(17) Sharifa Vijaliwala in her one of the most famous books ‘Vartasandarbh’ (Gujarat Sahitya Akademi 2001) presents the articles and criticism related to the short fiction. During the preparation of her Ph.D. thesis, she used to read many Gujarati and other languages stories. And during this reading, she gathered some interesting material and perceptions for female short-story writers for the articles of this book.

In addition to the interesting articles, on some of the elements present in short stories, Sharifa has also given a rare collection of the critique of some of the finest short stories of Gujarati literature like Andhari Gali ma Safed Tapka (Himanshi Shelat), Kumbhi (Mohan Parmar) Shabvat (Ramesh Dave) and Gajva Ma Gaam (Manohar Trivedi). She has also presented a rare interview, in this book, with Himanshi Shelat. Eva Dev and Izak Bashevis Singer.

In one of the articles on ‘Inquiry of some of the stories through Female perspectives’, she wrote,

“The sensitivity of female is extremely different than that of males. Female works on intuition and males work on logic. And as the world of ladies is different than that of males, it is only female writer who can give proper justice to some of the subjects.” (Vijaliwala 06)

Sharifa, in this book tries to answer the question raised by Anne Ferguson in 1973 in Image of women in Literature. “Do women authors write differently from men? Do women author use genres and techniques different from those used by men?” At the end of this article, Sharifa makes a useful suggestion to research on the language used in
female gender and on gynocriticism. Indeed, the book is of great help to the researchers of Gujarati literature. However, including some Indian women writers writing in English would have made it a more comprehensive volume.


In order to give proper structure to the inquiry that how those writings have viewed ‘women’, she has divided 1947-97 into three periods- 1947-69 was a time of synthesizing the past and assessing then present. 1970-1985 focused on a critique of the present and efforts to excavate the past and the third 1986-1997 was a time for challenging categories, reassessing colonialism and revisiting the “Third World Woman”. (Forbes 74)

Very minutely, the writer of this essay selected a few representative works of each period and analysed how the authors defined women, their adherence to traditional disciplines and the questions they deemed most relevant.

After interesting comparison of all these three eras of women’s writing, Geraldine concludes,

“In the post independence era, women writers in Indian English have become more conscious of the concept of a liberated woman. There are images of new era – women in their works. The novels of some contemporary male writers do not subscribe to this image. Writers like Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and Bhabhani Bhattacharya have not given us any significant portrayal of Indian women in their fictional works. Whenever they have tried to characterize women, it has been in the traditional mind”. (Forbes 77)

Gradually in the portrayal of women writers like Ruth Parwar Jhabvala; Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Saygal, Anita Desai, Shahi Deshpande, Bharti Mukherjee and
Kamala Das that we find the successful ideal concept of a liberated woman. Geraldine has given, in the pages of this essay, an interesting history of women’s writing in India and how it undergoes a big shift with the changing time and society. However the essay has not included the Indian women writers writing in the languages other than English.

Sura P. Rath in his essay “Home(s) Abroad: Diasporic identities in Third space” (published in the edited volume Theory and Praxis – Curriculum, culture and English studies, edited by Pruffulla C. Kar, Kailash C. Baral and Sura P. Rath, Published by Pencraft International, Delhi-2003) comments on his multiple identities engaged in conflictual relationship with each other, even while negotiating through a global space for greater visibility and recognition. He narrates his trajectory through multiple homes until he finds himself in a precarious position of being neither here nor there, permanently “out of place” but turning his alterity into an advantage. Like Edward said who paradoxically feels at home when “out of place”, Rath too feels that a sense of displacement does some good to an intellectual who could use his experience at home and abroad for forging relationships and refining his sensibility.

In the words of Sura P. Rath,

“The most common manifestation of one’s otherness in an alien culture is a question one encounters from time to time: “Where are you from? Not “Who are you?” Its follow up is often “No, I mean where you are really from” and “what brought you here from there?” (Rath 05)

Rath has aptly provided the metaphor of Trishanku, the character from Ramayan who went ‘embodied’ to heaven but had to settle at a place midway between the earth and the paradise, for the modern expatriate / immigrant inhabiting the contested global local space. This essay discusses in detail how the globalization of the local has localized the globe. Sura P. Rath aptly concludes,

“Perhaps in me as in thousands of other immigrants of diaspora who inhibit the third space, live the third culture and shape the third history,
post colonialism has come full circle, and the trauma of post modernism has a final relief.” (Rath 23)

**Research Methodology**

An extensive review of the existing literature on Diaspora works has been accomplished in the first part of this chapter. The review reveals that much has been written and reviewed on Diaspora population, issues and literature. Many national and international writers have contributed in formulation of Diaspora theories in literature. Even the issues of feminism came under the vigilant lenses of research studies. The literary scholars and researchers have also recognized the significance of Comparative Studies. It is only due to the blessing of translation that we know about rich cultural and literary heritage of the different civilizations of the world. There are numerous instances in the history of the world literature that disclose the fact that the translated work had given more popularity to the writer on the global scale than the original book did so at the regional level. The first part of the chapter on literature review shows that an abundance of research has already been done on three different fields as following.

1. Diaspora Writers
2. Feminism and Female Writers and
3. Comparative Literature

There is a need for a sincere research in the field of comparison of Diaspora writers with non-Diaspora writers which is mostly regarded as two distinct and dissimilar fields. The present research tries to make this evaluation of comparing Diaspora women writers with regional Gujarati writer and by doing so, the researcher tries to find similarities and dissimilarities between these two seemingly unlike genres of Literature.

**2.2 Aims and objectives**

However, the present research strives to evaluate the themes of diasporic female writers Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Uma Pameswaran. After an unbiased evaluation of their works, they would be compared with a renowned regional writer Kundanika Kapadia. This innovative
comparison would throw lights on the issues faced by women in the present era in their own land as well as in the host land.

**There are five prime objectives of this study.**

1) How these women diasporic writers have explored their sense of displacement. How they have given more poignancy to the exploration by dealing not only with a geographical dislocation but also a socio-cultural sense of displacement.

Do the characters of the diasporic writers reflect a sense of dislocation and yearning for their home-land?

2) To identify the similarities of themes and characters between these two most representative Indian Diapora writers. And to know how near is Kundanika in her treatment to lady characters.

What are the similarities and dissimilarities in the writing styles, themes and plots and women characters of the three selected writers?

3) How some of the Diasporic theories find true representation in plot, themes, characterization and style of these writers.

Do the works of the selected writers confirm with the popular theories commonly associated with diasporic literature?

4) Is the outlook of Indian diasporic writers on Indian culture, society, traditions etc. same as the Indian regional writers?

5) Does the culture and writings of the foreign country in which the writers are currently residing affect their perception and writings about their homeland?

**2.3 Research Methodology**

In order to achieve above objectives, the following methodology of research would be followed.

1) Two most representative books of these two writers – *Arranged Marriage* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and *What Was Always Hers* by Uma Parameshwaran would be compared closely in connection with their themes, plots, culture
representation, characters, style of narration and most importantly, language which is said to be the most illustrative tool of diasporic experience. However, a wide comparison would be made of these two diasporic writers with the selected stories of a Gujarati woman writer, Kundanika Kapadia.

2] Some of the noteworthy works and research done on these writers would be studied and cited to reinforce the arguments.

3] Library work

2.4 **Hypotheses**

There are three hypotheses of this research assignment as following.

1] There are many similarities in the themes and characterization of women in the works of the Diasporic women writers and non-Diasporic female writers.

2] Even with the emigrated status, the role of women does not change much in patriarchal society. **Even a woman in her own country can feel diasporic and alienated.**

3] The writings of the selected women writers broadly confirm to the established theoretical framework related to Diaspora theories. **The diasporic writers exercise variety of techniques (in narration, characterization, dialogues and in language) for expressing their diasporic sensibility.** And there are many similarities in such techniques employed by non-diasporic writers.

There has been a lot of research on the works of individual Diasporic women writers, regional women writers and International women writers. However, a comparative analysis of the Diasporic and regional writers, especially with respect to the treatment of women characters, has hardly been attempted systematically.

This research would try to throw new lights on the role of women in global society. It will also reflect traditions and values of both the countries. It will reflect how traditions of home country have permanent place in the memory. This research project would try to find out similarities and divergences in these two forms of writing in the next core chapters by analysing
three most representative texts of female writers.

2.5 **Social Significance of this Research Study**

This research on Diaspora writers would throw some lights on the typicalities of such writing. It will build a platform for a novice reader of what exactly Diaspora writing is all about. The research would also make an earnest attempt to list down some characteristics commonly shared by women writers throughout the globe. The research would try to diminish the thin and vanishing line between the diaspora and regional literature by noting down common attributes between the writers of both the genres.
Works Cited


