Review of Literature

The approach of the society towards the women was taken into account is prime issue in their writings viz. G.B.Shaw, Henrik Ibsen, Jane Austen, Rabindranath Tagore etc. G. B. Shaw gives respect to women in his writing like ‘Candida’ (1955). Approaches towards marriage were presented in Pride and Prejudice’ (1975) by Jane Austen. Henrik Ibsen, a dramatist presented some personal and social problems, problems in family and society and its trends. In plays like ‘Brands’ (1866) and ‘Peer Gynt’ (1867) he offered questions like men superiority and his lack of humanity. John Stuart Mill (1869), Fredric Engels (1884), Kate Millet (1970) touched upon the issues like family structure, subjection of women and sexual politics in literature. They have mainly focused on equality in economic and external issues.

The Indian writers like Bankim Chandra Chatarjee and Raja Rao dealt with real social and cultural problems in their novels i.e. Rajmohan’s Wife (1964) and Kanthapura (1938). Rabindranath Tagore pointed out in his ‘Tapasya’ that union of man and woman is the marriage of true minds, its journey from the sensual to the spiritual. Mahashweta Devi (1981) forwarded radical approach in ‘Draupadi’ through dialogues of ‘Dopdi’, the heroin like ‘tortures are not males, and true males never insult a woman’.

Nayantara Sahgal concerned with the man-woman relationship, the problems of marital incompatibility and view of morality imposed on women, whereas Anita Desai stated that femaleness leads them to suicide or murder or withdrawal from the society. They focused large on emotional space and that too within marriage. Bharati Mukherjee shows the contrast women characters to Desai. Shashi Deshpande explained the male dominance in joint families. She discussed about women in struggle for basic rights like education, job work, decision of child birth, self fulfillment, suffering in silence, etc.
Paranjape (1998) adopted historical approach to portrait the trend of changes in literary types, issues, views and approaches in Post-independence Indian English literature. Indian writers were confined to cultivate the issues and approaches related to nationalism as India was supposed to get freedom from British Empire. In post-independence the writers were modified their approaches towards cultural and social issues i.e. village economy (1954) including Gandhian village co-operative and Nehruvian heavy industry (1966), feudal orders in the Princess (1963) and contemporary political issues. Some of the writers were focused on metaphysical explorations. At this background the writers like Salman Rushdie, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande and Arun Joshi have started to write effectively lives of middle class women. The English literature have emphasized greater on the experiences and subjectivity of minorities, women, anglo-Indians, Parsis, others who cannot seen themselves as a part of the national ‘mainstream’. The literature characteristics are usually urban, middle class, English educated and westernized.

Aditya (2011) reviewed the feministic views of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar in his writings and legal documents. He remarked that ‘Manusmriti’ is inculcating discriminate views in society in last few centuries. He has invested his energy to cultivate man-woman equalities in different castes.

Anand (1999) recognized that the democratic languages are ever accessible to masses. The Sanskrit was never a ‘mother tongue, it was always father tongue’. It was not accessible to women as well as Shudras or ati-shudras. In modern Indian society, the English literature is also belonging to elite classes mainly ‘Brahmins’ which presented in Indian English fiction. It has ideological discriminate culture and issues handled are belongs to middle and upper classes.
Feminism is revolutionary ideology concerned with political power (Bhola, 2009). Bhola (2009) reported the themes in feminism and feminist theory includes patriarchy, sexual objectification and oppression. Women have central importance in formation of feminist theory. She reviewed feminism depicted in fictions of women writers i.e. Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande and Manju Kapur. She identified the problems of middle class women reported in their writings i.e. suffering from neurosis, struggle for survival, generation crises, sacrifice for family, traditions and culture, sentimental problems, contradictions and crises between modernity and traditions, gender discriminations. The writers have presented women characters revolutionary and tragic. Manju Kapur has presented contradictions in political views and provisions Indian Law i.e. Hindu Code Bill.

Feminist writers have recognized that the contradictions between man and woman were not reduced even after 65 years of independent republic of India (Rengnathan, 2009, Azhar and Ali, 2012). They have started discussions on sexual problems of women and questioned about the gender role in society. Shashi Deshpande has presented women in middle class families in her novels i.e. The Dark Holds No Terrors, Roots and Shadows, and That Long Silence. Renganathan (2009) has described various strengths of novels written by Shashi Deshpande i.e. 1) the Indian feminism depicted in fictions is unique one, 2) Shashi Deshpande have presented women experiences with gynocentric vision, 3) she writes about the culture and societies simply and mundane, 4) she shows the women identical contradictories between the traditions and modernity, family and profession, culture and nature, 5) her feminism is humanistic and optimistic, 6) awakening of women consciousness,

Shashi Deshpande projected the image of women who get the support from the male as a Father and husband but she is not free for self identity, decision i.e. choice marriage in outside
community, sense of fulfilsments (physical and mental). However, at maternal home, she felt relief in old shelter but this is not permanent relief from their sufferings. Deshpande justified the extra marital relationships in the condition of sexual dissatisfaction of women, affecting marital life. The father advised to daughter to face the problem at marital home not to run away in presence of patriarchal traditional way of thinking. She expressed that the solutions are self bounded and self-realization is key for the solution which is psychological rather than metaphysical.

Gove (2010) reported thoughtful account of women’s world and psyche on the background, crucible of traditions, conventions and social changes presented by Indo-English novelists in recent past. He concluded feminine sensibility, human relationships, human bonds and bondages in long review of ‘A Matter of Time’ by Shashi Deshpande. He mainly focused on issues like marriage, sex and sexuality, mother-daughter relationship, womanhood, trauma of a deserted wife, gross injustice meted out to women in matters of property ownership, marginalisation of women, etc of women in middle class family.

Mahmood (2010) stated that Ram Mohan Roy and Macaulay have recommended English Language education in India. Fiction is the most suitable literary term to express our experiences and ideas in our time. Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan and Raja Rao and Bhabani Bhattacharya were contemporary novelists. Shashi Deshpande has a unique place in indian English writing. She focused on marital relations, man-made patriarchal traditions and rebellious heroines. She presented social reality as it experienced by women. She has also write about girl child’s position in society, self-identity, modernity and tradition, rebel against way of life and traditions. She presented realistic, authentic and credible women characters in her writings. The writer has
suggested small adjustment to old as well as new generation for bridging gaps and better family environment.

Ramachandran (2011) noted that Shashi Deshpande presented women characters with their plight, fear, dilemmas, contradictions and ambitions. The woman in middle class families has to be faced the problems of adjustment between idealism and pragmatism even though she is financially independent and educated. Woman is uncomfortable and living in frustration, endurance and long silence for many centuries. Ramachandran (2011) remarked that Shashi Deshpande’s protagonists are stronger than other contemporary writers. They struggle against the inner conflicts as well as problems in patriarchal setup of the society and families.

Nayak (2011) stated that Shashi Deshpande is a feminist writer. He has recognized that she has mainly focused on ‘rainbow coalition of rights, desires, agendas, struggles, victories’, speaking for all the women.

Varma and Lal (2012) used realistic approach to study the social, cultural and economic aspect of discrimination of Indian women. They referred directions given in the ‘Manusmruti’ i.e. ‘A woman is never fit for independence!’ to explain the nature of dependency in male centric ‘Patrarchical’ society. They remarked that the different issues depicted in writings of Shashi Deshpande i.e. self identity crisis, individuality, self emergence, loveless marriage, conflicts between tradition and modernity and the role in family fold (service, sacrifice, submissiveness and tolerance).

Biswas and Roy (2011) attempted to see the points of divergence and convergence in Nayantara Sahgal's ‘Storm in Chandigarh’ and Shashi Deshpande's ‘That Long Silence’ with feministic angle. The issues handled in these novels are marital discord, silence, lack of communication, quest for identity. These writers have similar views on marriage that marriage
enslaves women and forces them to lose their identity. On the other hand, presented male characters are helping to woman for their self identity.

Azhar and Ali (2012) analyzed the issues related to the middle class or upper middle class women in ‘Difficult Daughters’, ‘A Married Woman’ and ‘Home’ these novels by Manju Kapur. They discussed about the status of women in her family and society. Azhar and Ali (2012) have recognized different issues portrayed by Manju Kapur: 1) women life status before and after marriage, 2) self identity and 3) struggle for survival against traditions. In traditional society women treated as an object even they have contributed in fight for national freedom, political issues, literature, economic sectors, etc.

Chaudhary and Sharma (2012) compared the fictions of Manju Kapur with contemporary conceptualized feminism in India. They reviewed the concept of feminism in India, Indian patriarchy and curtailed rights. Manju Kapur’s writing reflects man-woman relationships, human desire, longing body, gender discrimination, marginalization, rebel and protests. She presented socio-cultural life in modern urban post-colonial India as well as lesbian relationships. The middle class women are searching for place of shelter and securities. She recognized the healthy sexual relationship for personal, social as well as family securities.

Al-Quaderi and Islam (2011) showed the transgression of the caste, class and religious boundaries of women in Arundhati Roy’s ‘The God of Small Things’. She presented the outcasted women from marital and maternal home with twin because of lacunae of kin womanhood even though her maternal was elite leftist in their religious past. They noted that limitations of co-existence of ‘untouchable’ and ‘touchable’. The writer tried to feminist reconceptualization of politics. The Ammu was lower class woman exploited from upper class in ‘class society’ i.e. her Bengali Hindu husband wanted to prostitute her in order to please his white boss.
Purushottam (2011) gyno-critical strategy to examine three novels by contemporary Indian women novelists, namely, Arundhati Roy’s The God of Small Things, Kiran Desai’s The Inheritance of Loss and Manju Kapur’s Difficult Daughters. He got together traditional views with modernity like globalization, materialism, consumerism and feminism. The writer has covered different issues in their writings with innovative style, depicting social realities, advocacy of the emancipation of women and feminine sensibilities in man-woman relationships.

Khan (2009) compared the psychoanalytical portrayal of the women characters in fictions by Virginia Woolf and Anita Desai. Basically, they are influenced by the modern psychological interpretation of their behaviour, actions, reactions and responses under given circumstances. They handled the issues like love and marriage, subjection of women to social injustice or psychological torture, sense of self centeredness and helping nature, ideology and religiousness, discrimination and struggle for freedom, etc.

Parveen (2012) stated that R. K. Narayan portrays life in Malgudi with comic point of view. He treats human as sentimentalism, selfishness, manners, and meanness with sympathy and compassion. He presented orthodox middle-class life and society. It also reveals traditional and modern Indian cultural clash. The women protagonist devotes her life for goal achievement i.e. social cause: population control. She (Daisy) has no place for personal feelings or emotions (modern). She (Laxmi) has religious discourses; rites, and rituals, family is everything (traditional).

Mishra (2011) remarked that Jane Austen has propagated romantic approaches through her six popular novels. She preferred conversion of willing love into marriage for success. The writer tried to inculcate common sense and practical attitude towards life and find matching for the heroines.
Jubimol (2012) explained the close association between women and nature i.e. ‘Mother Earth,’ ‘Mother Nature,’ ‘Virgin Land,’ ‘Barren River,’ ‘Flowery Women,’ describing women as ‘chicks,’ ‘cow,’ ‘bitch’ in reference to reproduction and nurturing. However, this association allows to male as well as society for women exploitation in patriarchal/capitalist/colonialist society. Therefore, the feministic and ecological studies and movements have same way to work in Eco-feminism.

Singh (2012) pointed out that Sarojini Sahoo is a bilingual South Asian feminist writer. She explores female sexuality, the emotional lives of women, and the intricate fabric of human relationship, identifies women’s sexual liberation, rape, motherhood and marriage (sensitive topics). Her women protagonists are discarded from maternal home in traditional patriarchal set up, inner crisis, poised between submission and resistance, passivity and action. She deals with social issues, conflict between social and individual values (individualistic urges and societal expectations).

Devereux (1999) reviewed the representations of white women in anglo-colonial fictions for nation progress and empire. The fictions are underlies the reproductive duties of women and presented women as a ‘mother of race’. Sujatha (2012) has reported the racial hatred of Indian immigrant in Canada in Bharati Mukherjee’s fiction. The later writing show optimistic views of inclusive society and culture.

Datta (2000) examined the process of gendered representations in Indian cinema and how ideological and market forces impact on this process. He referred the feminist novels for explanations of women behaviour, patriarchal control on women, family relations and lesbian relationships. The changes in traditions and activities are linked to western world in the globalization i.e. shopping malls, food habits (Sanyal, 2011), entertainments etc. Indian cinema
guiding to women as well as men for traditional ideological setup in new way of western forces for representing them as a glorious woman i.e. higher expense of cosmetics, fancy garments or dresses, etc to maintain the men.

Sanyal (2011) pointed out food faddism and faulty food habits were more common in low educated and low income group as compared to high educated, high income and middle income group of Hazaribag district of Jharkhand (India). The quality of food was recorded better of women of high income and high educated group, compared to middle income, low income and low educated group.

Yazdani and Royanian (2012) noticed that Margaret Atwood shows world of feminist protest through her novel ‘The Handmaid’s Tale.’ She has presented sexism and anti-feminism in contemporary society. She explains physical and psychological suppression of women, problems of discrimination, subjugation and denial of human rights in patriarchal society.

The feminist writers have presented rebellious women in their novels. However, they are protecting their family structure in faith and honesty. In this background, Manju Kapur has presented complex of women struggle for survival and self identity in successive generations. The earlier generations are accepting contradictions, but next generations realizing these things due to education and awareness. Women of first generation are self bounded by tradition and rituals in contemporary society but the next generation is ready to break it for self identity and reliance. They are ready to rebel against bounds in her family. However, the struggles presented in literature have not converted into rebel against cruel treatment given to women at large i.e. sex selective abortion of female child (Das Gupta, 2003) and exploitations at different places. Therefore, the literature can be revolutionary but not a revolution, it is not a science of revolution but inspire for revolution against the cruelty (Patil, 1985).