Research Methodology

The proposed research work would depend upon the textual analysis of primary and secondary sources having references to the poets’ works, documents reviews in journals, essays and magazines, reports, memoranda, letters, interviews and websites.

Research Strategy

The proposed research work will be divided into the following chapters broadly.

Chapter - I

Introduction

I] Background of the Indian English poetry:-

Literature in the Indian languages appears to possess a substantial by significant poetic writing, significant at least in relation to their own tradition produced from the time they came under British influence to the attainment of Independence. Poets in Indian languages, even when they imitated English models, were doing so in their own languages, and thus performing the momentous task of altering their literary tradition.

After independence, Indian English literary culture remains deficient in several ways in comparison with other Indian literatures or other countries. There is a desultory air about the Indian English poetry. Most Indian languages possess homogeneous, geographical compact of literary culture; English in India doesn't. There was a problem to get publications to publish poems by poets. Indian poets ran every where to get publications. But the Indian English poetic culture needs the dynamic play of forces and counter-forces, which is the proper mode of building a living and lively tradition. Some of the Indian poets wrote simultaneously in English and their own native languages so; it is the major problem to consider them English poets.

II] Modernity of Indian English Poetry:-

Modernity was available to Indian English poets readymade. He \ she did not have to win it by hard way it was won in the early decades or the century in England. After independence all writing in English literatures was written by modernity. They have been influenced by modern Marathi literatures also. B.S. Mardhekar had begun to publish strong and striking modernist poetry in the forties. Even in Ezekiel's volumes of the fifties- ‘A time to change’ (1959), there is not much concentrated imagery of modern, urban life. It is in the mid-sixties that mature, modern poetry emerged in Indian English, with Ezekiel's. 'The unfinished man' (1960) and 'the exact Name' (1965), Arun Kolatkar had written ‘Jejuri’ (1976), also it is known as modern poems.

III] Indianness of Indian English Poetry:-
The term 'Indianness' means those traits in the character of a man which shows him to be an Indian and certainly not those traits which show him as a foreigner. Nissim Ezekiel is, by parentage and religion, a foreigner whose ancestors had migrated to India from their own country and had settled down in the metropolitan city of Bombay. Nissim Ezekiel was born in Bombay and educated in Bombay. He has written a large number of poems depicting the Indian conditions of life, and more particularly the conditions of life in the city of Bombay. Arun Kolatkar has also used the term indianness in his poetry. The Indian poets have enumerated the following sights which are common in this country: The beggars, hawkers; pavement sleepers; slum-dwellers; burnt-out-mothers, frightened virgins; The city, its tall buildings, its factory chimneys, and its human souls choked by the buildings and the Gods, animals, landscape, transport facilities, rivers, servants and hills etc are the common Features of Indian poetry.

VI] Language and Special Theme of Indian English Poetry:

Indian English poets occur in peculiar position of English language: a language which is spoken by a minuscule percentage of the population, which is mostly used for formal, official, or professional purposes and which is not really a language of the street, or with most people, even of the home. Arun Kolatkar travelled whole world, but wrote particular location on Jejuri. These English poems are often largely descriptive, or significantly, ironic and satirical, and thus closer to the conscious mind. Nissim Ezekiel’s very Indian poems show humor and satire which is unique feature of Indian English language and poetry.

Chapter - II
The Poetry of Arun Kolatkar

I] Biography

i] Childhood and Education:-

Arun Kolatkar was born in 1932, in Kolhapur. The name of his father is Balkrushn and mother is Seetabai. His parents taught him meaning of well education and discipline of life. His family inherited religious, social and cultural background. Arun Kolatkar had completed his primary and secondary education from ‘Rajarm High School’ in Kolhapur. Arun Kolatkar enrolled in the J.J. School of Art in Bombay in 1947, and after attending this and other Art schools in Kolhapur and Pune. He completed diploma in painting from the J.J. School of art in 1957. He completed fine art degree as a distance student from J.J. school of Art. Arun Kolatkar died on September 25th 2004.

ii] Profession and his Works:-

Arun Kolatkar had performed in many advertising agencies as a graphic designer and in the art direction as an art Director. He spent his early life with ‘Lintas group of
company' as an advertising advisor. Arun Kolatkar had started poetry writing when he was eighteen years old. He published his first book of poetry, ‘Jejuri’ in 1976 through clearing house, and second edition of Anthology of Jejuri published through pras publication in 1977. He wrote ‘boatride’, which is very interesting poem. He also published ‘Arun Kolatkarchya kavita’ in 1976. He also published ‘Kala Ghoda’, ‘Heart of Bombay’ and ‘sarpa satra’.

iii] Recognition and Awards:-

Arun Kolatkar had received many awards and rewards from different institutes. He was awarded by ‘Kag award’six times from ‘Kag Institute’. Bahinabai foundation awarded him ‘Hall of Fame’ in 1995. He won the commonwealth award in 1977 for Anthology of “Jejuri”. Kolatkar was the president of Marathwada Sahitya Parishad in 1993, so he awarded “Kusumagras Award”. He participated in Global poet Gathering which was managed by Bhopal Bhavan, he was the representative of Marathi language and Marathi speaker.

II] Themes of the poetry

i] Kolatkar’s Attitude of Scepticism and Even Disbelief:-

Arun Kolatkar wrote a poem about the place of pilgrimage, giving to his poem the title ‘Jejuri’. But the most important aspect of his writing poem is the faith which the people of Maharashtra have in the miraculous powers of god Khandoba. Many people go to Jejuri from different part of Maharashtra even from other parts of India. They go there to pay their obeisance to the god, to worship the images of the god, and to make their offerings in an effort to placate him and win his favour. But Kolatkar has not written the poem “Jejuri” to celebrate this god or to pay his personal tribute and homage to him. Kolatkar seems to be debunking and denigrating not only people’s faith in this kind of worship but in all kinds of worship having its origin in a belief in existence of gods and goddesses.

ii] Quests, Investigations and Inquiries about Jejuri:-

Arun Kolatkar imagines the protagonist of his poem as actually paying a visit to Jejuri to explore the beliefs under the influence which people travel to Jejuri in order to offer worship to god Khandoba. For all we know, the protagonist may be the poet himself but the poet gives to his protagonist the name Manohar. The Protagonist is a city bred man visiting a small town which is more or less a village. The protagonist himself is a sort of tourist because; he has no intension of offering worship at the feet of the revered god Khandoba. He goes round the place, scrutinizing every stone or bronze image of Khandoba and a number of other deities. He meets the priest of the temple and asks him all sorts of questions about the temple and about the god Khandoba.

iii] The power of Legend and myth:-
Most of the poems are written in an ironical and sarcastic vein. Together these poems constitute a satire on the people’s religious beliefs which actually are superstitions. Kolatkar exposes the legends about god Khandoba for what they really are. As pointed out, they are superstitions and myths. Every legend and every myth tends to acquire a stronger and still stronger hold upon the minds of the people with the passing of time. Years only strengthen the legends and myths; and this is what seems to have happened not only in Jejuri but in all the places of pilgrimage in the various far flung stated of India, and also in other countries.

iv] The study of pilgrimage place:-

Arun kolatkar is Maharashtrian poet. Maharashtra is the place of saint venerate. There are so many places which are religious as Pandharpur, Alandi, Shingnapur, Shegaon, Shirdi, and Jejuri. Jejuri is the faithful centre of God Khandoba. Though jejuri is pluralistic and holy place, the condition is very pathetic. Arun Kolatkar focuses on jejuri to describe the position of pilgrim place. Jejuri is the representative place of pilgrimage places in whole India. Arun Kolatkar observed the blind faith of pilgrimage about gods and guts of gods.

III] Techniques of the poetry

a) Imagery:-

Imagery is an indispensable ingredient of poetry because it is imagery which lends solidity to an idea. Arun kolatkar’s imagery is perfectly concrete. Most of the poems in “Jejuri” contain vivid imagery. The butterfly and heart of ruin which contain half a dozen pictures, not only vivid and realistic but also interesting.

b) Irony:-

Every poem in “Jejuri” illustrates Kolatkar’s gift of irony and sarcasm. There are many poems in collection of ‘jejuri’ as a low temple, priest, priest’s son, a scratch and yeshwantrao, are examples of irony.

C) Diction:-

Arun kolatkar uses figure of speech in his poems. He uses repetition and alliteration in his poems to show excellent style of writing. He also uses metaphorical language to write poems.

D) Lucidity, Brevity and Colloquial style:-

There is no complication of syntax in Kolatkar’s style. The meaning in all poems of ‘jejuri’ is almost transparent. Much of Kolatkar’s poetry is written in a colloquial style. Almost every poem in ‘jejuri’ is written in the colloquial or conversational style. Brevity is the soul of wit in his case.
Chapter - III

The poetry of Nissim Ezekiel

i] Biography

i] Childhood and Education:-

Nissim Ezekiel is one of the foremost poets writing in English. He belongs to Jewish family who had long ago migrated to India and settled down in Bombay. Nissim Ezekiel was born in 1924. Both his parents were teachers at the time, the father in a college and the mother in a primary school. After finishing school, Nissim Ezekiel went to college and there he stood first in the M.A. English examinations of the Bombay University in 1947. Then for a short period he worked as a lecturer in English in Khalsa College, Bombay. The next stage of his life came with his departure to England for higher studies. He spent three and half years in London. During his stay there he evinced a keen interest in the theatre, in the cinema, and in art. He also studied psychology and philosophy under Professor C.E.M. Joad. However, he showed a much greater inclination towards literature. By returning to India, he married Daisy Jacob who was Jewish girl.

ii] Profession and Works:-

Nissim Ezekiel worked as a lecturer in English in Khalsa College. He then took up teaching and retired as professor of English at the University of Bombay. He has edited several Journals with distinction, and has been an art critic for ‘The Times of India’ and other papers. He joined shilpi advertising as a copy-writer in 1955, he was appointed the editor of a magazine called ‘Quest’, in 1954, and he visited the U.S.A. for four months as the manager of shilpi advertising.

Nissim Ezekiel has published several volumes of poems over the years; and these volumes appeared under the following headings:
1] ‘A Time to Change’ - 1952
2] ‘Sixty Poems’ – 1953
3] ‘The Third’ – 1959
5] ‘The Exact Name’ – 1965
6] ‘Hymns in Darkness - 1976

iii] Recognition and Awards:-
Nissim Ezekiel is a widely travelled man, and delivered lectures in U.S.A., Australia and England as well as given poetry reading in those countries. He retired as professor and Head of the Dept of English at the Bombay University. The government of India conferred upon him the title of “Padmashri” in recognition of his service to literature, and he is also a recipient of the ‘Sahitya Academy award for literature.

II] Themes of the poetry

i] The study of philosophy and psychology:-

Nissim Ezekiel has made a tangible contribution to the philosophical poetry produced by Indo-English poets. Indeed, Ezekiel has shown certain in several poems written by him. The poetic self of Ezekiel has experienced two divergent pulls- the existential enigma on the hand, and the poetic enigma on the other. He has the sensibility of a modern poetic ideal world. He shows that the culture of the city and the repressive social codes in the modern world inhabit a man’s individuality and his freedom to grow. This culture spreads perversion in all walks of life. Thus, marriage has become more of a bondage in which a man and a woman lose their freedom and their identities, with the result that “a man is damned in that domestic game.” He therefore stresses the need of commitment, sincerity and integrity as essential conditions for the completeness of a poet; and without such completeness there can be no association of sensibilities so that a poet’s imagination would remain fragmented. Ezekiel has illustrated this view in the poem entitled ‘Enterprise’. The poems entitled ‘philosophy’ and ‘Time to change’ also show Ezekiel’s philosophical bent of mind.

Nissim Ezekiel is known as the psychologist and a poet of the mind. He shows a marked tendency to probe the human mind, and his poems reveal not only the conscious but also the sub-conscious thoughts and conflicts of human beings and more particularly, his own thoughts and conflicts. Indeed, his primary concern is with man and man’s mind. His striving to become a “Finished” man compels him to self-analysis and introspection. The poem entitled “case study” is one of his several attempts at an exploration of his own mind. He portrays his own personality and his mind though he appears here in disguise, it seems that he is portraying somebody else; self-exploration is also very much in evidence in the poem entitled ‘London’. ‘Island’ is another of Ezekiel’s poem where we find the same search for the self leading to resigned acceptance of his environment. Indeed, Ezekiel may be described as an endless explorer of the labyrinths of the mind.

ii] A Poet of the Metropolis:-

Nissim Ezekiel has made an equally substantial contribution to Indo-English poetry by having written poems depicting Indian life, more particularly city life, vividly and realistically. Many are the poems in which he has depicted the sights which are seen daily in the city of Bombay, though he has depicted these sights which in a witty
and satirical vein. The poem entitled ‘India’ is an outstanding example of his realistic imagery. Here he enumerates the city sight, focusing attention upon the poverty of the people as represented by beggars, hawkers, pavement sleepers, and the dwellers in slums. He also draws out attention to the burning of woman who did not bring enough dowries, and to the virgins who are frightened virgins.

iii] The Theme of Alienation: -

Nissim Ezekiel is not only alienated from his Indian environment but also from his own minority religious ethos. Ezekiel’s alienation from Indian environment began very early in his life when he was yet a student at school. His autobiographical poem, ‘Background, casually’ clearly reveals his antipathy to that environment where he found himself a mugging Jew among involves, they told me I had killed Christ. His “Later-Day Psalms” offers a direct criticism of modern life and civilization.

iv] The study of love and sensuality:-

Nissim Ezekiel is known as love poet. His loves poems are mostly concerned with physical sexual relationship between men and women. The themes of such poems are sensuality and lust, and not true love or love which has its basis in the heart and the emotions. ‘Nudes’ and ‘the couple’ both poems are very interesting and spicy though very brief and pictures of sexual relationship between males and females of human species.

III) Techniques of the poetry

a) Colloquial:-

Ezekiel has been adopting a conversational style. ‘The Exact Name’ is the best example of colloquial style. The frequent use of a colloquial idiom imparts to these collections of poems a fine combination of the clarity of expression and cogency of argument.

b) Imaginative and Suggestive style:-

Ezekiel is perfectly aware of the significance of suggestiveness in poetry and he feels that the imaginative faculty should be allowed to play its role. At the same time he is always eager to celebrate the ‘ordinariness’ of most events; and his characteristic mode remains simple, colloquial poetry of statement.

c) Economy and spoken language:-

Ezekiel has tried to bring the idiom of poetry closer to the spoken language. His poems like ‘Philosophy’ and ‘Perspective’ do contain some abstract thought and vague expression.
d) Imagery:-
Ezekiel’s best poems have an undeniable pictorial quality and, therefore, show an obvious affinity with the visual arts. Ezekiel has given concrete and vivid pictures of Bombay which he calls a ‘barbaric city’, sick with slums.

e) A Sophisticated style:-
Sophisticated means complex, subtle, involved, and having deeper layer of meanings. Enterprise, Philosophy, Visitor, is the examples of sophisticated style.

Chapter - IV
A Comparative study of the Themes and Techniques of the poetry of Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel

1] The Themes of the poetry

1] The study of socio-graphical and cultural:-
Arun Kolatkar highlighted the theme of socio-graphical and cultural through his collection of the poems. The prentious nature of the people is shown by both musicians and priests. Some poems are depicting the hollowness of a borrowed cultural standard. In the contemporary society we find people having no sincerity in their beliefs and attitudes. The poet is pointing out the lack of sincerity of people and criticizing, the hypocrisy of those people who deliberately choose unconventional attitudes. The poem entitled “Makarand” presents a simple theme about social. The poet raised a question about the relevance of a custom at the place of worshipper. He also showed social attitude through the poems entitled ‘The Bus’, ‘The Priest’, ‘Vaghya and Murli’, ‘The Beggar’, ‘The Blue Horse’, ‘The Railway Station’, ‘Yashwantrao’, ‘an old Woman’ and ‘Chaitanya’ etc.

Nissim Ezekiel also wrote poetry on society, common man and woman. He focused largely on philosophy of life and psychology of the people. Philosophy and psychology these concepts are different from Arun Kolatkar’s concept of the poetry. Ezekiel is the poet of ordinary human situations and common human relationships and human interest comes to the fore in a host of lyrics. Night of the Scorpion” integrates the family with community, the superstitions with the rational and the scientific. He has written many poems on society, entitled “The visitor”, “Good by Party for Miss Pushpa T.S.”, The poem of ‘the separation’ ‘marriage’ and ‘unfinished man’. These are the comments on society. He also used themes of Beggars, saints, sadhus, Healers, Yogis, The society girl, English Boss, the clerk, Guru etc; they are common men and women.

2] The Study of Tradition and Superstition:-
Arun Kolatkar wrote a poem about the place of pilgrimage, giving to his poem the title “Jejuri”. But the most important aspects of his writing this poem is the faith which the people of Maharashtra have in the miraculous power of god Khandoba. It is this god to worship whom people from different parts of Maharashtra, and some even from other parts of India, go. They go there to pay their obeisance to the god, to worship the images of the god, and to make their offerings in an effort to placate him and win his favour. But Kolatkar has not written the poem “Jejuri” to celebrate this god or to pay his personal tribute and homage to him. In fact he does not even fully or whole heartedly believe in idol-worship or the worship of gods. He believes this worship to be kind of superstitions, though he does not openly say so anywhere in the poem. Although the attitude of disbelief, or at least of scepticism, predominates in the poem, Kolatkar’s general attitude is that of a rationalist.

Nissim Ezekiel has written some poems to criticize superstitions angle. The poem entitled “Night of the Scorpion”, one of the most striking, and also interesting, has features of the contrast between superstitious view of the neighbors and the rationalistic attitude of the father of the speaker in the poem. While the orthodox neighbours steeped in superstition, alter prayers and express their holy wished, the father tries every scientific method known to him to assuage the woman’s pain. He also expressed attitude about crows, cats and owls and foxes. He gave information about traditions through ‘The couple’, ‘a woman observed’, ‘case study’ and ‘marriage’.

3] The Study of Religious and Mythical Theme:-

Arun Kolatkar’s most of the poems are written in religious and mythical views. He has written most of the poems in an Ironical and sarcastic vein. Together these poems constitute of satire on the people’s religious beliefs which actually are superstitions. There are some poems which related to religion as, ‘The Priest’, ‘The Priest’s son’, ‘Song for a Vaghya’, ‘A song for a Murli’, ‘Ajmil and the Tigers’, ‘Makarand’ and ‘Yashwantrao’. Arun Kolatkar Fully agrees about mythical or mythological story related to Jejuri. Arun Kolatkar exposes the legends about god Khandoba for what they really are. Lord Khandoba is incarnation of Lord Shiva. The poem entitled “Heart of Ruin; perhaps, it is related to collapsed temple of the God Maruti, belongs to the ancient time. Maruti is worshipper of “Rama” in the great epic of Ramayana. Maruti is an incarnation of Lord Shiva also Lord Khandoba is incarnation of Lord Shiva. ‘The scratch’, ‘The Horseshoes shrine’, these belong to mythical story.

Nissim Ezekiel has written religious entitled “Declaration”. This poem is essentially religious in its definition of a good life and the right attitude towards the world in which we live. True freedom, peace and power reside in obedience to a law which is understandable and acceptable to us. People, who do not yield to the law of Nature, receive their punishment by being in some way or the other afflicted by misfortune or disaster. True freedom comes from a sense of being one with god and from a bold
acceptance of god’s laws. A surrender to the laws of the universe leads to some final good.

4] Indianness:-

The term “Indianness” means those traits in character of a man which shows him to be an Indian, and certainly not those traits which show him as a foreigner or which shows that, though an Indian by birth, be behaves like a westerner and has picked up not only western tastes in food and dress but also in mode of speech. Now, Arun Kolatkar is, by his parentage quite religious. He has written a large number of poems depicting the Indian conditions of life, and more particularly the conditions of life in the city Bombay and town ‘Jejuri’ but in these poems he appears more of the critic and a censor than an admire or a champion of those condition of life. Arun Kolatkar’s Indianness lies only in his commitment to this country and in his earnest and sincer endeavor to bring about some improvement in the conditions of life in this country through his poetry. Arun Kolatkar has written poem entitled “Jejuri”, he has enumerated the following sights which are common in this country; the beggars, hawkers, pavement sleepers, animal relation, social, historical, cultural, mythical, god, etc. He also wrote ‘irrani’, ‘the boatride’, ‘Dnyaneshwar Samadhi’ ‘kala Ghoda’, ‘sarp-satra’.

Nissim Ezekiel is a very Indian poet writing in English. His commitment to India, and to Bombay which is his chosen home, is total as is shown by ‘Background, casually’ and a host of other autobiographical lyrics. He is entirely Indian in his sensibility. He has not only tried to describe Indian culture but he has made good use of Baby Angrezi or Indian English. He has performed half a dozen interesting experiments in this genre. “Very Indian poem in Indian English” tries to depict the characteristic Indian attitudes in swadeshi Angrezi. In this way he creates the authentic atmosphere of paddy fields with knee deep water and how all the houses have collapsed. But there is apathy and indifference of the Government officials. Ezekiel is able to evoke a grim picture of Indian poverty.

II] Techniques and styles of writing

1] Imagery and Metaphor: -

Arun Kolatkar has used Imagery in his poems. Imagery is an indispensible ingredient part of poetry because it is Imagery which uses solidity to an idea. Sometimes no doubt the imagery itself is very abstract and in that case, it does not impart any correctness to an idea though it may still serve as a clarification of the idea in philosophical language.

2] Irony: -

Irony is one of the most conspicuous features of Arun Kolatkar’s poetry. Almost every poem in “Jejuri” illustrates Kolatkar’s gift of Irony and sarcasm. His treatment of the theme in the poem of “Jejuri” is ironical from beginning to end. He does not attack
the superstitions of the people directly. He exposes the absurdity of superstitions beliefs by the use of irony. Almost every poem in “Jejuri” illustrates Kolatkar’s use of irony which comes to him naturally. Nissim Ezekiel also used irony in his poems. The use of irony is one of the most outstanding features of the poetry of Nissim Ezekiel. ‘Background, Casually, ‘Night of the scorpion’, ‘the visitor,’ ‘good-bye party for Miss Pushpa T.S’. , the scorpion, two nights of love, these are excellent examples of his use of irony to achieve comic effects and to hit his target of criticism.

3] The symbols: -

The symbols indicate reality of the society. Most of the poems which are written by Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel show symbolism. The poem entitled ‘Enterprise’ written by Ezekiel which is example of symbolism, the journey is a metaphor for the journey of life, it is symbolic for the voyage into one’s inner self, the voyage of self-exploration, the poem ‘Night of the scorpion’, ‘the city’, ‘the woman’, ‘the marriage’, these are the examples of symbolic imagery. Arun Kolatkar has written poem “Jejuri”. It is also example of symbol. It is the waste land. It indicates the symbol of waste land of mind.

4] The Study of Lucidity, Brevity and Colloquial Style:-

Lucidity is the merit of Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel. They enjoy using mockery in their poems. There are no complications of syntax in their poems. We generally speak of a poet’s capacity to condense or compress their material in case they possess that capacity. They naturally write in an economical style. Brevity is the soul of wit in their case, much of the poems of Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel are written in a colloquial style. Almost every poem in “Jejuri” is written in the colloquial or conversational style. Nissim Ezekiel also wrote some of the poems in colloquial style.

Chapter - VI

Conclusion

The conclusion will be based on the observations and interpretations in regards to a comparative study of the poetry of Arun Kolatkar and Nissim Ezekiel poetry; a thematic and stylistic approach. They are Maharashtrian poets, so they highlighted social and cultural attitude of the society.