REVIEW LITERATURE

Review literature helps the researcher to understand the background and base the future research on that foundation.

Feminist critics have assessed the psychological development of Desai’s female characters in terms of the patriarchal Indian family structure while evaluating Desai’s representation of the Indian feminine within the context of other Indian literature written by women. Although most of these critics have praised the complexity of the family relationships depicted in Desai’s novels, several have objected to their resolutions as either too simplistic or perpetuating patriarchal values. Her characters finally give in and compromise not showing how they fight for equality. They are escapist who prefer the safe house of alienation to a fight for the rightful place in the society.

A Tempest: A Brief History of Woman’s Suffrage by Terrie Bittner- the writer speaks of lack of voting privileges, divorce laws which gave women no protection, even over their own children, barriers to education and little protection from husbands. They based their document on The Declaration of Independence itself, a document that had already changed history once. The woman’s suffrage creating laws that brought change.¹

Teaching Leadership to Female Students in Saudi Arabia by Neva Helena Alexander- the study conducted in Saudi Arabia shows that female education used to take place at home or under religious guidance. Women have faced many challenges in leadership positions, in terms of their gender, their identity being fastened to many stereotypes, being marginalized, and their experiences unnoticed in the formation of knowledge. The article covers the changes in the scenario showing the change in situation of women.²

¹ Bittner Terrie. ‘A Tempest: A Brief History of Woman’s Suffrage’
Two Tributes to the Strength of Women's Friendships- Reviewed by Nancy A. Hardesty-
review about importance of female bonding and relationships based on frequent
communication, shared passions, and life-times spent together.³

Feminism Today- The Personal is Political by Ann Farmer states that the feminist
movement is more politically inclined than meant for personal development. All the
developments and the changes in laws are still fixed in second or the third wave of the
feminist movement. We are now waiting for the fourth movement to bring about equality
of the sexes in real terms.⁴

Deconstructing McClary: Narrative, Feminine Sexuality, and Feminism in Susan
McClary's Feminine Endings by Elizabeth Sayrs, The Ohio State University Published by
Finding a correlation between music and feminism is being looked into taking into
consideration the great composers like Beethoven, Brahms, Mozart, Hayden. Earlier the
sonnets, tone voice were mainly for the male barely proving scope for the feminine using
only the baritone for singing.⁵

Education and Women's Resiliency: Exploring the Experiences of Successful Women
from Disadvantaged Backgrounds Pamela Lepage-Lees, Ed.D The women in the survey
contend that they experience disadvantage and race can be important, especially if people
achieve at higher levels when they are not aware, or do not acknowledge, their
disadvantages. In this study, women blamed themselves, rather than the system, for their
difficulties. Yet, they attributed their success to family members or school interventions.
These women had extremely high standards for themselves and saw achievement as

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³ Hardesty Nancy A. ‘Two Tributes to the Strength of Women's Friendships Reviewed’ Book Review, EEWC-
Christian Feminism Today.htm Nebula 6.3, September 2009
⁴ Farmer Ann (© 2008) ‘Feminism Today- The Personal is Political’, Published in Perspectives, Volume 17,
Number 1, Summer 2008.
⁵ Sayrs Elizabeth. ‘Deconstructing McClary: Narrative, Feminine Sexuality, and Feminism in Susan McClary's
Feminine Endings’ The Ohio State University Published by the College Music Society in College Music Symposium
completely dependent on their own abilities, not on the school and not on their family. Also, most of the women believed they achieved at a higher level because professionals in educational settings did not know who they were as individuals. They actively hid their nontraditional histories.6

Women as Victims of Violent Crime: A look at the FBI stats by Lili Pintea-Reed, PhD.-The articles speaks of violence towards women by people they are acquainted with rather than by those who are strangers. Violent crimes towards women have always been in the society, it is only now that women have gathered courage to speak about them. Unlike males who are attacked by other males women are violated by family members and acquaintances.7

Chandra Mohanty and the Technology of Gender by Ingrid Hoofd Utrecht, 18th of June 1997 -Criticizing the white Western feminist scholarship Mohanty is in fact killing two birds with one stone, namely deconstructing the binary 'first world woman versus third world woman' and the binary 'men as oppressors versus women as victims'. And in my view she is not only taking up for various real life women but also holding a mirror to Western feminists in order to make them aware of their whiteness and the colonial history that comes with this and to help create a more effective way of feminist scholarship which will be helped by listening to the voice of the 'post-colonial Other'.8

"My/Our" Comfort Not at the Expense of "Somebody Else's": Toward a Critical Global Feminist Theology Kim Nami. The article states the Asian woman’s feminist theology; it

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7 Pintea-Reed Lili, PhD ‘Women as Victims of Violent Crime: A look at the FBI stats’. FEMINISTA! Magazine<http://www.feminista.com>
has since rendered women in and from Asian a monolithic group irrespective of varied socio cultural, religious, political, and economic differences among them.\(^9\)

*Is It Okay To Call God "Mother"? : Considering the Feminine Face of God by Paul R. Smith Peabody*, Reviewed by Cliff Williams-Williams speaks of accepting God as a feminine factor that gives more power and inner strength that can be attributed to Mother God. Congregations are influenced today to think of God as feminine. This is not uncommon in Hindu tradition were Goddesses are norm.\(^10\)

Women in ancient Egypt by *James C. Thompson* – Women in ancient Egypt were treated better than most other civilizations of ancient world. A small handful of documents mention a man giving permission for a marriage, but all are sufficiently ambiguous to leave open the question of whether or not a father's permission was necessary as it was in other societies of the time. The earliest known Egyptian marriage contract dates from the seventh century BCE, long after the end of the New Kingdom. There is no unambiguous evidence of a man having more than one wife at a time, although there is some evidence of men who fathered children by a servant girl when their wives were unable to conceive. We see the prevalence of a much modern society.\(^11\)

American Women and the Gender Pay Gap: A Changing Demographic or the Same Old Song. *Jennifer Perry* and *David E. Gundersen* - Despite changing demographic it is the same song where there is an imbalance between the gender pay. The writer has hit the nail on the head when he cites the reasons for this. There are various factors that contribute to this gender pay gap. Factors like gender discrimination, education, ratio of the number of men and women, family and biological play an important role in gender

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\(^11\) Thompson James C. ‘Women In Ancient Egypt’<Women in Ancient Egypt.htm>
pay gap. It is a problem that society will face indefinitely if it continues to be ignored. The true costs for society are not just inferior female earnings. Lost energy, expertise, potential skills, and the costs associated with the low-wage population are borne by all. 12

Promoting Equity for Girls in Guatemala's Public Primary Education System by Jennifer Johnson. In an effort to minimize the connection between girls in school and women who are educated, no mention was made of women, oppression, or any other topic that would allow the listener to associate girls with educated women. USAID personnel felt that this association would cause the listener to have reservations about educating the girls, since educated women were seen as potential threats to the family and community. These efforts show flexibility and adaptability on the part of the people involved in the Initiative. USAID was successful in staying with the original goal of girls' education, despite making compromises in certain areas. In summary, the Guatemala Girls' Education Initiative seemed to be particularly innovative and fresh in its approach to an enduring and deeply rooted problem of equity in education in Guatemalan public primary schools. Education for girls in developing countries is not an easy problem to tackle, since it takes money, time, and organization, not to mention support from the government and the immediate community. 13

Violence(s) and Silence(s) in Engineering Classrooms by Karen L. Tonso – The writer speaks out the different types of violence that the women studying engineering face. The students are discriminated against on the basis of gender and how gender bias is normalized. The overt acts of physical violence against women, the other subtle and


pernicious violence that women contend with daily and the continuous discrimination is what women live within their daily life.¹⁴

Female Bodies: Gender Inequalities, Vulnerability, HIV and AIDS in Kenya—Dr. Waithera Sesay—Kenya, where AIDS has taken its toll is attributed mostly to unprotected heterosexual sex. The concept of HIV vulnerability refers to Kenyan women’s multiple layered realities, characterized by social and cultural inequalities that perpetuate HIV vulnerability. In this context, attention has been given to the ways in which women may be vulnerable. The African woman does not have power, decisions are controlled by the man and that makes her vulnerable to HIV.¹⁵

Failing to Achieve the Goal: A Feminist Perspective on Why Rape Law Reform in Taiwan has been Unsuccessful--Chih-Chieh Lin. The Taiwanese did not accept the new laws especially those related to tradition. The laws of rape in Taiwan are similar to that of America and are influenced by the feminist yet the actual embedded Taiwanese culture did not allow the laws to be fully functional. Rape law reform in Taiwan is directly linked to the Taiwanese feminist movement, which occurred in three waves from the 1970s through the 1990s. Prosecutors were frequently unable to convict those accused of rape because the level of force used did not meet the level required for the victim to be unable to resist.¹⁶

Implicit Gender Bias in the Legal Profession: An Empirical Study by Justin D. Levinson & Danielle Young. The writer found that implicit biases were pervasive; a diverse group of both male and female law students implicitly associated judges with men, not women, and also associated women with the home and family. This Article

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¹⁴ Tonso Karen L. ‘Violence(s) and Silence(s) in Engineering Classrooms’ Advancing Women in Leadership Journal—Tonso Spring 1997

¹⁵ Dr. Waithera Sesay. ‘Female Bodies: Gender Inequalities, Vulnerability, HIV and AIDS in Kenya’-Advancing Women in Leadership Journal. Volume 13,Number 17 ISSN Number 1093-7099

¹⁶ Lin Duke Chih-Chieh. ‘Failing to Achieve the Goal: A Feminist Perspective on ‘Why Rape Law Reform in Taiwan has been Unsuccessful’. Journal of Gender Law & Policy Volume 18:163 2010
considers implicit bias based theories of gender inequality in the legal profession and
details the empirical study. The numbers are clear that the gender gap amongst leaders in
the legal profession persists, and does in an alarming fashion.\textsuperscript{17}

Women and Work-Family Interface: Indian Context \textit{Vinita Chandra}-The factor that the
man is the bread earner while the woman is the care giver and the home-maker plays an
important role in the dynamics of the male female relationship. Since women have
entered the public domain and started working the problem of balancing work and family
together has given rise to what is called the ‘work-family conflict’. The problems have
burgeoned with the coming of the MNC culture of work characterized by long working
hours, deadlines, competition, lesser holidays, negligible number of leaves, frequent
tours, job transfers, increasing work pressure and so on. This has further posed challenge
to the marital quality of the dual-earner couples; sometimes even threatening the
sustenance of a happy marriage.\textsuperscript{18}

Gender issues: Why I was not born as a son? \textit{Aggarwal AK, Gupta N} -Gender disparities
exist despite educational status and financial independence. Our system as a whole is
inadequate and insufficient to deal with the problem. Abuse and violence against women
is another important dimension of this gender problem. After marriages, plight of
women's status is not better. Working ladies have to perform dual role - Job tasks and
household chores. On reaching home from job, she is expected to entertain and serve the
in-laws family, while others will sit/relax and have fun. Gender disparities exist
throughout the life cycle of the individual from birth to death. Gender issues are therefore
very deep rooted and affect all age groups and societal group.\textsuperscript{19}


\textsuperscript{18} Chandra Vinita. ‘Women and Work-Family Interface: Indian Context’. Banaras Hindu University (Varanasi, India) and International University of Humanities and Social Sciences (San Jose, Costa Rica) \textit{Journal of Asia Pacific Studies} (2010) Vol. 1, No. 2, 235-258

\textsuperscript{19} Aggarwal AK, Gupta N. ‘Gender issues: Why I was not born as a son?’ \textit{Indian J Community Med} 2007; 32:173-4. /36819 < http://www.ijcm.org.in/text.asp? >
Patriarchy: Perpetuating the Practice of Female Genital Mutilation by Sharmon Lynnette Monagan - Female genital mutilation is a common practice in certain regions of Africa and Asia. This often times performed by women on other women and young girls. Men are far removed from the act itself. Proponents argue that it decreases the rate of HIV/AIDS. The procedures are normally carried out by older female tribal leaders and midwives. Women, because of their nurturing role in society, are expected to protect their children from all harm and are ultimately responsible for their well-being.

The New Woman in The Sun Also Rises by Xiaoping Yu - The New Woman was a historical figure that became prominent in the public eye as she began to redefine gender roles, go to college, and start working in the male world. The presence of this historical New Woman then generated a certain amount of masculine anxiety as women began to take over typically masculine gender roles and spheres (Schneider 16). Based upon this prevalence both of the New Woman and of masculine anxiety, it is not surprising that these topics become thematically important in The Sun Also Rises.

Feminist Politics as Reflexive Citizenship - Charalampos Tsekeris and Nikos Katrivesis. Reflexive citizenship signifies a new possibility for omnipresent emancipative “life politics” (Giddens), for the development of a stronger and more cosmopolitan civic culture, and for the generalized defense of the rights of the individual based on the principles of liberty and equality. It also signifies the vital need to foster moral responsibility, capacity for self-assertion (autonomy), and conversation that facilitates learning through open, genuine dialogue, encouraging a flexible politics of “voice”.

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21 Xiaoping Yu. ‘The New Woman in The Sun Also Rises’. College of Foreign Languages, Qingdao University of Science and Technology Qingdao, 266061 Vol. 3, No. 3; September 2010.

22 Charalampos Tsekeris & Nikos Katrivesis Feminist Politics as Reflexive Citizenship. <www.intellectum.org - intellectum@intellectum.org>
'Gender Inequalities in Tasks and Instruction Opportunities within Indian Families' by Motiram, Sripad and Osberg Lars. The analysis documents clear gender inequalities in the allocation of household tasks among girls and boys and their parents, but finds more mixed evidence regarding gender favoritism in human capital investment. As children living in rural areas grow older, school attendance falls off much more rapidly for girls than for boys; but in urban areas, attendance of boys and girls remains essentially similar. In both urban and rural India, gender specialization in housework is strong and starts early, as girls are introduced progressively to household chores while boys – particularly those still in school – are largely exempt.23

This time of Morning by Nayantara Sahgal -Through the character of Nita, Sahgal exposes the conventional narrow minded Indian Society where life partners are chosen by parents and marriage seems to be a license to do things hitherto prohibited. The writer condemns the hypocrisies of the affluent upper classes where women are encouraged to take drinks or to smoke in the name of freedom and modernity but is not allowed to take independent decisions in choosing their life partners and marriage is considered to be the greatest ambition of a girl.24

The Hungry Tide by Amitav Ghosh, -Postmodern Novel characterized by the presence of many narrative voices. Through the protagonist in the story Ghosh made an attempt to explore the emotional world of woman revealing a rare imaginative awareness of various deeper forces that help us to understand the feminine sensibility as well as psychology. They are illustrations of women seeking to be independent, to be whole human beings. The journey of the characters Piya and Neelima direct towards survival and inner freedom. They gave way to individuality and autonomy in antagonistic male chauvinistic society.25

23 Sripad Motiram, & Osberg, Lars(2010) 'Gender Inequalities in Tasks and Instruction Opportunities within Indian Families', Feminist Economics, 16: 3, 141 — 167

24 Sahgal Nayantara. 1970 ‘This time of Morning’Rpt Delhi; Orient Paperbacks

25 Ghosh Amitav 2004. ‘The Hungry Tide’, New Delhi, Ravi Dayal
French Lover by *Taslima Nasrin* - Nasrin’s French Lover is a post modern feminist critique that resists cultural, sexual and psychological stereotyping of woman. In a hostile environment the woman survives a dynamic state of ‘self as arbitrator’. It is a tale of 27 year old Bengali Dalit woman who moves to Paris, after her arranged marriage to Kishanlal, a restaurant owner. On arrival at the airport in Paris, she experiences firsthand the racial discrimination of black, dark and white alongside the contempt against citizens of 3\textsuperscript{rd} world economic order.\(^26\)

Nectar in a Sieve by *Kamala Markandaya*, -A novel which illustrates how Rukmani a peasant woman of pre-independence rural India resolutely struggles for survival with undaunted courage, determination, fortitude and an indomitable spirit of endurance. The traditional character Rukmani accepts and endures sufferings with innate strength of character, vigour of mind and a true spirit of tolerance and resilience. She symbolizes the indefatigable Indian rural psyche which buckles under pressures but does not break.\(^27\)

Voices in the City by *Anita Desai* -The novel is set in transitional India and documents the specific victimization of educated middle-class, urban woman. The novel shows how Monisha destroys the self to seek her real self. Simrit finds a proper choice in the character of Raj whose entry into her life changes her course by turning it towards self realization at last. Towards the end of the novel, therefore Simrit proves to be a real feminist. In spite of her trouble, she possesses toughness and firm determination. She becomes aware of her own existence, identity and human rights and hence solves her identity crisis in a reasonable and quite justifiable way.\(^28\)

That long Silence by *Shashi Deshpande* —The novel is the story of Jaya, the protagonist who remains a sufferer in her childhood and adulthood. The girl is being conditioned throughout her life towards the comforts of her future life partner. Jaya finds herself in midst of domestic tension when she tries to find out about her husband’s corrupt practices

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at the office. The couple sinks into utter silence in a mood of frustration and depression
without talking to each other and without sharing ideas. The writer through the
protagonist shows the society’s adherence to Manu Smriti in the modern era. Jaya’s
supportive and submissive role proves detrimental to her own creative talent.  

The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy — The novelist implicitly advocates greater
social reforms in the rigid positioning of women. The world of Arundhati’s novel is
captured in a state of flux where values of the patriarchal society are under attack from
the new world in which self interest and social equality are forcing their entry. Seeing
from a feminist point of view the novel speaks of violence perpetrated on women and
paternal tyranny engulfing luckless children. It ruthlessly unmasksthe dual standards of
morality in the society in respect of men and women, the passive submissive role of a
wife in a man – woman relationship.  

A Married Woman by Manju Kapur -- The womb of Manju Kapur’s creative mind gave
birth to such an outstanding and most memorable female characters like Nisha, Virmati
and Astha, who shook the very sphere of feminism and changed the very terminology of
woman’s life. These women characters gave such a jolt to the male dominated society
that the so called male dominated society gave up the thought of suppressing and
victimizing and ignoring their existence. These women protagonists revolt against the
traditional male dominated society and unlock the fetters of slavery which prevent them
from being the part of outside word which is ruled by men. These women are the best
representation of the women of the time and change occurring in their attitude and
sensibility. They show how women are adopting change of modernity by coming out of
the shadow of the age old traditionalism. 

Women's imperative need for personal time, for self-growth and development may have
provided the initial impetus to Anita Desai in writing her novel Fire on the Mountain.

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31 Mr. Wakde Balasaheb Ishwar. ‘Woman’s Suffocation and Struggle for Independence in Manju Kapur’s ‘A
Anita Desai's *Fire on the Mountain* is a radical comment on women who turn their back on the world, who denounces all that traditional women hold as precious and dear, a woman who dares to live an independent existence.32

*Fasting, Feasting* very vividly and realistically portrays a typical Indian family consisting of three children and their parents. Uma, the spinster daughter is trapped at home, with her 'Mama-Papa', unlike her ambitious sister Aruna who brings off a 'good marriage', and brother Arun, the disappointing son and heir, who goes off to America to study.33

It’s a trap... that’s what marriage is. A trap? Or a cage? May be the comic strip version of marriage... a cage with two trapped animals glaring hatred at each other... isn’t so wrong after all. And it’s not a joke, but a tragedy. But what animal would cage it? Shashi Deshpande makes her protagonist choose security through reconciliation. The ethos in the novel is neither of victory nor of defeat, but of harmony and understanding between two opposite ideals and conflicting selves!34

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