2. Review of Previous Literature:

Researcher has studied novels of R, K. Narayan in detail. One of the leading Indian authorities on Indian English Literature, M.K.Naik in his book *The Ironic Vision: A Study of the Fiction of R.K.Narayan*, focused on close examination of the regional element in Narayan’s fiction and its important relationship with his ironic vision.¹

Professor Veena V. Mohod of Amravati University undertook research on *Social Realism in R.K. Narayan’s Novels*, and proves that with Narayan, social realism acquires a new dimension. His realism is an expression of his essential humanism. She views Narayan’s success as a social realist artist is epitomized in his creation of Malgudi where man realizes the wholeness of existence, his place in the infinite.²

Jayant K. Biswal worked on *A Critical Study of the Novels of R. K. Narayan: The Malgudi Comedy*. He explored the immense possibilities of the comic in the common place of Malgudi. He emphasized that comedy is not only confined to physical details, it also incorporates the philosophic awareness of life which integrates man into his society and reconciles him with his gods. Apart from these researchers reviewed many researches and the information has been reviewed for importance of study.³

The book *An Anthology of Recent Criticism* is a collection of delightful essays on R. K. Narayan and they bring together critical responses to the writing of eminent Indian English writer. The book prominently concentrates on Narayan’s ‘barely sufficient resource’ and ‘restraint art’, his ‘entangled irony’ and an ‘irregular humor’.The essays also attempting well to project women as ‘tools of social change’, its indigenization of language for cross cultural significations, and the appeal of its ‘familiar rhythm’for western critic.⁴

R.A.Singh’s Critical Essays on R. K. Narayan’s novels discusses at length Narayan’s rich literary achievements. It is rare for one top collect views only on a particular writer, and such work is surely singular in the Indian context. More so, subject of the essays is not a single novel but a complete work of the novelist. Efforts have been made to present to the readers full views of Narayan’s fictional world. It is interesting that the Indian Novel in English developed differently from its western counter part. It is different in conception of plots, characters, social, religious and political ideas. There is also difference in prose style and myth. R. K. Narayan uses his own style which is remarkable. The myth is tackerfully
handled by the novelist in almost all the novels. The classical myth, however, is a source of symbols in
the work.⁵

Sharan Nagendranath’s book *A critical study of novels of R. K. Narayan* is quite helpful to the readers
to study and understand R. K. Narayan’s novels in detail from ‘The Swami and Friends’ to ‘The Talkative
Man’ which have been evaluated by Sharan. The studies made so far are mostly thematic. But the
present study seeks to provide a union of technique and theme; form and meaning. In a true sense,
technique and theme are not separated in a work of art. As a result of this, the usefulness and validity
of this study is obvious.⁶

The book *The Child in R. K. Narayan’s Fiction* by Uday C. Gor is a good attempt of understanding the
child in R. K. Narayan’s novels. It focusses upon Naarayan’s art of characterization in general and on the
characters of children in particular. The characters reveal a definite journey of the self from innocence
to experience and then to wisdom. Gor has examined the psychological insight of the novelist in the
portrayal of school going children. The relationship of children among themselves, with parents, elders,
teachers and world of grown ups is studied by him in minute detail.⁷

*Wit and Humour in Indian English literature* is edited by Ramesh K. Srivastava. His introductory essay
explicates the purpose of comic elements which is mainly “to provoke or evoke laughter”. Narayan is
known for comic elements in his novels. His humour from different angles has been discussed by
Hariprasanna and Ramesh K. Srivastava. Srivastava concerns only to ‘The Man-Eater of Malgudi’,
amalgamation of mythic and comic modes. Due to use of myth as a structural parallel the printer
Nataraj and the the taxidermist Vasu symbolize Shiva and Bhasmasura. Swati Srivastava’s article on ‘Wit
and Humour’ highlights the novelist’s skill of creating humour in a work of art. The papers on Bhabani
Bhattacharya’s ‘He who Rides A Tiger’, Anita Desai’s ‘Cry, the Peacock’, and Anant Murthy’s ‘Samskara’,
Nissim Ezekiel’s poetry, and two papers on Arundhati Roy’s ‘The God of Small things’ highlight the comic
vein even when the works deal with hunger, poverty and caste-discrimination.⁸

The book *Ironical comedy of R. K. Narayan* by Bal Ram Mishra, is an exhaustive study of Narayan’s
major fictions. The book is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is related to a critique of the
fundamental irony. The plot and its ironical curvature are focused on in the chapter second. The third
chapter is devoted to irony in portraiture, or characterisational workmanship. In the fifth chapter Mishra
concentrates on comparison between the two locales Malgudi and Wessex of Thomas
Hardy. Here, exploitation of regionalism and its contribution to a sense of irony is enlightened. The last
chapter suggests that evaluation is a needed task which readers and research scholars may undertake for fresh dividends.\(^9\)

The book by Kanak Lata Tiwari, *The Novels of Thomas Hardy and R. K. Narayan* deals comprehensively with the elements of locale, custom, people, languages which constitute a regional novel. As a critic, she has critically unfolded the thick texture of the regional novels. To her, even though they belong to two culturally different countries, the novelist Hardy and Narayan share, to a large extent common narrative techniques, in treating the regional elements in their novels. Each in his own way depicts the region, its history, its geography, its institutions, customs, dialects, superstitions, myths and fables etc. They give descriptions of the landscape describing rivers, mountains, forests, and market places. Hardy has depicted his native place Dorchester as ‘Wessex’ and Narayan has used the setting of South India towns like Mysore, Coimbatore, etc, to visualize town of Malgudi.\(^10\)

An Eminent Scholar, Dr. R.N. Panda in his book *R. K. Narayan: A Critical Study* brings out all essential reading materials. He narrates the story at the superficial level where the locale is dominating. Humanism is basically a philosophical outlook centered on human beings. The article ‘A Novelist of All Humanity’ shows Narayan as a humanist who draws the best possible picture of contemporary Indian middle class families. The book makes fair attempt to show that his heroes are nondescript citizens who find within themselves the moral strength to develop into model Hindu.\(^11\)

The book *Indian Fiction in English* edited by Pramod Kumar Singh comprises 23 scholarly papers on different issues of Indian fiction in English. The papers make an intensive study of the work of novelist who have helped in shaping Indian English fiction. The research papers reflect scholar’s critical vitality. Shashi Deshpande suggests that the concept of new woman will have justified only by bringing about a radical change in public attitude towards man-woman relationships.\(^12\)

*Family in Indian English Fiction*, by Dr. Gautam Sharma analyses that family is the universal social grouping found in every society. It is functional as well as economic unit which performs for the healthy existence of its members. Being a member of joint family; the author has been observing traditional Indian family system in Rajasthan. The book is a result of own experience. Changing aspect of family in Indian English novels has long been neglected. It is true that most of the novels are directly or indirectly based on depiction of family. Many writers have concentrated their work on the changing aspect of woman and change in the relationship, e. g. mother-daughter, and husband-wife etc.\(^13\)
‘Studies in Classic American Literature’ is a valuable book by D. H. Lawrence on the port of literature. The articles in the book move on word the critical debate and point their latest orientatios. The article ‘The Spirit of Place’ by D. H. Lawrence enables the readers to think over the study of the place ‘Malgudi’, in Narayan’s fiction.14

‘The Literary Endeavour’, edited by Dr. L. Adinarayan highlights the significance of the regional literature through transcreation. The journal comprises twelve articles focusing on myth, irony, love, non-violence, time and language, God consciousness and narrative strategy in Narayan’s novels.15

K.R.S. Iyngar, an authority in Indian English Literature in his book ‘Indian Writing in English’ focuses on traditional characters in Narayan’s novels. Comenting on charater of Savitri in ‘The Dark Room’ he says ‘Narayan manages to preserve in the pages of the novel- like the mummified curiosities of ancient Egypt- ‘dark room’ as a satcuary and a retreat for the eternal feminine badge is sufferance.16


Narayan’s autobiography ‘My Days’ narrates an uneventful story of writer’s life; which presents remarkable illustration of the writer in the making and his entry in the field of literature.18

David Lodge describes in detail myth and allegory in, ‘The Modes of Modern Writin,’ Narayan’s protagonists, he dominately feels are comparable to humours, but in Narayan, this approach elevates his comedies into myth.19

The articles, in ‘R. K. Narayan’s ‘India, Myth and Reality’ are devoted to R.K. Narayan. The efforts have been made to present to the reaers full views of Narayan’s fiction.20

‘Flying Pan and Other Stories’ a clection of twenty seven short stories which executes a communication with a Malgudi. The author strongly says that the way Narayan captures events and coins them as motifs, the way he wraps his characters and texture them into different mould make the reading of the book an enduring memory. The front and back cover design aptly illustrates the typical South Indian milieu which forms the settings for most of the stories in the book.21