Review of the Work already Done on this Subject

Indian drama in English remains the last choice with the academic researchers. There have been few studies available on the playwrights like Vijay Tendulkar, Mohan Rakesh, Badal Sircar, Girish Karnad and others but they focused on their literary values and dramatic aspects. Their prolific and profound dramatic outputs and their personalities have tempted large number of scholars to their plays. Their plays have been translated into English and other Indian modern languages by eminent figures. The researches leading to the degree of Ph.D. and M. Phil. have been moving around their treatment of sex, love, violence and their overall dramatic arts. The doctoral theses published and submitted in different Indian universities on Indian drama in English do not take into account the socio-political aspects of Indian drama in general. Some titles of these theses are as below.

In his thesis Dr. S.T. Kharat focuses on acts of the characters in the plays of Girish Karnad. The researchers has taken pains to prove how the major characters in Karnad’s plays like Tughlaq in Tughlaq, Padmini in Hayavadana, Rani in Naga Mandala, Vishakha and Paravasu in The Fire and the Rain betray those who trusted in them.

In this thesis, Anil Krishna describes how the playwrights Girish Karnad and Nissim Ezekiel have dealt with the different themes in their plays. He has compared how modern Indian drama is full of variety. While Karnad deals with the events from history, myths and folk tales, Nissim Ezekiel invests his energy in the depiction on the urban and middle class issues.

In this thesis, Uma Shankaran Padhya has taken a long survey of the Absurdist tradition in the Western drama and proved his hypothesis that those very absurdist elements are present in the plays of Badal Sircar and Girish Karnad also. The plays focused are There is No End, Evam Indrajit by Sircar and Tughlaq and Hayavadana by Karnad.

In this thesis, Sunderraman has taken a cursory survey of the major contemporary Indian English dramatist from the thematic point of view. The playwrights under study are Badal Sircar, Girish Karand, Mohan Rakesh and Vijay Tendulkar.

In her scholarly thesis, Mrs. Veena Das gives in-depth analysis of how the contemporary dramatists like Karnad, Mohan Rakesh, Sircar and Tendulkar have used the indigenous techniques in writing their plays innovatively.
Dr Wadikar infers the salient aspects in areas like socio-cultural, psychological, existential, feminist, etc. in the plays of Vijay Tendulkar. Realism of all sorts in Tendulkar’s plays forms the core of this investigative work. The work focuses on themes like blind and conventional morality towards an increasing awareness of neo humanitarianism; from anger, cruelty and violence towards mute, silent commitment; and from an old, outdated order towards a new and renascent one. The book throws Light on the fact that Tendulkar with Mohan Rakesh, Badal Sircar, and Girish Karnad has transformed the regional theatre into a pan-Indian one.6

In this study, Mr. Dhanavel investigates how Girish Karnad is the only living dramatist in India who has used the Indian folktales, history, and myths to the full for his dramatic purposes. He gives a complete analysis of the plays Tughlaq, Tale Danda, Hayavadana, Naga Mandala and The Fire and the Rain.7

In a highly research manner, N.S. Dharan offers an intensive study of Vijay Tendulkar’s plays. He covers almost all the plays written by Tendulkar. The book deals with various themes in the plays of Tendulkar.8

This is the best book ever appeared on Indian drama in English both in terms of its content and bibliography. Dharwadkar gives an in-depth analysis of the plays written in India applying various post colonial theories. She describes the role of the leading dramatist in decolonizing Indian theaters. She also refers to the folk drama in past and its practitioners in the present.9

Jaydipsing Dodiaya and KV Surendran has taken pains to gather a good number research papers contributed by scholars from different parts of the country. The book focuses on the development of Indian drama in English in the course of types.10

Jaydipsing Dodiya has meticulously collected and edited the scholarly papers on the plays of Girish Karnad. A book in a bulky size is full of scholarship on Karnad’s plays. The scholars focus on the thematic and structural side of Karnad’s plays.11
Dwivedi has compiled the various articles written by scholars of different educational centers working on drama written in English in India. The nature of the book is a kind of survey and scattered comments made by the writers on individual playwrights and their dramatic works.  

In this thesis turned book, Dr. Kulkarni emphasizes how Karnad has the Indian myths in his plays. He mixes the myths with the folktales and history also. The book offers the thematic study based on the available studies.

In this book, Birendra Narayan puts on record the development of Hindi plays written by different playwrights. These playwrights are Jaishankar Prasad, Dharmaveer Bharati, Safdar Hashmi, Mohan Rakesh and other. He also prepares a documentary of the plays staged in Hindi.

According to Manoj Pande, though the book explores 'Girish Karnad and tradition of theatre in India and world over' yet it examines the nature of human relationship in his plays. Because from his first play Yayati to The fire and the Rain, he continuously explores, examines and analyses the shifting paradigm of human relationship.

In a very interesting way, Sarat Babu has analyzed the plays of Karnad, Tendulkar in terms of deformity. He proves that these plays understudy delineate deformity of one or another kind. The deformities described are cultural, physical, psychological and intellectual also.

Dr Satish kumar devotes his energy on the categorization of Indian drama in terms of pre-independence drama, post independence drama, drama written in regional languages and drama in translation and drama originally written in English in India. The book hardly has any research oriented approach.

In this survey, Dr Ram Sharma takes a long survey of Indian drama from the theory of the Natyashashtra and the Sanskrit drama. He also describes the role of English education in the development of Indian English drama. He traces the beginning of Indian English drama in Bengal with Krishna Mohan Banerjee’s Is this called civilization? (1837). He refers to the plays of Rabindranath Tagore, Aurobindo, A Spy, Lakahn Deb and Harindranath Chattopadhyya. He also gives detailed information about the plays of Nissim Ezekiel, Assif Currimbboy, Girish Karnad, Vijay Tendulkar, Badal Sircar, Mahasweta Devi, and Mahesh Dattani. Unfortunately Dr. Sharma does not offer any commentary on the plays of Mohan Rakesh, Habeeb Tanvir, and Utpal Dutt.
D. R. Subramanian offers a detailed study of the plays of Girish Karnad. He has included the scholarly papers from K. S. Rammurti, P. Ramamurthi, C.R. Simha, B. Jayashree and also an interview with Mr. Karnad. Some papers in the book shed light on the contemporary relevance of Karnad’s plays in a very convincing manner.  

In this edited book, Urmila Talwar and Bandana Chakrabarty have painstakingly culled the scholarship from the leading contemporary academicians like Neeru Tondoan, Tutun Mukherjee, and Mahesh Dattani. The book offers some fresh insights into the study of Indian English drama as the title indicates.

This is a wonderfully study from an academician of BHU, Varanasi. Mrs. Tripathi gives a feminist coloring to the plays of Karnad focusing the plays like Hayavadana and Naga Mandala. With the analysis of the books, Tripathi arrives at some general conclusion on the dramatic art of Karnad.

This is one of finest books on the plays of Girish Karnad. The focal point of the book is the interview of Karnad by Tutun Mukhrjee. The book not only covers the thematic aspects but also the performance of the plays.

In this article, Dr. Wankhede finds that in his play *Silence! The Court is in Session* Tendulkar has portrayed the picture of a young woman, Miss Leela Benare. Her plight proves how young women in Indian society are under the hegemony of male and how they are betrayed by the male dominance. Even after the independence and several provisions in the Indian constitution there is no change in the status of Indian women.

In this paper, Sachin Bhumbe observes that Vijay Tendulkar criticized orthodox Indian middle class society and tried to present the impact of meek acceptance of so-called social values, customs, traditions and conventions on Indian women. In the present play, the playwright focused on the social institutions like marriage, politics and ‘blood thirsty’ journalism.

Dr. R.T. Bedre and Dr. S.T. Kharat opine that the spread of women education and emergence of private sectors had opened new avenues for the women empowerment leading to women emancipation. The job opportunities for the women naturally brought to an end the male monopoly in the job markets. The newly financial self-reliance earned by women and their support in the domestic responsibilities awakened so far suppressed female psyche and desires.
It offered the women opportunities of exploring other psychological and intellectual equivalents in the outside world. It naturally threatened and shook the foundations of family structure. Their exposure to the outside world showed them variety of male other than their husbands. Husbands did not receive earlier respect at home. Finally, it affected the traditional family structure. The play reflects the slow but steady changes in the shifting of positions in the family frame in the wake of modernization.25

In the present paper, Dr. D. B. Ravande focuses on the darker aspect of the present day civilization where organs are sold and purchased in the prophesized pen of the writer. He finds that the stark reality of the post-colonial life is vividly underlined in the play. The multi-national avatars of the so-called post-post-modern world and vaulted spread molls have brought the life in a crisis. It has commoditized those things, which are not meant for sale. Mr. Ravande focuses how the need of money and fascination for an attractive life forces them to accept the offer of selling the organs to a Multi-National company. According to Ravande the play also discloses the on-going manipulation of developing countries by developed countries.26

In this paper, Mr. Kharabe initially offers the meaning and relevance of the four purusharthas namely, Dharama, Artha, Kama and Moksha in Hinduism. One who fulfils these four purusharthas attains the completion in his life. Kharabe finds a microscopic picture of these four purusharthas in Mohan Rakesh’s play Half Way House. In the play, Savitri’s husband Mahendranath is unable to provide food to the family, thus fails to fulfill the artha as Savitri is the bread winner of the family. Savitri’s fruitless search for a matching partner outside marriage indicates her violation of dharma and points to Mahendra’s failure in Kama. As the result of this both fail to attain moksha.27

Sharma looks at Sakharam Binder as a play displaying the domination of the male gender over the female. He is of the view that for the many decades no play created such a sensation in a theatre world of Maharashtra as his play Sakharam Binder as it is the most intensity naturalistic play of 1972.28

Buzz terms the play as the exposes the hypocrisy of the male in society. Sakharam Binder decries the hypocrisy of men who have sex with other women on the sly and thinks nothing about bringing home cast-off women to his house. These women have either been discarded by their husbands or are running away from them. At its best, it is an intense
psychological play. The review has a different impression of Sakharam. He may scoff at other men who 'disrespect' women and have sex on the sly but thinks nothing of beating up a haplessly docile and immensely God-fearing Laxmi. His conscience is not pricked at all when he demands sex of these cast-off women he apparently helps. Champa, the second woman, is a voluptuous and outspoken woman who sets out to manipulate Sakharam agreeing to have sex with him after being drunk. Things come to a start when Laxmi, who had run away from Sakharam's house too, returns. In the ensuing power struggle, events take a turn for the worse with the otherwise docile and God-fearing Laxmi turning into quite a shrew.  

Dr. Mhangore and Chougle note that in wedding Album he has taken the characters from the contemporary life. The final impression these writers of the play is that Karnad has become successful in raising certain questions in the mind of the audience about the Indian culture which is changing fast. But he has also suggested that Hinduism and knowing oneself will solve the problems of the young generation.

The newspaper reviews that Wedding Album narrates the story of a middle class family getting together for the youngest daughter's wedding - the excitement and nervousness that pervade a household for getting a child married off is shown very well in the play. Also, though the play is a contemporary look at a middle class family, yet, it was difficult to digest the reasons why a 21st century girl might want to get married and settle down with an NRI - as portrayed in the play. The very act of the wedding being treated as a burden and something to be done away with didn't appeal.

Panda finds that the play gave a glimpse of all the complexities of modern Indian society, as it adjusts to the tech-savvy lifestyle of the young. The new face of India may come as a surprise to some. In contrast to the way marriages used to be arranged when a man and a woman did not see each other until the wedding ceremony had begun, the prospective bride and groom today have the opportunity not only to introduce themselves to each other but also to have a private conversation in a place outside their homes where their family members are not present. To Jhanvi Acharekat, Wedding Album is a fitting tribute to the family drama that revolves around every Indian wedding. Characters are like finely etched sepia portraits while the setting is the playwright’s own home turf. The play was also the first to be written originally by him in his home language — Konkani. In the end, Karnad delivers the masterstroke by concluding with Radhabai’s predicament: “You can’t keep a grownup daughter at home, can you?” And in that question, lies a synopsis of the play, proving that
modernity and social class have little to do with the universal concerns and drama of the Great Indian Marriage.\textsuperscript{33}

The bloggers believe that it can be said that although Mohan Rakesh’s “Halfway House” deals extensively with the question of identity and meaning in life, to situate it solely in an Existentialist dimension and accord it the distinction of being the primary concern of the play, would unfairly downplay many other socio-economic themes that the play encompasses.\textsuperscript{34}

In the present paper, Sudari holds a comparison between Tendulkar’s Silence! the Court is in Session and George Ryga’s The Ecstasy of Rita Joe and proves that in the every corner of the world, women are sufferers at the hands of male dominated social norms. They are also denied the very inseparable rights to life.\textsuperscript{35}

Here the writers Kundu and Mallick present in the play projects how the impulse of revenge cripples the reason and sensibility of a man to the extent that he overthrows all the canons of morality and good sense and how power is exercised in most cases on women characters only.\textsuperscript{36}

The writer of this piece Rupam tries to prove how the higher education changed the role of women. The dawn of the twentieth century witnessed a change, a change in the man's attitude towards women. Of course the tempo had been built up by many socio-religious movements in the 19th century. It was however, the 20th century which witnessed a large number of who belonged to the enlightened families and had received higher education. At the same time we do find playwright's bitterness directly engendered by the situation which he must have personally experienced- against such career women who, in order to fulfill their ambitions, let their families go helter-skelter and remain indifferent to the growing up children.\textsuperscript{37}

In this article, Suderraman takes three plays under consideration, namely, Nissim Ezekiel’s Marriage Poem, Shiv Kumar’s The Last Wedding Anniversary and Rama Sarma’s Towards Marriage, throw up a significant point, namely, the approaches of different writers to the same theme. As has already been pointed out, the theme of these three plays is the same; domestic disharmony due to the temperamental differences between the husband and the wife and also because of the attachment of the husband to another woman or other women. But, significantly, the three plays offer three different solutions to the same problem. All these ideas have the touch of orthodoxy and reflect Prof. Sharma’s attitude towards life in general and marriage in particular.
Sunderraman observes that Tendulkar’s plays deal with agonies, anxieties, and tensions of the urban, white-collar, middle-class people. The angry and frustrated protagonists of his plays are actually the victims of harsh circumstances in life in the so-called modern, cultured society. The cruelty of some protagonists is a kind of perverted humanity and their desire to inflict miseries on others is a kind of revenge sought against society.\(^\text{38}\)

Wadikar finds that Tendulkar explores human mind and its complexities in all depth and variety. He presents man-woman relationship in terms of sensuality and violence rather than love and affection. An anti-romantic playwright as Tendulkar is, he projects not love but its perversion, not sex but its degradation.\(^\text{39}\)

In this article, Dr Bite shows how Indian Drama in English translation has made bold innovations and fruitful experiments in terms of both thematic concerns and technical virtuosities. It has been increasingly turning to history, legend, myth and folklore tapping their springs of vitality and vocal cords of popularity with splendid results. A closer contact is being established between the theatre workers from different regions and languages through these translations. Thus, regional drama in India is slowly paving a way for a ‘national theatre’ into which all streams of theatrical art seem to coverage. The major language theatres that are active all through the turbulent years of rejuvenation and consolidations are those of Hindi, Bengali, Marathi and Kannada.\(^\text{40}\)

Ravinder Kaul traces the historical survey and writes that the male and the female are not seen as exclusive entities, separated into watertight compartments, in Indian metaphysical thought. Early Indian history has been a period of equality of sexes and celebration of femininity. The contrast in modern Indian theatre as against western theatre is manifest in the manner in which the powerful and highly individualistic female characters in Indian plays are comfortable with their femininity while in western plays woman characters are compelled to attain male characteristics in order to exert their influence in the society. Modern theatre in India is in some ways craving to restore the ages old position of women in Indian society where they could not only enjoy but also celebrate their femininity and not feel compelled to be apologetic about it.\(^\text{41}\)