CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION
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Literature holds a mirror to society as literature and society are interlinked with each other. In mirroring the society, literature exhibits numerous aspects of society like the class structure, economic conditions, political and cultural situations, domestic relations and human relationships. By showing all these facets of life, literature focuses on the soul of society i.e., human being. While delineating an individual, he/she is measured according to his/her relations with others and hence relationship plays a vital role in the human world. Human relationship is the part and parcel of individual and social life and hence it has remained as the central theme of literature. There is a very close relationship between literature and human relationships. Literature is a depiction of human life and human relationships.

Among all the literary genres, novel illustrates the most how people live and shows human experiences and their relationships with one another and with life. Human relationships hold the interest of the writers and the readers cutting across cultures, countries and continents.

The overall evaluation of relationships in Indian society shows that our society is going through the process of transition. Today the relationships are passing through many forces. An individual is becoming lonely and bears this sting of loneliness continuously. Emotional attachment is effacing and human beings are becoming like machines. The modern man is torn between tradition and modernity. Women’s changing position in the society is also responsible for such transformations. Women who are very emotional beings breathe relationships which encompass their entire life. Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja’ woman-centric novels hold special significance in this respect.

The present study, based on the selected novels of Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja deals with the treatment of domestic relationship, specially disturbed human relationship and the resultant alienation in middle class Indian family. Temperamental incompatibility is a significant reason behind it, which is further intensified by loneliness, lack of communication, isolation and also quest for identity. Being modern
writers, Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja do not deal with the traditional morality, but their novels are centred on the re-defined human relationships of today’s culture, and they give their contribution to social equilibrium.

In concluding chapter an attempt is made to concretize the certain principles which are the key of a happy, successful and peaceful life. On the basis of these principles harmonious human relationship could be built. These principles have been interpreted through the understanding of six selected novels of Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja. The present chapter aims to provide a unique vision of both the novelists through their critically analyzed novels.

Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja depict the world of Indian women as they perceive it. Writing in the second half of the twentieth century, these writers do not confess any special resemblance for feminist theories nor do they reveal a strong, anti-male stand anywhere. It is apt that these novelists are rather concerned with the disturbing question of the existence of women, but they are not misogynists seeking a world without men. These novelists deal with women belonging to both rural and urban, middle class and upper middle classes of the society. There is a noticeable resemblance among these protagonists depicted in their novels. At the same time, their distinctive uniqueness has set them apart from each other and contribute to the variety of protagonists that one comes across in these novels.

The study of the selected novels of Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja show notable similarities and differences in their attitudes and vision. They derive their material primarily from their internal and external experiences of life. Being a chairperson of Infosys, Sudha Murty has seen the corporate world very closely and tried to exhibit it through her novels. Whereas Varsha Adalja, researches her background in detail before penning it in her writing. Their themes have a profound socio-cultural and psychological significance. They have succeeded in capturing the transitional phases of the rapidly changing roles of contemporary women in India. The divergences between the two writers emerge only when the individual works are set against the specific psychological and socio-cultural milieu.
Both the novelists have apprehended the socio-cultural fluctuations that have deeply affected the lives of women. The comparative study of these writers shows several aspects of Indian tradition and culture. A comparative study of their fiction divulge the essential unity of of women’s perception. Both the writers represent the truthful images of women in the Indian society. The selected six novels of each writer have been explored to analyze the main aspects regarding the life viz. marriage, migration, motherhood and midlife of an Indian woman. In their fiction women characters are brought to the centre stage and their characters are intricately explored in bringing out their strength. However, there is a notable difference between Adalja and Murty with regard to the attitude of their central protagonists towards life. Murty’s women protagonists assert individuality above everything and ultimately achieve self-realization by building successful career in their life. For example, Shrimati in Gently Falls the Bakula, leaves for US to pursue her doctorate degree and thus achieves happiness. Anupama, in Mahashweta, becomes a professor in a college in Mumbai and directs plays. Vinuta leaves her home to attain mental peace. Women characters in the novels by Varsha Adalja, on the other hand, compromise and accept reality to maintain harmony. They rather accept whatever is destined to them and through this acceptance achieves self-actualization. Vrunda in Khari Padelo Tahuko remains in the life of Anant and yet separate from him. She attains happiness in dedicating her life to her mentally retarded daughter, Shyama. Leena in Mare Pan Ek Ghar Hoy accepts her destiny and the moment she overcomes the bitter feelings, destiny bestows upon her all that she had wished for. Similarly, Rupa in Ansaar decides to serve lepers and pass the rest of her life by living among them. This gives happiness to her and by doing this she achieves self-actualisation.

Even Domestic relationships are not good between the mother in law and daughter in law, and the sisters. All of them are distressed by the feelings of alienation and loneliness because of loss of the intimate domestic relationship. All of them are in search for identity. The domestic relationships described by Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja in their novels are not blissful and strong relationships. The domestic life in their novels is affected by many factors. The major reason behind this is temperamental inharmoniousness. It is a universal phenomenon which leads to separation, despair and loneliness. This leads to lack of communication. The characters fail to establish happy relationship with each other. The theme of
alienation, economic and social status of family, clash of home and the world, husband-wife relationship also play important role in shaping the domestic life.

Sudha Murty’s novels deal with human relationships working in modern Indian context with its well established socio-cultural norms and perpetual moral and ethical values. Her novels are also concerned with the shifting context bringing in its trail moral and psychic dilemmas and challenges in achieving a new harmony in human relationships. Obviously, they present a marked change from traditional human relationships to modern human relationships. The protagonists in these novels belong to the middle class—the class which ever seeks to reach the pinnacle and is always afraid of falling into the depth and which entrusts its members to eternal struggle against the forces of tradition and modernity.

All the novels of Sudha Murty are imbued with the essence of human relationships. Being an educationalist and a philanthropist, she socialised with people and observed the native people. In a simple and lucid language she has put down the common everyday incidents and situations of life exposing the very profundity of the human heart in a vivid manner. In short, she understood people in their true essence. This writer and philosopher wrote down her experiences and observations in a simple yet eloquent style. Fear of seclusion, isolation, solitude and darkness always troubled Murty and hence in her writings she gives her voice to such trauma faced by the people.

Sudha Murty is noteworthy in her treatment of contemporary issues of society in general and women in particular in her novels. While delineating various issues, Murty has led her women characters play a dominant role in her novels. They play a pivotal role, whereas male characters got totally marginalized. Every women character in her novel stands superior compared to her male counterparts. Women character stands totally different, brilliant and tries to acquire a totally new persona. Shrimati is a topper in Board, Anupama is a professor and Vinuta is a teacher. They all have their own vocation in life.

A study of Murty’s novels shows that her novels generally centre around family relationships, particularly, husband—wife relationship, woman’s relationship with her
in laws and some other social relationships. The families which she chooses to represent are the Indian urban and semi-urban middle class families, mostly joint families incorporating even the extended families, and she deals with their actions and reactions in personal interactions and relationships rather than looking at their outer life. However, she often rise above the self imposed limits and reaches out to include human relationships outside the family e.g. the relationship between Anupama and Dr Vasant in *Mahashweta* is forged outside family. She does so because she believes that the relationships which exist within the family are to an extent parallel to the relationships which exist between human beings outside. The dilemmas and conflicts that occur in these relationships are portrayed in a realistic manner.

Murty’s novels reveal certain recurring patterns of human relationships despite significant changes taking place at fast pace in individual, family and community life under various economic, social and cultural influences in the volatile era of Post-Globalization. Her novels portray various kinds of human relationships and each novel looks at these relationships from a different perspective. Altogether her novels offer a wide range of human relationships and portray them in all their profundity and density: the artificiality of relationships, an individual’s struggle to adhere to it or get rid of it and the value and significance of such different relationships to their lives. She exhibits a deep insight into human nature based on her minute observation, intense sensibility and fine sensitivity. Murty’s men and women, who build different kinds of relationships at different stages of their life, are caught in the predicament of transitional society where the shift is taking place from conventional to unconventional. Therefore, human relationships presented in these novels are not usual but perplexing. The problems in human relationships arise mostly because of the gravitational pull of tradition which binds in its invisible threads modern, educated and financially independent men and women. A study of human relationships in Murty’s novels reiterates the fact that human relationship is not static but dynamic: it keeps on changing in response to changing circumstances and it may become unconditional or demanding after a length of time depending on circumstances.

Murty’s characters appear to be extraordinarily talented but disturbed by family ties. As a result they undergo distress and feel confined in an oppressive environment. In most cases the adverse environment frustrates the aspirations of the individuals either
leading them to their verge of total destruction, or to a humiliating compromise. The process of her character construction includes quest of self – exploration a struggle for realization and an exposure to agony.

In Murty’s novels, the awareness of self is the result of intellectual probing. Her young heroines rebel in a very submissive way against the traditional way of life, its rituals, ceremonies, and values. There is in the efforts of these characters a struggle to transcend these restrictive and moulded roles. They rebel, reject and seek freedom from the traditional norms and way of life by separating from nuptial bond. Murty’s heroines are all keen to retain their individuality on the face of disintegrating forces that threaten their identity as a woman. Murty has dealt with the problems that confront a middle class educated woman in the Indian society.

Sudha Murty’s novels present a social world of many complex relationships. The women are particularly caught in the process of redefining and rediscovering their own roles, position and relationship within their given social world. Migrating to new place after marriage into the world of unfamiliar people is always a cause of anxiety and distress for woman. One needs to be confident to adjust to the new environments. Arduous times expose the true potentialities of one’s character. Unannounced conditions actually elevate ones’ latent potential. When one consistently move closer to what one is resisting, it will build confidence in the individual to face it. Murty’s women protagonists fail to cope with their in laws. Despite their virtuousness and integrity they fail to win their heart. To speak from within the woman’s world is not a destructive or disintegrating attitude. Murty uses this point of view to present social reality as it is experienced by women. The relationship between men and women and between women themselves thus becomes important from the point of social interaction.

Though Varsha Adalja’s primary concern is human beings, her novels tend to give an indication that a woman can maintain different relationships better than a man can. However, she only tries to highlight women’s potential in a state of freedom and equality and never seeks to idealise them.
Varsha Adalja has taken women for her novels from middle class to upper middle class society as her protagonists. Her characters like Rupa, Vrunda and Leena are some of the specimen of humanitarian approach. The humanitarian approach, reflected in her characters is her vision for humanity. Traditional approach is seen powerful and dominant in Adalja’s women characters. They stuck at their threshold in any condition than to violate the traditional ties. Their simplicity did not allow them even to think against their own people for their joys and merriment. One observation is important and noteworthy here is that of lack of higher education. Absence of higher education and hammering of tradition have taught them to ‘live without complain.’ Another important reason is that they don’t have any means to earn their daily life. Among the female protagonists in the selected novels only Leena is a bread earner in her family.

It is true that Adalja’s women, struggle to fine-tune rather than to get free from the traditional world. Varsha Adalja’s portrayal of women’s relations is a process of balancing the modern and the traditional, the boldly individual with a mellowed selflessness. Through these novels, the novelist shows that her principal concern is human relationship and she expresses her firm view that every human being has to live within relationships and there is no other way.

Varsha Adalja’s characters appear so ordinary that the reader may overlook the latent potential and strength that they possess. These people are deliberately made to appear static and docile by the author so that their journey of life, their relationships with those around them and their various quests and the realizations in the end, acquire an undiminishing shine. Among the women protagonists Leena is an exception as she is the bread earner and sole supporter of her family. Leena is sensitive and thoughtful girl. Her adverse circumstances have made her a fighter. She describes herself as a fighter and fighter throughout. Compared to her Rupa is described as a very meek woman. When the novel opens, Rupa’s mother in law compares her with a pigeon who gets frightened at a simple matter. But the same docile and meek Rupa gains immense strength as the novel moves forward. Alike Rupa, Vrunda in Khari Padelo Tahuko is a very submissive character. Though she is not happy with the strained relationship with her husband, she scarcely raises her voice to injustice done to her.
Significance of relationships and family for a human being is established by almost all of Adalja’s characters who embrace the family bonds after an awakened self. They neither renounce the world nor cease to be exiles. They may not emerge as complete separated people, yet the extent of awakening as compared to the initial stage is greater. Vrunda, Rupa, Leena are alone but not alienated as they have gained a deep understanding of life.

There is an undercurrent of spirituality in the novels of Varsha Adalja. Her women protagonists ultimately see God’s manifestation in every situation and observe different facets of love and observe God’s compassion in it. This wisdom helps them to understand the numerous human relationships. Rupa in Ansaar constantly strives to find the reason behind trauma and predicament of human beings and she gets the answer that these pains and traumas on this earth is the sign of God’s presence. Similarly, Vrunda in Khari Padelo Tahuko feels that God stood by her in her genuine efforts to give meaning to Shyama’s meaningless life. She felt that the Almighty had sent her a small token of His existence and had made her conscious that He was always with her. Leena, too at the end of the novel receives everything she has dreamt of and feels that after all it is God’s mercy. Her female characters come out of their narrow world and sees the various facets of love and God’s mercy. The love that Adalja wants to depict in her novels is not limited but pure and universal. Adalja’s novels appear to be choosing the life embracing path, because it appears to her as the best option. She sees a ray of hope in the otherwise sombre and gloomy life. Her novels are picture of the reintegration of human personality. The struggles of the women protagonists compel generous admiration from us and we sympathize with them in their tribulations. At the end of the novel, Adalja’s women have no spiritual doubts or conflicts because they have accepted misfortunes as inevitable and is prepared to reconcile themselves to them. Their patient suffering help them to emerge as a wiser and more spiritually serene and mature person in the end.

The woman protagonists in the novels of Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja belong to different strata of society. They are continuously in search of their self and meaning of their existence. But their desire to be a free individual clash with the socio-culture values which they inherit from tradition. They are preoccupied by the thought of the absurdity of existence. Trapped in their predicaments they go through experiences of
anguish, anxiety and despair. They are tortured by a fear of uncertainty and their consciousness of suffering, their powerful emotional drives come into conflict with the traditional socio-culture values.

The explicit purpose of marital relationships is to provide companionship to each other. This element of companionship is ironically missing in the relationship between husband and wife in the novels of Sudha Murty and also in the novels of Varsha Adalja. The protagonists of Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja are disconnected from their husbands and from family. But the manners and sources of alienation are different. In Varsha Adalja’s novels the protagonist suffers more due to the psychological problems and the lack of adjustment. Whereas Murty’s woman protagonists are disturbed with social problems. In *Khari Padelo Tahuko* Vrunda is disconnected with her husband as she is unable to keep pace with him. Anant continued to climb steps of success and Vrunda fails to perform this due to her mentally retarded daughter Shyama. A vacuum is created in their relationship. She remains in his life, yet she is separate. Similarly, Shrimati in *Gently Falls the Bakula* is fade up with corporate culture and plastic smiles. She keeps on postponing her desire for Ph D for the sake of her husband’s success. And ultimately leaves for US for pursuing her Ph D.

In *Gently Falls the Bakula*, Shrikant is alienated from his wife because he is a businessman and remains busy in expanding his business. Shrimati is deeply sentimental while Shrikant rejects such pleasures of life as money is more important for him. Shrikant dislikes sentimentalism. Similarly in *Khari Padelo Tahuko*, Vrunda is alienated from Anant due to the same reasons. Once Vrunda and Anant were sitting in the room; Anant was too busy in checking his files. This disturbs Vrunda and she feels that Anant always thinks about money, property or about some case and does not bother about the passions of his wife, and the wife remains lonely in the very presence of her husband. Thus both the novelists want to emphasis that man is a social animal and he makes society so communication must continue if we want to live domestic life meaningfully, which goes a long way in the establishment and maintenance of a harmonious relationship.
Failure in one aspect of the women’s lives does not reduce them dysfunctional in society. Adalja’s women characters are able to survive in this hostile world because of their ability to live life as women on their own terms. Torn by the conflict between their emotions and their social–cultural values, Adalja’s women protagonists come out of their discord with life and the fragmentation of their consciousness when they understand the significance of human relationship. Their struggle against the painful realities of life induces them to explore their self. As they analyse and review their past they become aware of the reasons of their sufferings.

Murty’s women seem to put individuality above everything else. They fail to cope with their surroundings, their families and society. The desire to live and love clash so violently in them, that their interpersonal relationships become inharmonious and shaking and from there their quest for self commences.

Adalja is predominantly concerned with the social and psychological problems of women. The depiction of psychological problems becomes the base of her writings. Like Sudha Murty she is quite cognizant of social problems and its effects on the people in their personal life. She is of the opinion that these social predicaments regulate human mind and finally human beings become the dupes of their problems. The world of Varsha Adalja’s characters is occupied with their solitary strivings. Most of her characters go through experiences which is responsible for their split personality. Their domestic life is damaged by such experiences. Adalja tries to explore the inner psyche of the characters in her novels. The modern life of the middle class woman, is burdened with anxiety, frustrations and insatiable desires. The domestic and social conditions cause and even aggravate such kind of complexity. The diagnosis and analysis of this mental ailment is invariably manifested through her female characters created in her novels. Rupa in Ansaar, becomes the victim of reflective self-awareness when she discovers that she is affected by leprosy and hence dejected from her own family members and society. The split in her personality is also suggested by her different names: Rupa, Kusum and Savitri. She is conscious of her being as Rupa who is entirely different from Savitri and Kusum. Already on the verge of neurosis, Rupa reveal her fragmented personality as she fight against her own wishes and desires. As they struggle against the changed realities of their lives, they experience psychic conflicts of personal origin. Their milieu acts both as a physical
reality outside and as a psychic agent within. *Mare Pan Ek Ghar Hoy* also deals with the split personality of Leena. Though apparently the novel shows struggle between the two sisters, on deeper level the struggle is between the two selves of Leena herself. She is slit into duality one that is a self-sacrificing sister, and other pining for the fulfilment of self-aspirations. Her ideal self makes her love Surekha and be compassionate to her, and the ‘real self’ hates her and sees her as the biggest hindrance in the way of the fulfilment of her desires.

Murty’s women stay within their trajectories and protest against lack of communication, injustice and humiliations in a subdued manner. This does not mean that Murty’s women do not long for harmonious and peaceful life. They have ardent desire for union in conjugal relationship but they are introverts who refuse to compromise any more and, they have the incapability to accept the perspective of their respective partners which inevitably results in isolation and thereafter separation. Unable to cope with their traumatic conditions, Murty’s women finally cut off their marital ties and divert their mind towards self development and thus attain happiness. Instead of cutting off from their nuptial bond, Adalja’s women characters remain within the orbit and accept the reality. They accept the circumstances thrust upon them and through this acceptance achieve meaning to their meaningless life. This instils in them a sense of gratification and equanimity.

It is clear that Adalja is a staunch supporter of affirmative humanistic values. Her vision is down to earth and realistic. She puts the central characters in the middle of various challenges of life in order to affirm invincible spirit of humanity. The women characters are realistic to an extent that one gets a feeling that she has lived with them and known them most intimately. Adalja advocates submissive acceptance and calm resignation so that one may bend but not break. This distinctive Indian response to the human dilemma is brought out in almost all women characters. Though this spirit of passive acceptance may seem to be a sign of weakness to West – but in reality it is a sign of their strength. She gives paramount significance to Indian morals of life. Adalja believes that Indian women should confidently follow her own path maintaining her traditional values and using methods appropriate to her culture. Hence, she presents typical Indian women characters who firmly advocate to Indian value system.
The reason for depression in the women characters of Murty and Adalja is because of their attitude towards life. It is the vision of life which makes the life happy or miserable. The peace of mind depends upon one’s achievement of dreams and desires. Environment, experience and education determine the formation of attitude in human beings. The friendly home environment is the prerequisite for the balance of relationships. But in Adalja’s world a healthy emotional interaction between the family members is not found. Leena in *Mare Pan Ek Ghar Hoy* suffers in her life due to her parents’ partial attitude to her schizophrenic sister, Surekha. Similarly in *Dollar Bahu*, Vinuta becomes the victim of depression due to her mother in law’s partial behaviour towards her wealthy ‘bahu’ Jamuna. In Murty’s *Gently Falls the Bakula* and Adalja’s *Khari Padelo Tahuko*, lack of communication and exchange of thoughts and feelings between husband and wife results in fragmented relationship between the couple. It is perceived that the discordancy in their marital life is due to lack of appropriate communication of their feelings to their life partners. Both Shrimati and Vrunda fail to communicate their feelings to their spouses. One needs to communicate impeccably to keep relationships flawless.

Education is another important segment that helps one to lead path of happy and successful life. It may be formal or informal. Its purpose is not only to teach human beings how to make a living but also how to live. Murty’s women are educated and from elite, and urban class, and hence they are capable to think and dare to stand courageously to face the challenges. Her women characters suffer because they refuse to submerge their individuality and cling to their personal identity. Both the novelists have portrayed the free, liberated woman and ready to sacrifice the family institution for the long cherished dream. Varsha Adalja’s heroines are not formally educated like Sudha Murty’s heroines. But they have abundance of common sense called wisdom required for smooth running of life. For instance, Vrunda, Rupa, and Leena are quick at modifying themselves according to the changing circumstances. Adalja feels that passive acceptance of life is clearly seen among not highly educated women of rural India, than among women in the urban cities. This spirit of passive acceptance makes them able to endure much more than that would have been possible otherwise. They may bend, but their fatalism keeps them from breaking. She evolves towards a larger concept of universal love, caring and harmony. Whereas Sudha Murty’s educated and brilliant heroine is torn between her traditional role as wife and her newly acquired
sense of self and desire for freedom. In *Gently Falls the Bakula*, Shrimati seperates from her husband not for her selfish motives but in search of her own happiness. Vinuta in *Dollar Bahu* leaves her home towards the end to acquire mental peace and Anupama in *Mahashweta* rejects to be reunited with Anand as she had discovered the true picture of her married life. Adalja’s women by its very extension ensures the endurance and vitality of Indian womanhood, whereas Murty’s heroines, Shrimati, Anupama and Vinuta though formally educated, turn inward or backward when circumstances throw unexpected challenges to them.

Dynamism is always there in all the female characters of Varsha Adalja. They uphold her vision of life quite perfectly. In spite of facing so much agony and pain in life, they never shack their positive attitude. Unlike Sudha Murty’s characters, Adalja’s women never ponder over suicide. Life is too precious for them to end it so easily. Sufferings lean towards to make them sturdy and strong and bring out the best in them. There is no ambiguity about the actions of her protagonists who pick their right path. Their preparedness to change themselves according to the situation indicates that they believe in eternal goodness of life. Adalja’s protagonists, curiously enough do not assert in a pragmatic manner. They suffer in silence, perceive the agonies of existence and quietly accept their role given to them by destiny. Rupa in *Ansaar*, Vrunda in *Khari Padelo Tahuko* and Leena in *Mare Pan Ek Ghar Hoy* are confined in an uninspiring environment. Yet besides being sensitively analytical about their own condition, they do not assert against their circumscribed status.

The difference between women characters of Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja lay in the way they make choices to evolve their lives’ destiny. One cannot not control all the events that happen in lives, but can control how one deals with them. If one has trust and focus of control on one’s life, more decisions can be made avoiding external pressures. Hence destiny of ones’ life is pre-determined. One has to accept destiny and go ahead with life. This is the true philosophy of Indian life. In truth, there is no condition in life which is either wholly good or bad. It is just the way one perceives it makes it bad or good. Ultimately one alone create the life, one gets to live.

The domestic relationships described in Varsha Adalja’s novels are not intimate and happy relationships. They are affected by alienation, lifelessness, quest for identity
and psychic disintegration. Varsha Adalja stands away from Sudha Murty. She too dwells on the themes of alienation, isolation, maladjustment and the eternal solitariness of human beings. Of course, her characters do suffer from such maladies but they do not cut off from it because of their inherent wish to live life with all its shortcomings. Adalja feels that the fountain of hope flows in all human beings. Through this hope and patience one can fight worldly obstacles, as her characters do, who, after undergoing suffering, purifies themselves like gold. Thus Adalja as a writer is more committed towards social welfareness. Her writing is a means of exploration of self-discovery and self-actualisation. Undoubtedly she is one of the most noteworthy among the writers writing in Gujarati.

Both the writers move from the outer gross realities to inner complexities. They have been able to see the Indian complications closely where constraints of varied hues and shades work upon the sensitive individuals. Both the writers record the dilemma faced by an individual in the Indian urban system. And thus focus on analysis and portrayal of human relationship, mostly inexplicable in nature in the sense that man’s actions and wishes often take to indefinite ways under different situations.

Murty has concentrated on the predicament of modern women in the Indian society. Her novels suggest that most marriages are unions of incompatibility. Men and women look differently at different situations and hence their reactions are also different. In Indian value system the women is expected to change, to adjust herself in the different environment after marriage; instead of mutual adjustment. This results in gradual destruction of marital relationship. It brings a nullification of the values she has cherished. This affects her psyche and behaviour. Murty has depicted this aspect of the man and woman relationship in her novels.

In Murty’s novels, one can see a definite sequence and pattern emerging. We can see growth and development of her attitude towards this theme. In her first novel, *Gently Falls the Bakula*, the relation between Shrimati and Shrikant is of indifference. Shrimati’s quest for love and understanding remains unfulfilled as Shrikant is indifferent to her demands. This results in a void in her life which she is unable to bear and she finally separates from him to find the true happiness. The predicament of Vrunda in *Khari Padelo Tahuko* is similar to that of Shrimati. Vrunda is obsessed by a
sense of suffocation. Unable to cope with her overambitious husband, she dedicates her entire life for the upbringing of her mentally retarded daughter and thus gives meaning to her meaningless life.

In many ways, the married lives of Shrimati and Vrunda are similar. In *Khari Padelo Tahuko* Vrunda is a victim of loveless marriage. Here we see a change in the theme as Vrunda remains in Anant’s life yet remains untouched by his life. Whereas Shrimati, in *Gently Falls the Bakula*, leaves Shrikant at the end of the novel in quest of happiness.

In her next novel, *Mare Pan Ek Ghar Hoy*, Adalja has treated the tensions between two sisters, but there is an optimistic end. She has reached the conclusion that there is no need for despair. She sees the ultimate wisdom of life in understanding.

In the novels of Varsha Adalja and Sudha Murty the moving description of loneliness leaves a lasting impression on the reader’s mind. Rupa, Leena, Vrunda, Shrimati, Anupama and Vinuta- all suffer from a sense of isolation which is not merely physical but also psychic. This estrangement from which they suffer is the consequence of the absence of desired relationships. The breaking of communications, dissimilarity of attitudes, incompatibility of temperament, leads to the feeling of loneliness. Rupa, Anupama, Vrunda and Shrimati suffer from alienation as it stems from incompatibility in their relationship with their husbands and family. These women are hypersensitive. Their hypersensitivity becomes hurdle in their relationships. They are unable to communicate their feelings and thoughts with others, and thus, isolate themselves. This loneliness has a harrowing effect on their psyche. Different aspects of feminine psyche constitute a major part of Adalja’s fictional material. The novels have been selected from the point of view of female characters, such characters who represent different aspects of feminine psyche. These characters cover different personalities and characteristics.

If, on one hand, there are sensitive women characters, on the other hand, one also finds thick-skinned women with blunt sensibility. Murty’s novels aptly and vividly exhibit this two extremes. All the woman protagonists of Murty are very sensitive and sensible. They rather believe in suffering than to rebel out rightly. Whereas their
mother in laws are all shown as selfish, cunning and rude towards them. Murty through her novels shows typical mother in law- daughter in law relationship existing in majority of Indian houses.

Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja specialise in depicting the undulations of the female ego or self under the pressure of critical human situations and emotional relationships. Their attention is also focused on feminine suffering in the complex cultural stresses and strains in Indian society, having strong past moorings. Both Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja explore human relationship in modern Indian society, particularly the husband-wife relationship. Murty’s women are tolerant, obedient and submissive, but a feminist awakening and upsurge is all along notable in their feelings and conduct.

Both the novels- *Gently Falls the Bakula* and *Khari Padelo Tahuko* are mainly concerned with the theme of disharmonious marital relationship. Vrunda is highly sensitive and emotional, who is married to Anant, a promising, prosperous and workaholic businessman. Anant’s sensibilities are too rough and practical to suit Vrunda’s. Though initially they have good harmony between themselves, the growth and expansion of business gradually takes away the love between them. Anant takes care of Vrunda’s materialistic needs, but he fails to give his valuable time and company to her. But Vrunda is never satisfied and happy with such treatment. She feels that Anant never cares for her and does not have any feelings for her. The novel gives us an impression of the marital incompatibility and unhappy conjugal life. Similar theme is dealt by Sudha Murty in *Gently Falls the Bakula*. The novel shows strained relationship between Shrimati and Shrikant. Shrimati keeps on postponing her desire for doctoral degree for the success of Anant. In *Gently Falls the Bakula* Sudha Murty has portrayed feminine psyche, mainly through the character of Shrimati. She is childless, sensitive and a victim of ill-matched marriage. Similarly Vrunda is also a victim of ill-matched marriage. Both are lonely in their family because it is a nuclear family. If Shrimati is lonely with no one except her husband, Vrunda is at least gifted with two children. Shrimati’s plight increases because sterility is a stigma for a married woman. Through Shrimati, Murty has depicted the inner self of sensitive, intellectual woman who is suffocated in uncongenial atmosphere of her in-lows house. She is happy neither with her husband nor with his
family members. Her sister in law stays for most of the time with Shrimati’s mother in law and always injects malafide talks into her ears.

Adalja has also touched upon a very vital aspect of the feminine psyche. In different novels she has portrayed different facets of human feminine psyche. When Rupa learns about her disease and the maltreatment she receives from her family members upsets Rupa so terribly that she is off her mental balance. This example certainly gives us an idea of Adalja’s art of reading woman’s psychic-self, which reveals Rupa’s inner thoughts. This mental regression suggests that Rupa has not been able to adjust herself in the world of reality. Adalja’s characters cover women of different all age groups. In Ansaar Rupa, a middle aged woman, in Khari Padelo Tahuko, Vrunda, a married woman and in Mare Pan Ek Ghar Hoy Leena, an unmarried woman. Whereas Sudha Murty focuses on married women. Shrimati is intellectual wheeras Vrunda is merely metric pass. Not only are the women of different age groups but they are also of different types and characters.

Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja probe the limited frame of reference within which women’s lives are structured in Hindu culture. The domestic world, for a large number of Hindu women, is still held to be the equivalent of the satisfaction of their material and spiritual desires. Mare Pan Ek Ghar Hoy suggests the difficulties that confront women in their unconventional search for inner peace and tranquillity. Leena ultimately comes out of her conflicting self when she accepts the reality. Both novelists emphasize the need for a modified form of female renunciation, especially in a cultural context, that denies full personhood to women. In an act of subversion against such a circumscribed milieu, Adalja allows her female protagonists new patterns of spiritual subjectivity which take into account their justified need for spiritual repose.

Adalja thus tries to introduce a modern psychological attitude and projects a sensibility. As a novelist, her distinguishing qualities are many, the chief among them being, the subordination of the background to the characters and the deft handling of language, imagery and syntax in order to convey an intimate expression of the inner world of her characters. In Mare Pan Ek Ghar Hoy, in order to probe the psyche of Leena, the narrative is not chronologically straight and moves to and fro, between past
and present in her mind. Adalja has used imagery of a room to depict the disturbed mind of Rupa in *Ansaar*. The dark room is used as a leitmotif which haunts her mind through out the novel. In *Khari Padelo Tahuko*, she has used descriptive prose and rhetoric as a technique, and has made effective use of irony to describe the hollowness of Vrunda’s life.

The novel *Mare Pan Ek Ghar Hoy*, uses flashback technique to describe the upsetting condition of Leena’s mind. Adalja’s novels describe a Journey from what is false to what is true; from ignorance to wisdom; from earthly love to Divine Love; and from communion with human beings to communion with God and, from darkness to Eternal Light. *Ansaar* transcends the barriers of caste and creed. The chief protagonist of this novel, Rupa, defies her social code and comes above the narrow round of caste, creed and a religion for attaining the higher vision of human life. The novelist thus professes the universal validity that all religion of the world come to a single stream, representing the religion of humanity. The novel thus ends with a hope of mankind’s regeneration through self-analysing process.

Sudha Murty’s forte lies in the way she weaves a fine, clever story around them. There is a clear focus on the family, and in particular the lot of women trapped in traditional family structures in a rapidly changing postcolonial world. *Dollar Bahu* is a carefully balanced novel of contrasts: between foods; between Indian family life and American family life; as well as between East and West in a broader sense, between lack and excess; and, between lack of ambition (for Vinuta) and too much ambition (for Goriamma). Similarly, in *Gently Falls the Bakula* Murty uses bakula flower as a symbol to show gradually drying up relationship between Shrimati and Shrikant. But, what the novel ultimately reveals are the similarities rather than the differences. In her long career in fiction Adalja has won well-deserved praise for her elegant, evocative prose and for the keen intelligence with which she explores culture and character.

In her style, Adalja is very much occupied with the skill of communication, irrespective of ‘the nature of experience’, embodied in her novels. Her imagery is quite picturesque, for instance, in *Ansaar* Adalja uses ‘room’ as a symbol to show Rupa’s mental condition. She constantly dreams herself confined in parallel rooms which has no last door. From one room she enters into another door and it is infinite.
It has been observed that Adalja changes her style of writing with the change in the themes. In her earlier novels, her prose had the quality of straightforward style. As she gain experience in writing she moves from a straightforward narrative to more complex introspective deliberations. Her writings turn reflective and go deep into the psyche, acquiring a different form and character, affecting the heart and mind and leave their imprint there. But in her later novels, emphasis is shifted from external to internal. Both the novelists have confined on the theme of disharmony and discord to the family and, at times, to the maladjusted or ill-adjusted self.

Sudha Murty’s works have kept forth the burning issues of modern days, probably seen in middle class people of India. The striking and contrasting characteristic of Sudha Murty’s women in comparison with Varsha Adalja’s women is that they symbolize the educated and changed Indian women. Their education has tied them in westernized knot. Murty’s women protagonists are portrayed as decisive in nature. Decisiveness is their plus point that gives them reader’s sympathy and praise. Along with one’s nature one has to manage one’s life within the bounds of society by developing relationship. Her women protagonists are confined to themselves. Instead of widening their attitude and adjustment in relationship in the free domain of life they are coooned in their own routine problems. Their alienation in their own home is a mental morbidity, and Murty’s dominant theme. The economic independence of women and narrowness in men’s nature brought embarrassment in their relationship. Shrimati’s breaking of conjugal relationship in the mid-way of life is the indication of her patience’s limitation and her husband’s incapability to handle relationship. Anupama knew all consequents to break her relationship. She undertook the skills of up-to-date life and formed herself according to the circumstances.

Sudha Murty’s heroines- Vinuta, Shrimati and Anupama have caught into their cocooning attitude that suffocated themselves in their own circle. They seem faint in their demand, and offering. They are resilient in their attitude to face the challenges which they have accepted. They could not confine themselves for a concrete action. Her heroines have been changed themselves totally. Instead to surrender to the situation and compromise they have left the fragmented relationship. They are in search of self identity, in search of a place for self expression. Their self awareness has changed their traditional attitude in modern attitude asking for equality and
Anupama did not want to be a reminiscent of Anand’s life and body, nor does she compromise in her traditional bound life. Opposite to her parents’ will she denies to reconcile in conjugal bond. Shrimati goes to US leaving Shrikant behind. Vinuta deserted her home because of her subjugation in domestic relationship.

Though, Murty’s women characters are constructed on Indian tradition attitude, modern influence is so powerful on them and they are allured to do something different from traditional ties. Undoubtedly, they have succeeded in their deeds but could not maintain the bond of kinship. Sudha Murty’s some characters know how to develop every relationship. They succeeded to develop the relationships beyond primary kinship. The actions and thoughts of her protagonists made a gap between primary relationships. So the human relationship in Sudha Murty’s novels has been projected very quickly. They are always in a state of flux of change. Her protagonists failed to ahead in kinship relationship. Their less success has been affected on their development in worldliness. Then also, Murty’s writing is powerful because of the powerful projection of 21st century woman. The mesmerizing narrative of her women characters remains spellbounding for the reader. They linger forever in the mind of readers. Her women characters are stubborn as well as there is domination of emotion on them. Their stubbornness and emotionality compels them to be ready for anything. These two factors have become the cause of their fragmented relationship that they are left unable to proceed further on any decisive path.

These women characters have unbonded themselves from tradition. They stood on the threshold of Indian tradition and culture, trying to get rid of them. Those women are moving away from traditional locks of endurance, self-scarification for family towards self-assured, assertive and self ambitious woman. Shrimati’s deed of leaving her home and husband forever could be possible only on alien land. If she and her husband would have been staying in India, she would be in humiliating locks of her husband.

One of the most visible aspects of conjugal relationships in the novels of Murty and Adalja is that husbands are dominating, ambitious and even calculating. They are educated and modern and claim to be liberated but they expect their educated and modern wives to be submissive to them and they most often try to impose their will
upon them. Shrikant imposes his will on Shrimati on her career. Anant insists Vrunda for personal grooming and wants her to learn and adapt corporate etiquettes. Shailesh and Anand, husband of Rupa and Anupama respectively are doctors by profession yet deject their wives on learning their diseases. Vinuta’s husband, Girish is a notable exception, who treats his wife as an equal, as a person with a mind and will of her own.

Being modern writers Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja do not deal with traditional morality but their novels are centered on the redefined human relationship of today’s culture. Their novels deal with the psychic turmoil of woman within the limiting and restricting confines of domesticity. Both the writers believe in empowerment of women. Majority of Adalja’s characters are preoccupied with the issues of physical survival. Potential unrealized in women turns to pain and later to their destruction. One needs to engage oneself in some activity or other to keep the mind sane. They have some vocation in their life. Vrunda in Khari Padelo Tahuko is busy bringing up her little mentally retarded daughter. Rupa is busy helping the poor lepers of the society, Leena becomes a surrogate mother of Apurva. In a way, Adalja’s novels give stage of propaganda against the vices of the society. She gives new insights into the ambivalence of change in women and men and in human nature. Through the character of Vrunda and Rupa, the author exposes the dreadful experiences of the poor, mentally retarded children and lepers and urges the readers to find solutions. Their experiences of life teach them to adapt themselves to the situations that occur in their life. Adalja is of the opinion that a woman needs a vision of herself with strength, enough to assert herself in life, to motivate her and others around her towards the benefit of the entire humanity. On the contrary, the experiences of Murty’s characters, teaches them to achieve harmony and tranquillity by focusing on their career development and escaping from the demands and expectations inherent in human ties.

Varsha Adalja, through her fiction, give the message of adjustment and acceptance while Sudha Murty emphasises on standing for one’s identity by rebelling against set norms though in a very subdued manner. She through her novels spreads the message to be firm but be gentle. A woman has to lead normal life in the society assimilating all the aspects of life i.e. love, attraction, hate, trivial quarrels, etc. This does not mean
they are against woman’s need for personal space and individual identity. It is only when some deliberate injustice is done to her or some basic right is wilfully violated or snatched from her that she has to rise, stand and fight paying any price. Largely concerned with the present, Murty’s women have no time to dwell on the past. Their real-world experiences of life turn them into practical person. Their experiences of life teach them to become accustomed themselves to the situations that arise in their life. Murty is of the opinion that a woman must have a vision of herself with power, enough to affirm her identity in life, to motivate her and others around her towards the welfare of the human race. The writers seem to aim at a social structure that is congenial to all humanity irrespective of their gender. With deep imaginative insight, they trace in their novels the lives of contemporary women realistically, retaining at the same time the sense of wonder and mystery that lies at the root of existence.

Through their novels, both the writers attempt to arouse the passive, quiet women from their inertia, so that they shed their groundless fears and embarrassments and stand up against the forces which are working as hurdles for them for happy relationships with others and also restricting their freedom and progress in the society.

The position of the Indian woman has been paradoxical. In spite of being a central character in the family, she has lived the life of suppression, suffering and subdual. However, now she has gained resilience against it. However, it ought to remember that conjugal relationship can be restored through mutual understanding, love, respect, and dilution of the egos. Both the writers suggest an honest appraisal of one’s own role, strengths and weaknesses and admiration for the positive qualities of the spouse, can save relationships from disintegration and pave way for serenity of mind and harmonious discourse. A woman has to take care that her urge for self-identity is not tattered while fulfilling her family responsibilities.

Indian women can make positive changes to happen in their lives because they have unshakeable faith in their vision and unrelenting confidence in their potential. They have courage and conviction to act on their ideas. They have the potential and unrecognized powers in them which on exploration will explode the every element of life into success.
Sudha Murty has drawn her contemporary social situation. There are many superstitious beliefs which are prevalent in India still today. Lukoderma is considered as a divine curse in India. All these social facts exist in our Indian society which the writer has pictured in her books. Today middle class is suffering from psychic morbidity. Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law could not live under one roof is seen in majority of the novels of Murty. Varsha Adalja also has drowned her contemporary social situation through the character of Rupa and Vrunda. In short, there are some similarities and some dissimilarities, as illustrated above, in the presentation of various human relationships in the writings of Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja due to their different regions and classes as well as different backgrounds.

Both the novelists have breathed Indianness in their fiction by using Indian diction, characters, places, socio-political situations as the background for their each novel. The family institution system, the codes and the place of women in the family institution is also Indian. The characters of both the novelists are Indian in name, style and behaviour. Their characters like- Rupa, Vrunda, Leena, Anupama, Shrimati and Vinuta are very Indian figures representing the Indian way thinking, tradition and culture.

To conclude, both the Indian women novelists- Sudh Murty and Varsha Adalja are noteworthy in their delineation of human relationships. Both aptly portray the female psyche as far as their subjugation and subservience in various relationships are concerned. They examine the pathetic condition of Indian women from various social strata due to tradition, religion, culture, patriarchal system, family institution. Both the writers present their vision of life through their central characters. Adalja advocates acceptance of reality and adjustment with the cosmos and thus attain happiness whereas Murty asserts individuality above everything and stand for one’s right in a very firm and gentle manner.

Sudha Murty and Varsha Adalja through their writings have whittled a place in Indian English Literature and Gujarati Literature respectively. This research can further be extended to study the complexities of human behaviour and socio psychological dilemma as well. Stylistic perspective is another angle which is yet to be explored. Very meagre research is done on the works of Sudha Murty who is writing under the
category of Indian English Literature. She writes with subtle simplicity but beneath that simplicity lays a deeper understanding of human nature which has not been thoroughly explored. So there is ample scope of research in her writings. Varsha Adalja can be juxtaposed with other Indian or non-Indian writers. Adalja has written a considerable number of detective novels which could be studied as a different type of novel. Further the short stories of Sudha Murty can be compared with the short stories of Varsha Adalja. In a way, by placing them together in this research study, it is hoped that it will add an iota in the ocean of research from where further study can be extended.