

## **CHAPTER: 7 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION**

### **7.1 Introduction:**

In the late twentieth century, Indian writing in English, both fictional and nonfictional literature, attracted the global attention with its creativity and originality and achieved international reorganization. The extraordinary voices in the new work enchanted international scholars. This credit goes to the Indian writers who write in English - Arun Kolatkar, Anita Desai, Jayanta Mahapatra, Nissim Ezekiel, R.K. Narayan, Bharti Mukherjee, A.K. Ramanujan, Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth and so on. They placed Indian literature on the world platform as the best genuine writing with a new voice. Unluckily, the literature written in regional languages like Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Hindi and Urdu, could not have achieved the same reorganization as Indian literature written in English, even if it has its own potential creative voices, as their works were in regional languages. Here, the translation is the major issue and they failed to influence the shaping of a global Indian image and identity.

It is true that many celebrated contemporary Indian women author's life narratives have been translated into English, French and German languages by the foreign scholars. But the majority of women who are little known or not known in the field of literature have also written high-quality auto-narratives in their respective regional languages are being ignored to translate. So that their voice reached to the limited readers who know that textual language. It means their voice confined in their texts or premature death of the voice.

The most interesting change came to notice at the beginning of the twenty-first century in the contemporary Indian writing, especially in life-narratives written in regional languages have been transcribed by many Indian scholars. Indian women scholars are getting the best interest to transcribe the life-narratives of contemporary Indian women writers. In the present study, out of four selected memoirs, three texts

were transcribed into English by the scholar Indian women – Uma Randeriya (*Torn From the Roots*), Maya Pandit (*The Weave of My Life*), Masooma Ali (*Pebbles in a Tin Drum*). Further the information and communication technology has drastically changed the way of life. The internet and social media have increased the curiosity of the people. They are getting good interest in other people's life story. So the importance of the nonfiction genre is increased as well as a new subgenre of nonfiction literature are invented in social media like Weblog (personal blog), Facebook, Twitter and so on.

From the 1980s onward, many contemporary Indian women writers started to write their life stories in their regional languages. Though they belong to a different region, caste, culture, tradition, language and religion, their reasons to write memoirs are almost same. They were directly or indirectly became harassed or tortured under the male-dominated environment. Thus the feminist voice is easy to recognize in their writings. The contemporary memoir is a genre in that the writer is recounting true events from his or her own life.

## **7.2 General Observation: Voice/s in Memoirs:**

Regarding the voice in memoir is concerned, it is observed that text without a voice like a body without a soul. The voice in the text gives credit to the author. According to Robert Frost, each word has a ‘sound’ or a ‘voice’. It means each sentence has ‘audible voice’. The term ‘audible voice’ refers to the sound of the text experienced by the reader during the silent reading. It is also known as ‘inner voice’ and ‘inner speaking’.

In the course of this study, it has been observed in detail about the role of the ‘voice’ and its importance which are as follows:

- The memoir writers have implemented their convincing and credible ability to produce voice in the text. The quality of the text (memoir) is based on the quality

of the voice which represents the writer's personality. It is found that it communicates with the reader and generates a response. Generally, all selected primary texts have respective voices. For instance, in the first chapter *One-Zero-One* of Ajeet Cour's memoir *Pebbles in a Tin Drum* reveals mother-daughter love which stimulates reader's emotions and encourages to read the text till the end.

- The four primary memoirs included in the present research study demonstrate 'I' the narrator in the centre of the story not only develop voice and extend identity but also enhance authority.
- It is found that voice is not consistent, it varies from writer to writer, place to place, region to region and language to language.
- It is also found that voice is a social phenomenon (every 'I' has a voice and everyone has his/her own life-story) with metaphorical effects and social identification, not as a private, internal or authentic experience.
- These women's memoirs are powerful only because it has various unique voices. It reveals their experiences confidently. The confidence of the writer creates various voices that encourage readers to believe it.
- Memoir a genre exhibits certain qualities and perform specific social functions. The distinctive quality or feature of the genre is a life story which fundamentally based on truth. The truth of a memoir and the truth of a novel is quite different. Memoir stands on the ground of reality, whereas novel has a flight of imagination.

- All these memoirs have communicative power and rhetorical authority due to effective voices realistically expressed by the authors in their respective texts.
- There is a subtle distinction between memoir, autobiography, biography, reminiscences and sketches, even though in the contemporary era all these distinctions get vague and come under the one roof term such as self-life narrative, auto-narrative or life-writing. All genres of life writing are constructive and productive, no one is less in power than others. It has been felt that the basic essence of the life narratives is confessional discourse, private writing and a personal catharsis, which connects the readers closer to the writer. Its personal touch is stronger than its universal appeal.

### **7.3 General Observation: Memoir and Memoirist:**

Both nouns ‘Memoir’ and ‘Memoirist’ begin with ‘M’ sound unavoidably dependent on another ‘M’ sound, namely ‘Memories.’ Memories or reminiscences are the raw material of the memoirist by which she constructs her story. In the chosen four memoirs, the following observations have been found:

- It is observed that at the initial stage the storyteller found an individual but as the story proceeds an individual is absorbed in collective whole – ‘I’ becomes ‘we’ - this is because the storyteller implements multiple voices.
- The voice represents in the memoir is not universal but the way the memoirist skillfully develops voice or voices which impact on the mind of the reader at length that they forget themselves where they are and slip into the world created by the author.
- In the memoir, the writer tells the story of the story with a multiple narrative skills – shifting settings, coincident, surprises, changes, chance connections, flashback, dialogues, and so on.

- The memoir is a self-reflexive story of an individual, the memoir writer immediately begins her story on ‘self’ with a mixture of public issues and female rights. Then slowly she skillfully merges another person’s life story with her story. So that, it directly effects to readers and they think that whatever narrated in the memoir is an authentic and valid not futile exercise.
- Generally, in memoir, the memoirist shares her rich experiences in a way that whatever she is narrating is without any prejudices. Further, she reveals her story in a beautiful expression with perfect sentence structure, no one doubts the source and raises questions.
- Memoir brings to notice many public issues – gender discrimination, class distinction, subjugation, oppression, socio-cultural instability, working women, and so on. So at times it becomes a socio-cultural document of the contemporary era. We come to know about social environment of her time.
- The story of memoirs is personal because the ‘I’ in the story retelling the experience directly to the reader. It claims the hard truth because identity is constructed well from the beginning.
- The memories narrated in memoirs are all may not be based on facts. Sometimes memoirists slip into the fictional narration and starts to share personal thoughts or ideology. So the reader should develop the rhetorical nature and raised the questions wherever they suspect the source in memoir and not blindly follow the experiences narrated by the memoirists.

- It is also experienced from the journey into this research that the reader may get many avenues for his/her self-development also, as it comes from first hand life-experiences of the writer. Thus, memoirs have an educational value also.

#### **7.4 Overall Findings:**

The overall findings of the study are as follows:

- All the contemporary women memoirists have come out here as the champion of women's inner world, which was not so well-expressed before. Their expressions are more authentic and accurate.
- The selected primary memoirs represent the contradiction of classes, castes, religions and dialects/languages, geographic regions in India. The memoir writers chosen for the study belong to the following states of India: Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Delhi. However, most of the memoirists have migrated from original birthplaces, Ismat Chughtai and Ajeet Cour family migrated from Lahore to Uttar Pradesh and Delhi respectively during partition. Both memoirists minutely narrated their childhood reminiscences of parental homes located in Pakistan. Urmila Pawar shifted from her original birthplace Adgaon village of Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra transferred to Mumbai city for performing government job. Kamla Ben temporarily transferred from Gujarat to Lahore and later at Punjab for five years. Within this period, she performed humanitarian duty to rehabilitate and resettle of abducted women during the partition of India and Pakistan.
- All primary texts of memoirists display feminist ethos in their self-life writings. It presents the fearless voice in condemning the inequalities and injustice in the treatment of society towards women. As an individual woman in her social-

cultural scenario tried to share her experiences by searching for female identity and self-discovery. It is observed that almost all women memoirists demanding equal social status and even voiced their emotional demands. They harshly criticized the tradition-bound conservative society which was always imprisoned and shackled women in the so-called male made rules and regulations.

- The agony of partition is striking to the eyes in the memoirs of Ismat, Kamla and Ajeet. Kamlaben's memoir is thoroughly based on the trauma of partition. She narrates what she experienced and heard the stories of the partition victims, whereas Ajeet and Ismat families were already victims of the partition because both families were living in Lahore and after partition, Lahore province became part of Pakistan so that they lost everything. Their families came to India as a refugee, struggle a lot to resettle life. Though, in their memoirs, they haven't written any tangential comment on nation, country or religion. This is the outstanding characteristics of a great life writer.
- Generally, it is found that the Dalit downtrodden woman memoirists issues and the upper-class women memoirists issues like domestic problems and oppressions of patriarchy are very close to each other. But the way of presentation of 'self' in the memoirs of Dalit and upper class women is fairly different. It comes to notice that Urmila Pawar in her memoir *Aaydan* raised the issues of whole Dalit Mahari community, whereas Ismat and Ajeet narrate their individual domestic and career related problems. Thus, the Dalit women memoirists were finding their identity within their community and raised their voice against the system and the tradition of the society.
- The past childhood nostalgia of famous literary personality Ismat Chughtai and Ajeet Cour represents in their memoirs, which draws our attention and provide the evidence how the Muslim and Punjabi peoples living friendly and happily in

Lahore before the partition. The politics divided them forever and made enemies of each other. It reveals the socio-cultural environment of the time.

- Logically, it is found that man and woman write a memoir with different objectives. Generally, man's memoirs project his achievements and fame. While the woman memoir generally projects her self-consciousness. She narrates about her parents, siblings, husband and other women. Out of the four selected memoirs, three women memoirists, Ismat Chughtai, Ajeet Cour and Urmila Pawar narrate less about themselves and more about other women of their family set up, their parents, their children and husband. Except for Kamlaben Patel, who writes very little about herself and entirely discussed her partition experience.
- Kamlaben Patel's memoir *Torn From the Roots* is quite different from the four chosen memoirs. She is not in search of self-identity like Ismat, Ajeet or Urmila. Like them she was not a renowned literary personality, perhaps *Mool Sotan Ukhdelan* is the only text she has written. But her work for the abducted women's rehabilitation during the partition as a social worker is not less than Ismat, Ajeet and Urmila. This memoir is a solid historical proof written by an eyewitness and a person who practically play a roll on the ground for the resettlement of abducted women. But this creates a vivid picture of what a determined and dedicated woman can do in society, a brilliant illustration of woman empowerment.
- In the case of Urmila Pawar and Ajeet Cour, it is found that contemporary Indian women were financially dependent on their husbands, even though they were well-educated and earning themselves. Ajeet Cour narrates that her husband Rajendar Singh demanded the account of minor domestic expenses. Urmila Pawar writes when she received her first salary after marriage, she became confused. She accessed from two contradicting feelings, happy for getting the first salary and sad because she has to give salary to her husband Harishchandra. She writes, "When I

got my first salary, I could not believe that money was mine; that I could spend it the way I liked. Before my marriage, I used to hand over my salary to my mother. Now I started handing it over to my husband. If this is not like deliberately offering head for the butcher's knife, what else is it?" (Pawar 208) This statement makes clear that contemporary Indian women are not free from traditional psyche which is deeply rooted in the social structure. They are not free from the influence of male-domination even though they have good education and handsome salary.

- The present study of these memoirs reveals that though they describe traumatic, oppressive status of women, on the one hand, they also indicate the positive aspect of society on the other that such incidents should be minimized or curbed from our social life. When the readers come to know about such a situation of women, they may be aware or become conscious in the future to avoid them in their life in the future. Thus, in a way these memoirs are like 'lighthouses' that shows the navigator not to get struck with rocks. They are the 'social indicators' which warns against unwanted things in society.
- One more positive finding of this research is that, the sufferers or the victims of social evils, become stronger and comes out victorious at the end. So the memoirists in question are like women-leaders or sources of inspiration to other women of today to chart out their way from all odds and obstacles.

## **7.5 Contribution of this Research and its Usefulness:**

Any literary endeavour – critical or creative, fictional or nonfictional – has its identity and usefulness in the world of literature. This critical writing and research carries an academic value. The memoirists are creative writers, who once bring out their work of art, as they develop a sort of detachment with it. Then it becomes open for public criticism and research.

The present research, in a way, is a public criticism and an individual scholar's comments on the primary texts created by the writers. It presents the researcher's own interpretations, readings, re-readings and comments supported by the views and opinions of other critics and scholars of the same texts. Thus, it would become the original contributions of the researcher amalgamated by or conglomerated by the supportive readings. It adds something new, original, unheard of or innovative understanding of the texts. It would generate a new way of thinking or looking at a text of life writing.

The future readers or students will be benefited by referring this research on memoirs in question along with the theoretical background to them. This will help to develop critical thinking and analytical insight into them. This research would be an addition to the meagre material available on the memoirs in question. Moreover, a sort of Dalit consciousness will also be enhanced by reading the chapter on Urmila Pawar's *Aaydan*. Partition environment will be enlivened by the reading of the chapter on Kamlaben Patel's *Mool Sotan Ukhdelan* and so on.

Thus, the research will ultimately be proved beneficial to the readers at large.