

**A Comparative Study of Filial Relationships in the Novels of Manju Kapur and Kiran Desai****1.Archana Soni**

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**Article Received:** 09/09/2026**Article Accepted:**10/10/2026**Published Online:**11/10/2026**DOI:**10.47311/IJOES.2026.8.10.211**Abstract:**

This research paper presents the importance of filial relationship in the society and the comparison between the behaviour of parents and children in modern and old age. The effects and side effects are shown on the children. It throws the light on the problem of generation gaping. The parents suggests and advises to the children according to their ways but the children take it according to their modern age, in this way many confusions and misunderstandings have taken place among them and in this situation both the parents and children suffer whole life. Parents blame on self that they could not give proper treatment to their children so they spoil and in other aspect the children think that their parents always interrupt them without any reason. A healthy family relationship is very necessary to make a civil society, so this topic is very relevant for study in present time to make good citizen.

The concept of filial relationship is expressed by Manju Kapur and Kiran Desai, very vividly with deep emotions. Manju *Kapur* explained about interim struggle of family relationship, Kiran Desai throws the light on home sickness and life of foreign countries as well as the cultural differences, so both writers justify the perceptive of filial relationship in their works.

**Keywords:-** Filial relationship, Generation gaping, Confusions, Misunderstandings, Treatment.

**Introduction**

A society is made by good citizens and good citizens are prepared by good family, good family has the characteristics of healthy relationships among the family persons, in

many forms of relationship in which the relationship between parents and children is the base of a family. It is also said, “*The first school of a man to learn is only home.*” The qualities and attributes are always taken place in a person mental and physical development. Filial relationship shows the relationship between children and their parents. This word *Filial* is taken by Latin words *filius* means son and *filia* means daughter. Filial relationship expresses the duties of parents towards the children when they are young, dependent on them and afterwards in the old age of parents the children have the great duty to take care their parents with respect and dignity.

Filial relationship is affected by many things as generation gap, old parenting system, new parenting, the desire of parents and own thoughts of children, the condition of parents and demands of children etc. In the effects of these reasons many a conflicts are shown in the family. Generation gap is the most crucial as the parents are upbrought by the old rules and regulations, so they treat their children according to that way, but in modern era children do not accept it and the mental conflict takes place between parents and children. The children think that the parents are very strict and unsupportive, while the parents blame on self that it is the result of any mistake in the upbringing of their children.

### **Objective**

1. To examine the difference between old and new parenting.
2. To develop responsibility in children to take care their parents in old age with respect.
3. To express the generation gap problems and its effects.
4. To maintain bond between parents and children.
5. To realise the feelings and emotions of the parents and children.
6. To develop a healthy family relationship and to make it very useful for the country development.

### **Review of Literature**

#### **Novels of Manju Kapur a Feministic Study by Ashok Kumar Sharma (2010)**

Ashok Kumar Sharma explains the inner motions of Manju Kapur’s novels. In Manju Kapur’s novels, presents the real life of middle class family and women’s struggles for their freedom. Women have every essentials of their life, but they feel that they are shackled with traditional chains of family responsibility and relations, so they want to freedom from it.

#### **Manju Kapur a Postmodern Critical Reading by Premila Swami D. (2021)**

Premila Swami D. analysis of Manju Kapur focuses on portrayal of women, family and the sociocultural pressures of middle class India. Swami D. discussed that Kapur creates a fictional world centred on family’s emotional and intellectual journey. Manju Kapur mostly advocates the rights of women.

#### **The Fictional World of Kiran Desai by Dr. K.V. Dominic (2010)**

This book is a critical anthology focused on the literary contributions of Kiran Desai. It explains the diasporic and identity crisis, displacement, cultural conflict, familial relations and generational conflict. Kiran Desai takes the interest to draw the picture of superstition that is in the society.

#### **Diasporic Consciousness in the Novels of Kiran Desai by M.S. Vinod Kumar (2014)**

M.S. Vinod Kumar presents the theme of diaspora that is used by Kiran Desai in her novels. Diasporic consciousness refers to the awareness, feelings, identity conflicts and emotional effects of people living afar from their homeland and families. Kiran draws the picture of inner struggle of a person who tangled with his own land and new atmosphere of abroad.

### **Indian Family in Transition by Tulsi Patel (2005)**

This book is very useful for the description of parents child relationships, the joint and nuclear families and generational conflicts. Indian family has the concept of joint family, it is very beneficial in many ways but have some critical issues too. New generation wants to freedom and not interested to take responsibility to anyone so there is always a conflict between old and new generation .

### **The Family in India its Structure and Change by Arvind M. Shah (1998)**

Arvind M. Shah is a renowned Indian sociologist known for his pioneering work on family household and kinship structures in India. He introduced the concept of functional joint family and intensity in family relations. Migration and modernization have not weakened kinship, instead of it creates new forms of affection.

### **Hypothesis**

Filial relationship is the main relationship of life, from where a person attached with emotions, known about family, love and care, so these relationship should be healthy but it is affected by many social and emotional norms. The novels of Manju Kapur and Kiran Desai depict filial relationship very vividly. Manju Kapur's novel *Home* and *Custody* express filial duties bounded with social and emotional conflicts, the novels of Kiran Desai, *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* and *The Inheritance of Loss* explain characters with alienation and psychological effects.

### **Discussion**

Manju Kapur and Kiran Desai is very well known writers of English Literature. Manju Kapur knitted very well the family relationship in the novels of *Home* and *Custody*. In *Home*, Manju Kapur throws the light on the old and new parenting system and the mental conflict as well as the sufferings and feelings of children. In her second book *Custody*, Manju Kapur explains about the marriage failure, divorce and it's effects on the children. Now a days divorce is very common problem of the society, but the society does not accept the reality of this relationship and its failure. So the society blames to the parents and the children suffer so much.

The Character of Nisha in *Home* explains the inner motions and conflicts. In her home, the parents of Nisha wants to bring up her according to old customs, so they do not want that Nisha study more and starts her profession. On the other hand her maternal aunt Rupa and uncle support her to study as well as encouraged her to start a professional life. Her mother Sona interrupted her every time to practice anything new because she was afraid about her future and the view of society, so she wanted that Nisha should be brought up under old customs while Nisha has own modern thoughts, it creates many silent conflicts

between mother and daughter. When Nisha wants to go out and play cricket, here some lines are visible,

*Nisha: "I want to go too."*

*Sona: "You can't."*

*Nisha: "Why? Why can't I?"*

*Sona: "It is better for girls to remain inside." (Home, p.n.51)*

When Nisha wants to study and live with modernity her mother Sona interrupted her to explain the role of a woman in the society, she said, *"This is the life of a woman, to look after her home,*

*her husband, her children and give them food, she has cooked with her own hands."* (Home, p.n. 115)

When Nisha told to her mother Sona that aunt Rupa said, *"There is always time to learn cooking, but only one time to study."* Sona said, *"That Masi has ruined you head. What does a girl need with studying? Cooking will be useful her entire life."* (Home, p.n. 125)

In *Custody*, Manju Kapur expressed about the inner motion and conflictions. Shagun, a lady who did not want to avoid her children but she wanted to fulfil her desire. She wanted to excitement in her marital life but her husband is busy in his professional life and careless about conjugal life because he thought that after being married and have two children, there is no responsibility towards wife. His only duty to be successful in his professional life, so his wife Shagun betrays in the relationship with other man Ashok and demanded the divorce from his her husband. Her husband Raman never expected it.

The battle between husband and wife is very crucial for their children they had two children, one son Arjun and one daughter Ruhi. They both are very young so they need very much to their parents, but their parents is busy from the battle for custody of the children. Both are involved their ego battle, but no one care for the emotions of the little ones. So Arjun hates his father and go with her mother Shagun and stepfather Ashok, while Ruhi lives with her father and step mother Ishita because she was very little and unable to understand the situation.

Namita Gokhale has interviewed Manju Kapur at Bangalore literary festival on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2011 at 7 p.m. Manju Kapur said in the interview with Namita Gokhale that the couples are turned into monsters in court rooms during the divorce cases but in the point of children everyone would have to resist. Manju Kapur talked about her deep desire to write about her own mother in future but after taking her permission. Manju Kapur explores it, filial relationship bonds and conflicts in her novels very deeply, while Kiran Desai draws the picture of the children and parents relationship according to physical and psychological situation of life. In her novels *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* and *In the inheritance of Loss*, both captures the inner sides of relationship between parents and children. *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* exposes the psychological effects on children that is passed them by

their parents and their family members and make pressures on children to fulfil their desires in life. Sometimes this pressure betrays the children on wrong way. In this effect, they are unable to see their own dreams but they are only the puppets of their parents or family members. They do only what their parents want, in this way they have lost their own personality and its charm. The character of Sampath is an example, he is only son of family and every member of the family have so many expectations, he feels pressures and begins a business to make fool others to forecast their future.

In *The Inheritance of Loss*, Kiran Desai portrays the Indian families who went to live in other countries. They try so much to accept the foreign living methods, rules and regulations, cultures etc., but they never accepted by the foreigners. When they return their home, they do not adjust themselves in the condition, so they live very frustrated and this situation misguided their children too. The children do not understand what they should do or not. They are not sure for their life and future, they are always hanged in to cultural battle, the character of the judge Jemubhai, Sai and Biju reflected the motions of alienation in their life and seeking their identity. The retired judge Jemubhai and his granddaughter Sai live together and it is unexpected because he didn't like anyone so it is said, "*This granddaughter whom he didn't hate was perhaps the only miracle fate has thrown his way.*" (*The Inheritance of Loss*, p.n.210)

Kiran Desai is also justify filial relationship bonds and conflicts in her novels. Kiran Desai was only fifteen years old girl when she left India and lived in England for one year after that she moved to America and settled there till now, so she felt it deeply herself. She talked about it in her many interviews. She accepted it that many a people survive in foreign countries but many a defeated and left. In her booker prize winning book *In the Inheritance of Loss* is fulfilled by her own experiences too.

### **Methodology**

This study follows the qualitative research method to understand and exploration of the topic. The focus is on descriptive, narrative and interpretive understanding rather than numerical measurement so researcher talked with old and young people, that is very useful to collect data for expressing the reality and knowing the differences between old and new generation parenting methods and family relationships.

### **Findings**

1. it is very beneficial to realise the causes, effects and side effects of the filial relationship.
2. This study helps to make people deep bond between parents and children
3. This research paper is helpful to understand the age gaping problems and avoid the misunderstanding between old and new generation people.
4. This paper learns about moral duties to children for their parents.
5. This study throws the light on making good citizens who make their society very civil and develop.
6. This research paper is useful to make balance between old and young people.

### **Conclusion**

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This research paper has the concept of filial relationship duties, emotions, desires and conflicts at the lens of the works of two prominent writers Manju Kapur and Kiran Desai. Manju Kapur presents deep inner conflicts, old and new thoughts differences elaborately. On the other hand Kiran Desai explains about the feelings when a person leaves his country and settled in other country. Inner conflicts that are impossible to express before any other person. This research paper is very relevant in the sense of realising the thoughts of new generation of modern era who wants to achieve great luxuries in their lives but to follow this, they leave the roots of their culture and naturality of life. After achieving their dreams when they turned to see their past, they feel that they lost only, not gain anything so they find themselves tangled with their past and future. This study is very useful in these days when all world is in our hand in the form of mobilization and technique based life. Everything is covered with artificiality so this research paper is very suitable for present time and gives many clues for the future researchers to further researches.

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