



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Vol. 13. Issue 3. 2026 (July-Sept.)



INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

2395-2628(Print):2349-9451(online)

From Nostalgia to Negotiation: Identity Formation in Divakaruni's Diaspora Fiction

Sumit Kumar Misra¹ and Dr. Upasana Bharati²

¹ Research Scholar, Ph.D., Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Major S.D. Singh University, Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh, India

Email: sumit.km151@gmail.com

² Professor, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Major S.D. Singh University, Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh, India

[doi: 10.33329/ijelr.13.3.74](https://doi.org/10.33329/ijelr.13.3.74)



Article information

Article Received:13/07/2026

Article Accepted:19/08/2026

Published online:23/08/2026

Abstract

This paper examines how Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni presents the struggle in shaping the identity in her novels 'Before We Visit the Goddess' and 'Oleander Girl'. Her narratives often deal with the difficulties and challenges of displacement, adapting new culture, and making balance between present and past. The paper examines how experiences of migration, bond with native land, nostalgia, cultural differences, adaptation, and search for belonging form identities of the characters, and how they maintain connectivity with their family, native land, culture, and traditions whereas they also face challenges living in multicultural environment. The study argues that identity is flexible and evolving, it changes through relationships, cultural interactions, and personal experiences. Nostalgia connects people to their roots while they grow, survive, and find new feelings of belonging in the alien land through negotiation. The study also examines how family, gender, multicultural society, and shared memories influence the identity formation. The perspectives of Stuart Hall, Homi K. Bhabha, and Avtar Brah have been used to investigate how the characters shape their identities living in multicultural environment. A qualitative approach has been used in the study that is basis on close reading, and thematic analysis.

Key Words: Diaspora, Identity, Migration, Nostalgia, Alien land, Adaptation, Belonging, Multiculturalism, Cultural Interaction, Negotiation.

1. INTRODUCTION

This research paper examines the complicated process of identity formation in the selected literary works of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni a prominent writer of diasporic literature. This study also explores how the stories of her novels move from a simple representation of nostalgia for the home country to evolving and dynamic process of identity formation and negotiation in multicultural

environment. Her novels strongly rooted with the experiences of displacement, migration, reflection of tension, cultural hybridity, transformation, conflicts and identity formation.

Earlier the diasporic writers focus on feelings of homesickness, loss, and separation from home country. The writers generally represent the immigrants who feel disconnected and lonely in foreign land. But in modern era, diasporic writers like Divakaruni, have changed their perspectives; they present identity as not only sense of loss but also a process of adjustment, growth and transformation. The characters in Divakaruni's novels do not only suffer with nostalgia but they also learn how to compromise, adjust and fit in the unfamiliar environment and form a new identity between different cultures. Therefore, the shifting from nostalgia to negotiation is a prominent idea to understand Divakaruni's narration.

Divakaruni presents women from three generations in her novel 'Before We Visit the Goddess'. They experience differently related to cultural change and displacement. The first generation is strongly connected to their cultural values and traditions. The second generation tries to make balance between family responsibilities and personal freedom. The third, younger generation, attempts to understand the surroundings of their parents and their cultural heritage growing up in a multicultural environment. The novel presents that with the passing of time, identity changes across generations.

In *Oleander Girl*, Divakaruni presents the story of a young lady named Karobi who struggles to find out of her true identity. When she becomes aware about the history of her family, she questions herself about her belongings, values and beliefs. During her journey she faces difficulties and struggles between modern life and traditions. Her experiences show that identity is affected not only by the society but also influenced by individual experiences and personal choices.

Another important feature of her writing is her focus on women. In her novels the female characters generally face challenges related to personal dreams, culture, traditions, and family expectations. Showing their courage and strength, they shape their identities. It includes a new attribute to the literature of diaspora focusing on the role of gender in shaping of identities.

This study also examines how emotions and nostalgia play an important role in identity formation. Nostalgia makes the characters keep in touch with their traditions and roots; however, staying connected with their native land is not sufficient to survive in a multicultural society. They have to face different real life challenges, therefore they learn how to negotiate and adapt their place in multicultural society. The process of negotiating and adapting helps the immigrant characters to form a balanced identity that contains both their present and past.

Negotiation is the central concept of this study that shows as immigrants neither completely abandon culture of their native land nor completely embrace the culture of host country. Instead, they form a hybrid identity that is a mixture of both cultures and such identity becomes flexible and changes according to the new experiences.

Novels of Divakaruni clearly represent this process and her narratives become relevant in the era of globalization. Her novels represent how immigrants have feelings of nostalgia and move to the process of adaptation and negotiation. By examining these two novels 'Before We Visit the Goddess' and 'Oleander Girl', this paper examines how identity is formed by memory, personal experiences, culture, and relationship.

1.1 Review of Related Literature

Earlier studies conducted on Divakaruni's fiction, generally emphasizes on the conflict between Indian tradition and western social surroundings. Most of the studies depict identity experience influenced by experiences, migration, family relationship and belonging.

Raviya and Kapil (2020) explore *Oleander Girl* through the perspective of journey. They explain that Korobi's journey to the United States is related to her inner journey to discover about herself and her identity. Their investigation is significant because it explains that identity formation is a process that is linked with personal experiences.

Bakayaraj and Pal (2022) analyze diasporic identity in *Oleander Girl* and explain how ethnic, racial, cultural, religious, and national factors influence the character's understanding of selfhood. Their study also focus on the perspective of multiple identities instead of fixed identities. The idea helps argument in the present study that identity is flexible and evolving and formed through cultural interaction.

Lobo (2023) examines the politics and identity formation in *Oleander Girl* and also explores the connection between power and identity. The study focuses on class, race, gender, and ethnicity related to Korobi's experiences about homeland and host country. It represents that social structure and personal choice influence identity.

Sherawat and Gupta (2025) study cultural diaspora and negotiation between cultural heritage and modernity of western countries in Divakaruni's novels. Their study focuses on alienation, belonging, cultural negotiation, and hybridity. The ideas support the present study to understand diasporic identity as a process of negotiation.

Mishra (2026) explores diasporic identity, memory, interpersonal relationship, and female subjectivity in Divakaruni's fiction. The study represents that diaspora is not only geographical migration but also experiences shaped by family, emotional connections, culture, and memory. This idea helps the present study, focusing on shared memories and relationships in identity formation.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

The analysis is based on theoretical concept of Stuart Hall, Homi K. Bhabha, and Avtar Brah. Their works represent a strong foundation to understand formation of identity in diaspora literature. Their theories examine how migration, memory, and cultural interaction influence identity formation in multicultural societies. These point of views are generally relevant to Divakaruni's fiction 'Before We Visit the Goddess' and 'Oleander Girl' in which the characters make a move from nostalgia about their native country to negotiation with the realities of new cultures.

Stuart Hall develops the theory of 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora' (1990). He describes that identity is a process of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It is formed through migration, cultural experience, memory, history, and negotiation.

Homi K. Bhabha introduces the theory of 'Hybridity' and the 'Third Space' in "The Location of Culture" (1994). In his views identity is formed through cultural interaction, it is not fixed. The third space represents 'In-Between' where immigrants negotiate between the culture of their homeland and culture of home country that creates hybrid identities.

Avtar Brah develops the concept of Diaspora Space in 'Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities' (1996). He provides idea about diaspora as a cultural and social space where individuals shape their identities through interaction between different cultures and communities. He explains as belonging is not confined only one's native country but it is formed through experiences across different cultural settings. The theories of Hall, Bhabha, and Brah provide a framework for analyzing how new identity develops from memories of homeland and adapting new environment.

These theorists have been chosen because their perspectives help to understand the process of shaping diasporic identity in Divakaruni's novels. Hall explains the basis to understand identity as evolving, Bhabha provides explanation of hybridity and cultural negotiation, and Brah examines the cultural and social space where negotiation takes place. The ideas of these theorists, together, provide

an appropriate framework to explore how characters in Divakaruni's novels remain connected to their inherited tradition while responding new surroundings.

Nostalgic consciousness: memory, loss, and identity formation

In the novels of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni 'nostalgic consciousness' represents a deep emotional and psychological attachment with the past that forms emotions, identities and shapes the lives of diasporic characters. In her fiction, nostalgia is not only sentimental remembrance about family, childhood or homeland; rather, it is a state of mind that makes characters understand their emotional isolation, displacement, and cultural conflict.

In literature of diaspora, nostalgic consciousness takes place when immigrants continuously compare memories of their homeland with their present life. This consciousness affects their sense of belonging, decision, and relationship. In her novels 'Before We Visit the Goddess' and 'Oleander Girl', Divakaruni represents characters carrying memory of their homeland while living in new culture. Their nostalgia shows family bonds, emotional security, traditional values and longing for roots. Nostalgic consciousness at the same time, often creates conflicts between the past memory and new culture.

Memory functions as to connect identities, culture and generations and makes a bridge between present and past. Memory is not related to only personal experiences but it is also the presentation of traditions, cultural heritage, emotions and family history. In the narration of diaspora memory becomes prominent because immigrants maintain the connection with their native country through remembered experience. Memories are transferred from one generation to another that helps to understand of love, survival, sacrifice, and motherhood.

The characters continuously memorize of their childhood, emotional wounds and family struggles that affects their present relationship. The novel 'Before We Visit the Goddess' opens with Savitri's emotions about her mother's sacrifice "The memory of my mother is etched in my heart, sharper than the knife I used in kitchen" (Divakaruni, 2016, P.14). Savitri's nostalgia is deeply rooted in her memory of her homeland. Her identity is recognized by motivation for her village and mother. Therefore, nostalgia functions as both burden and strength.

Bela, Savitri's daughter, is represented as the immigrant of second generation. In Before We Visit the Goddess, she articulates as "In America, I am too Indian. In India, I am too American. Where, then, do I belong? (Divakaruni, 2016, P.112). Bela's attachment to home land is inherited; therefore her nostalgia gives her sense of alienation in both the societies as of her homeland and host land. Tara, Savitri's granddaughter, first she rejects nostalgia as she says, "I didn't care for the saris my mother pushed on me or the curry that smelled up my clothes" (Divakaruni, 2016, P.178). As she grown up in America, she makes distance from Indian culture and tradition. Later she rediscovers her tradition and cultural roots. When she comes to India, she considers "For the first time, I felt a thread tying me to this soil, fragile but real" (Divakaruni, 2016, P.245). Here nostalgia functions as a resource for identity formation.

Early life of Savitri has been marked by survival, struggle, and poverty. Her identity is not shaped through cultural pride only but hardship of life. In a sense, Savitri's memories are related to reminders of struggle forming her determination and ambition. Her identity becomes indivisible from her ability to bear and adjust in different circumstances. Thus here memory is not stable but it is active and forming present liking.

In the same way in 'Oleander Girl', memories of hidden truths and family history guide the journey of protagonist towards self-discovery. Through rituals, family experiences, and remembered stories the characters in Divakaruni's novels try to preserve their cultural identity in spite of emotional and geographical displacement.

Divakaruni represents loss as a major emotional experience in her fiction of diaspora. It depicts not only separation from family of home land but also it represents the loss of relationship, certainty about identity, traditions, emotional security, and cultural familiarity. Immigrants generally have the feelings of alienation and loneliness because they leave their cultural environment and social roots behind them. In 'Before We Visit the Goddess', the protagonist experiences loss of emotional intimacy, intergenerational understanding, dreams and family unity. Their lives represent how migration and social realities create differences between daughter and mother. Loss seems through hidden family truths, absence of parents and the scattered assumption of the protagonist about her ancestry and identity. Divakaruni represents loss as both transformative and painful. The characters experience of loss encourages them for personal growth and self-exploration. Therefore, loss is a prominent force in forming diasporic consciousness.

Identity formation is the process through which the characters develop their understanding of belonging of family, social environment, and culture. Generally identity of characters is not stable because they live between two different cultures as the cultures of homeland and host land. It results in conflicts regarding cultural values, language, gender, roles, modernity, tradition, and belonging. Identity formation is related to generational experiences in 'Before We Visit the Goddess'. The three women characters are presented negotiating their identities in different ways according to their emotional struggle, migration experiences, and social conditions. Their identities are formed by cultural expectations, memory, relationship, and education. In 'Oleander Girl', Nostalgia has been represented in another form. Karobi's sense of identity is stable rooted deeply in family narration as she grows up. She begins her journey of formation her identity when she goes to search for truth and family history. Her search emphasizes her to rethink about her belonging and nationality and the stability collapses as she realizes that her past is different as she believed. Here, memory is manifested as constructed. Karobi's experiences show that identity based on memory is subject to disruption and unstable.

Negotiation as a continuous process

In literature of diaspora, there is no endpoint of negotiation but it is a continuous process of adapting and understanding. In Divakaruni's fiction protagonists live in middle space where memories of homeland and new surroundings influence each other. Due to this, identity keeps on changing as immigrants negotiate with different cultural and social norms living at new places and facing modern challenges. This ongoing process of negotiation happens in daily life when old customs of family meet new social norms; individuals adapt elements of both cultures to create a balanced lifestyle. Identity as an ongoing journey represents that belonging is constantly evolving and dynamic. There is no need to explain about their birth and residing place, instead, belonging depends on lived experiences, relationships, and personal growth.

Negotiation and adaptation

The novel 'Before We Visit the Goddess', represents that identity is reconstructed through changing social, emotional, and cultural circumstances. The characters of three generations, Savitri, Bela, and Tara negotiate many forms of displacement representing that adaptation and negotiation are continuous processes. Diasporic identity forms through adjustment in new environment while maintaining connections with cultural heritage. Savitri adapts blending cultural practices as "I cooked with spices that smelled of my mother's hands, yet I learned to serve them on American plates" (Divakaruni, 2016, P. 91). Her negotiation reveals hybridity adapting new environment while preserving cultural roots.

Bela migrates to the United States of America and negotiation is assumed as diasporic aspect. Migration makes aware with social values, expectations, requiring adjustment, and unfamiliar cultural practices. Bela faces economic insecurity, emotional isolation and linguistic differences while trying to maintain aspects of her upbringing in India. Rather than giving up her cultural identity, Bela adapts

selectively to new American society forming a hybrid identity that contains the aspect both cultures. She also negotiates as a mother balancing culture and assimilation, **"I had to teach my daughter not just to survive America, but to be of it"** (Divakaruni, 2016, P. 129). These words represents the burden on immigrants parents in upbringing the children across the culture.

It reflects the experiences of many immigrants as Divakaruni focuses on adaptation is not instated by abandoning one's native culture and tradition but by connecting various cultural influences into practice of everyday life.

Tara represents the third generation negotiating identity differently. Growing up in the society of America, she does not have lived experiences of cultural inheritance. Indian identity of Tara is mediated through fragmented traditions, stories, and family memories rather than everyday practices in modern society.

Divakaruni represents Tara's journey as an investigation of multicultural consciousness. She considers that both cultures of India and America influence her personal identity. Tara's experience represents diasporic identity as transnational, multidimensional, and flexible.

In 'Oleander Girl', Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni represents the concept of negotiation that is beyond migration including search for cross cultural belonging, racial identity, and family history. Through Korobi's journey from India to the U.S.A., the novel depicts that identity is formed by not only inherited culture and tradition but also by encountering with different unfamiliar cultures and past hidden histories. As Korobi explores that stable identities are generally challenged by interaction of many cultures, mobility, and globalization.

The search for identity of korobi's father becomes essential to this negotiation. Her acceptance of her combined heritage symbolizes the beginning of complete understanding of selfhood. In beginning she gives importance biological ancestry as the primary formation of identity, but later she considers that shared experiences, compassion and emotional relationships are equally important. This transformation represents Divakaruni's idea that belonging is not related only through ancestry but also through human relationships.

Divakaruni focuses on negotiation through relationship between different cultures. Characters from different national backgrounds and religions interact to each other within globalized settings. She represents Korobi's journey within a process of globalization. Transnational family networks, international travel, and modern communication enable development of identities across national boundaries.

Search for belonging and nostalgia:

In 'Before We Visit the Goddess', Divakaruni represents nostalgia as an emotional force that forms identities across generations. The novel shows that even after social transformation and migration, cultural traditions, family, and memories of home influence individuals. Through interrelated lives of Savitri, Bela, and Tara represent that nostalgia can be complex in searching for belonging and presenting cultural continuity.

Divakaruni also focuses on nostalgia as mediator to relationships. Memories of Bela are indivisible with her mother. Their emotional distance confounds devolution of cultural memory explaining that nostalgia is not related only to individual but intergenerational. There is absence of open and clear communication between family members creating gaps in understanding and search for belonging becomes dependent on emotional connection and lost stories.

Tara's experiences represent another aspect of nostalgia as she does not have direct and same memories of India like her mother and grandmother have. She is third generation immigrant grew up in U.S.A. Her understanding of native land is formed by family anecdotes and inherited narratives;

therefore, her nostalgia is not lived but imagined. Divakaruni explains that diasporic identity generally formed by 'post memory' in which children inherit emotional bond with history and places to which they never experienced, therefore, children of immigrants face difficulties and challenges in search for belonging. Tara belongs to neither the culture nor tradition of her ancestors nor the culture of host land where she grown up. This is the position of in-between that creates uncertainty and encourages understanding of selfhood.

Divakaruni, in *Oleander Girl*, discovers nostalgia through interweaved themes of quest for personal belonging, cultural inheritance, and family history. The novel explains Korobi Roy's search for truth about her father. Her journey to the United States represents that nostalgia is beyond to geographical desire to encompass ancestry, desires for identity, and familial connection. The novel depicts that belonging of individuals is not determined by nationality or birthplace but by willingness to embrace the heritage.

When she travels to the U.S.A., she feels unfamiliar culture of America, contrasting with the traditions and social norms of India. Yet exposure of racial diversity, immigrants' experience, and multicultural communities develops her understanding about identity. Korobi's journey points out that belonging go beyond geographical borders in the world of globalization.

The novel focuses on the significance of memory about family in shaping the identity. Her search for her father and ancestry create feelings of incompleteness in her. Her quest about her past is motivated her emotional need to understand her origin. But contradiction between cultures in America makes korobi's understanding complicated. Her interactions with people of diverse cultures and backgrounds demonstrate that nostalgia is as a characteristic of displacement than Indian experience.

Negotiation between Tradition and Modernity:

Divakaruni, in *Before We Visit the Goddess*, examines the relationship between tradition and modernity presenting women characters of three generations. They have different experiences of different cultural environments and historical periods. Rather than keeping in mind these two aspects as mutually special, the novel represents that identity forms through negotiation between contemporary realities and inherited values.

The lives of Savitri, Bela, and Tara each encounter changing social expectations as personal freedom, marriage, gender, family, and education. Their lives represent that tradition and cultural values are neither completely restrictive nor absolute. Modernity provides opportunities that also create emotional challenges and uncertainty. Here, Divakaruni represents identity formation is as a process that balances transformation and continuity. On the other hand negotiation is as a particular process under which an individual reframe tradition to adapt changing circumstances of society.

Bela's experiences represent this negotiation in the context of diaspora. When she migrates to America, she comes into contact to such society that characterized by personal freedom, greater individualism, and cultural diversity. This environment gives her chances for independence but they also produce tensions related to cultural continuity and family obligations. Bela tries to maintain Indian traditions and practices within her family life while at the same time adapting social norms of America. Her experiences represent that immigrants manage various cultural system with modernity without replacing one culture with another.

Tara faces complexities of globalization. Her experience of modernity is a common facet of daily life instead of dramatic social transformation. Her inherited tradition and cultural values influence her sense of selfhood. Growing up in multicultural society facilitate her to admire cultural diversity presenting bond with the heritage of her ancestry. By presenting three generations, Divakaruni explains that negotiation between tradition and modernity becomes central to the experience of diaspora.

Divakaruni, in *Oleander Girl*, explores the relationship between tradition and modernity through Korobi's journey for self-discovery. The novel portrays a globalized world in which global communication, multicultural relationships, international mobility reshape understandings of identity. Her experiences represent that cultural values and traditions influence life of an individual through globalization presents new possibilities for self-definition and belonging.

In America, Korobi faces cultural differences and discrimination. She feels, **"In this country, they looked at my skin before they looked at my heart"** (Divakaruni, 2013, P. 132). Korobi deny to give up her heritage facing challenges, she affirms **"I will not give up who I am but I will learn to live among you"** (Divakaruni, 2013, P. 167). It presents negotiation rather than abandon her cultural heritage.

Both the novels show that negotiation between tradition and modernity is central for shaping diasporic identity. Divakaruni represents identity as relational, dynamic, and formed through lived experiences. Her novels represents that individuals receive a more inclusive and resilient sense of selfhood participating with both expectations of modernity in the global world and inherited tradition.

Identity and globalized world

In, *Before We Visit the Goddess*, Divakaruni focuses on the role of family in constructing identity in the context of globalization. Geographical separation and migration generates emotional distances that confound intergenerational relationships. Personal stories and memories make bridges that link generations. Therefore, these narratives give the sense of belonging. New professional and educational opportunities in the context of transnational challenge traditional expectation related to women's responsibilities. Savitri, Bela, and Tara reply differently to the changing environment, presenting different ways of women's negotiation in identity formation in the globalized world.

Divakaruni in *'Oleander Girl'* represents identity in a globalized world through Korobi's searching for cultural origins and family history. The narrative shows how globalization make difficult to traditional understanding of belonging, race, and nationality. But gradually korobi understands that geography cannot define the identity, but it is formed by cultural interactions, relationships, and many experiences. Through cultural practices, ideas, and the displacement of people, globalization is represented. Korobi interacts with individuals from different social backgrounds negotiating their cultural adaptation and experiences of migration.

2. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study finds that Divakaruni's novels *'Before We Visit the Goddess'* and *'Oleander Girl'* shows identity as a process formed by migration, cultural interaction, gender, family, and memory. Instead of showing identity as fixed, both novels represent that it is shaped through negotiation between modern life and tradition. The pace from nostalgia to negotiation focuses on how individuals in diaspora move beyond impulsion for their native country and shape new identity by serving and adapting new cultural environments.

The study finds that nostalgia is a significant aspect of identity but it cannot be preserved through nostalgia alone. In *'Before We Visit the Goddess'* while there is physical distance but three generations of women are connected by memories. In *'Oleander Girl'*, When Korobi travels to America for searching her family history; it helps her to understand herself. Memory, in both novels, becomes significant when it helps to self-discovery, adaptation and growth.

The study finds that identity is formed through cultural negotiation instead of overall assimilation. While adapting new experiences, Divakaruni's characters maintain their cultural roots. The novels also present that modernity and traditions can coexist. The characters like Korobi, Savitri, Bela, and Tara maintain cultural values with changing roles in contemporary society and personal ambitions.

Family plays an important role in constructing the identity by passing on cultural values, traditions, and memories across generations. Meanwhile, differences between generations show that cultural beliefs change with the passing of time. Globalization affects identity by permitting the immigrants to keep connected with different cultures, establishing belonging more transnational and flexible.

The findings support and justify the theories of Stuart Hall, Avtar Brah, and Homi K. Bhabha who explains identity as hybrid, fluid, and continuously evolving. While making comparison both novels, *Before We Visit the Goddess* concentrates on intergenerational relationships. On the other hand *'Oleander Girl'* focuses on multicultural belonging and self-discovery. In spite of these differences, these novels show that identity is formed through openness to cultural diversity, relationships, and resilience.

In general, Divakaruni represents diaspora as a scope of growth instead of loss. The novels make contribution to the contemporary literature of diaspora by representing that identity is multicultural, dynamic, and formed through negotiation between the present and the past.

3. CONCLUSION

This study explores formation of identity in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's fiction *'Before We Visit the Goddess'* and *'Oleander Girl'* with the theme of modernity, tradition, adaptation, negotiation, globalization, and nostalgia. The analysis represents as identity formation is a non-linear and evolving process instead, a static destination. Both novels represent that individuals connect with their native country through nostalgia and negotiation in the multicultural society motivating them to form new identities.

Migration stimulates cultural negotiation instead of complete assimilation. The characters in Divakaruni's novels maintain and preserve their cultural roots adapting new cultural and social environment. Both novels depict that modernity and tradition may exist together. The study represents that through cultural interaction and personal choices, immigrants continuously reconstruct selfhood. Through the theoretical perspective of Hall, Bhabha, and Brah the findings demonstrate that belonging within transnational space is multidimensional and fluid. Emotional bonds, family narratives, and memory provide a bridge between Traditions and realities of modern society, enabling diasporic figures to forge resilient and hybrid selves. Finally, Divakaruni's novels present geographical displacement from loss to opportunity for individual's growth, demonstrating that defining selfhood in globalized world is based on continuous adaptation instead of rigid boundaries.

This study may contribute to contemporary scholarship in literature of diaspora by discussing identity as a process that is formed through memory, relationships, changing social contexts, and cultural negotiation. For further research, it provides a basis on Divakaruni's fiction and other diasporic writers from South Asia, especially from the point of views of generations, gender, transnational, identity, and globalization. This framework may be extended in future studies exploring how changing social and cultural conditions result to reshape identities in diaspora.

References

- [1]. Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. University of Minnesota Press.
- [2]. Bakyaraj, R., & Pal, G. (2022). Representation of diasporic identity in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Oleander Girl*. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 6(S1), 3324-3330. <https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6nS1.5487>
- [3]. Basu, L. (2014). Negotiating modernity and tradition in *Oleander Girl*. *South Asian Review*, 34(2), 45-59.

-
- [4]. Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture*. Routledge.
- [5]. Divakaruni, C. B. (2013). *Oleander Girl*. Simon & Schuster.
- [6]. Divakaruni, C. B. (2016). *Before We Visit the Goddess*. Simon & Schuster.
- [7]. Hall, S. (1990). Cultural identity and diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (pp. 222–237). Lawrence & Wishart.
- [8]. Hirsch, M. (2012). *The generation of postmemory: Writing and visual culture after the Holocaust*. Columbia University Press.
- [9]. Jain, J. (2006). *Beyond postcolonialism: Dreams and realities of a nation*. Routledge.
- [10]. Lobo, L. (2023). Deciphering the politics of identity in the multicultural context of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Oleander Girl*. *Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Review*, 4(6), 93–105.
- [11]. Mishra, P. (2026). Female subjectivity, interpersonal relationships and diasporic identity in the selected novels of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. *The Creative Launcher*, 11(2), 35–42. <https://doi.org/10.53032/tcl.2026.11.2.05>
- [12]. Mishra, V. (2007). *The literature of the Indian diaspora: Theorizing the diasporic imaginary*. Routledge.
- [13]. Raviya, H., & Kapil, K. (2020). Self-quest: Unveiling the journey motif in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Oleander Girl*. *Towards Excellence*, 12(4), 172–182.
- [14]. Roye, S. (2018). Generational memory and the diasporic subject in Divakaruni's *Before We Visit the Goddess*. *Journal of South Asian Studies*, 9(1), 55–72.
- [15]. Safran, W. (1991). Diasporas in modern societies: Myths of homeland and return. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1(1), 83–99. <https://doi.org/10.1353/dsp.1991.0004>
- [16]. Said, E. W. (1994). *Culture and imperialism*. Vintage Books.
- [17]. Sati, S. (2012). Nostalgia and negotiation in South Asian American fiction. *Comparative Literature Studies*, 49(3), 389–406.
- [18]. Sherawat, S., & Gupta, P. (2025). Bridging East and West: Decoding identity and cultural displacement in the fiction of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. *The Creative Launcher*, 10(4), 192–197. <https://doi.org/10.53032/tcl.2025.10.4.23>
- [19]. Vertovec, S. (1997). Three meanings of “diaspora,” exemplified among South Asian religions. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 6(3), 277–300. <https://doi.org/10.1353/dsp.1997.0010>