CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

I choose <u>Everything Happens for a Reason</u> by Kavita Daswani and <u>Difficult Daughters</u> by Manju Kapur to be analyzed because the works of both novelists deal with Indian women and their tradition. They focus on the limitation faced by Indian women. In her novel, Kavita Daswani tells about "how young Indian girls are trying to break away from their tradition in pursuit of their dreams" (Wands). As an Indian, Kavita Daswani is determined "to represent her passion and love for the Indian culture" ("Kavita Daswani"). She also wants to portray Indian women who are trapped between "tradition and ambition" ("Kavita Daswani").

In this novel, Kavita Daswani also states that "The new generations of Indian women are not just housewives. They are educated and career-minded, which leads them to choose a lifestyle that does not revolve around in-laws and children" (Seth). In one of the interviews, Daswani strongly argues that her work is a "social commentary" ("Few Men didn't Like Me because I was Dark") and

declares to Indian women that "They are not alone. They don't have to stifle themselves. There are many opportunities to strengthen oneself and still be part of a traditional family" ("Few Men didn't Like Me because I was Dark").

Kavita Daswani's work is similar to Manju Kapur's work. "Manju Kapur speaks, with great narrative eloquence, of the idea of independence" (Rollason). Manju Kapur is really concerned with the independence of Indian women. Throughout her novel, Kapur reveals that women can decide to have education, to choose who will be their husbands and to be independent although they have to contradict the society. The major portion of the novel deals with "how [an Indian woman] is torn between family duty, the desire for education and elicit love" (Sharma). In this novel, Manju Kapur reveals to Indian women that they deserve to get their freedom although they have to be "marginalized and despised by their family" (Rollason).

As Roberts has mentioned, a character is "a verbal representation of a human being as presented to us by authors through the depiction of actions, conversations, descriptions, reactions, inner thoughts and reflections, and also through the authors' own interpretative commentary" (66). Therefore, I decide to analyze the portrayal of the protagonists in both novels because both female protagonists persistently struggle to get their personal rights although they have to go against the traditional values of their culture. They are highly determined in fulfilling their purpose in reaching equality between men and women.

Statement of the Problem

The statements of the problem as follows:

1. How are the protagonists portrayed in the novels?

2. What are the purposes of the authors in portraying the protagonist in the novels?

Purpose of the Study

Based on the statements of the problem above, this study is done:

1. To show how the protagonists are portrayed in the novels.

2. To show the purposes of the authors in portraying the protagonists in the novels.

Method of Research

The method of research I use in writing this thesis is library research. I begin by reading Kavita Daswani's <u>Everything Happens for a Reason</u> and Manju Kapur's <u>Difficult Daughters</u> as the primary texts. Furthermore, I gather some resources and references taken from books and the internet to support my analysis. Finally, I draw some conclusions of what has been discussed.

Organization of the Thesis

I divide the major thesis into four chapters, which is preceded by the Acknowledgement, consisting of the Table of Contents and the Abstract. Chapter One is the Introduction, which consists of the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study, the Method of Research and

the Organization of the Major Thesis. Chapter Two is the analysis of the portrayal of the protagonist in Kavita Daswani's Everything Happens for a Reason and Chapter Three is the analysis of the portrayal of the protagonist in Manju Kapur's Difficult Daughters. The last chapter, Chapter Four is the conclusion of what has been discussed in the previous two chapters. The major thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendices, which contain the Synopsis of Everything Happens for a Reason and Difficult Daughters and the Biography of Kavita Daswani and Manju Kapur.