

The Flavours of Migration: Mother-Daughter Culinary Experiences in Preethi Nair's *100 Shades of White*

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Abstract—The concept of resilience in diasporic contexts emphasises how individuals and groups deploy cultural traditions and adaptive tactics to confront hurdles and retain their identities in the backdrop of relocation. Masten underscores the power of endurance in adjusting to notable challenges. In a transnational environment, food functions as an important emblem of resilience, where it connects diasporic individuals to their cultural roots and promises a sense of continuity in a landscape of displacement. This paper primarily explores migrant mothers and their daughters' culinary attitudes towards traditional foods in diasporic settings, focusing on the mother-daughter conflict in Preethi Nair's *100 Shades of White*. Our analysis is guided by Masten's notion of resilience and McCartney and Gill's framework of Cultural Freeze, Convergence, and Compromise/Adaptation, offering novel perspectives in investigating Nalini and her daughter Maya's interactions with traditional cuisines across cultural and geographic divides, addressing a lacuna in British South Asian women's literature. The novel compellingly displays the power of embracing forgiveness in culinary practices enabling the protagonists to incorporate English ingredients and habits, thus facilitating their assimilation into unfamiliar life in Britain. This paper endeavours to uncover how migrant mothers' and daughters' food attitudes endure, adapt, and achieve equilibrium that values both their cultural traditions and the unique culinary traditions they find in foreign settings.

Index Terms—diaspora, food, forgiveness, generational conflicts, resilience

I. INTRODUCTION

Food is more than a nourishment; it is a potent expression of connection, memory, and cultural heritage. This is particularly notable in the context of the South Asian diaspora, where the exploration of food holds a distinct and multifaceted magnitude in illustrating its cultural, social, economic, and emotional contributions to shaping the diverse experiences of diaspora communities. Moreover, food serves as an influential and recurring motif in the literature of South Asian diasporic women authors, presenting an interesting lens through which to gain insight into the realm of culture, identity, and belonging (Gandhi, 2024). Furthermore, British South Asian women writers have largely contributed to the debate on food and identity in transnational experiences, providing unique insights into women's lives. *Brick Lane* (2003) and *In the Kitchen* (2009) by Monica Ali, *The Handsworth Times* (2004) by Sharon Duggal, and Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows* (2009) are among the pioneering works of this group of authors that highlight the significance of food in cultural identity and migration.

This paper primarily aims to explore the food attitudes and responses of migrant mothers and daughters towards traditional foods in the light of generational conflicts in the diaspora, therefore bridging a critical gap in the literature of British South Asian women. To elucidate this discussion, we focus on *100 Shades of White* (2003) by Preethi Nair, a British writer of Indian origin. Nair's corpus exposes recurring themes that align her with prominent British Asian women authors, including Monica Ali, Kamila Shamsie, Meera Syal, Ravinder Randhawa, and Kamala Markandaya, who have courageously examined the challenges of identity within the diaspora. They address questions of belonging, displacement, memory, nostalgia, and cultural struggle through various literary genres and styles (Hussain, 2017). Nevertheless, Nair's engagement in the British Asian literary canon of such writers presents unique perspectives on migrant women's culinary experiences, particularly in *100 Shades of White*. This novel features the fusion of the Eastern and Western worlds, the role of food in survival and healing, and the conflict between mothers and daughters. The

novel's portrayal of family interactions and food provides a fascinating outlook into cultural adaptation and identity, as represented by the culinary voyages of Nalini and her daughter Maya as they relocate from India to Britain. Nair's novel, written in 2003, continues to be pertinent today as it ventures into the timeless themes of migration, intergenerational conflict, and cultural assimilation all through the ever-present prism of food. The novel's depiction of migrating mothers and daughters traversing culinary traditions offers unique insights the therapeutic role of food in fostering generational connections, healing, and resilience—core elements that continue to resonate in the lives of diasporic communities.

This study further delves into the significance of resilience in culinary traditions, underscoring its impact on diasporic individuals' adaptations to culinary practices. Additionally, it illustrates the role of forgiveness in food habits, enabling the protagonists to make compromises and integrate English ingredients and customs, thereby facilitating their assimilation into the host country—a void that this study seeks to fill. By drawing on Masten's (2018) interpretation of resilience and McCartney and Gill's (2007) framework—comprising Cultural Freeze, Convergence, and Compromise/Adaptation, this paper offers a new perspective on the generational culinary paths to traditional cuisine experienced by migrant mothers and daughters in a transnational context. The mother-daughter relationship in Nair's novel serves as a focal point for this analysis.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Food studies is a comprehensive academic discipline that researches the historical, cultural, social, and economic implications of food. It goes beyond consumption to address the complex relationships between food, people, communities, and the wider globe (Guptill et al., 2022). Food studies undertake a critical analysis of behaviours and attitudes towards food, which comprises beliefs, emotions, and relationships with consuming. Eating habits are greatly influenced by cultural heritage, social dynamics such as peer and family influence, and socioeconomic status (Chen & Antonelli, 2020). In this context, researchers study the effect of a variety of influences on these attitudes and their consequences on identity, social structures, and good health (Gandhi, 2024).

Food transcends national borders, fostering cultural expression and resistance while connecting disparate diasporic groups. It helps people keep connections to their heritage by preserving traditional cuisines (Roy, 2021). In the same vein, Mannur (2010) highlights the significance of food in South Asian diasporic communities as a cultural signifier and a means for identity negotiation. She investigates the preservation of legacy through cuisine, while also adapting to new contexts, emphasising the conflicts between belonging, tradition, and assimilation. Moreover, Rasagam and Pillai (2015) illustrate how food in *Born Confused* triggers nostalgia and cultural memories, aiding migrant individuals in reclaiming their identities. Furthermore, food has an essential impact on gender dynamics, offering women the opportunity to regain authority and challenge patriarchal systems (Fauzi & Ahmad, 2022).

Generational conflicts in the writings of South Asian diasporic women, notably British South Asian writers, frequently emphasise the struggle between conventional and contemporary ideals, migration, and identity (Hussain, 2017). A major concern is the mother-daughter relationship, where tensions arise from mothers' commitment to tradition and daughters' aspirations to navigate new cultural contexts (Oreiq et al., 2024). These writers employ a variety of narratives to accentuate the complexities of transnational connections.

Considering the aforementioned, Preethi Nair, a contemporary Indian-British writer residing in London and the focus of our paper, engages with the literary tradition of British Asian women writers through her novels, which encompass recurrent ideas and subjects. This paper primarily examines Nair's second novel, *100 Shades of White* (2003). It is worth noting that Nair's creative journey commenced with the successful self-publishing of her first novel, *Gypsy Masala* (2000), which first faced rejection but eventually led to a book deal. In addition to these two novels, she has written *Beyond Indigo* (2004), *Unravelling* (2024), and a children's book entitled *Anjali's Story: My Magical Lip Balm Adventure* (2021).

Several scholars have examined *100 Shades of White* (2003) through the prism of food. Ray (2017) demonstrates how diasporic women writers utilise cooking to represent dual existence, with traditional foods reminding characters like Nalini and Maya of their homeland. Rana (2019) highlights food's significance in expressing South Asian female characters' self-worth and cultural roots, whereas Karthika (2019) analyses how food, namely Nalini's pickle business, resolves financial challenges. Moreover, Ayan and Yalvaç (2022) explore the role of cooking in the everyday experiences of female characters through a gynocritical lens. According to Devi (2022), Nair's protagonists use cooking as a metaphor for conserving cultural roots and navigating identity challenges in a new environment. Furthermore, Fathima and Gnanamuttu (2023) elaborate on this, illustrating how three generations of women employ cooking to investigate identity and manage the duality of their experiences. Priyadarshini et al. (2024) further highlight how Nair's female characters gain self-discovery and independence through food as they encounter the challenges of migration and integration.

Considering this, this paper deviates from previous studies on British Asian women's literature and analyses of Nair's *100 Shades of White* by investigating how immigrant mothers and daughters adjust their culinary practices. It explores how these women build resilience and employ forgiveness in culinary traditions to navigate and resolve intergenerational conflicts within the diaspora. Accordingly, the paper aims to address this gap in the existing literature

by employing Masten's (2018) idea of resilience and McCartney and Gill's (2007) framework of cultural adaptation, by relying on the experiences of the protagonist characters in Nair's novel.

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

A. *Approaches for Culinary Survival*

Traditional societies frequently place a greater emphasis on community and family compared to individual ambitions, which may culminate in challenges when families migrate and carry their cultural values along (Ahmed et al., 2020). Food acts as a significant healing element in intergenerational conflicts and trauma between migrant mothers and daughters, particularly when viewed through the lens of forgiveness in culinary traditions, a notable gap that this study aims to address. Within diasporic theoretical contexts, forgiveness is an intricate process impacted by the historical and emotional realities of migration and displacement. Communities frequently grapple with the legacies of trauma, including colonialism and violence, which impede the process of forgiveness. Brah (1996) emphasises the significance of 'home' and 'belonging' in diasporic identities, proposing that the incapacity to forgive may arise from losing a solid sense of self and place. Moreover, this term in diasporic thought is more than just a release of past wrongs; it can also serve as an arena for political reform. According to Gilroy (1993), forgiveness is conceptualised as a means of healing and reimagining the future, allowing marginalised communities to redefine their identities and histories. Therefore, this concept is both a personal and collective process, determined by the desire for justice, healing, and identity preservation in the aftermath of adversity.

In terms of food, mothers view traditional cuisine as a crucial link to ethnic identity and lineage, frequently leading to a strict dedication to these habits. Nevertheless, daughters raised in contemporary cultures that value individuality may reject traditional ideals, leading to conflict. This paper emphasises forgiveness as crucial in easing this tension. By embracing forgiveness, migrant mothers and daughters can share culinary experiences that harmonise their cultural expectations. Both generations engage in culinary reconciliation by modifying recipes and integrating new ingredients, reflecting their evolving identities. This approach fosters communication and compassion, aiding in healing emotional traumas from displacement and migration, making forgiveness key in reconciling generational differences through cuisine.

In addition to conflict resolution, food is vital in promoting resilience in migrant families as they adapt to their new host countries. In a diasporic context, resilience pertains to the ability of individuals and societies to endure, adjust, and prosper in unfamiliar environments beyond their native land (Pandya, 2024). From the standpoint of family dynamics, Masten (2018), noted for her work on resilience and its influence on helping children and their families manage adversity, contends that resilience is "the capacity of a system to adapt successfully to significant challenges that threaten its function, viability, or development" (p. 1), stressing the ability to prosper despite adversity. In the realm of migration, food helps migrating mothers and daughters adapt to new situations while preserving their cultural heritage. Their culinary adaptation reveals their resilience and feeling of community (Roy, 2021). Additionally, food fosters psychological resilience, assisting both generations to adjust to challenging environments (Denckla et al., 2020). In the context of resilience, McCartney and Gill (2007) use Cultural Freeze, Convergence, and Compromise/Adaptation to study cultural integration in British South Asian groups.

The term 'cultural freeze' refers to the preservation of traditional cultural practices in the face of migration. Migrants frequently uphold their cultural beliefs and practices to maintain their identity in a foreign setting (McCartney & Gill, 2007). From the perspective of migrant mothers and daughters, this paper will utilise this concept to explore how mothers uphold traditional culinary habits without adapting to the new cultural environment, which can lead to conflicts with daughters growing up in a different culture. This notion highlights the discrepancies in cooking practices between mothers and daughters and how these disputes are managed within the framework of cultural continuity and adaptability in Britain.

The concept of 'convergence' proposes that migrants quickly embrace the cultural norms of their host country (McCartney & Gill, 2007). In our paper, we use this approach to explore migrant daughters' culinary attitudes towards traditional food, illustrating their adjustment to and adoption of new cultural customs. Generational tension is demonstrated by their hesitation to entirely accept traditional foods their mothers enjoy as they attempt to incorporate more familiar, local items or foods that fit their new cultural identities. Consequently, this culinary battle symbolises the fight between heritage and conforming to mainstream society, providing a nuanced comprehension of the cultural and generational interactions within migrant families.

The notion of Compromise/Adaptation posits an amalgamated and balanced approach, in which diasporic individuals adapt to the new settings while preserving the cultural practices of their homeland culture (McCartney & Gill, 2007). This study employs this concept to explore how migrating mothers and their daughters navigate the balance between adapting to new environments and preserving traditional culinary practices. This approach highlights the resolution of generational conflict, where both parties reach an understanding. Forgiveness is central to this process, helping mothers and daughters redefine culinary traditions while preserving cultural heritage, filling a key gap in the research. Forgiveness extends beyond emotions to practical issues like food, fostering culinary reconciliation between generations and representing cultural compromise. This paper underscores the role of forgiveness in resolving

intergenerational issues, helping mothers adapt to new elements while maintaining cultural roots. For daughters, it involves accepting traditional meals, recognising their heritage, and adjusting to life in a new country like Britain.

This study principally investigates the food paths of migrant mothers and their daughters to traditional foods in transnational settings, through the lens of generational conflicts as portrayed in Nair's *100 Shades of White*. It posits that food serves as a cornerstone of resilience, assisting individuals in navigating challenges and flourishing in diverse circumstances. It further offers a novel perspective by showing that forgiveness through culinary adaptation embodies resilience and healing, demonstrating that resolving culinary conflicts symbolises a broader reconciliation of identities in cross-border contexts.

To demonstrate migrant mothers' and daughters' culinary and survival experiences, this paper utilises Masten's (2018) interpretation of resilience and McCartney and Gill's (2007) framework—comprising Cultural Freeze, Convergence, and Compromise/Adaptation—to explore how Nalini and her daughter Maya in Nair's novel interact with traditional food. It illustrates how they preserve, adapt, and balance their culinary practices as they navigate their cultural identities in new environments. This dual framework deeply explores resilience in daily routines like food consumption and how cultural adaptations help preserve, transform, and blend culinary traditions in diasporic communities. By adopting this framework, this study illustrates how these concepts address generational conflict and how culinary traditions reflect broader issues of belonging, identity, and cultural survival in migrant households.

B. Methodology

The methodology reflects the conceptual framework adopted for this paper by identifying three distinct approaches to culinary adaptations experienced by migrant mothers and daughters in the novel. Through a textual analysis, Nalini and Maya's culinary clash is analysed first, demonstrating Nalini's 'Cultural Freeze' approach versus Maya's 'Convergence' strategy. The paper then delves into their culinary reconciliation, highlighting their eventual adoption of the 'Compromise/Adaptation' approach. This method underscores Nair's emphasis on generational conflicts regarding traditional foods and their closure through embracing forgiveness in culinary practices, accentuating the vitality of traditional foods in a transnational context. Forgiveness bridges the generational divide between migrant mothers and daughters through food practices, symbolising adaptability and historical reconciliation. By accepting their heritage and migratory experiences, they achieve tranquility in their identities and connections, reflecting the immigrant experience of navigating dual cultures.

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A. Mother-Daughter's Culinary Approaches in *100 Shades of White*

Nalini, a mother who is forced to leave her comfortable life in India and face the challenging conditions of Britain, is left to take care of her two young children by herself after her husband leaves them. Nalini's initial fabrication of the death of her husband, to protect her children from the awful truth of his abandonment, creates a crucial metaphor for her ongoing efforts to preserve equilibrium and safeguard their innocence in a time of turmoil. "I cannot easily put into words why I told my children that their father had died. To save them from the lies that inextricably led to the fact that the only person he could have possibly loved was himself," Nalini confesses (Nair, 2003, p. 53). Thus, Nalini's lie hides the unpleasant reality of her husband's betrayal from both her children and herself.

Nalini's narrative offers a perspective on the tensions between generations, illustrated by her declaration, "Children adapt, it is adults who find change hard" (Nair, 2003, p. 80). Her assertion addresses the crucial aspect of personal behaviour and development, notably concerning generational conflicts and traditions. The core message of the quote reveals that younger generations, signified by children in this scenario, are frequently more adaptable and flexible to adopting modifications in cultural rituals, traditions, and behaviours. Their adaptability derives from an ongoing process of learning and integration in which individuals are constantly exposed to new viewpoints and influences from their surroundings, as confirmed by Masten (2018). On the other hand, adults, who are already comfortable with their unique cultural identities and deeply established habits, may have greater difficulty in accepting or adjusting to changes.

Extending this understanding to the culinary struggle between Nalini and Maya, Nalini reflects the adult standpoint by adhering to a 'culture freeze' approach, which aligns with McCartney and Gill's (2007) interpretation of the concept, underlining the persistence of traditional cultural practices despite migration. Contrary to this, Maya epitomises the younger generation's embracing of a 'convergence' approach, confirming a greater openness to exploring and integrating new culinary skills and techniques into her repertoire. This varies by generation, with first-generation individuals demonstrating distinct methods of cultural adaptation compared to concurrent generations. The following discussion will demonstrate the divergent culinary voyages of Nalini and her daughter Maya.

Nalini's character is primarily defined by her strong affinity for typical Indian cuisine and cooking, which not only supports her with nourishment but also as an emotional connection to her cultural and familial traditions. This is exemplified by Maya's assertion that her mother "could cook exceptionally well, since she and my Amamma were the village cooks" (Nair, 2003, p. 5). She further states, "Groceries and things like spices and other ingredients, which weren't readily available, were delivered to our house every Thursday. Achan had arranged this as Amma liked to cook. It was the only thing she loved to do" (Nair, 2003, p. 23). She also emphasises that cooking is the most successful

resolution to her challenges, as she states: "At times, I didn't want to see because guilt crept into my soul. Guilt that I had nothing to offer them and the only way I could compensate was to cook" (Nair, 2003, p. 93). In another incident, Nalini declares that she "cooked just to forget. I had to continue. There was no choice" (Nair, 2003, p. 91). Consequently, Nalini establishes an entrepreneurial business that sells homemade pickles, perceiving cooking as a form of solace and change in times of hardship. She is inspired by her mother's guidance to flavour her culinary endeavours with enthusiasm and commitment, contending that the love and gratitude that are incorporated into her food are the basis of her customers' pleasure.

Nalini demonstrates the powerful impact of spices, stating, "just the right amount of cumin to stimulate appetite for life, a cinnamon quill to bring spice or action into stagnant phases of life, lemon juice to diffuse an argument, chilli to relieve pain and turmeric to heal the heart" (Nair, 2003, p. 54). Nalini's belief in the healing power of food and its role in fostering resilience is reflected as she overcomes challenges with the help of chillies and peppercorns. Her homemade pickles are a nostalgic reminder of their Indian heritage amidst the coldness of their new home. Hence, Nalini's devotion to traditional South Indian particularly Malayalee cuisine, specifically expressed through her homemade pickle enterprise, reflects the cultural freeze attitude. For Nalini, the act of preparing traditional dishes and selling homemade pickles from her kitchen is not merely a means of generating income or sustenance; it is a conscious endeavour to preserve a cultural identity that has been passed down through generations.

In stark contrast to Nalini's firm dedication to Indian culinary habits, her daughter Maya's narrative trajectory demonstrates the intricacies of generational difference and adjustment to culture. Maya, shaped by being raised in a diverse British society, enthusiastically adopts a variety of culinary practices. She represents the 'Convergence' approach, expressing hostility and refusal towards her mother's conventional cuisine. Nalini's delightful pickles offer both enjoyment and financial security to the household, having an immense effect on all who consume them, except for her adolescent daughter, Maya. Maya loves English burgers, fish fingers, and chips and rejects to taste her mother's food. She expresses this by stating: "I loved my school, my teacher, the food, television, and I didn't want to go back. If I was asked to make a choice, I would choose England every time" (Nair, 2003, p. 26).

Maya's preference for English cuisine over her mother's traditional Indian dishes illustrates her process of cultural adaptation and her wish to smoothly merge into her new home. Maya's narrative commences with poignant recollections of her birth, characterised by an astrologer's gloomy prophecy: "the second child always brings change, but this one has come with Mars in the first house, and she will surely be the cause of much, much upheaval" (Nair, 2003, p. 6). The prediction anticipates the chaos that Maya believes haunts her throughout her life, especially as she encounters the difficulties of migrating from India to Britain.

Nair adeptly depicts the culinary tension between the mother and daughter in *100 Shades of White* through a multitude of incidents. Any time Nalini cooks a meal, there are always leftovers since Maya and Satchin love fish fingers with ketchup and burgers, showing their acceptance of a different lifestyle. This follows McCartney and Gill's (2007) utilisation of the notions of cultural adaptation, marked by 'cultural freeze' and 'convergence', as stated previously in the conceptual framework section. They often persuade their mother to grill food or make English cuisine, highlighting a generational conflict between traditional and cultural integration. Maya and Satchin's refusal to eat leftover lunches underscores their difficulties adapting to the new environment, often disposing of food on their way to school.

In addition, Maya adopts English food protocols and customs, mastering the skill of using cutlery from her teacher, Miss Davies, to assimilate with her school peers who deem eating with hands to be improper. "Miss Davies is warm and cuddly and is nice to me, she sat with me at lunchtime, to make sure that I ate properly. She taught me how to use a knife and fork" (Nair, 2003, p. 22). Maya informs her mother and justifies this by stating, "Amma, all the other children looked at me when I ate with my hands" (22). This cultural adaptation is evident when Maya decides to use a knife and fork at a restaurant, saying, "I cut softly into them with my knife and fork" (Nair, 2003, p. 239), despite her mother's preference for eating with fingers, as represented by her mother's comment "fingers connected you to food in a way no other instrument could" (239). The mother's commitment to eating with the fingers is an embodiment of a 'cultural freeze,' underscoring her significant attachment to traditional practices despite the new surroundings. Nevertheless, Maya's rationale to her mother reflects her adjustment: "Satchin and I would argue with her about hygiene, insisting that we had to use cutlery" (239) and further defend such reaction: "We had learnt this from the other kids who said that Pakis were unclean and ate with their fingers. "No," the mother answered, "it is important to touch the food" (239). Maya's mother's desire to connect her children with home traditions contrasts with Maya's emphasis on using cutlery, emphasising the generational clash between maintaining cultural practices and embracing new norms.

In *100 Shades of White*, Nair skilfully presents the causes of the mother-daughter culinary conflict in a transnational context. Maya's deviation from her mother's cooking style illustrates the constant dispute between the traditions of her native Indian culture and those of her new host country. This tension, as underlined in recent studies, frequently introduces significant obstacles for migrant daughters when their home culture clashes with that of the hostland (Costa, 2022). Torn between these two worlds, Maya refuses to eat her mother's homemade food as part of her efforts to fit in. She expresses this struggle: "I felt we were forced to make a choice and I chose the easiest route, which was to forget the place and the culture that I was from" (Nair, 2003, p. 51). Maya's capacity to adapt and thrive amidst cultural

conflict demonstrates Masten's (2018) theory of resilience; her initial disapproval of her heritage, while seemingly a setback, constitutes an integral aspect of her holistic journey to reconcile and assimilate both cultures.

Furthermore, Maya's encounter with racism at her school in London intensifies her refusal to accept conventional cuisine. Discrimination, bias, and stereotyping increase the challenges for migrating daughters, intensifying feelings of loneliness and hostility (Pourya Asl, 2022). Maya, at six years old, is deeply impacted by racial acts against her native foods.

In class, Mark Fitzgerald denigrates her by calling her "Paki," a derogatory term for South Asians (Nair, 2003, p. 37). He further abuses her during playtime by asking, "Well, why have you got dirty hair and that Paki smell? Bet you eat with your fingers an'all" (37). This remark devalues Maya and links her cultural food habits with inferiority. In this context, Belford and Lahiri-Roy (2020) explore the impact of racism, triggered by gender and migration, on South Asian women's feelings of identity, belonging, and social mobility in Britain. They underscore how these women challenge discrimination by embracing cultural history and perseverance. Maya's resilience in facing such prejudice is illustrated when she physically fights him back. Thereby, she is driven to give up her native cuisine and embrace English cuisine because of this disrespectful comment.

The conflict between Nalini and her daughter Maya over food in Nair's novel represents the broader issues of identity negotiations in migrant families. Nalini's commitment to traditional culinary practices (cultural freeze) helps maintain familial ties and cultural consistency in a foreign context (McCartney & Gill, 2007). Conversely, Maya's preference for diverse foods from her new home reflects the convergence approach. The novel showcases the complex struggle of diasporic individuals using the kitchen to maintain and adapt cultural roots across generations.

B. Culinary Reconciliation Between Mother and Daughter in 100 Shades of White

In the course of the narrative, a resolution evolves demonstrating a harmonious approach in the mother-daughter relationship towards conventional culinary practices. This commences with Nalini, the mother, undergoing a considerable change in her culinary habits. Nalini's transition from cultural freeze to a strategy of compromise and adaptation signifies her realisation of the need to adapt to thrive in a new setting. Initially adhering to traditional practices to manage parenting alone in Britain, she eventually incorporates local elements with her cultural heritage. This shift indicates her move towards adaptability and a better future for her family. Her successful opening of a new brand shop in London, where she sells her recipes to diverse consumers, exemplifies her adaptation. Nair details Nalini's use of specific ingredients, highlighting cooking's role in fostering migrant women's resilience. Thus, her integration of new components into traditional recipes illustrates the 'Compromise/Adaptation' culinary approach, aligning with McCartney and Gill's (2007) interpretation.

Unlike the 'cultural freeze' style she previously embraced, the 'Compromise' strategy entails adjusting to the new setting while upholding the customs and habits of the home country (McCartney & Gill, 2007). Realising that her mango and lime pickles are selling, Nalini decides to present a new range: apple, cinnamon, and chilli. She mixes English cooking apples with a combination of fiery chilies, asafoetida, a hint of toasted fenugreek, and luscious all grounded with nicely sautéed onions and mustard seeds. Nalini reflects on this by saying: "In those bottles were a perfect combination of stable West and fiery East. It was an acceptance on my part, an assimilation of cultures, fused with the coarse sweetness of cinnamon" (Nair, 2003, p. 108). Nalini's remarks underscore her adoption for the Compromise cooking approach, emphasising her skill in blending ingredients from her new surroundings with traditional recipes from her native country. Her culinary creations reflect a seamless cultural fusion, with cinnamon symbolising the sweetness of integration. Nalini's expert use of spices and gratitude gives her pickles healing properties, contributing to the success of her company, 'The Abundance of Spice'.

Nalini reconstructs her life with the support of her loved ones and the wisdom of her mother. She affirms her mother's emphasis on the healing power of forgiveness by saying: "My mother used to say that it was forgiveness that worked on the soul and made miracles possible. According to her, forgiveness from a broken heart combusted energy that made insurmountable obstacles just dissolve" (Nair, 2003, p. 101). Nalini's 'Compromise' method implies that acknowledging forgiveness helps her overcome obstacles, reconcile new and old traditions, and achieve a balanced and successful life. This corresponds with Gilroy's (1993) understanding of forgiveness, which he characterises as a restorative process enabling minorities to heal and redefine their identities. In Nair's *100 Shades of White*, the Compromise cooking approach provides new insights into diasporic literature by South Asian women writers, addressing a significant gap. Forgiveness is essential for Nalini's ability to adapt and incorporate English products into her culinary practices, easing her transition into British culture.

Nalini finds solace in her mother's wisdom about forgiveness, which helps her accept her new context and let go of past bitterness. This forgiveness inspires her to blend English components with traditional Indian flavours, symbolising her cultural adaptation and personal growth. Forgiveness enables her to embrace new opportunities, turning her culinary art into a thriving business that reflects a blend of her heritage and new life. In this process, Nalini enriches her cultural identity, showcasing adaptability and resilience in her culinary journey. This is consistent with Masten's (2018) notion of resilience, referring to an individual's ability to successfully adapt and prosper in the face of adversity.

Maya's journey of self-discovery through various countries leads to a pivotal return to India after twenty years, restoring her connection to her roots through traditional food. This enhances her appreciation of her heritage and highlights the role of culinary traditions in emotional wellness. Like her mother, Maya adopts a compromise approach

to her culinary customs, balancing new influences with the core elements of her home traditions. As the following discussion will demonstrate, this technique helps her adapt to new culinary environments while preserving her cultural heritage.

Maya's development in incorporating traditional food into her culinary life reflects her 'Compromise' approach. Initially, she rejects iddlies, seeing them as a conflict with her mother: "It was the battleground between Amma and us, used to establish the balance of power, and Satchin and I stood firm. She was a skilful opponent, packing the iddlies into our lunch boxes which we managed to dispose of them easily" (Nair, 2003, p. 238). However, upon returning to India, she finds comfort in the dish: "The hot peppercorns made me cough and felt soothing, like returning safely home" (Nair, 2003, p. 240). This is further illustrated when Maya, staying at a hotel in India, decides to order "iddlies with sambar" (Nair, 2003, p. 238) and admits that "the last time I tasted iddlies and sambar was probably when I was about four, preferring food that had been processed since" (Nair, 2003, p. 239). Maya's choice of a traditional South Indian dish over an English meal highlights her cultural heritage and openness to blending modern experiences with conventional techniques. She recalls, "It was a typical dish from the South which my grandmother would make for us, smashing down the fermented rice cakes in the liquid sambar" (Nair, 2003, p. 238), underscoring the cultural and familial importance of iddlies and sambar. This shift signifies her reconciliation with her heritage, embracing her grandmother's wisdom that "this was the process of self-cleansing, washing out all the impurities that had become stuck throughout the years" (Nair, 2003, p. 240). Maya's capacity to reconcile her past and present through culinary practices demonstrates resilience, as she evolves beyond her prior rejection of tradition, exemplifying the constructive change that Masten (2018) posits as fundamental to resilience.

A prime example of Maya's 'Compromise' approach to her culinary journey is her reunion with her mother in Britain. After reconnecting with her Indian culture, Maya joins her mother in pickle-making rituals, preserving their heritage. Nalini's first lesson to Maya, "It's forgiveness, Mol. I know there is no more resentment inside of you, but forgiveness also includes oneself" (Nair, 2003, p. 286), deeply resonates with her. This advice highlights that forgiveness is about letting go of animosity and embracing self-acceptance. This realisation exemplifies the complex interactions between mothers and daughters, where culinary practices serve as a path to reconciliation and understanding. Maya reflects on this new culinary experience with her mother: "We chopped our way through so many bags of onions that it made us cry. Sizzling in a cauldron of oil, everything that was bitter and raw turned sweet" (Nair, 2003, p. 286). Cutting onions together, despite the tears, symbolises their effort to turn bitterness into sweetness through cooking. Maya's eagerness to learn this tradition represents her embrace of her heritage and her bond with her mother, representing a compromise between past conflicts and present harmony.

Considering the above discussion, Masten (2018) underscores the importance of the bond between migrant mothers, such as Nalini, and their daughters, such as Maya, in reconciling their cultural upbringing with their new surroundings. They build resilience by harmonising the dual expectancies of their host country and the customs of their homeland. This voyage enhances their culinary skills and fortifies resilience, developing a stable identity essential for their wellness. As illustrated in this section, both Nalini and Maya experience a culinary reconciliation that reflects their broader cultural and emotional healing. Nalini adapts by combining new and old cooking methods; similarly, Maya embraces new practices while maintaining her heritage. Therefore, this compromise strategy fosters adaptability and fortitude.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper delves into the diasporic culinary experiences presented in Nair's *100 Shades of White*, concentrating on the generational disputes over traditional food as faced by its protagonists within a transnational context. Using McCartney and Gill's (2007) paradigm and Masten's (2018) insights into familial resilience, the novel reveals the culinary adjustments migrant mothers and daughters make across cultural settings, fostering deep connections in new environments.

Analysing the culinary adaptations of migrant mothers and daughters in Nair's novel, we contend that Nair employs traditional foods as a means to depict diasporic individuals' passion for, refusal of, and eventual embrace of their native culture. This paper proposes that food becomes a battlefield for generational tensions, with initially Nalini manifesting the cultural freeze approach in upholding traditional culinary practices and Maya the convergence culinary approach influenced by Western culture. The novel poignantly presents this culinary conflict to highlight larger themes of independence, assimilation, and changing identities of South Asian women in the diaspora. However, the narrative gradually bridges the gap between Nalini and her daughter Maya by leveraging food as a reconciliation ground for their culinary disagreements. Both characters embrace a compromise/adaptation approach, integrating conventional and new culinary practices through forgiveness, thereby facilitating their adjustment into the new land. Through Nalini and Maya's growing relationship with food, Nair emphasises the continuing value of legacy and the dynamic nature of cultural identity in promoting personal development.

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