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Feminist Reading of Indian House Wife in Shashi Deshpande's Select Novels

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Abstract

The books of Shashi Deshpande are examined in this essay. "Roots and Shadows," "The Dark Holds No Terrors," "That Long Silence," and more tales. Her novels have attempted to demonstrate feminism. Feminism basically means equal social, political, and economic rights and opportunities for women in society, according to many feminist critics. Help, survival, gender equality, and women's strangulation for reorganisation have all been highlighted in this study. The identity and rights of women, as well as Shashi Deshpande's depiction of women, were the main concerns of feminist critics. The study also examined Shashi Deshpande's methods for depicting female characters in her books based on the characteristics of patriarchy, gender inequality, discrimination against women, and the average Indian housewife.

Shashi Deshpande promotes women's emancipation by dismantling inflexible ideologies that oppress them. She thinks that women's legal rights and economic freedom alone won't free them from inflexible ideologies. The entire societal structure needs to shift. Shashi Deshpande's feminist views are therefore appropriate for Indian society. We can better comprehend the position of women in modern Indian society by analysing her creative and explanatory works.

Keywords: Feminism, tradition, patriarchy, gender discrimination, equality etc.

Introduction

In India feminism has come to mean a movement in support of the principle that women should have the same rights and opportunities in legal, political social and economic matters as men. Mainly it started from men but later on women writers contributed their work for women's liberations. Many Indian women writers like Anita Desai, Maharashtra Devi, Shobha Day, Arundhati Roy, Kamala Das, Nayantara Sahegal, Kamala Markanday and Shashi Deshpande wrote in women's point of view.

In India women is neither free nor dependent, but she is laying somewhere between the two. The same picture of society where transition is taking place is projected by Shashi Deshpande's. That Long Silence. She wrote four children books, no of short stories, nine novels, and several perspective essays. Her first novel is The Dark Holds X10 Terror-1980, The Binding vine-1993, That Long Silence-1988, The Narayan pus Incidents-1995, A matter of time-1996, small remedies-2000 etc. the novel that long Silence is a feminist and social novel 9t is about women's miserable condition in the man dominating society. In Indian Society women is given secondary place. Women of middle and poor classes are tortured more by the old superstition. Novelist ridicules the mythical women like Sita, Draupadi and Gandhari', who followed their husband blindly, such women have blindfolded themselves to the misdeeds of their husband

The story of this novel is imaginary but it tries to remove the bandages from the eyes of the women so that they may be able to see the sins of their husband and oppose them. As a best feminist has stories explore the search of women to remain as a human being in spite & playing her role as a daughter wife & mother. The story entirely revolves around 'Jaya' her married life and her role as a dutiful wife affectionate mother, "carefully being. Jaya is a woman who is dominated by her husband Mohan, Mohan stops Jaya's career of writing. He blames "Jaya" to bring realities of their family life to the public through one of her stories. According to him "Jaya" is a conventional wife who obeys the husband as a God. It shows a dominance of Mohan and feminine sensibility of "Jaya" According to the author husbands take in for granted their wives emotions, likes, dislikes to be same like them and here author stresses, punctuates and reciprocates these emotions.

Shashi Deshpande has written seven novels and five collections of short stories to her credit. She has begun her work with national magazines such as 'Femina' and 'Eve's' weekly. Shashi Deshpande's novels are concerned with the women's quest, an exploration into the female psyche and an understanding of the mysteries of life of women, and protagonist's place of women in it. The theme of women's quest for life has continued in all her work- "That Long Silence", "Roots and shadows", "A platter of Time" and

“Intrusion” and other stories. Shashi Deshpande’s novels depicted Indian male-dominated society and culture. Her novels are realistic and optimistic portrayed of the Indian educated women. As well as she has presented these women as they are engaged in complex and difficult psychological and social problems. A common pattern of the feminine researcher can be opened in all her novels. Her novels are deals with the issues or problems like, sexual, cultural, and social roles of women. And her novels not only assert woman, wife or mother but also an individual. Shashi Deshpande’s novels heroines are follow the middle of the road path. For example, in her novel, *“The Dark Holds No Terrors”*, is a story of Saru (Sarika) is called „two-in-one“ woman.... in daytime a successful doctor and at night a “trapped Animal” in the hand of her husband Manohar, Saru unable to bear the sexual aggression of her husband, and rest of novel is remembrance of things past and confessions to her father of her married life. In this novel Saru is badly treated by her husband, because he is superior by profession as well as socially. Shashi Deshpande’s another novel, *“Roots and Shadows”* in which she presenting educated middle-class women under male-domination. Indu is main character of the novel, she tried to release from the tradition and traditional bound institution of marriage. She also was suffering socio-psychic in nature. Basically Shashi Deshpande represented the relationship between man and women are strongly, she used the terms „slaves“ she portrays women as slaves in the home. The “Feminine Sensibility” of “Jaya” in Shashi Deshpande’s *Tensioning Sensibility* is the subject of this paper. Indian women are exceedingly shrewd and conflicted between their intellect and traditional beliefs, as evidenced by the fact that they never abandon their home duties or the expected roles of mothers and wives. In their own way, they are turning in. Women are raised with a nurturing mind-set from an early age and are taught the value of family. This story illustrates the woman’s struggle and conflict between tradition and patriarchy on the one hand, and her own self-expression, individuality, and independence on the other, as well as the transition she experiences.

Nature of Patriarchy: A social and ideological system known as patriarchy views men as superior to women. It is predicated on an unequal power structure where men dominate women’s sexuality, reproduction, and production. The structure of Indian society is patriarchal.

The primary cause of women’s repression in Indian society is patriarchy. Motherhood limits a woman’s freedom of movement and imposes obligations on her to care for and educate her children under patriarchal civilisations. Although the Indian constitution guarantees women the same rights as males, powerful patriarchal traditions still exist in various societal segments, and women’s lives are influenced by their patrons.

Gender Arrangement and Gender Discrimination

Subordination of women to men is prevalent in large part of the world and in India also we come across experiences where women are not only treated as subordinate to men but are also subject to discrimination, exploitation, oppressions. Women experience discrimination and unequal treatment in-terms of basic right to food, healthcare, education employment, decision making, and livelihood not because of their biological difference but their gender differences. Gender based discriminations and exploitations are widespread and socio-culturally defined characteristics, aptitudes, abilities, desires, personality traits, roles, responsibilities, of men and

women contribute to the inequalities in society. Many Indian women face discrimination throughout all stages of their life beginning at birth, continuing as an infant, child adolescent and adult.

Discrimination against Women

Bias is primarily directed at men and their superiority in marriages that are maintained for the benefit of their spouses. Their contentment is essential to the family’s overall success, harmony, and happiness. Since they cannot be finished or trusted, they should also be constantly monitored. In contrast, a girl should be left in her parents’ care and custody as a youngster.

After marriage she becomes the property and responsibility of her husband who is supposed to take care of her and keep her in his custody as she is not capable of earning money and is economically and emotionally dependent on men “Java” as a typical Indian Housewife: During Shashi Deshpande’s and that extended stillness, “Jaya” portrays the heroine. Her life is similar to that of any other Indian housewife who makes concessions to meet the requirements of her family. Putting family first by going through all of this in silence. “Jaya” was raised in a liberal household. “Jaya” that means “Victory” was her father’s name. He expected her to be brave and fearless, but as we read this book, we learn how her own liberal father repressed her emotions and needs. Although “Jaya” like movie music, her father preferred that she listen to Paluskar and Faiyaz Khan’s classical music. He thought movie music was subpar and inexpensive. As a child, “Jaya” remained silent rather than rebelling.

After marriage “Jaya” encountered the similar expectations from her husband Mohan. “Jaya” is the daughter of proud and educated man, he sends her to a convent school, but after his death “Jaya” attended college and become BA honors. She is a modern girl, wears boy’s clothes. Her father being a progressive man wishes to send her to “Oxford” for higher education, but all of this remains a dream only.

Unwillingly, her brother marries her to an engineer named “Mohan” when she graduates. Ramukaka informs Jaya at the beginning of their marriage that she is essential to her husband’s and the home’s happiness. “Vanitamami” informs her the value of having a spouse and “Remember, Jaya, a husband is like a “Sheltering Tree”; without the tree, you are unprotected.” “Dada” advised her to be a good wife. She silently endures the dominance of her husband “Mohan” as a result of keeping these words in mind. “Mohan” is an overbearing spouse. He doesn’t love “Jaya” spiritually. But only engage in sexual activity, giving birth to two children, but are unable to unite their hearts.

Jaya’s marriage did not turn out to be fulfilling. Her husband turned out to be just a husband and not a lover, despite her romantic dreams. He angrily claims that “Jaya” didn’t inspire him as an officer’s wife and holds her responsible for all of his troubles. Despite the fact that “Mohan” is a terrible man, “Jaya” is a real and devoted wife who regards him as “God” and obeys him. Even though “Jaya” is aware that all of the accusations against her are unfounded, she does not protest and instead listens to everything in silence because she is an Indian woman in both official and social contexts.

Jaya is a representation of the perfect Indian woman. She brings “Kusum” to live with her, feels sorry for the insane man, and sympathises with the ignored. She is smart enough to make psychological inferences from the military incident. She found out that “Mohan” felt bad for military men’s wives and kids because he was afraid he would end up there. “Jaya”

had an attic personality. Comforts and pleasures don't appeal to her. She dedicates herself to her husband's comforts and housekeeping in order to become the perfect wife and mother. She feels as though she has no position or identity during this procedure. She believes she has no position or identity of her own. She continues to "charge herself" in accordance with her husband's preferences. "Mohan renames 'Jaya' as 'Sahasini' after marriage." Sahasini means "soft, smiling motherly woman" for her husband, while Jaya means "victory." "Jaya" discovers that a wife shouldn't be upset with her husband since that undermines his power. She suppresses both her feelings and her physical cravings because she is fully aware that one of these methods is to serve in marriage.

According to Indian tradition a wife is expected to stay at home, look after her babies and keep out the rest of the world. She expected to have the qualities like.

"Karyeshu Mantri, Karueshu Daasi, Rupecha Lakshmi, Kshamayaa Dharitri, Bhojyeshu Mata, Shayaneshu Rambha, Shot karma yukta, kula Dharma Patni".

Thus Jaya represents an Indian housewife another female characters in "*That long Silence*" like Kusum, Vimla, Jeeja, Tara, Manda, Asha also reveals women's position in male dominating society and their sensibility.

Conclusion

As a feminist author, Shashi Deshpande is appalled by women's propensity to endure silent suffering and death. Their important sacrifice is still overlooked. She therefore desires that the women trek. They must be conscious of the subordinate position they have put themselves in for the benefit of their husbands and kids, as well as maintain that prolonged silence to find their place in the man-oriented world. She should fight to establish and maintain her identity as a wife, mother, and—above all—a human being in the framework of modern Indian society.

The book explores the "feminine sensibility" of Indian housewives like Jaya, who, after struggling between her "duty" and her "wish," suddenly breaks her "long silence" and shares her innermost thoughts about who she was, who she had become, and who she should be going forward. In her work, she gradually reveals all of her inner anguish and shameful consignments.

Given the state of women in India, it begs the issue of what country can claim to be a powerful and affluent society when half of its citizens are subjected to oppression? And what aspirational country can afford to mistreat half of its citizens? The answer is obviously no! Without women's involvement and empowerment, long-term, sustainable development is impossible.

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