



A critical study of Shashi Deshpande novels

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Abstract

Sashi Deshpande is an Indian novelist who was born in 1938. She is the second daughter of Kannada actress and writer Adya Rangacharya and Sharada Adya, and was born in Dharwad, Karnataka. He went to Bombay (now Mumbai) and Bangalore to study. Deshpande holds economic and legal degrees. He studied journalism at Vidya Bhavan in Mumbai and worked as a journalist for Onlooker magazine for a few months. In 1978 he published his first collection of short stories, and in 1980 he published his debut novel, *The Dark Holds No Terror*. In 1990 he was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award for his novel *Long Silence*, and in 2009 he was awarded the Padma Shri Award. In 2014, his work *ShadowPlay* was nominated for the Hindu Literary Award. With the exception of many cutting essays in the Anthology entitled *Writing from Margins* and other essays, Deshpande produced four children's books, many short stories, and nine novels. He withdrew from the Sahitya Akademi General Assembly on October 9, 2015, and returned his Sahitya Akademi award. As a result, he joined a widespread writers' protest against the Academy's activities and his silence on M's assassination. Kalburgi, M. Deshpande urged Indians to consider the consequences of seeking the Hindu nation in his inaugural address to the ninth edition of the Goa Arts and Literature Festival (GALF) on December 6, 2018, and reminded those in attendance of the violence and genocide that had resulted from India and Pakistan's divisions.

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1. Introduction

In practically all of her fictional writings, Shashi Deshpande, a notable Indian women writer, deals with "the inner world of Indian women" (Arvind 137). Her work centres on the general idea that women are disproportionately affected by social injustice. Injustices are increasing rather than decreasing as modernism and education levels rise. Shashi Deshpande's method focuses on understanding how women groom despite the issues they are forced to deal with. Situations and scenarios alter as generations pass,

but the status of women does not strengthen as planned. Deshpande reflects society through her agility and efficiency in presenting human beings. We see his fictional characters as our next-door neighbours.

Deshpande's short stories are about the different issues that women face, both personally and in society. The themes of divorce are explored in the stories "*A Man and a Woman*," "*The Cruelty Game*," and "*And Then*." In "*Travel Plans*" and "*A Day Like Any Other*," the female protagonists' main dilemma is their husbands' infidelity. "*I Want*" addresses the issue of marriage. The problem of abortion is addressed in "*Death of a Child*," rape is addressed in "*It Was Dark*," and marital rape is addressed in "*The Intrusion*." "*It Was a Nightingale*" and "*A Wall is Safer*" both deal with the conflict between work and family life. "*A Liberated Woman*"³ discusses the customary thinking of the wife, which forces her to endure her husband's cruelty. The issues that women encounter and their responses are a common thread that runs through all of these stories. The dissertation "*Critical Inquiry into the Select Short Stories of Shashi Deshpande*" tried to critically examine the primary issues addressed in Shashi Deshpande's short stories.

2. The Family Relationship

The issue of author splendor has little to do with how the subject influences the author. This quote from the Russian writer Boris Pasternak refers to Shashi Deshpande. Shashi Deshpande is deeply devoted and devoted to what she wrote as a writer. She is undoubtedly a great storyteller, and like her novels, her short stories are set in an intimate setting. Familial and family relationships, as well as customs, faiths, beliefs, and histories, are recurring themes throughout her short works. She delves into the individual, psychological, and emotional relationships, as well as the occasional tensions, that characterize the middle-class Indian family. Relationship problems can cause problems and conflicts within the limited territory of such a family, but are usually addressed sooner or later. However, Deshpande's family choices and their placement in her work do not undermine her literary status. Deshpande performed a microscopy of a middle-class family in India. She focuses specifically on women and takes advantage of her excellent awareness and sensitivity to her people and their surroundings. With regard to great literature, she has strongly highlighted the role of a writer.

In her works, Shashi Deshpande has formed households and homes as perfect areas and web web sites for girls. Despite the remarkable increase of training in an age of globalization and liberal economics, girls are nevertheless portrayed as having a secondary function within side the family and society. Middle-elegance girls are both combating with their cutting-edge scenario or reliving their painful preceding reviews. Women decide on to speak about their painful reminiscences and reviews with any other woman, particularly a member in their family, a blood relative, or maybe a cousin, throughout those intervals of

agony and sorrow. Natural empathy transforms into pity in such situations, culminating in what's called female bonding. However, in her novels, girl bonding isn't a widely wide-spread or preferred quality. The bond among mom and daughter, for example, isn't usually described through sympathy and mutual knowledge in her novels and quick tales. As a result, motherhood appears to be problematic. This is due to the fact Deshpande hardly ever strays from the direction of rationality, and he hardly ever indulges in idealisation or glorification of girls as mothers, grandmothers, or daughters. In different words, Deshpande avoids portray a romantic image of an Indian own circle of relatives and its ladies. She does, however, emphasise the significance of relationships, organic links, felt emotions, and claims in households. Jasbir Jain, commenting at the number one topics in Deshpande`s stories, says:

The stories reflect either the early development of topics she would later expand in novels or explorations of alternative perspectives on the same subject. Some of the most common issues are family, marriage, and grief. Some of the stories deal with social themes such as female infanticide, feticide, and rape. Cultural and political views that have developed over time are analyzed. Sex and sexuality, aberrations, extramarital affairs, and even lesbianism all have a place in this book.

In Shashi Deshpande's works, the family plays an important role. Women play a variety of functions in families. They fight for a free life while attempting to understand their place in society as people. She presents women in the context of their families. She highlights the evolving middle-class Indian family life in Short Stories. Shashi Deshpande describes a blended family in the story "The Boy." She reflects a regular middle-class family's overall fabric. The mother-daughter bond is shown in some of her stories. She tries to break through the daughters' barrier. She has portrayed such a mother in the story 'A Liberated Woman,' that she is unable to forgive her daughter for marrying against her parents' wishes. Instead of supporting her daughter in her decision, she expresses hatred toward her. In her writing, Shashi Deshpande depicts 'the parent-child relationship.' She emphasises female-related family issues. She has mentioned the daughters whose life choices are limited by their parents. She describes how modern Indian daughters rebel against a male-dominated culture in her literature. The novel 'That Long Silence' by Shashi Deshpande is based on real-life experiences. Because Jaya, the protagonist, is a woman, this work has more credibility. The novel 'That Long Silence' illustrates the tension between the writer and the housewife in the narrator's head. Jaya had managed to suppress her feelings for seventeen years, believing that being a good wife is more important than becoming a successful writer. She would not have built the edifice of her family if she had remained under the shade of her husband. The author has mostly concentrated on family dynamics.

The woman characters Saru and Indu in Shashi Deshpande's novels -*The Dark Holds No Terrors* and *Roots and Shadows*- are the focus of this chapter. The chapter analyses the feminist aspect of each story, demonstrating how men subordinate women in society and the different factors that affect a woman's existence. It depicts the heroes' plights in many scenarios that they encountered during their course of action. It also describes the causes of their quarrels and the divisions that arise from life's reactions. It accords to be appropriate in today's world. It struggles to find its identity, based on experiences gained while working in difficult circumstances. Finally, the chapter delves into the existential concerns raised in the novels, focusing on the protagonists and emphasising the author's perspective.

Sashi Deshpande is another important writer who championed the cause of women's empowerment in India. Her sincerity and capacity to deal with the issues and raise the voices of women against male dominance in society are admirable. Is well-represented in the novel in terms of upper-middle-class female characters. Her works also highlight challenges of cultural diversity. For her novel *That Long Silence*, she received the prestigious Sahitya Academy Award (1989). Her works include *The Dark Holds No Terrors and others* (1980), *That Long Silence* (1981), *Roots and Shadows* (1983), *The Vine of Binding* (1993), *Small Remedies* (2000), *A Matter Of Time* (1996), and other films represent the image of women and feminine consciousness. Her novels are primarily on a woman's search for herself, and discovering new paths to female empowerment and unravelling patriarchal society's riddles. The majority of Shashi Deshpande's articles deal with the crisis and challenges that women face in today's society. *Shadows and Roots* (1983). Her debut novel, released after *The Dark Holds No Terrors* (1980) and *qi Die T000*, (1982), symbolises the start of a woman's search for herself. Deshpande's interest is the woman and her exterior journey in her subsequent novel *That Long Silence* (1988) which continues the theme.

That Long Silence is Deshpande's first novel to be published in English outside of India. The novel was obviously more popular with *Virago*, the British feminist publication. 'Mot Long Silence' is a novel about a woman's struggles as a daughter, wife, and mother. The novel's main character, Jaya represents Indian women's attitudes. Her silent expression conveys psychological, rational, and sentimental feelings of women at various times in their household lives. Many other contemporary female writers have expressed the freedom of women from male-dominated society. Sashi Deshpande, on the other hand, has chosen a distinct way of expression. She bases her arguments on real-life events and situations. They represent middle-class ladies who balance tradition and modernity. In general, the narrative emphasises gender disparities and inequalities in exchanging ideas and treating one another with respect. Her heroes are outspoken in their opposition to the application and practise of age-old rules and conventions imposed by

patriarchal society at the time. Her appearance reflects several female personalities. She appears to be a romantic woman at first, but she believes that a husband is a protective tree. She also claims that the roles of wife and husband are pure and sacred. As a result, she occasionally loses her Hindu wife's views. 'A Matter of Time' (19%), on the other hand, explores the human condition of four women: Manorama, Kalyani, Sumitra, and Arundhati. Four generations of the same family are represented by these four women. They cover topics such as parenthood, husband-wife relationships, mother-daughter relationships, and Indian joint family issues. Women's emotional and physical trauma, sex and sexuality It is an excellent example of the leading women's pain, their suffering at home and in society, and the imposed endurance in marriage. It criticises Indian social institutions such as marriage and family life. conventional Hindu wife expectations, the women protagonists' suffocating experience, and emblematic of the developing 'new woman' who struggles to transcend her home hardship with dignity and courage A Matter Of Time is a profound investigation into female consciousness and human interactions of all kinds. The most satisfying aspects in this novel are Gopal. Sumi, Shripati.Kalyani. vithalrao. manorama.kalyani. Sumi, Sumi. Aru. This novel focuses on four middle-class ladies. Relationship comments come in a variety of forms. The entire story is a representation of a woman's true personality. Her documents represent her experiences as a mother and daughter, as well as her household, professional, and cultural relationships. When it comes to sensitive matters like family relationships, she might appear very panicked at times.

The Bonding Vine, another of her works, is a feminist novel. Woman is depicted as a spineless wooden creature vulnerable to masculine power. In The Bonding One, the protagonist, uh, portrays a completely altered image of a woman who fights for oppressed women and so gives voice to the voiceless. She rebels against a culture that robs women of their identities and a spouse who is only interested in physical fulfillment.

3. Man - Woman Relationship

Nature assigned numerous functions to humans when they were created. In both literature and culture, the man-woman relationship has been a major preoccupation. In both her short stories and novels, Shashi Deshpande has explored numerous elements of the man-woman connection. She has captured the beauty and ugliness of the relationship in all of its varied colours and complexities in her stories. Men and women, she claims, have two separate ways of relating to one another: acknowledged and unacknowledged. The social institution of marriage is the most well-known and recognised kind of man-woman connection. Romantic love, adulterous love, and sex, on the other hand, are unacknowledged forms of relationship. Within the permissible framework of relationship marriage, there are arranged

marriages and love marriages. Planned marriages are socially acceptable and guarantee a happy life. Arranged categories of marriage are based on social realities such as caste, class, adolescence, financial wealth and security. Again, marriage is more than just a contract. It is part of a larger relationship that includes more stages such as charm, love, gender, sexuality, cohabitation, and children. Out-of-marriage relationships between men and women can lead to love marriages and adultery, which has been criticized by society.

Shashi Deshpande is concerned with women's subordination in marriage and society, as well as their emotional and psychological deprivation as a result of patriarchal criticism. She demonstrates how traditional Indian society is skewed against women, recognising that the idea of male hegemony is frequently applied to women, particularly women in matriarchal roles.

Her short story features a sophisticated, educated, autonomous woman as the main character. Her struggle for self-identity and freedom in marriage is a common theme. The women in the stories and novels are confident and ambitious, so they reach their goals and at the same time get caught up in the men's conflict zone. As a result, the connection between men and women is drawing attention in both her short stories and novels. Women's empowerment is a prominent theme in her work. She has primarily focused on women's flaws that make them vulnerable. In her works, she demonstrates how education can empower women.

Shashi Deshpande has used a variety of colours and tints to illustrate the Man-Woman Relationship. In her short tales and novels, there is an undercurrent of dissatisfied sex for a variety of reasons, such as the lopsided decision of celibacy, unequal pitch of passion, and sexual relations as a mundane daily routine. She emphasises that while sex is an important aspect of a man-woman relationship, emotional and psychological fulfilment are as significant. A good relationship requires a balance of body and mind.

4. Multiple Concerns

Shashi Deshpande writes extensively about the struggle of middle-class women in India. Shashi Deshpande's novels and short novels include rape, pagan marriage, abortion, female fetuses, male childhood preferences, widow, widow remarriage, domestic violence against women by men, unfaithfulness between couples, and women. It deals with themes such as the pain and suffering of childbirth. Suicide of a woman who is emotionally disadvantaged due to girl's plight, neurosis, lesbian relationships and, of course, political and historical concerns.

It's worth noting that the author mostly lets her main character grow on her own, with only a few instances of brainwashing. Women endure several challenges on their path to self-realization.

In her stories and novels, she has developed female protagonists who have a sense of dignity and self-respect in their daily lives. She has changed the focus away from the external environment when dealing with women's difficulties. 'It Was Dark' is a story about rape that deals with severe issues. Rape is unquestionably the harshest and most horrific kind of abuse against a woman's body, yet the women suffer more on a psychological level than on a physical level. It's also the most humiliating treatment a woman may receive. It is clear from the writer's writings that she has uncovered a wide range of issues, many of which are centred on women. Shashi Deshpande had to deal with a variety of challenges.

5. Literature Review

Mohd Mir, Gh (2017) He claims that She researched historical and cultural backgrounds. She looked at psychological issues and personal zones. She connects numerous literary traditions of language, gender, and culture to create narrative meanings, yet the act of writing has, more often than not, been drowned within the fact of being a woman. She emphasised women's domestic difficulties. In her writings, she depicts a male-dominated world. She has described how women have been held behind in every facet of life due to gender prejudice. She intended for her writings to portray the entire community, but as the characters developed, the female characters emerged as the protagonists. This is the world she is familiar with. The explanation for this could be that, as a woman, she had a deeper understanding of the common reality and the complicated structure of the man-woman interaction.

Kumar, Pardeep (2019) Feminism, he claims, is an expression of animosity toward women who are treated unfairly. It refers to any literary form that approaches a book with a primary focus on the character of feminine experience. The disparities against which feminists have protested—legal, economic, and societal restrictions on women's basic rights—can be traced throughout history. The word feminism comes from the Latin word *lemina*, which means 'woman' (through French *l'émancipation*). On the basis of 'equality of sexes,' it advocates for equal rights, position, and authority for women and men. In other terms, it refers to the notion that men and women should have equal social, economic, and political rights. His research sought to determine whether Shashi Deshpande's ladies truly assert themselves or if they conform to endurance somewhere along the way. All of her novels have been evaluated for this study, although the focus is on three of her main works, namely *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *Roots and Shadows*, and *That Long Silence*. These three books have received accolades and have been translated into several languages.

6. Conclusion

Shashi Deshpande's act of writing for her is a conscious participation in the creative urge's process. Novelist and short story writer were the only designations she used and encouraged others to use about her. She has written on the lives of Indian middle-class people and families as a writer. She has clearly voiced her preference for middle-class culture and people in her writings, presentations, and interviews, particularly ladies who invariably appear in her short fiction. As a result, her contribution to international literature is her portrayal of the reality of middle-class women:

I recognise that I write because I feel compelled to do so. It's one point of view, a world seen through the eyes of women, and I believe it's my contribution to Indian literature.

Shashi Deshpande portrays the truth. Her characters are set in the context of a family. Families work via their interdependence and interactions, but they are not without their critics. Women marry to become wives, but they also become mothers during their marriage. Her literature is primarily about a mother-daughter relationship. Aside from mother-daughter relationships, several of her stories deal with man-woman relationships. Shashi Deshpande's literature ponders the everlasting questions of human life, relationships, love, faith, and death.

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