



Feminist Ideologies In The Writings Of Shashi Deshpande

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ABSTRACT

This article serves as a mediator between women and the existential challenge of finding their place in this world. Focuses mostly on women who have difficulty expressing who they are and what they want to become because they believe that their identities have been predetermined for them by society. Every aspect of a woman's life has its own set of challenges. The male population repressed and mistreated females. They had the women under their authority as slaves. In politics and ideology, "Only Feminism" refers to movements that work to establish and protect women's full civil, legal, and cultural rights. The world of women is portrayed in *That Long Silence* with veracity, authenticity, and credibility. This article argues that the sexism and misogyny that plague the world today are not the direct cause of the denial of women's rights, but rather the fault of the women's people themselves.

KEYWORDS Feminism, Shashi Deshmukh, Sexism, authenticity, credibility.

INTRODUCTION

A native of Dharward, Karnataka is Shashi Deshpande. She is the famous playwright and Sanskrit scholar Shriranga's daughter. She left for Bombay when she was fifteen. After completing her undergraduate studies in Economics, she relocated to Bangalore to pursue a legal education. She is highly educated, holding both a master's degree and a certification in journalism. She spent the first few years of her marriage taking care of her two small kids, but she eventually went back to school to become a journalist and worked for a magazine. Her career as a writer started following the birth of her two kids in 1970, and she has since released many collections of short tales. Among her many published works are the novels *The Dark Holds No Terrors* and *Narayanpur Incident* and the short stories *The Binding Vine* and *That Long Silence* and the novellas *A Matter of Time* and *Small Remedies* and the novellas *Come up and Be Dead* and *Roots and Shadows* and *Moving On* and many more. Her other collections of short stories are *The Instruction* and earlier *Stories and Writing from the Margins* and *Other Stories*. Her most recent book is titled "Moving On".

Among modern Indian women who write in English, Shashi Deshpande is among the most prolific. Her extensive body of work includes nine novels, six collections of short stories, four books for children, and a screenplay. That *Long Silence*, her first published novel, was awarded India's Sahitya Akademi Prize in 1990. Shashi Deshpande's writing is grounded in reality because of this. She said, during a 1993 interview with Lakshmi Holmstrom:

"My background is very firmly here, I was never educated abroad, my novels don't have any westerners, for example, they are about Indian people and the complexities of our lives..... My English is as we use it".

Shashi Deshpande's protagonists face some kind of crisis in almost all of her stories. While this may make her work seem more geared toward women, there is nothing "doctrinaire" in her works that would make it fair to label her as a feminist. It's really a very detailed look at a lady and what it means to be a woman in contemporary India. The pivotal moments in all of Shashi Deshpande's books — with the exception of *The Binding Vine* — occur after the heroine has returned to her birthplace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Batshala Kumari (2021) Shashi Deshpande is one of the most prolific women writers in contemporary India's English literature, having written eleven novels, six collections of short stories, four books written specifically for children, and a screenplay. That *Long Silence*, her book, was published in the United Kingdom in 1988 and in India in 1989, and it earned her two prestigious literary awards: Tanjanganad Thirumlamaba Award, Sahitya Academy Award, and both. She is lauded for her forthright and accurate portrayal of Indian female sensibility and of middle-class, urban, educated Indian women, complete with their suppressed hopes and dreams, unavoidable silence, patience, tolerance, sorrows, sufferings, suppression, oppression, pain, agony, issues, problems, trials, tribulations, plights, strengths, and weaknesses. She makes an earnest effort in her books to delve into the minds of Indian women who have been oppressed for centuries. All of her books and tales include strong female protagonists who are the focus of her genuine care. This study, titled "FEMININE PSYCHE OF JAYA IN SHASHI DESHPANDE'S THAT LONG SILENCE," examines the struggles of the novel's heroine, Jaya, a middle-class working woman. The article demonstrates how she falls into the male-dominated society's trap.

Upkar Kaur Chhabra et.al (2020) A woman's sense of self-identity is shaped in large part by her conception of who she is as a woman. In a patriarchal culture, women have traditionally taken a back seat to men. In a patriarchal society, they were unable to find their own voice. The social position, status, personality, and sense of self that a woman develops during her life all contribute to her identity,

which in turn plays a significant part in empowering her. Everything about her life is covered there. It has to do with a woman's sense of who she is and how she views herself while she conforms to the expectations of a society and family that are controlled by males. Therefore, women believe they are men's property. Family dynamics and other social activities are both affected by social revolutions. This study investigates the primary factors that devalue women and have become a barrier to women's liberation.

Dr. Lairellakpam Romabati Devi (2020) Famous among Indian authors who write in English is Shashi Deshpande. Her works center on the plight of women who are denied basic human rights because of patriarchal society. India's male-dominated societal structure has been a source of oppression for women for centuries. Their rights as human beings are being denied them, and they are suffering physically, emotionally, financially, and socially. Many obstacles and confines are appearing, both physically and socially, in their various lifestyles. Women, however, eventually made their way into the classroom. Their cries and voices have begun to be heard as they begin to struggle for their rights in the face of a discriminatory societal structure. Women are nonetheless subject to the male-dominated norms of Indian culture, even if women manage to get an education and even become the breadwinner. This research has been done in the context of this subject, examining Shashi Deshpande's depictions of women's lives in her fiction.

Maninder Kaur (2019) Feminism's positive effects include a renewed focus on and recognition of women's contributions and standing in the public sphere. In doing so, it reframed the problems at hand, setting off a massive level-headed conversation and directing focus to various facets of women's participation in the course of history. Literature, being a carrier of ideas, enthusiastically embraced this free discussion, contributing to the raising of concerns from a variety of perspectives. Indian literature may also claim a somewhat rich past in this respect, albeit it seems that western thought has had a significant effect on a capable region. In the zeal to preserve freedom of choice and unrestricted sex without providing a meaningful notion to the consequence, the family and the institution of marriage have come under passionate attack, even without a justifiable alternative. The purpose of this review is to evaluate Shashi Deshpande's work in this area. Therefore, the centrality of problems relating to the family and the basis of marriage should be determined after giving due consideration to the role and position of Indian women. The purpose of this research is to investigate Indian women's social standing.

P. Madhurima, (2018) Many examples of gender inequality may be found throughout history. A woman must isolate herself from her community because she is stereotyped as being helpless and ineffectual. Women of all ages and from all over the globe have been working for centuries to bring attention to the

contributions they make to society. In the nineteenth century, French writer Alexander Dumas used the word feminism to describe the developing movement for women's rights, which at the time was primarily political. Although they make up nearly half of the world's population, women have historically been underrepresented in many professional arenas. As the "lesser sex," women have always been treated unfairly in all areas of society. The Women's Liberation Movement emerged at the middle of the nineteenth century as a response to societal inequality. It gained momentum in the latter half of the twentieth century, but its only effect was to force individuals to reevaluate long-held ideas and principles.

SHASHI DESHPANDE'S VIEWS ON FEMINISM

Shashi Deshpande's representation of female characters requires a feminist lens in order to be properly examined in the context of this study. As a writer from the 1970s and 1980s, she is representative of the modern Indian woman in the middle class who lives in a city and has some college education. She writes on the predicament of middle-class, urban Indian women in the present day and examines how little has changed for them even in the twentieth century in her books.

Despite her strenuous denial of being a feminist, Shashi Deshpande has made some brave efforts to give a voice to women's disappointments and frustrations. A close reading of her works will reveal how she handles the central female characters and how the themes are connected to issues faced by women today.

In her first work, *Roots and Shadows*, Shashi Deshpande exposes the effects of widespread discrimination against women in a mostly male culture. The book follows the heroine, Indu, as she suffers under the oppression of a male-dominated and tradition-bound society. She is not going to conform to the stereotypical wife role that society has placed upon her. In the book, she poignantly describes her search for self-identity.

Saru, the heroine of her second book, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, goes through a horrible experience since her spouse refuses to take a supporting role. As a kid and later as a wife, Saru suffers tremendous shame and mistreatment.

Deshpande examines the open sexism that some parents display toward their girls because of their want to produce a son. Things start to go wrong for her once she is married, when she has more social standing than her husband Manohar.

Virginia Woolf, in articulating women's place in the global pervasive patriarchal system, speaks for millions of her sisters. She bemoans the vulnerable position of women in society in these remarks.

“A very queer, composite being thus emerges. Imaginatively she is of the highest importance; practically she is completely insignificant. She provides poetry from cover to cover: she is all but absent from history. She dominates the lives of kings and conquerors in fiction; in fact she was the slave of any boy whose parents forced a ring upon her finger. Some of the most inspired words, some of the most profound thoughts in literature fall from her lips; in real life she could hardly read, could scarcely spell, and was the property of her husband.”

The same adjectives used to describe a woman as they used in Woolf's day are still in use now. To a guy, a woman is still indispensable, but only to the degree he deems necessary. This allows the mythical and actual conditions of a woman's existence to be continually measured against one another. The fact is that women are nothing more than "wombs," with their "secondary" roles in society constantly established by men. When there is a pressing need for her services—when there is a baby to feed, when the in-laws require attention, when the husband is out of town, etc.—then her value becomes apparent. No clear picture emerges when asked to describe a woman's life, since no such thing exists. No more "her" tales, please. Moving on from "his" tales to "her" stories is challenging in patriarchal societies, and India is no exception. This is clear from the fact that "history" is written from a male perspective. Including women in the narrative is essential if we live in a society where men and women are treated as equals.

For quite some time, men dominated the area of literacy. For a woman to even consider furthering her education was unimaginable. Once the Vedic period ended, women's standing gradually declined. Later came a lengthy history, with numerous highs and lows for women's literacy. The advancement of women's education throughout the Victorian era is particularly noteworthy. In an effort to avoid having their works automatically dismissed by readers, some women began to publish under male pseudonyms³. Thus, gender politics existed from the very start, but it wasn't until the 21st century that it was properly defined and prioritized to the same degree. To be sure, women have always been fighting for their own separate territory.

Each of these authors has a unique voice, but they have a similar theme: discussing women as a theoretical category. Throughout history, it is very difficult to uncover "her" tales, which indicates that women's stories (personal narratives) are not given much of a platform in the mainstream discourse. Women's lives are explored and their tales are revealed in these authors' fictional novels. To them, these stories would make them wonder whether feminism is, in fact, a movement searching for its own unique sense of purpose.

Women in every society and culture have been shaped to meet certain expectations. In any case, the procedure continues. A perfect Indian lady is described in the following sloka.

Karyeshu Mantri, Karaneshu Daasi Rupecha Lakshmi, kshamayaa dharitri
Bhojyeshu Mata, Shayentu Rambha Shat karma Yukta, Kula Dharma Patni

The female psyche is the subject of a deep psychological trip in the novels of Shashi Deshpande, a writer active in the second part of the twentieth century. Her main audience are modern Indian women of the middle class who are well-educated, culturally savvy, and in some cases, self-sufficient. One could wonder why it is necessary to include her women's narratives in the prevailing discourse if they already have so many advantages. Therein lies the gender politics. It's hard for women to fall into the patriarchy's trap when they're holding so many ostensibly beneficial tools. Deshpande's works provide insight into the trap. Deshpande's stories are set in a patriarchal society, as is the case in much of India. Therefore, the novelist's purpose frequently includes putting there her female characters and attempting to accommodate them inside it. This is often seen as a "feminist" plan. In her later works, the author even admits that this is the case.

A MATTER OF TIME: THE QUEST FOR FEMALE IDENTITY

Shashi Deshpande's female protagonists grapple with the effects of feminism on their identities and roles. Marxist and social feminism both argue that the separation of public and private spheres fostered by capitalism is a primary factor in the subjugation of women. Feminist ideology places a premium on ensuring that women can continue to support themselves financially. The way women are thought of and portrayed has evolved for the better. Women are an essential aspect of human civilization and its overall growth, and no society can advance without their involvement. When it comes to writing on universally relevant human themes, Shashi Deshpande is in a league of her own. The search for one's own identity is a central subject in "A Matter of Time." The novel takes a feminist perspective because of its emphasis on topics like the difficulties of man-woman relationships, especially in the context of marriage, the trauma of a troubled adolescence, the struggle against societal expectations of women, the rejection of the dependency syndrome, and introspection. As such, her writings are a significant addition to English-language texts about India. Shashi Deshpande shows genuine concern for the advancement of women in all spheres of society.

Deshpande is primarily focused in the generational divide and struggle amongst women to illustrate the tension between tradition and modernity in her presentation of women's perspectives. Her work is geared for female readers. Her books are fundamentally rooted in feminism. Kalyani in "A Matter of Time" is a good example of how she tackles the psychology of a woman and the ways in

which she is made to feel like a lesser human, an unwanted child, and a burden on her family. Both Kalyani and Sumi's friendship and Sumi and Aru's relationship are intriguing in this tale. One of the central themes of "A Matter of Time" is a woman's search for her own identity. Because it addresses topics like sexual discrimination, dependency rejection, and the complexities of man-woman relationships, as well as the trauma of a troubled adolescence, and the attempt to break traditional molds in which women are trapped, this novel can be read as having a feminist slant. with self-reflection.

FREEDOM AND FEMINISM: THE SELF-ACTUALIZATION

Shashi Deshpande's books are timeless for its positive articulate message for women and the entire of mankind, thanks to her representation of the modern Indian women's condition and the pragmatic solution she proposes. She has researched several everyday crises that lead people to start looking for answers. Deshpande feels very strongly for the female characters. The author delicately bares the numerous layers of oppression, especially sexual oppression, that women in our society face while portraying the woman's battle to gain self-respect and self-identity for herself. Women's voices, silenced for generations, were finally heard by a new generation of women who embraced the new principles. These women are represented in the books of the new generation of women authors because they have the ability to make a free choice and are not limited to the decision of the male. Women are generally seen as the keepers of culture and the identifiers of others, making the subject of identity particularly important to them. The ambiguities and conflicts that underlie the conceptions of self, gender, and collectivity are generally relevant since all civilizations must deal with birth, life, and the realities of the two sexes. Therefore, it is crucial to the foundation of every civilization that gender roles be constructed. Rearranging not only gender roles and arrangements but also the social and political order, which in turn affects the culture and the collectivity's self-definition and identity, is necessitated by women's perceptions and actions that seek to redefine their roles and expand their arena of choice. As a result, the foundations of the oldest form of tyranny and cleavage/fault line in history are being disturbed. Identity is partly about people's perspectives, but it's not something they can just adopt at whim, apart from all external factors. Identity expressions must be analyzed in light of their historical, social, and material contexts.

The philosophy and gender movement should be founded on a partnership framework, with women taking on men as living partners or vice versa, rather than retreating from the concept of rivalism that frames the other sex as an adversary who would shackle their freedom of action. This viewpoint will help the gender movement achieve a balance between men's and women's rights and responsibilities (check and balance) in the home and the workplace, not on the basis of inherent gender differences but on objective criteria such as quality and

effectiveness. From what has been said above, it should be clear that the empowerment process carried out by women does not include their controlling or manipulating each other in any manner, but is instead carried out in a democratic fashion. Sharing, equality, and acceptance as pillars of power distribution. This fight for equality does not have to be framed as a direct confrontation between women and men, but rather as a process based on mutual respect and understanding. Working together with other organizations has become a crucial part of building a powerful network of teams that can compete for and win big. In addition, women and men must be constantly socialized to the process of comprehending equality (egalitarianism, equality), where gender difference need not imply the continuation of discrimination against the acquisition of key resources. Therefore, it is essential that the first step in empowering women be to (1) help them feel more confident in their own minds. Do modern women realize their full potential and have clear life goals? (2) Increasing the caliber of human resources to enable command of key entry points. An indication of the quality of human resources used in the selection process in the modern, fast-paced economy. If women really internalize this knowledge, they will be in an advantageous position to negotiate without compromising the worth of their own quality and integrity.

CONCLUSION

There hasn't been a serious examination of women's identities yet. This paper primarily focuses on the problems women face in today's male-dominated society, including subjugation, neurotic worries, psychological turmoil, sex exploitation, harassment, a lack of free will, and an identity crisis, and the devaluation of traditional feministic virtues like service and submission in favor of modern feminism as a social movement to balance the society by empowering women with the same rights and opportunities as men. Shashi Deshpande's books depict the experiences of contemporary Indian women as they seek to define fundamental aspects of who they are and their place in the world. The protagonist of Shashi Deshpande's story is a woman who is searching for who she really is.

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