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Trajectory of Indian Women Writers

ABSTRACT

The aim of this Paper is to explain and analyse the life of those who doesn't have their own spoken identity. It is always in relation to man that their existence is traced i.e., as a wife, mother, daughter but not as a "women" separate and independent .The present study will try to analyse the trajectory of Indian women writers through their works and how men and patriarchal society tries to determine their image and controls them I may continue my discussion by referring to a very famous women novelist "Shashi Deshpande's" selected work "That long silence and Dark holds no terror" .In the first novel under study "That long silence" the protagonist Jaya is portrayed as a typical housewife who follows her husband as his shadow and realizes that the life she had been living does not belong to her. And in "dark holds no terror" a well-educated independent woman "Sarita" who has lived her childhood in a trauma of being an "unloved child" and after marriage she is forced to spend her life with a person who is filled with inferiority complex leading to an unfortunate marriage as well as "sexual sadism".

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

When a little girl, is asked to do some outside chores, she is stopped by saying “these outside woks are to be done by boys you do home chores” why would she go outside if a male member is present at home? And even a working woman or a housewife have to do a lot of household Chores because society exempts men from performing household activities like (Cleaning dishes, washing clothes excreta). Therefore, girls and women continue to follow the pattern consciously or unconsciously because of the prevalent norms of the society. Women throughout lifespan have been struggling for the attention, liberation and for equality. In order to become a “good women” the qualities society expects her to be are gentleness, Empathy, humility and sensitivity etc. As Portrayed in “The story of my life.” It was the Kamala Das where she faces Racist Discrimination throughout her life and indulgent relationship with her husband. She shares her sexuality and she almost opens her personal life in her autobiography. The aim of this paper is to show how a society bounds and forces woman to live a life which doesn't makes her happy it just bounds her. It will also try to explore how a culture plays a major role in framing their lives. The major question of this study in the propound scene refers as bounding women in social norms make her individuality alive?

The primary texts of this study are “That long silence and dark holds no terror” both works are written by Shashi Deshpande. The major source of this work is to show that the conditions and circumstances which forces women leads to the death of her individuality and it just leads to forceful unhealthy relationship.

The paper is divided into five sections. The first section will give you an overview of the topic and will try to define the main objective. The second section will deal with the literary review, which will introduce the major works –books, articles and journals related to that topic.

Likewise, third section will be about methodology, will talk about the major scholars, theories and concepts that are used in this paper. The fourth section will be given to the main body which will discuss in detail the primary texts and finally the last section will conclude the paper.

SECTION II: LITRATURE RIVIEW

This section will introduce you some of the major works which will be helpful in this study. Further it will try to look into the research which has already been done on the primary texts of this project.

“Lihaff” by Ismat Chughtai is the best work of 20th century women writers of Urdu. It is the most controversial and popular work of her .

“Lihaff” focuses on the theme of female sexuality, at that time themes like these were rarely seen and heard in literature especially Urdu literature .The first observation of a reader regarding the book is the portrayal of female sexuality .It awakens its audience by telling more about female sexual desire which every time cannot be fulfilled by man .At that time women were not considered that much important and sexuality doesn't suits in any of the categories .Women sexual desires were not given mere attention it was simply imagined that it doesn't exists ,Under social pressure men marries women just to overcome societal pressure as shown in this work , the pressure of society makes an individual loosen its identity and it implies to both men and women

An Introduction by Kamala das

This book is written by kamala das in autobiographical words. This book portrays the conditions, restrictions and the situation of women which is faced by them in men biased society. This work portrays the honest experience of her personal life and problems which she was forced to apply on herself. This can be said as severe case like (bed to dead). Kamala das did not demand anything from his husband expect love and respect but she was always treated as an object for the satisfaction of lust.

The god of small things by Arundhati Roy

This work shows a clash between older and younger generation and how family and political customs plays a significant role in disadvantaging women. Arundhati Roy challenges the position of women in Indian society because of the social constrains which are applied on women and every society is patriarchal and discriminates women at every point of her life. It shows realistic portrayal of gender inequality in India. Ammu is the central character who works and earns her livelihood but she also faces cruelty of her father and mother who beats her and don't let her to get education because they feels Education is an "unnecessary expense for a girl" and his brother is sent abroad for higher studies through this we conclude the discrimination in gender which is highly prevailed in India. Arundhati through her works put a satire on patriarchal society in which women are treated inferior and they are not given any importance and values. In countries like India situations and conditions are merely common. This novel also put light on the problem of children which are related to sexual abuse and untouchability. The basic concern that Roy presents in her works is the discrimination between people and problem faced by women because of the pressure and weak mentality of Indian society.

SECTION III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

After throwing light on some of the famous works of women in focus of this paper in the previous section which conveyed us the real situation of women in Indian society and how they are made so weak from beginning that they forget their individuality. Often in patriarchal society men are shown as powerful than opposite gender which leads to the rise of discrimination. This study has shown the clear picture of gender politics prevailing in society and the problem faced by children which includes physical abuse

Shashi Deshpande and Kamala Das are the main the main novelist of this study. Their work and concepts are worthy to study, which leads to better refinement of the topic.

That long silence, shows the unhappy relationship between the partners in which both are to living together but the silence plays a major role between them. Deshpande symbolizes jaya who doesn't protest in the beginning and till end she adapts the change happened in her life. she keeps her anxiety and anger by herself and the silence leads to uncover the truth and problems she has in her mind.

Dark holds no terror has an opening which shows women who is a sufferer from childhood she was hated by her mother since childhood but after she realizes her worth, she went to her parental home and tells her about the actual situation it includes every torture and discrimination she was going through. Shashi Pandey broadly showcase the problems of an independent women after marriage in which she is bound to follow the norms by typical society.

These novels have concepts of gender inequality, indiscriminate of women and child sufferings. Gender inequality have been discussed in literary review where male discriminate

women by their actions. Hence, the analysis of the novel long silence will be regarding a helpless women and dark holds no terror will be of women who stood up for her self

SECTION IV: MAIN BODY

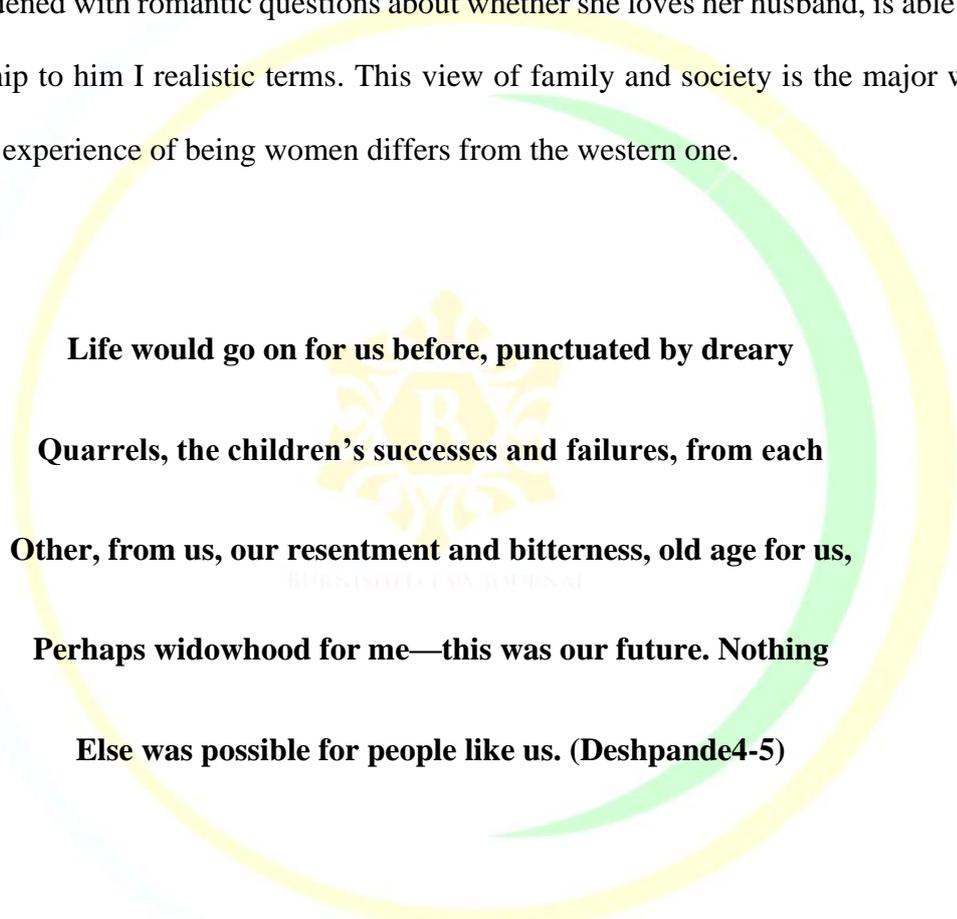
During Victorian era the rules of women writers were very low as compared to men and as men did not want women to come up and publish their works. They were seen as weaker, nothing less than household commodities who look better in home rather than going outside it may be for job or doing something for themselves. According to Author Anita Nair literature has always been ambivalent in its representation of women.

THAT LONG SILENCE

Portrayal of factual image of women in society

That long silence is the first of Shashi Deshpande's novels to be published outside India. It is an exceptionally accomplished portrait of a passive women who begins, tentatively, to take responsibility for her life. The first person narration is by Jaya, mother of two teen-age children and wife of Mohan, who corrupt business practices are under investigation. Jaya and Mohan must "disappear" from their comfortable Bombay home. With her normal routine disrupted, Jaya can, for the first time, look at her life and attempt to decide who she really is. She rejects the various fixed images into which she wanted to fit: the model bride"; the "soft, smiling, placid, motherly woman"; part of the modern Indian ideal family. The novel is not an exemplary quest for self-discovery. Deshpande indicates with quiet irony of the flaws in Java's search; her need to wallow in a "sqishy bog of self pity", her tendency to cast herself as victim, whether of her father, of her husband or of male-oriented society; her desire to retreat into madness; her willingness to exploit women of a lower social class. Jaya decides, finally, that

change may still occur , that she can act responsibly: “life has always to be made possible”. Even this tentative conclusion, however, is couched in typically feminine language:”But why I am making myself the heroine of the story? Why do I presume that the understanding is mine alone? In spite of its ambiguous ending. Deshpande’s novel seems less pessimistic than many contemporary women’s novels. Perhaps this is because of the allusions to Jaya’s family, a series of aunts and uncles who represent an order within which she may begin to function . Jaya, not burdened with romantic questions about whether she loves her husband, is able to see her relationship to him in realistic terms. This view of family and society is the major way in which Indian experience of being women differs from the western one.



**Life would go on for us before, punctuated by dreary
Quarrels, the children’s successes and failures, from each
Other, from us, our resentment and bitterness, old age for us,
Perhaps widowhood for me—this was our future. Nothing
Else was possible for people like us. (Deshpande4-5)**

These lines are from the starting chapter as it is shown that the bond between husband and wife was vague. Jaya’s was pursuing this unhappy relationship for about seventeen years and still it was continuing the middle-class women and the male psyche does not change. The change in the time doesn’t make their relation happy or better. The journey of Jaya’s life is filled with self-doubts, fears, guilt, smothered, anger and silence. She is just a disappointed mother,

unhappy wife and failed writer, from all these we can conclude the life of an educated women who cannot do anything just to feel left and failed in life.

“One Morning soon after APPA death

I woke up and remembered that he

was dead. And I had a sense of

Loss that was not vague but

Specific. I thought of that place

where she should have at that movement on his bed. And with a picture

of his absence, there was terrifying sense of emptiness in me (TLS 66)”

In this paragraph it shows that the attachment between Jaya and her father as he consoles her trust which was on her father for the choice of the husband, he made her to marry Mohan, an Engineer. The attachment between Mohan and Jaya was mutual and both loved each other but because of the male superiority their relationship started diminishing and due to situations aroused in Mohan's life leads to destroy their relation.

“It's possible that we may not

Change our long periods of time.

But we can always hope without

That life would be impossible. And

If there is anything. I know

Now it is this life has always to be made possible. (193)”

It is clear that Mohan needs Jaya's support and affection during this hard time and his breakdown but neither of them tried to ask and tell the problem by disclosing their feelings. As the work named long silence it truly defines that the silence between them was to be broken and the love should be evaluated again which was diminishing. Silence separate people emotionally and mentally Jaya however felt that her life has reached at a stage where she doesn't consider it a curse but she takes it as a part of her life because she cannot lose everything which includes her children and her family. Her silence has to be kept silent.

The book ends up with Mohan sending telegram to Jaya in with the she agrees to the approval of her home coming and accepting that life as her fate. Despite the silence and problem, she is facing will continue with her till death.

An Introduction by Kamala das

This book is written by kamala das in autobiographical words. This book portrays the conditions, restrictions and the situation of women which is faced by them in men biased society it focuses on patriarchy, leading to sexual politics it clearly shows her life and rejection made by her to the norms which forced her to lose her identity.

“As shown in the opening lines

I was child, and later they

Told me grew, for I became tall, my limbs

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Swelled and one of two places sprouted hair.

When I asked for love, not knowing what else to ask

For, he drew a youth of sixteen into the

Bedroom and closed the door, He did not beat me

But my sad woman- body felt so beaten.

The weight of my breasts and womb crushed me.

I shrank pitifully”

These lines show the helplessness felt by Kamala Das at that time as she was married at an early age. These lines symbolize her miserable married life His husband never loved her but always used her and treated her like an object by which he can appease his lust. This shows the experience and reality of poet's married life.

“Then .. I wore a shirt and my

Brother's trousers, cut my hair short and ignored

My womanliness. Dress in sarees, be girl

Be wife, they said. Be embroidered, be cook,

Be aquarelle with servants. Fit in. Oh,

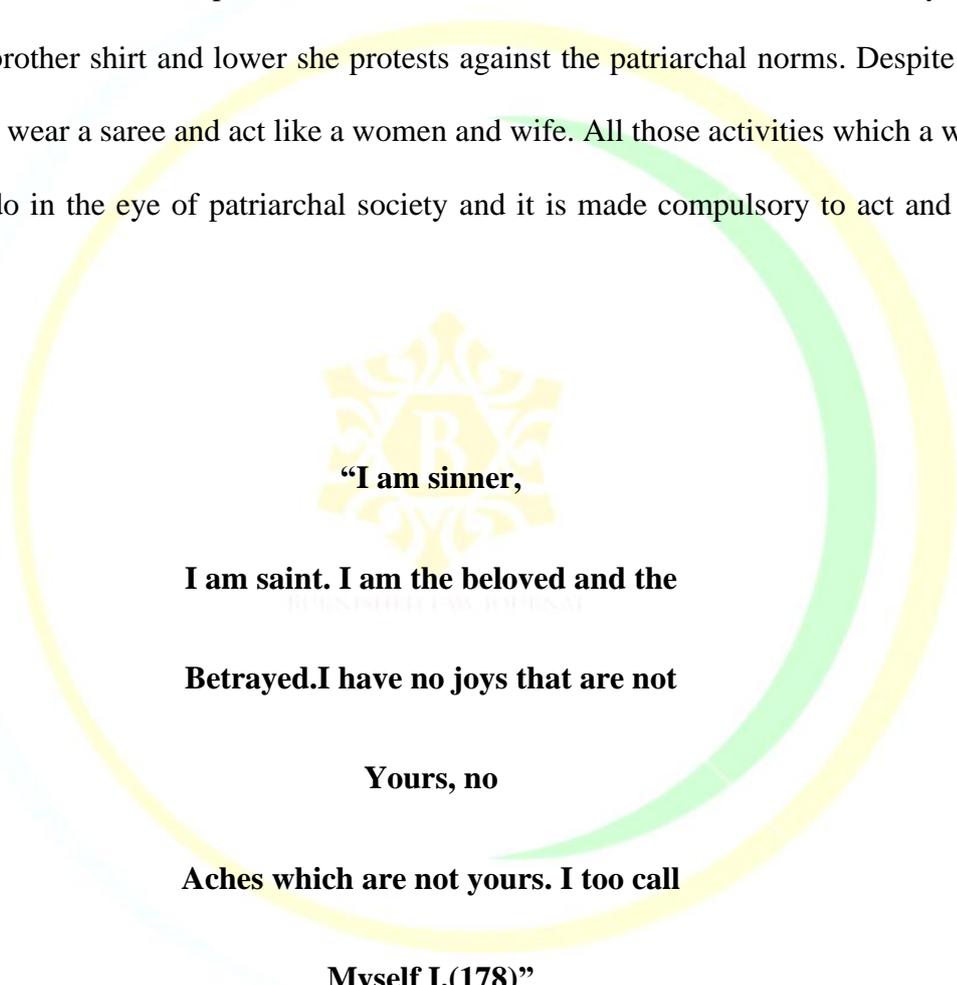
Belong, cried the categorizers. Don't sit

On walls or peep in thigh our lace-draped windows.

Be Army, or be kamala. Or, better

Still. Be Madhavi kutty”**REJECTION OF PATRIARCHAL NORMS**

Because of painful and bad experiences, these situations forced her to un love her body and by wearing his brother shirt and lower she protests against the patriarchal norms. Despite it she was forced to wear a saree and act like a women and wife. All those activities which a woman is forced to do in the eye of patriarchal society and it is made compulsory to act and fulfill them.



“I am sinner,

I am saint. I am the beloved and the

Betrayed.I have no joys that are not

Yours, no

Aches which are not yours. I too call

Myself I.(178)”

She identifies herself with ‘I’ she says that she is also like men in joy and sorrow. She also did perform norms and many vices just like everyone did. But she is never loved the way she deserves and the experiences she had she too declares herself as “I”. this shows the ignorance of womanliness.

“DARK HOLDS NO TERROR”1980

Display of past and future discrimination

Second novel of Sashi Deshpande. The protagonist of this novel is Sarita called (Saru) and the novel opens up with the family irritation and as in childhood Sarita was discriminated and humiliated on the basis of gender and her colour complex by her mother itself and after marriage she was married to an insecure personality person who made her life tough. Sarita is a medical doctor by profession and a modern independent woman and her husband earns less than her. Sarita's husband is an envious person who doesn't appreciate her wife's success and achievements despite he shows his anger in the form of sexual sadism.

It is a story of a marriage which is on the peak of breakdown even after 15 years and same girl who is made extreme conscious about her color and gender since childhood. The novel starts with the arrival of Saru at her parents' home. Her stay in her parent's home leads into the fear of dissolution of her married life and a "terrified consciousness" of not existing (22). The real cause of the dissolution of the family is a searching interview of Manohar by a lady reporter for women's magazine: "How does it feel when your wife earns not only the butter but bread as well? (35-36) since then Manohar became a wild person who started torturing Saru in bed. Saru's past (childhood) events were quite disturbing where her mother always used to favor her son more than daughter. An Indian mentality which clearly signifies (boys as an asset a girl a liability to family) and this discrimination had a major role in making of her personality and the most unforgettable moment and a turning point which made her life worse. Saru's brother accidental death which was caused by drowning in a pond and her mother didn't leave any point and time to blame her and that fear persistently haunted her in her mind as she was responsible

for that act occurred. She didn't refute the blames put on her by her mother and gender sensitivity can be seen in all novels by Shashi Deshpande .

DISPLAY OF HELPLESS SITUATION

Saru saw and realized many things from her grandmother, she saw the dependence of her grandmother on her husband and realized how her grandmother was treated as a burden by other family members because of her dependency on others for her daily needs, that promoted and inspired her to become an economically independent women so that she can have a security of independence in her life like Every girl has many dreams about her marriage like the initial years of marriage will be the most happiest and memorable time of her life and she will be the luckiest woman on the earth .But the happiness and the dreams of love soon fades as she discovers .In her new role as women Saru was not happy with the place where they live but somehow she managed to live on .

Saru's social life took a move and slowly her financial status started growing beyond her husband. She is a busy successful doctor in contrast to his husband who is an unpaid lecturer in a third-grade college. She refined herself and became an independent successful doctor and raise her standards which can fulfill her needs and satisfy her ego, but this made her husband jealous of her and find complex in himself rather than be proud on her wife achievements. Betty Friedan says: "for women, as for man, the need for self- fulfillments- autonomy, self-realization, independence, individuality, self- actualization is important as the sexual med, with as serious consequences, when it is thwarted."

HELPLESS SITUATION

"Terror waited for me in our room. I couldn't escape it" (79)

Shashi Deshpande, however proves that marriage bounds a woman economically, socially and mentally it relates to every woman it may be dependent or independent, for an independent woman it's quite difficult to digest all the sufferings which they are forced to digest. and if they don't work accordingly, they live in the fear of hurting ego of her partner like Sarulived.

Saru confesses her tortures and terror caused by her husband to her father, reducing her to a "two-in-one woman" and a "terrified, trapped animal" but somehow, she puts the blame on herself that because of her own misdeeds in the past like drowning of his brother as her mother made her realize. The dark holds no terror.

Feminism – Deshpande's views

As the study attempts to study Shashi Deshpande's women character, need to study as a feminist point of view. She shows the realistic picture of urban Indian women and also analyze there is not a lot of change which can be seen in 20th century. The theme in her novels highlights the problem of women. As the Dark holds no terror , shows the traumatic experience the protagonist Saru undergoes as her husband refuses to play a second –fiddle role. Saru undergoes great humiliation and neglect as shown .After marriage as she gains a greater social status than her husband her husband Manohar , all begins to fall apart . Her husband's sense of inferiority complex and the humiliation h feels the insult in the form of sexual sadism. Her novels belong to her early life and a mild form of feminism.

CONCLUSION

When a person is targeted and scolded rapidly for the things, they didn't do it becomes a trauma in their minds and it keeps evolving throughout life and recovery is hard. This applies same on women from beginning of childhood they are taught and made a belief in their minds that they are inferior and they have to do sacrifices .In both novels we can see the struggle faced by

women and the helpless nature which they are prone to lead them to live a life of a victim which they are not supposed to live but at last some women somehow accepts it as fate and continue that life and some gain strength and break all the barriers and come out of that.

In long silence, the female character is shown weak as she is not that type of women who openly bursts out and come to face to face to interaction. she is dependent on his husband and moreover she knows about her qualities and energy she has she is like a bird who have wings and knows that can fly, but somehow, she doesn't. She wants to live in her own terms that life but she remains silent.

In dark holds no terror, the female protagonist is active and somehow Shashi's Deshpande novels leaves a genuine concern for women. Her protagonists have an energy to do something for themselves. Despite the fact she faces tremendous situations in her life time as in childhood and her marriage life but she stood up for herself and try to move out from that situation and life which is really hard for some women and she proves her.

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