

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In human communication, the catastrophe begins, when there is a misunderstanding about words, but when silence is not understood. Shashi Deshpande's projected fictional works emphasize the impact of the silence on the human relationship primarily between husband and wife. The contented conjugal relationship is feasible only when there is mutual understanding, compromising abilities and applies of the tolerance from both sides. The research "Depiction of Introspection in Shashi Deshpande's Select Novels" explores the women's psyche as delineated by Deshpande through analyzing the process of introspection from the novels *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *That Long Silence*, *A Matter of Time* and *Small Remedies*.

Every human being's way of life is strongly related to their self-confidence mind-set. Introspection helps in honorable and optimistic thought process which enables self-realization in individuals' to attain perfection and to live a successful life which can be achieved only through the blend of mind and heart.

The introspection of the self exhibits the truth about an individual. Human life is a framework of obligations, goals, and accomplishments. Self-discovery is the enlightenment of an individual in the journey of life. Human beings are obsessed with emotions and feelings. These qualities rule over or dominate human mind and heart which in turn close the eyes of consciousness. Self-discovery occurs at any moment in the course of introspection. It transforms an individual into an entirely different person. A life of reason and perfection begins with introspection. It is a dawn on the dark of ignorance and it is a divine



light upon the world of fantasy. It is achieved by the characters only through the course of introspection.

The predominant goal of introspection is to create self-awareness. Self-realization is a remedy to all the vices within the self and the world. It boosts the confidence to face the reality; it motivates the characters to take correct decisions. It enables to tackle the emotional and intellectual challenges of the self and the world. The dilemmas and experiences of life reconstruct the mind, thoughts, and feelings of the character. Accordingly, characters should possess virtuous thoughts and feelings. The prominent purpose is to ignite the obligations that everyone has to rebuild the self, society, and the world. Upbraiding others can be eradicated entirely with the knowledge of responsibilities. Duties appear as challenges during perverse periods. Introspection excludes the qualms that control the emotions. It unveils the true abilities. It imparts the love for humanity. It consolidates the mutual understanding among people. The journey of self-exploration analyzes the skills for determination. It helps to select a genuine pathway and encourages in strong fortitude. Apparently, choosing ethical values and determined approach brings victory to the self, society and the humanity.

With the changing times and values, the family, like the rest of society has undergone radical changes. In India, the tradition has been of a joint family which is today transforming into a nuclear family unit. There have been many optimistic sides and advantages of living in a joint family because it gives us an atmosphere to experience a mixture of sensation, contemplation, and ideas of diverse members. The company of grandparents sows the seed of better sensibilities early in life. The right family gives right dosage to the child to make him/her a good individual which is not to be found in nuclear families. But many a time it also leads to clashes, conflicts, tensions, foundations, frustrations and expectations etc.



The Indian society can broadly be classified into three hierarchical levels in terms of distinctions based on economic and political power: the upper class, the middle class, and the working class. However, it is not constantly true that the three classes have very clear and distinct margins. There is nevertheless a certain distinctive identity that each of these classes projects in stipulations of lifestyles and stances. Deshpande deals with the middle-class metropolitan life in major. Her protagonists are all artifact of it. They are educated, cultured, customary, intelligent and cerebral too. It is contended that the family and domestic relations in the novels of Deshpande represent a crucial transition of modern India, from a conservative and conventional societal order to a liberal and urbanized socio-economic and civilizing culture. Deshpande's novels seek to explore the psychological complexities in which the Indian middle-class family gets occupied in the course of drastic changes brought about by industrialization, urbanization and the growing influences of western thoughts and mindset. Her novels also reflect a fundamental shift in interpersonal relations and their consequences upon the changes in the Indian family. The recurring themes of Deshpande's novels are identified – woman's great effort for self-consciousness and self-description, woman's quest for her identity, her search of sovereignty, equality and transcendence, her uprising and gripe against oppression at every level with a limited dosage, without blaming the male community as well.

Deshpande's greatness as a novelist lies in her potentiality to probe deep into the psyche of human beings in their relations with one another. She is interested in the projection of the very ambiguities and complexities of human relationships. Though, she has repeatedly said that she is interested in the exploration of human relationships; we can never discard that the relationship that interests her most is the husband-wife affiliation.



“Depiction of Introspection in Shashi Deshpande’s Select Novels” is evidently stressed on the need for improving the human relations, family space and marriage through the protagonists and their process of introspection.

In *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, Sarita presents the predicament of a successful career woman who suffers the pull of modernity as against the traditional stance of an ideal wife who has to survive with her marital discomforts to the best of her capability. Saru is a so-called liberated woman only in name but she is a silent uncomfortable wife inwardly. She cannot break away from the constrictions of her marriage when she thinks of the sufferings of her kids. From her own understanding, she realizes that men cannot tolerate women who aspire to be booming individuals. After much introspection, she identifies the fear within herself. If she has the courage to emerge out of her refined conventional attitude, she would be able to face life courageously. Finally, she takes real conceit in being a doctor again which she had been formerly tormenting with a guilty conscience. Her self-awareness as a person with an individuality of her own becomes the light of knowledge for her that drives out the ignorance within her.

In *That Long Silence*, Jaya tries to mould her life according to the whims and wishes of her husband Mohan. These allusions here afford to lay bare the internalization of patriarchal descriptions of womanhood by Jaya. Jaya, for instance, is an educated modern woman and however, she assumes the role of Sita and Gandhari and submits her identity absolutely.

Jaya’s process of awakening reaches its zenith when she comes across her father’s diary and reads the final words of Krishna’s long sermon to Arjuna, “*Yathecchasi tatha kuru - ‘Do as you desire’! . . .* Krishna confers humanness on Arjuna. ‘I have given you Knowledge’. Now you make the choice. The choice is yours. Do as you desire” (TLS, 192).



The words from Jaya's mouth replicate the changed self of Jaya. Traditional Indian insight helps her gain self-confidence and a confidence in her own free spirit. She realizes that life can constantly be made possible. These two allusions reveal the change of Jaya from an outlook of self-surrender to self-realization, a movement from being a puppet in the hands of social customs and beliefs to a state of knowledge and wisdom about life.

In *A Matter of Time*, Sumi reflects her modern progressive attitude. She has a sound understanding that man-woman relationships should be a boom, equal and non-partisan. She stands for accountability, motherly care, love, and concern. Every moment she is alarmed and worried about her grownup daughters. She is worried about their future and is aware of her responsibility as a mother cum-single parent to her daughters. She becomes rather frantic when Aru meets with an accident, cries for help, despite the abundant bleeding from her own injuries. She is so much apprehensive about Aru that she neither leaves her daughter alone nor she takes a break. She desires that her daughter's life must become trouble-free and comfortable.

Sumi reveals fruitfully an optimistic vision of life. She demonstrates strength and mellowness even in adversity. She not at all wants to end her life like that of her mother. She introspects her relation with Gopal in a more developed way and recognizes that Gopal's life and its perception was always different individuality from hers. It is pity that Sumi dies when she was taking up a job to support herself and her daughters. Had she lived, she would have become an economically self-determining woman with modern and matured outlook towards life, and at the same time, a loving and responsible mother. Probably through Aru, the novelist looks expectantly at the younger generation to infiltrate silence, make women realize their circumstances and speak up for themselves. Inheriting her mother's pride, dignity, courage, and confidence, Aru assures her father- "we'll be guide alright, don't worry about us" (AMOT, 246).



Madhu ascertains her moral and physical self in *Small Remedies* by remembering and retelling the stories of Savitribai and Leela. Madhu realizes “that both were courageous women, that both were women who worked for and got the measure of freedom they needed, that both were ready to accept wholly the consequence of their actions” (SR, 284). They went on with the dying desire towards their achievements facing the hardships while life threw upon them. They never looked back as they knew “that what we call truth has nothing to do with the truth that emerges through words” (SR, 255). Madhu arrives at the conclusion that life has to move on whatever changes occur in the lives of people. She realizes this when she witnesses an “upanayanam” ceremony in the Bhavani Temple. Her past to the present and acquiring knowledge to lead her future peacefully from her loss of her dead son Adit and back to meet her husband Som.

As Deshpande has said in *A Matter of Time*, “Life must be lived forwards, but it can only be understood backwards” (AMOT, 98). These protagonists are not merely rebels. They are women who both derive support from their family as well as provide support to their family. Deshpande has thrashed women’s tribulations and situations in a fast-changing social scenario. They deal with the middle-class Indian woman who represents the overwhelming majority of Indian women and is struggling to adjust it rather than get free from the conventional world.

A family is an institution in itself everything begins and everything that happens outside the family mirrors in the family. The domestic atmosphere quite harmonious and sanctified by the standard norms of the society is often seen by means of dissension, domination, and violation. The complex nature of human relationships is analyzed, whether it is within a family or in the broader of social space. The novelist knits her narration around multiple acts of transgression bringing into the conflict of selves, other men, other women,



physical, emotional, sexual, ethical, individual and social binaries. Hence, the self-reflexivity, as she locates the self in the labyrinth of her lived experience, the experiential becomes the touchstone in narration. Thus a process of rebuilding and demolishing continues in the novel in a narrative flow.

Deshpande observes that family is certainly “not a divine, sacred institution, but one created by humans for the benefit of all society; and therefore, it should be built, not on the sacrifice of some but on the cooperation and compromises of all its members.” (WRTM, 83-84)

Deshpande’s novels show the urge of the woman to assert herself whether it is within marriage or outside it. One important contemporary voice is Deshpande who concerns herself with the struggle a woman undertakes in a society to find and conserve her uniqueness as a wife, a daughter, a mother and in particular a human being. Shashi, however, does not advocate a radical or strident kind of feminism, which sees man as the cause of all troubles. Instead, she highlights the need to complement the relationships, the requirement to grant space for others and a freedom to express. She seeks a re-orientation of societies in which unprejudiced relationships find a space for nurturing. There is a stable altercation between patriarchy and tradition on one hand and self-expression, individuality, and independence for women on the other and it is this predicament which Deshpande brings into a spotlight all through her novels. The themes of marital incompatibility, identity crisis, imbalanced family relationships and the patriarchal glance are brought to the vanguard all the way through her fictions. The recognized conservative ethos is questioned and deconstructed to get more constructive answers. In her novels, the crises that surround present day women are very efficiently reflected. The women protagonists surpass in assorted stages ranging from the self-oblivion to self-awareness.



Deshpande feels that security is an important requirement of women. If a home provides her safety, she may not revolt against the home. She is not for revolt for the sake of revolt but rather for revolt in the sector and degree to which it is required. So, she shows that there are some husbands who are good and some women who are not at all prepared even to raise their voice.

Deshpande's protagonists have their own analysis of various bonds, ties, and relationships. Families perpetually play a vital role in her life, and she tries her best to endeavor for her family's endurance. Deshpande defines her view of feminism as one that has an equal stand for mutually men and women and when asked in an interview by Geetha Gangadharan that whether she would like to call herself a feminist she says:

yes, I would, I am a feminist in the sense that, I think we need to have a world. Which we should recognize as a place for all of us human beings. There is no superior and inferior, we are two halves of one species. I fully agree with Simone de Beauvoir that the fact that we are human is much more important than our being men and women. I think that's my idea of feminism. (p, 254)

The protagonists are learned, cultured, conventional, smart and logical too. Deshpande's protagonists are revealed to be in a status of bewilderment at the beginning slowly but surely as the novels open up; they trek through a process of introspection to self-awareness, self-realization, and self-confident human beings. Towards the end, they emerge as more confident, more in control of themselves, and significantly more hopeful. Her novels mirror a strong shift in interpersonal relations and their consequences upon the transformation in the Indian family. Her feminism is peculiarly Indian in the sagacity that it is born out of the sticky situation of Indian women placed between contradictory identities: tradition and modernity, family and profession,



culture and nature. Her art is profoundly special, not biased. Her feminism embedded in the inhabitant milieu tends to be humanistic and optimistic in its stance.

Deshpande characters recur with subtle changes. The first category is the heroine's mother or the mother figure - the customary woman who believes that her place is with her husband and family. Whatever be her troubles, she does not leave her husband; she strives for a working relationship with him at any cost. The second type of suffering women is the converse of the traditional type. Here, the woman is bolder, more self-reliant and rebellious. The third cluster of women characterizes the woman in between. Deshpande's heroines like Sarita, Jaya, Sumi, and Madhu belong to this category. These women are neither traditional nor radical in their ideas and practices. They might walk out of her home in protest against their sufferings, but slowly understand that walking out does not solve their problems.

The quest for identity and introspection process is intertwined in the novels of Deshpande and these elements highlight the completeness of female consciousness and confidence to balance their life peacefully. This kind of clear understanding about marital life to the middle-class educated Indian women is essential right now and it is possible only through introspection. Instead of blaming the men community, if women are contented and adjusted in their familial relationships, the total family will be a supporting force forever. With that, they can be happy and they can remold the society as well.



OUTCOME OF THE RESEARCH

- The research is expected to examine assorted aspects on human relationships so as to ascertain the nature of female psyche and marital relation which lead in the route of introspection of the protagonists in the select novels of the Shashi Deshpande.
- It is envisaged that exploring the different facets of female sufferings, pains and grief in the select novels on certain unexplored arena more than ever firmly that facilitate by introspection.
- Compromise and adjustment are the two survival strategies which direct a happy and serene life for women forever for both the gender. The research work will share the above strategies by means of searching self individualism of the protagonists in the course of introspection so that they can be confident, contented and peaceful human beings.

