Chapter 2

Women’s Suffocation :
Man- Woman Relationship
Chapter – 2
Women’s Suffocation : Man- Woman Relationship

2.1 Introduction :-

The Institution of marriage carries vital importance within the margins of the society. For the ages institution of marriage carried out two responsibilities-stabilizing and elevating the moral stature of an individual and progeny. Marriage Institution creates for a person a space which is providing him by family, children and an accomplishment of person’s existence. Along with marriage provides material and sexual convenience helping the individual to liberate himself from loneliness. But in spite of this fact man and woman attitudes are totally different towards the institution of marriage, it is cleared with the following remark of Simone De Beavoir is-

\[
\text{Marriage has always been a very different thing for man and for woman. The two sexes are necessary to each other, but this necessity has never brought about a condition of reciprocity between them.} \quad (1)
\]

According to this remark the institution of marriage offers a primary status to man, whereas secondary status to woman. ‘He’ moves out to take care of the house whereas ‘she’ stays inside to take care of the household. This is a way becomes ‘Her’ destiny which is traditionally offered to her. She by staying indoor fulfilled and shoulders all the duties and responsibilities of progeny and takes care of whole household and fulfills his sexual needs. These various duties and responsibilities demands a complete metamorphosis and whole heartedly transformation at her level best. The constraints of these duties leave no space for her own identity. In relation with this issue Simone De Beavoir comments –
The celibate woman is to be explained and defined with reference to marriage, whether she is frustrated, rebellious or even indifferent in regard to that institution.\(^{(2)}\)

The entire cultural and traditional set-up is such manner that she is made to think in terms of sacrifice- sacrificing her space, her own identity. The orthodox destiny offered to her, now turns out to be a cage house leaving no space for her inside the house and leaving no door open for her to rescue. Women are judge by the virtue of sacrifice. In modern era the situation related with marital institution is little bit change in the sense that marriage is subjected to the interrogation with the accompanishment of education makes her more aware, as an individual. She started to asks the questions related with this marital institution and its validity. With reference to this issue Simone De Beauvoir comments-

*In the early years of marriage the wife often lulls herself with illusions; she tries to admire her husband whole heartedly, to love him unreservedly, to feel herself indispensable to him and the children. And then…. she sees that her husband could get along very well without her, that the children are bound to get away from her and to be always more or less ungreatly. The home no longer saves her from empty liberty; she finds herself alone forlorn, a subject; and she find’s nothing to do with herself.*\(^{(3)}\)

Many women novelists are urged by this ‘empty liberty’, this isolation and loneliness for the boldly subject the marriage institution to an objective critical examination. This institution of marriage also going through a change in the awakening of modernism. Previously marriage used to take place between
close friends, relatives who resided within the village or nearby places but as time passes due to growing industrialization and means of transportation marriages took place between families from far-off villages and relatives.

Due to the increasement of interest in taking education, the age at which younger people get married also increased. In the past girls got married at a very young age and went to stay with their in-laws. They get easily integrated within the new family culture and traditions as they are being very young. But due to education and an increase in age and maturedness this integration became quiet difficult and resulting into a kind of cultural shock. Education made people more aware about “individual identity.” All these various factors causes the arousement of complexities in the marital institution.

The institution of marriage came under a serious persual in the wake of feminism. Moreover, feminism threw light on the evil practices which continues under the veil of traditions and culture. Feminism helped the writers to critically examine the institution of marriage since the institution demanded their total transformation on socio-cultural terms.

The women novelists in Indian English literature have strives for dealing with the place and status of women in Indian society, the problems, various consequences that they have to face. This deep study also helps to the women novelists to analyze the socio-cultural modes and moral values that are imbibed in Indian women about their image, role and the various efforts they need to put into the achievement of a harmonious relationship with other family members. Female novelists mostly aimed to delineates a realistic picture of women sense of their frustration and their isolation rather than glorifying and extolling them. They juxtapose a genuine portrayal of the woman who is torn in between the conflict of modernity and traditions. Every society almost has peculiar traditional ideas about marriage as well as having orthodox concept about the role and duties which must be fixed and perform by husband and wife. The Indian women novelists aim to confront the various issues and problems which
are emerging out of this particular change in roles. In reference with this issue R.S. Pathak comments that-

The predicament of working women as projected by them is still worse, constantly aggravated by their problems of marital adjustment and their quest for assertion of identity.\(^{(4)}\)

Shashi Deshpande pays attention more on the dilemmas and various problems and consequences of the educated, employed Indian women who belongs to middle class family. She explores through her novels the unuttered silence, undisclosed darkness. She zestfully attempts to tear off the facade romanticism attached to the marriage and portray the true picture that lies behind it. She comes to bare fact when she remarked in her novel-

Behind the façade of romanticism sentiment and tradition what was marriage after all, but two people brought together after cold blooded bargaining to meet, mate and reproduce so that generations might continue. \(^{(5)}\)

Shashi Deshpande’s fiction is mostly concerned with man- woman relationship, their formal bonding with each other, marriage and the other relationships that are formed due to marriage. Her novels present an interesting assemblage of female protagonists, who suffers within the framework of marriage. Jasbir Jain pointed out about this reference –

Marriage locates itself a romance, sexuality and social environment. Several marriages in the novels of Deshpande are built around the initial principle of attraction and in themselves indicate a rebellion on the part of the women. \(^{(6)}\)
Her depiction about the women suppression, suffocation through their bonding with their husband is very acutely matches with the contemporary Indian society.

2.2.1 Jaya- Mohan Relationship in That Long Silence :-

Shashi Deshpande’s novel- That Long silence entirely revolves around the anxious, uncertain bonding between husband and wife named Jaya and Mohan. The anxious bonding due to the difference in their personalities, their ways of thinking, their ways of perception and their attitude, view to look at things which are totally opposite. Mohan, the husband is a practical and rational person. He thinks about everything in terms of return. For his point of view nothing is important than his career, success, lifestyle, status and of course, his material success. He never tries to understand Jaya- his wife, who is a sensitive human being. She gives more importance to the relationships and bonding with her dear ones. She is having not much interest in materialistic world in which her husband, Mohan totally involved. She likes simple things in life such as the advertisement shown before the film in the theatre. She express her feelings-

*The kind with the endearing moustache of milk, the tender, smiling mother rubbing vicks on her son’s chest; the even younger mother feeding her baby with farex, her brother and sister running hand in hand to adoring, smiling parents and chocolates. I loved them all. Those cosy, smiling, happy families in their gleaming homes spelt sheer poetry to me. For me, they were the fairy tales in which people live happily ever after.* (7)

The background of Jaya and Mohan mould their personalities. Both of their family backgrounds are different. The protagonist, Jaya had a safe and
secure family and a loving father to take care of her and encourage her. She has her elder brother named Dinkardada with whom she has a healthy and sharing bonding. On the other hand, Mohan has gone through totally contradictory life. He has faced poverty. He has seen his father, who is a drunkard, being irresponsible person towards his family. He had seen his mother working very hard for her household and family, till death approached to her. All these consequences faced by Mohan, naturally he knows the real worth of money and the status that money bring in society. As he grown up zestfully strives for earning money and status regardless of any other thing. According to his opinion that only by earning money he is being responsible towards his family. But all his efforts for earning money and status affects on another side of his life and that is maintaining relationships means he becomes failure to understands the other necessities of family such as communicating, sharing and developing themselves through the psychological support. In another words he become failure to maintain the emotional bonding with his family members and of course, its importance in the life.

The isolation between the protagonist Jaya and Mohan goes on widening. He has certain conceptions about his wife, based on the relationship between his parents and what his mother has done for their family. After marriage of Jaya and Mohan, when for the first time there was a quarrel between them; she comes to knows about his shocks and also learns that-

*Later, when I know him better, I realized that to him anger made a woman ‘unwomanly’* (8)

On this particular situation Mohan, the husband also express his opinion about his mother’s ideal behaviour. He had told Jaya-
My mother never raised her voice against my father, however, badly he behaved to her. *(9)*

According to the expectation of Mohan, Jaya also quiet aware some of them and she reply-

*I had learnt to control my anger after that to hold it on a leash. Terrified of his disapproval, I had learnt other thing too, though much more slowly, less painfully.* *(10)*

With reference to above mentioned reply by Jaya, it is clear that she strives to fit herself into the tailor- made conceptions of Mohan about the wifehood, and of course about womanhood. And its result is the suffocation, asphyxiation, anger, the uneasiness that experienced Jaya and that cause of her ‘long silence’.

Jaya, the protagonist is the representative of a new generation, who will not adhere to the old traditions of keeping silent. Basically she is not a person, who accepts the silence unquestioningly. But her first outburst of anger and its impact on Mohan, that he is shocked about it, makes Jaya learn silence for the rest of her life. Jaya’s grandmother ‘ajji’ once said to her that she feels sorry for the husband of Jaya and when Jaya asked about the reason, in return ajji had asked question to Jaya that-

*Look at you- for everything a question, for everything a retort, what husband can be comfortable with that?* *(11)*

But Jaya has realized about this strange question of ajji many years later and she expressed-
I had neither any question nor any retorts for Mohan now and there was no comfort. So many subjects were barred that the silence seemed heavy with uneasiness. (12)

Jaya had created a very different concept about marriage and husband. She looks at Mohan and her marriage as her career, her profession and her means of livelihood. She admits this fact and comments that-

‘I know you better than you know yourself’. I had once told Mohan, and I had meant it; wasn’t he my profession, my career, my means of livelihood?’ Not to know him was to admit that I had failed at my job. (13)

The marital life of Jaya and Mohan is as if a play on the stage they performed, because in their married life they are playing ‘allotted roles’. This is the main feature of traditional Indian family. The husband, Mohan performs the role of a patriarch man, a head, a ruler, a provider, a person having all rights over the other family members. He behaves as if the main authority of the family. It seems from the incident when Jaya became late from her churchgate home, where Mohan himself asked her to go, Mohan get angry and restless as he had to wait for his wife for sometimes. It is clear from the following remark-

‘I’ve been waiting for over an hour.’ He said even before I could remove my slippers. ‘Didn’t you think of that?’

His words, and even more, have pervish complaining tone gave me a peculiar feeling. These were my lines. It was I who should be saying them. Since we got married, both of us had been serupulous about playing out our allotted roles. But since coming here, I’d often stumbled, forgotten my lines, what it was I had to do next. (14)
Jaya accepts the situation and looks at herself and her husband Mohan as if ‘two bullocks yoked together….’ And she try to convince herself by saying that-

*I can’t fool myself. The truth is simpler. Two bullocks yoked together…. it is more comfortable for them to move in the same direction. To go in different directions would be painful; and what animal would voluntarily choose pain?* (15)

The emptiness is arrived into the lives of Jaya and Mohan after the arrival at the Dadar flat, due to some consequences. The illustration of those consequences is mentioned by Jaya as follows-

*The truth was that we had both lost the props of our lives. Deprived of his routine, his files, his telephone, his appointments, he seemed to be no one at all; certainly not that man, my husband, around whose needs and desires my own life revolved. There was nothing he needed, so there was nothing for me to do, nothing I had to do. My own career as a wife was in jeopardy. The woman who had shopped and cooked, cleaned, organized and cared for her home and her family with such passion…… where had she gone? we seemed to be left with nothing but our bodies, and after we had dealt with them we faced blackness. The nothingness of what had seemed a busy and full life was frightening.* (16)

The protagonist, Jaya expressed her opinion in a very simple but straightforward manner. She said that generally they both live on two different levels – bodily existence and emotional—intellectual existence both are
interwined. But if one is disturbed, it disturbed the other one too. At that moment when both of them feels about emptiness i.e. of nothingness.

Many predicaments came in the married life of Jaya because of them she feels suffocated. All those consequences happen only due to her husband Mohan’s orthodox thinking and behaviors. Jaya becomes find herself totally shattered after Mohan leaves the house with immense fury. Initially, she is confused and unable to link the things, incidents and people with one another in her life. For many days, she keeps on thinking of herself, Mohan, their married life and her career. While contemplation of all these various aspects of her married life, she comes to know and understanding of her own self and tries to find out the true answers to some of the disturbing problems of her life. At this stage now, she has think about the reason that why she has stopped writing stories. She expressed-

“I had been scared- scared of hurting Mohan, scared of jeopardizing the only career” I had, my marriage. (17)

At this peculiar moment she admits that-

The truth came to me. I hadn’t stopped writing because of Mohan; I could not possibly make Mohan the scapegoat for my failures, for I had written even after that confrontation with him—stories that had been rejected stories that had come back to me, stories that I had hidden in this house. (18)

Jaya makes herself strong enough to face the truth however hard it is. This insight and understanding helps her to look at her relationship with her husband in a different way with its realistic aspect.
As a person, Mohan is a materialistic man and is indifferent to things around him, which are worthless for him and did not matter to him much more.

\[\text{........... this indifference to things that did not concern him had always been part of him.} \text{ (19)}\]

He is not interested and not noticed about all those things which his wife did about the surroundings and the people around. But slowly situation changes and gradually a change come over him since they came to stay in the flat of Dadar with reference to that-

\[\text{What was new was the frightened man who looked out from behind this wall of indifference. All his assurance had deserted him.} \text{ (20)}\]

Mohan, who used to be a man of confidence and authority, had now become a sad and obsessed man reconciled to failure, which Jaya had came across in Graham Greene’s books. Jaya blames Mohan for shaping her according to his needs as if she is the playing instrument-

\[\text{........ a savage anger began mounting in me. Yes, it was all Mohan’s fault, I had shaped myself so resolutely to his desires all these years, yet what was I left with now? Nothing. Just emptiness and silence.} \text{ (21)}\]

The protagonist, Jaya represents the rebellion, evolution into a new pattern of Indian family, while Jeeja, Jaya’s maid, who belongs to lower stratum of society and deprived of education, is the content with ‘existence’, Jaya is not while Jeeja represent convention.
The frightening change in the behaviors of Mohan at different situations is resulted that Jaya has restored to silence. But after a long contemplation, Jaya decides to put the silence away from her life because this silence is widening the isolation between Mohan and herself. It does not allow them to confront each other with their inner feedback. On the contrary, it makes compulsory them to play the allotted roles: Mohan- as an active ruler, and Jaya- a submissive, passive ruled. At one point, Jaya arrives at a firm decision related with it and remarks –

*But it is no longer possible for me. If I have to plug that ‘hole in the heart’, I will have to speak, to listen, I will have to erase the silence between us.* (22)

Thus Jaya resolve to depart from the allotted conventional role. In the family construct this is an indication of the transitional phase. Mukta, Jaya’s neighbour once expressed her opinion in this regard. She said that people don’t change themselves. On this Mukta’s expression Jaya thinks quiet differently-

*People don’t change, Mukta said. It is true. We don’t change overnight It’s possible that we may not change even over 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.* (23)

Jaya gives the clue with this note of optimistic attitude that she is going to make her life better and their husband- wife companionship more meaningful. For this deed gradually Jaya and Mohan will try to bring change in themselves.
Deshpande’s protagonist Jaya in the novel *That Long Silence* accepts that marriage as a natural consequence in the life of growing up of a girl child. In this reference Jaya comments that-

*It was not love, but marriage that was the destiny waiting for us.*

(24)

At the time of arrangements of Jaya’s marriage with Mohan the various issues that are discussed such as the girl’s education, her complexion and the boy’s family and his job. By occupation Mohan is an engineer and that is the most important thing for the sake of Jaya’s brother; while Jaya’s mother disapproves to the Mohan’s family which is an orthodox and conventional one. At this particular and most turning point of the life of Jaya there is no importance is given to the likings and expectations of the woman concerned. Jaya, the protagonists opinion about marriage is only to getting away from the present world of dependence. Moreover, no dowry has been demanded because Jaya is educated. Mohan is young, handsome and well-settled bachelor, so what else is there to look for or settle in an arranged marriage? However, the decision is made by the male, Mohan. Jaya is well aware that the decision had nothing to do with her point of view. She remarks-

*the truth is that he had decided to marry me. I had only to acquiesce.* (25)

A very major question regarding the issue of marriage is raised by Jasbir Jain. She asked-

*What happens to the idea of love in such arrangement? The two who are bound together are strangers; it is only the body that has a*
reality, and the body, too, is unfamiliar. Physical intimacy takes them unawares. The whole romantic atmosphere, which is created through folklore, myths, movies and lyrics, through the emphasis of ceremonies and conventional role expectations, is a socio-cultural phenomenon to render the strangers acceptable. (26)

As per the above mentioned remarks by Jasbir Jain, in the novel That Long Silence too male expectations differs from female ones. Jaya expect that closeness between them will come gradually, but this is not happen in case of Mohan. According to him, closeness was extremely simple thing-

We were married, we were husband and wife, so everything, according to him, was permissible. (27)

After marriage Jaya truly realizes that the reality is totally different from the dream world.

all those vague longings, all those suppressed thoughts, all those whispers, the hints, even the things we had so blithely called love and romance. It was then that I had discovered what it was all about- the songs, the poems, the stories: This, I’d thought, feeling his heavy, damp body on mine, this is the real truth. (28)

For female, marriage is one type of bond, but it is not necessarily the same kind of bond means some women are protected by it, some create their own space, while others are weary by the dependence and the bondage it imposes on them. Even though marriage is valued by society because widowhood circumscribes a woman’s life and it considered inauspicious. Jeeja, in ‘silence’ gives worth to her ‘mangalsutra’ realizing fully that she is
supporting by a burden. Jaya’s husband is a drunkard person and naturally have not at all able to look after his family. He is not a wage earner, even though he protect his wife Jeeja from the staring of other persons.

In the novel- *That Long Silence* Shashi Deshpande delineates the figure of a husband as ‘a sheltering tree’ in a several way. As if sheltering trees functions better for the protection, insulation and isolation of other small plants and do not allow anything to grow beneath them; they performs the role of a wall in between self and the world. Jaya, the protagonist experiences all these similar feelings and emotions as she sees her mother being widowed after her father’s death and she herself felt inhibited by Mohan’s dream, which imprisons her and of course reduce her area of freedom. The job she had wanted to take up, the baby she was willing to adopt, the anti-price campaign she had wanted to join, none of these various tasks undertaken or completed. Still when her husband, Mohan goes away from her for sometimes, she becomes terribly uneasy, because she is always overcomes by a fear of his having abandoned her or leave her alone. In her own words, Jaya expressed-

> *Was it impossible for me to relate to the world without Mohan? A husband is like a sheltering tree.* (29)

She thinks of herself that how would people have behaved or look at her in case they comes to know that she was an abandoned wife by her husband. She thinks that-

> *With pity? Contempt? Or, most frightening thought, without that barrier Mohan had raised between me and the other men.* (30)

Perhaps always woman is divided herself into two selves, one that wants freedom, the other one that wants to belong to. One of the two has to yield. For Jaya, her married name Suhasini indicates the presence of ‘others’. Into the
Jaya, Suhasini had taken birth at the moment of her marriage and had followed the cultural stereotype of being a ‘good’ wife. But as a writer, she finds self expression, anger and experiences towards social and gender injustice she begins to cast off the role of Suhasini, which was in any situation starts to cracking. She was a wife, a possession; an object owned and expected to fall in line. Jaya begins to ‘see’ herself, as she distances herself from this image-

….. the woman I had seen in the mirror the day of our wedding- a woman who had not seemed to be me, who had taken the burden of wifehood off me. A humourless, obsessive person. But Mohan’s eyes, as he spoke of her, were agonized, the eyes of a man who had lost a dear one. Suhasini was dead, yes, that was it, she was the one Mohan was mourning, She’d walked into the sea at last. No, the fact was that I’d finally done it- I’d killed her. (31)

According to Deshpande’s view- marriage makes various contradictory claims on the individual- irrespective of the gender. On the other side, it is based on domination of the other with the idea of female surrender and subordination built on it. The other one is the romantic conception of love is perceived as an essential face of expectation and desire. Again while it is the man who decides and works for the position he wants in society. On other side it is the woman who had to act and dress accordingly as if she is his playing doll. In the public view, married couples are seen as a unit which is inseperable. It is not just a power relation, it is also a power game where each person is striving for to define and explains others territory of freedom and choice. While individuals are different in their responses to the claims of this relationship.

In Shashi Deshpande’s novel- Roots and Shadows, she depicts the character Akka, who displayed an immense strength she had stayed on till the death of her husband, clearly defining her territory and not ready to get out of
the marriage. While Indu’s aunt, Atya is not so strong and takes a back position in her widowed state. The other female character Kaki yields on social issues, but defends the right to choose a suitable husband for Mini, her daughter.

Regarding the structures of marriage, Jasbir Jain makes a candid observation-

*Myths, cultural models, romantic songs and movies help a woman to accept the structures of marriage, but there are no role models available for managing life without a husband. A single woman is constrained in many ways, a widow is limited in her social sphere and a woman abandoned by her husband has no justification for living. Jaya recalls that though there had been no dearth of advice when she had got married, nobody had bothered to tell her what to do when a marriage is over and marriages, like any other human relationship, can be ‘over’ and done with through other means than death or abandonment. Widowhood may be an ‘empty space’ in the middle of the forehead where the kumkum had been applied, but loneliness in wifehood was a far more desperate loneliness, which belied the outward reality. It was an in between space without any markers. Husbandlessness, in any form is perceived as personal failure to attract a husband, or keep him, or failure to look after him.*

2.2.2 Vanitamami- Chandumama Relationship in *That Long Silence-*

There is no any sense of companionship between Vanitamami and Chandumama throughout their life span but even though the aspect marriage that has brought and live together to these two people forever. Their household was dominated by Chandumama’s mother, the Ajji at the time of their marriage. After the death of Chandumama’s mother the household was controlled by
Jaya’s mother. His wife, Vanitamami has experienced no freedom in her married life. Even she could not have the clothes of her own choice. In other words she never seemed to have a life of her own choice-

*Perhaps the truth was that Vanitamami had never known what it was to choose. Since the day she got married she like the rest of Ai’s family, was dominated and ruled by that ghoul, her mother-in-law, my other – ajji. Even Vanitamami’s Saris were chosen for her by the old women. Later, there was Ai, who went back to her old home after Appa’s death; there still is Ai.* (33)

While Vanitamami’s husband, Chandumama becomes totally passive towards her. He did not interest and expresses his love towards her. It clears that he had his extra marital affair. Vanitamami was a person whom neither her husband nor her in-laws loved and cared for. Even though she keeps her unhappiness in the fold of an envelop of her mind. She invested her love and care with her pet cats and for Kusum, the daughter of her sister. She expresses her feelings-

*Dada and I wondered whether they’d told her, ‘if your husband has a mistress or two, ignore it; take up a hobby instead- cats, may be, or your sister’s children.* (34)

Vanitamami’s love and care is only showered on Kusum and not on any of her other nieces and nephews. About this act Jaya surprised and becomes curious. She comments that-

*Why poor, childless Vanitamami had taken to the feeble, spiritless Kusum of all her sister’s brood is a mystery. Perhaps Vanitamami*
had felt a kindred spirit in Kusum, both of them born failures, born losers. (35)

Though Vanitamami becomes ignored by other family members, but she had managed to have her own way about Kusum, who initially was very much afraid of Chandumama, but later became a part of the family. Actually Vanitamami becomes childless and desperately wished to have one. She did many solutions but she couldn’t conceive a child and becomes mother. Naturally she bestow her love fully only on her niece- Kusum.

But one fact was inescapable- the two weak females, Vanitamami and Kusum, had managed to have their way; inspite of Chandumama and other- ajji, Kusum became a part of the family- part of our lives, too, when we want to live in Ambegaon after Appa- died. A hard-won victory----(36)

Jaya reminds that Vanitamami’s desperation for conceiving a child of her own made her follow the routine of fasts and pujas and other various rituals. In Jaya’s words

Mukta’s fasts reminded me of Vanitamami’s pujas and fasts. Perhaps Vanitamami had begun the discipline when there had still been the hope in her of having children; but she had gone on with her fasts, her ritual Circumambulations of the tulsi plant, of the peepul tree, even when their aim had gone beyond her reach, when her uterus had shrivelled and her ovaries atrophied. May be it had become a habit by then, a habit she could not forsake. Or may be, the thought occurs to me now, it had been a kind of flaunting in Ai’s face of her auspicious wifehood, as opposed to Ai’s inauspicious widowhood. (37)
Vanitamami has always gone through a subtle mental agony, predicament, suppression and a secondary place at home because of, her mother-in-law initially and later because of Jaya’s mother, her sister-in-law. In a way, it is Vanitamami’s turn now to pay back to her sister-in-law in a very subtle way for what Vanitamami had gone through. Here ‘auspicious wifehood’ becomes a weapon for Vanitamami, to take revenge on her sister-in-law against her ‘inauspicious widowhood’. Thus she represents all of those Indian women of yesteryears who were dominated by their in-laws lived a life devoid of love, whose husband preferred to leave them back at home for the mistresses outside.

The character depiction of Vanitamami seems to be a weak character yet she is full of strength who gives support to her niece, Kusum, who is a born failure. Another feature of her character is, she is not bitter or cruel, deceitful. She doesn’t blame others for the void in her life. She knows the ways of the world and accepts almost all of them. She is not rebellious in nature even though she knows how to make a thing work, when she wishes it to work. In that view she is a clever person.

Vanitamami though a meek and secondary character portrays an important dimension of Indian women’s lives; who were dominated and suffered from senior family members. Her husband Chandumama though never interested in her and loved her in his youth, shows concern for her health in the later part of their married life. The failureness in their relationship occurs due to that they were at different levels when they got married; so naturally they were totally dislikes each other. The reasons for lack of sharing in their relationship and lack of communication are their distinct social and educational backgrounds; different expectations about the life-partners and what they wanted to achieve from life.

2.2.3 Aai- Appa Relationship in That Long Silence:
The relationship of Aai- Appa in *That Long Silence* is seems to be a pleasant one. This relationship is not an elaborate one, naturally readers gets to know very little about it. It seems that Jaya’s father Appa has married a girl of his own choice, a Marathi- speaking girl, and not of the choice of his mother a Kannada girl. The relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is not so good and becomes scornful. The result is that Appa, Jaya’s father decides to live in a separate house away from his parental house. Emotionally he is more close to his mother than his other brothers are. Therefore this is very hard decision for him but his decision states that he loves and cares for the happiness of his wife. He is a man who belongs to the transitional phase. He evolves a personal solution to an old age problem. It might have been a wise decision in those circumstances for him. Every day he goes to meet his mother, travelling back and forth those three miles to his mother’s house riding his bicycle.

Jaya realizes now how he has been torn between these two women whom he loved most and who dominated his life. Jaya remembers sitting in front of his bicycle ‘snugly enclosed by his arms’ while going to meet her grand-ma on his bicycle. Jaya thinks bitterly that Appa’s wife and his mother are responsible for his death as it was he who suffered most in the process. According Jaya’s opinion—

*No more sitting on his cycle before him, snugly enclosed by his arms, feeling him pant as we come to one more incline. Appa cycling three miles into town to see Ajji and three miles back home to Ai again, cycling between the two women, up and down the undulating roads, his heart pumping furiously. Yes, that’s right, they were responsible for his death, those two women. Ai and Ajji.*
After Appa’s death, Jaya’s mother plans to sell the house and come back to her mother’s house in Saptagiri. Jaya’s mother seems to settle down comfortably in her mother’s and brother’s house. Jaya is a bit uncomfortable about her mother’s ease with which she has learnt to live her new life without her husband.

But there was Ai…….. Ai who had learnt to live without Appa; Ai who, when her marriage was over, had gone back to her home in Ambegaon as if her twenty years with Appa in Saptagiri had been only on interlude. (39)

According to Jaya’s opinion her Ai has forgotten her husband, Appa and of course their happy married life together. So Jaya complaints about her Ai. Her complaint is very much heart touching. She complaints….

I thought of her room in Ambegaon. There was nothing of her married life in it except one large, framed photograph of Appa’s that seemed to glare at you menacingly as you entered her room. At some time Ai had hung a sandalwood garland round it. I had lifted it idly one day and a swarm of mosquitoes had buzzed out angrily at me. I had removed the garland then, and Ai had not even noticed its absence. Twenty years and nothing left. (40)

Jaya’s father, Appa was a responsible man of family. He tried to extend happiness to his wife and children. He tried to be a good – responsible son, husband and father. He was a frank, open- minded and jolly fellow and always likes to spread happiness around him. Obviously Aai- Appa relationship was not darken by the shade of suppression, suffocation, injustice done to anybody in the partnership therefore the tone is happy. Thus, Appa’s married life is totally
different from other married people around him like Chandumama-Vanitamami, Mohan- Jaya and other married couples life depicted in the novel.

2.2.4 Geeta- Dinkardada Relationship in That Long Silence :-

In this present novel Deshpande delineates very little reference about Geeta. Almost she is absent throughout the novel and just peeps through the thoughts of Jaya and her Dinkardada, the eldest brother. Who left India and all of his relatives- mother, sister and younger brother? He has left behind all his responsibilities towards them and walked ahead to concentrates only on his self progress and leads towards his own care-free, progressive life with his wife Geeta and Children. He is looking after a family consisting of wife Geeta and two daughters. At present they have status, money and freedom but even though there is something lacking, widening gap and isolation in between Dinkaradada and Geeta. According to Vanitamami, he is ‘A simple boy’. Jaya thinks differently about her brother as per her experience and observation. Jaya comments about Dinkardada that-

\[
Dada \; simple? \; If \; he \; is \; only \; what \; he \; seems, \; he \; is \; that \; rare \; thing, \; a \; simple \; man, \; with \; no \; complications \; or \; subtleties \; about \; him. \; But \; a \; man, \; who \; has \; so \; successfully \; evaded \; any \; kind \; of \; involvement \; with \; people \; all \; his \; life \; can \; not \; be \; that \; simple. \; I \; often \; thought \; of \; the \; way \; he \; had \; kept \; Ai \; at \; a \; distance \; after \; Appa’s \; death, \; when \; she \; had \; showed \; signs \; of \; learning \; on \; him. \; And \; the \; way \; he \; had \; kept \; me \; at \; arm’s \; length \; too, \; so \; that \; I \; had \; turned \; to \; Mohan. \; And \; Geeta….. \; why \; was \; she \; so \; tense \; and \; seemingly \; unhappy, \; for \; ever \; swallowing \; tranquillizers? \; Certainly \; such \; a \; man \; could \; not \; be \; simple! \; \text{ (41)}
\]

Dinkardada is a representative of those man, who run away from their responsibilities. After a long time Jaya comes to know the real features of her
elder brother’s personality. He is becomes a very selfish person and always keeps himself aloof from the people around him. He even not interested only those people who loved him and feels need of him at an arm’s length. He becomes afraid of their love which he thinks might be an unbearable binding. As a result at a later stage he changes into a different person. Jaya remarks that.

_No, not the same old Dinu. A frightened man, afraid of loving, afraid of dying…_ (42)

Every strong and healthy relationship is based on love and affection; sharing of pains and difficulties and a strong sense of belief in each other. Dinkar in fact seems to be afraid of loving. He does not consent himself to reach out in any bonding with others. He is always reluctant to give others a feeling that he is or will be always there for them. He does not allow others to lean on him in the times of need. His unwillingness to admit himself to be a frank, sharing and understanding relationship seems to be one of the factors which mars the total happiness of Geeta- Dinkar’s bonding. The sense of sharing gives one the strength to face life with its problems it gives the warmth of togetherness. Sharing of feelings, thoughts and emotions and support to each other brings companionship in a relationship of husband and wife and not a sense of compelling of ‘two bullocks yoked together’. This sharing and supporting act of husband and wife gives a sense of complacence to both of them.

But Dinkar’s wife, Geeta has gain everything in her life- a stay abroad, status providing by husband, money and freedom, all physical comforts. Yet she is not complacence fully with her married life that she needs tranquilizers to sleep. This couple lacks the sense of warmth of togetherness, companionship and confidence, belief in their bonding.
2.2.5 Marriage : An Imbalanced Bonding in *That Long Silence* :-

According to an Indian context the married woman always follow the orders and expectations of her husband in any circumstances. She must have been circumscribe herself into the rules and regulations of her husband because first of all they have the mythical examples of the greatest ancient devotees Sita, Savitri and Draupadi in front of their eyes. The reference related with this issue is as follows:

* Sita following her husband into exile, Savitri dogging Death to reclaim her husband, Draupadi stoically sharing her husband’s travails… *(43)*

Through an Indian society context all these various ideals, an idols are set up and every single woman is expected to follow their ways of life. Means ‘woman ought to follow and not to lead’ this remark is aptly suitable for this situation. All these women are the representative of code of behaviour which Indian society expects from the married women and it is comparatively easy to follow the wishes of the husband than to contradict them and ask for a conflict on the part of a woman. A married woman is always advised by her paternal family about the importance of husband and duties of a wife. Jaya received this advise in abundance while Vanitamami was the first one who said ‘A husband is a sheltering tree.’ then Ramukaka, in his pompous head of the family manner had given the advise to Jaya that all the happiness of her husband Mohan and his family depends entirely only on her. Jaya’s Dada also advised her that be good towards her husband, when she was leaving Ambegaon after her wedding.

The subordination of wife towards her husband revealed through Ravi when he asks Jaya to meet his wife, Asha, who has gone to stay with her father as a result of a quarrel between them. Ravi expects from Jaya to talk with his
wife, Asha to bring her back to her husband’s home. Ravi represents a traditional Hindu male brought up in a typical Indian set-up.

Being a sensitive woman, Jaya is consciously aware of how women’s lives are affected by wifehood or widowhood in an Indian context. Jaya tries to define these two phenomena with reference to her Ai, i.e. wifehood and widowhood.

*Ai was a widow. There was something positive, something definite about widowhood. Ai looking earnestly into the mirror, applying her kumkum with the tip of her ring finger, gently spreading the red power, making the circle larger and larger and finally a large, perfect red circle shining in the middle of her forehead- that was marriage. And then the blankness, the empty space- how large Ai’s forehead was, how white and bony- that was widowhood. A clean, definite line between the two.* (44)

In an Indian society marriage has been looked upon as a measure of security for a woman. This peculiar attitude is impacts very clearly through the character, Jeeja. While Jeeja pleading Jaya to come to the hospital and talk to the doctors about the treatment of her son, requests Jaya to save his life for Tara, has young wife. According to Jeeja’s opinion that even Tara’s husband may be a drunkard person but as long as he is alive, no one will dare to cast an eye on Tara and if in case he is dies she is the young and foolish person in the society. As per her opinion the existence of a husband is the ultimate necessity for a woman. Jeeja scolds very harshly to Tara when she blames Rajaram for torturing her and her children. Jeeja scolds and said that due to Tara’s drunkard husband the kumkum on her forehead becomes safe. A married woman with a ‘kumkum’ is supposed to be respected and not molested in a social code. In case of middle class society this way of thinking is always experiences.
A woman is in contact to the world outside mostly through her husband, except to the only close friends and the relatives of her parental family. Jaya is annoyed to this experience when she meets Dinkardada’s friend Dr. Vyas. After discussion of a few words about past days and the patient, Rajaram, while taking leave, Dr. Vyas invites Jaya to visit his home and comments that---

‘With your husband, of course’- What did he mean by that? Was it impossible for me to relate to the world without Mohan? A husband is like a sheltering tree…. (45)

It means being a ‘wife’ to shut off almost all the possibilities as a person for a woman. It clears that a mere possibility of a limited personal growth in accordance with the wishes, needs and whims of a husband. After marriage woman’s identity is inculcated in one word. ‘you are his wife.’ On this issue Jaya muses that-

Once as a child, when we had come to Bombay, I had written my name in the sand on the beach, taking infinite pains over the writing. How stunned I’d been a little later to see nothing there. There was just blankness, the sea had erased everything. ‘you are his wife.’.. (46)

According to this Jaya’s thinking she feels that marriage almost annihilates the identity of woman, a wife. It negotiates her existence as an individual and as a human being, allowing her to live merely as a wife and a mother and with all those roles given to her by marriage.

2.2.6 Indian Society’s Patriarchal Pattern: Women’s Suffocation in That Long Silence :-
Shashi Deshpande’s novel- That Long Silence with it’s central content and its characters reveals an orthodox patriarchal pattern in the set-up of Indian society. All the female characters occurs secondary place as compare to male characters. Most of the time they are expected to be passive, absent and silent at the time of power structure and decision-making. On the contrary when the matter of responsibility rises, that are about family, children, household work, then the women are pushed at the forefront. Almost all the duties and contribution of man- woman in their family becomes totally imbalance in this novel, as we observe, in an Indian social set-up.

All the rights and power is always centralize only in the hands of man. Even the right to select a name for a girl or a new-born child is always of a man, either he be the father (Appa for ‘Jaya’) or he be the husband (Mohan for ‘Suhasini’ that is instead of Jaya. This is the orthodox transformation of the role of a daughter into of a wife. Suhasini believed like the sparrow believed in being at home, taking care of the home and kid, keeping the rest of the world outside her home. But after experiencing life, Jaya reaches a few steps further when she comes to know that now she is better and safety is always unattainable, obviously she is never safe. Shashi Deshpande’s almost all the protagonists including Jaya comes to this realization at the end. They understand the situation better, accept the destiny and keep step ahead to live with it, of course at the end of the novel.

Since ages the duties and roles of female, especially of wives are fixed. They are being inculcated in to women since they are ‘girls’. If one is not expert in these ways, she is ‘misfit’ into this pattern. After marriage, when Jaya goes to Mohan’s house for the first time, she has been made aware of the role of a woman and duties of a wife.

It was when I first visited his home that I had discovered how sharply defined a woman’s role was. They had been a revelation to
me, the women in his family, so definite about their roles, so well trained in their duties, so skillful in the right areas, so indifferent to everything else. I had never seen so clear, so precise a pattern before, and I had been entranced by it. (47)

Jaya continuely observes and learns from the women of Mohan’s family though she awares that she is different from them and so is distanced from the rest of them. She always blames to her mother for the cause of not making her ‘expert’ in the womanly ways. Many times she feels guilty and willing to pattern herself as other women. The peculiar change in Jaya is noticeable. The world of girls and women is different from that of men. Men can not even wait for anyone and anything. One day Mohan at the Dadar flat says that he is tired due to the experience of always waiting to Jaya. On the contrary, Jaya thinks of women’s never-ending list of waiting for one thing or the other.

Mohan once narrating the story about his mother. He delineates an incident showing his father’s indifference to his mother’s hard work and his strange dictatorship type behaviour. Once his father came late in night time in a drunkard condition, while the mother was waiting for him, after cooking fresh meal. The children, after finishing their dinner went to sleep. While his father wanted ‘fresh chutney’ which was not prepared and so he threw the thali. The whole food was wasted. Poor mother cleaned the room, pacified the child, who woke up and crying due to the quarrelsome noise of their parents. Mother, who prepared again fresh food, ground fresh chutney without a single word and sat there silently and motionlessly waiting for her husband. At the end Mohan comments that his mother was tough, in those days women were tough. But for Jaya this story was ‘strange’. Jaya’s response to this story is totally different from that of her husband. Jaya being a woman, experiences and understands the predicaments and agonies of her mother. Though Mohan is her son, he has failed to understand his mother’s emotions and feelings because he is a ‘man’
Jaya is disturbed and feels uneasy to see that being a son, Mohan becomes failed to experience his mother’s suffocation, suppression and helplessness, pains of his mother and the injustice done to her by his father. Jaya remarks-

*He saw strength in the woman sitting silently in front of the fire, but I saw despair. I saw a despair so great that it would not voice itself. I saw a struggle so bitter that silence was the only weapon.*

*Silence and surrender.* (48)

As per the above mentioned remark Jaya states the truth that as being a women, she can understands Mohan’s mother better. The predicaments going on in a woman’s mind characterizes the educated women. Values and ethics are being forced only on women and not on men. Jaya recalls that how irritated Mohan used to get when he came home exhausted by the day’s work and Rahul, her son was also never a contented, woke up and cried loudly. Then she had to take Rahul in kitchen to sit there shutting the door behind her. She remembers the each and every minute detail of those nights where the sharing and supporting of those difficult moments with Mohan, would have been a welcome thing for Jaya.

This is the patriarchal pattern of the Indian society which gives consent only to a man to behave freely means for example sleep calmly at the time of his child is crying with hunger and tells the mother that it is only her duty to get up, to take away the child, so that the man’s sleep would not be disturbed and at the same time feed and pacify the child. All these are the responsibilities expected only from the women, even after a hard work of whole day as take care of her children is only a mother’s duty and a father’s duty a little bit.

Once Kamat asks Jaya to use her anguish in the story, which she has written about a young widow and rejected by many magazines. Then Jaya replied that no women can be angry and yet not they heard about any angry
young woman. She explains that women can be silent, passive, but not angry. Further she said that woman can only be hysterical, neurotic and frustrated, even in her own life there is no room for anger and despair. Her life is only full of orders and daily routine. Women always have to obey a rigid, monotonous routine, which lacks a sense of achievements and excitement. Thus Jaya is a fine example of how the society teaches a woman to be remaining silent and just getting on suffocated continuously by the patriarchal family set-up of the Indian society.

2.3 Sarita – Manohar Relationship in The Dark Holds No Terrors :-

Shashi Deshpande delineates various facets related with an issue of marriage in her fictional work. Her novels juxtapose arranged marriages with marriages done by individual’s choice in an act of rebellion. This juxtaposition helps Deshpande to examine thoroughly all the problems at large scale. It places the harsh, realistic world in contradictory with the romantic world.

Deshpande’s novel- The Dark Holds No Terrors provides detail notes about the predicaments of the working and educated middle class woman. This novel dealt with the story of Sarita, lovingly called Saru, who has selected education as a means of to rescue from the hostile surroundings at her family. She joins a medical college, where she comes in contact with Manohar, called Manu. She revolt with her maternal family and in a very rebellious approach, she marries with Manu againsts the wishes of her parents. For Saru, marriage is a kind of revenge that she is willing to take againsts her parents. Shashi Deshpande explores various aspects of this marital bonding. She depicted and juxtaposes the various stages in the life of Manu and Saru to examine thoroughly the factors which are responsible for this disrupted relationship. Basically this novel explains very critical condition of the marriage as if it
standing on the rocks. Premila Paul remarks about the theme and concern of this peculiar novel. She explains—

*The Dark Holds No Terrors by Shashi Deshpande is a totally different novel in the sense that it explodes the myth of man’s unquestionable superiority and the myth of women being a martyr and a paragon of all virtues.*

Saru remains a calm and quiet girl busy with her medical studies even after bogged down by the fear of puberty and the changes taking place in her body. She in a way detested and rejected her being a ‘female’. A feeling of shame of this growing up is carried by her. Saru’s study of Anatomy and Physiology supports her to release herself from the prison of afraidness and shame and enables her to accept herself as a female. This new turn and awakening evokes a drastic change among Saru. In her own words she express her reading—

*I learnt how to dress, to accept the curve of my hips, the slimness of my waist. To take in male stares and admiration with outward equanimity and secret pride.*

Saru meets Manohar through her friend Smita. He is a budding writer and a poet of promise who has an aura of distinction. He is one of the known names, a good student working as a secretary of Literary Association and is associated with various other union. He was the “Life and soul of the dramatic society.” It was not love at first sight among them, but slowly a bond developed between them. Saru unable to believes herself with whatever that was going around her. She grew up with no one to fill up the void of loneliness in her life, while she gives prior to Manohar’s emergence in her life. Her sense of belongingness
remained unfulfilled. Now Manu, for her is the savior, a hero, who is there to rescue her from the shackles of isolation and loneliness. He is the one, for her, who identifies and respects her as an individual, adoring and loving all the inherent qualities in her. For Saru, he appears as the most beloved when he expressed his love for her. She express her feelings in her own words that-

\begin{quote}
It seemed incredible to me that I could evoke an emotion so strong in anyone. That any one could care for me in that way and to that extent. ‘I wake up to thoughts of you’, he told me, ‘and I know why I was born and why I’m alive.’ I thought they were the most beautiful words anyone had ever said. ‘The most beautiful?’ he said with a gentle scorn when I told him so. ‘Listen, I’ll tell you the most beautiful lines ever said by a lover.’

And he quoted, bringing back to my mind the young man who had recited poetry that day, holding all of us enthralled. ‘I long to believe in immortality. If I am destined to be happy with you here… how short is the longest life.’ (51)
\end{quote}

Saru and Manu both of them marry against the consent of her family. It is in this romantic aura that Saru gives herself unconditionally and unreservedly to Manu. This romantic aura continues creating for them only a world of two, ignoring all the ugly realities around them. Being together gives them heavenly feelings. Though they live together in just a single room, in a chawl still marriage was remains a bliss for them. Manu’s job as a lecturer in English in a third rate college could afford only a single room with the corridors smelling of urine, dark- sealed odorous room with unfriendly eyes of women and lascivious stares of men still they created a heavenly joy with their love in marital life.

Saru’s identity as a lady doctor marks the arrival of problems in their happy married life. It was her profession that brought to her respect and
greetings, on the contrary a total ignorance descended on him. Manu was almost totally ignored when Saru was with his company. This esteem and respect made her inches taller than her husband. At first he was the man and she known as his bride now she was the lady doctor and he was known as her husband. This contradiction made Manu a victim of the inflated ego resulting into marital incompatibility. From this moment the true facet of the marital life dawned on her. This Saru’s predicament is explains from the following remarks-

\[
a + b \text{ they told us in mathematics is equal to } b + a. \text{ But here } a + b \text{ was not, definitely not equal } b + a. \text{ It became a monstrously unbalanced equation, lopsided, unequal, impossible.} \quad (52)
\]

Till now Saru is doing her medical practice and Manu is the bread winner, everything going on well. Afterwards it is her economic independence, that Manu feels insecure and the predicaments starts casting shadows on their married life. Due to Saru’s financial stability, now she prefers to more from the one room to a flat which could accommodate them properly. Her profession, to make the matters worst, makes her isolated from Manu. This rift day by day widens due to lack of communication. Manu’s ego is hurt by her success and making him feels inferior. This sense of inferiority makes him to behave brutally. It means he becomes a victim of split personality. A caring, sincere and understanding husband during the day time, on the contrary a monstrous, maniac, a sadist who during the night time ruins her physically as well as psychologically. The novel opens up with the description of one such nocturnal brutal attack of Manu. Saru express her feelings-

Now there was no waking. The dream, the nightmare, whatever it was, continued. Changing now, like some protean monster, into the horror of rape. This was not to be death by strangulation; it was a
monstrous invasion of my body. I tried to move, twisting my body, wriggling under the weight that pinned it down. It was impossible. I was pinioned to a position of an object surrender of myself. (53)

Shashi Deshpande evolves through this novel tracing the problems and the various reasons of the split identity. The fairy romantic story turns the story of a brutal, sadistic mode. She examines thoroughly the causes of this twist through this novel. The treatment and behaviour of Manu emphasizes Saru to hate the word “love”. Once being together was heaven; now it was change into the experience of hell. His sadistic treatment and behaviour forces Saru to recoil from closeness. While Manu considers her rejection of sex as a negligence of him.

Manohar turns out a typical orthodox husband, who prefers to stay a step ahead of his wife. Saru, on her own, to bring back the lost romantic aura, decides to forsake her profession and be a housewife, which Manu disapproves. Saru’s gradual change in her attitude towards their marital life and Manu, her husband corresponds gradually with her neutralness towards sex. Obviously the bonding between them deteriorates. She looks towards sexual act a fifthly word and the entire act of lovemaking as something horrible, inflicting, inhuman insult to her identity. At this point Saru too becomes a victim of split personality- in the day time a doctor wearing an apron and doing practice confidently; on the contrary at night she becomes like “a terrified trapped animal.” She thinks that Manu is only responsible for this predicament. Premila Paul strikes the right note when she says-

Manu is no ordinary male chauvinist. He has absolutely no reservations about treating his wife as an equal and as a person. But when her success begins to highlight his failure he degenerates. In her attitude we find not just an itching for
domination but a total ignoring of Manu. In her self-centred march to progress she nullifies Manu’s existence. (54)

Saru prefers more to go back her father’s house deserting Manu, Abhi and Renu rather than confronting and solving her problems related with married life. But later due to her father’s insistence to confront problems make her realize her fault. She comes to know that by behaving in the manner she did, she has humiliated his manhood. The novel ends with her acceptance to meet him on a note of reconciliation.

Saru’s success in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is held responsible for a deteriorate marriage. On the contrary in the novel *That Long Silence* Mohan holds his wife Jaya is only responsible for his failure. On the basis of these two contradictory situations in both of the novels by Shashi Deshpande, it becomes clear that she transfer her writing strategies from a love marriage to an arrange marriage in *That Long Silence*.

### 2.4 Indu- Jayant Relationship in *Roots And Shadows* :-

Shashi Deshpande’s earlier novel depicted the suffocative, oppressive man-woman bonding that smothering the voice of a woman and ending up into bitterness, pain and hurt on the part of woman. The man who is a representative of patriarchal values, always takes his wife for granted and is never ready to comes to know that she is also an individual having her own ideas, expectations, thoughts, feelings and aspirations. Whatever the “wall-space” that means boundaries that husbands have created for their wives, they try to fit the woman in that boundaries prepared by themselves. Naturally wives becomes gets suffocated due to the imprisonment of their husbands boundaries. Being a traditional Hindu wife, the woman is made to think that it is her duty to obey and follow her husband and always gets suffocated her own self. This lack of communication and lack of understanding between husband and wife makes
‘marital life’ disturb for the sake of protagonists sketched by Shashi Deshpande. This is the main issue of Jaya in That Long Silence; Sarita in The Dark Holds No Terrors forces the same suffocation with bodily oppression. Indu, the protagonist of Roots and Shadows though faces the same predicament in her married life, there is a little bit different shade attached to it her problem is uniquely different and that is her intense love for Jayant, her husband.

Indu brought up in a very typical Hindu joint family, where four generations are living together. She is a motherless child and brought up by Narmada Atya and the other family members very lovingly. While Indu’s father, Gopal is a photographer and moves around for his assignments, very rarely he comes homes to the family and meet his daughter, Indu; once in a year or sometimes once in two years. Yet she never misses her father due to Anant kaka and old uncle’s forever love and support. Indu loves by other elders in the family still she preserves an intense hatred towards Akka for the rude behaviour which Akka exercised on others. Once Akka scolds Indu for talking with a boy in her college library. Due to this incident that Indu decides to leave Akka and the whole family forever. She asks her father to send her in city for her further education. Indu’s father is supportive in nature and sends her in city for education as per her wish. Now Indu stays in a Girls Hostel and feels lonely. She has come away in search of individuality and freedom. She is longing for to leave the family which surrounded her with love as well as boundaries. But now at the time when she is away from the family she feels isolated and alienated. She longs for love and affection, yet she cannot go back as she herself has chosen to be away from home. There is nobody with whom she can share her isolation. At this critical position she comes in contact with Jayant and aware that he is only the good companion for her.
The day I had met him, a burden, the weight of uncertainty, had fallen off me. There had been an absoluteness, a certainty instead. I had known then….. it was this man and none other.

After acceptance of Indu’s proposal to Jayant her uncertainty comes to an end. They both gets married againsts Akka’s wish as Jayant didn’t belong to the same caste. Only her father and Kaka are present for the marriage and both of them are happy for Indu.

Indu’s husband Jayant is a very intelligent, methodical and practical young man. He loves Indu according to his own way. Main problem in between Indu and Jayant is the lack of communication and understanding. Indu cannot express her true self, her expectations and necessities to Jayant. While Jayant is totally unaware of her expectations and feelings and expects her to accept his own ways of life. He perceives her not as an individual, but as his ‘wife’, and on this peculiar turn the problem begins to surface. By suppressing her emotions and expectations and getting suffocating, Indu strives to be on the same level where Jayant wants her to be.

In between the bonding of Indu and Jayant the problem is on two levels. First, it is Indu’s intense love for Jayant and the guilt she experiences for it; while second it is her dissatisfaction about her job and the contradictions of opinion between herself and Jayant related to it. Many times Indu comes to know that she loves Jayant intensely. She is incomplete without him. She expects to share every beautiful moment of her life with him. She thinks that only Jayant gives her sense of completeness. She is uneasy to realize what emotionally she is completely dependent on him.

This is my real sorrow, That I can never be complete in myself.
Until I had met Jayant, I had not known it.... That there was,
somewhere outside me, a part of me without which I remained incomplete. Then I met Jayant. And lost the ability to be alone. (56)

Indu recalls one of the incidents related with her Atya’s traditional opinion. Once her Atya told her that married women worship ‘Tulsi’ to grant death before the death of their husbands. On this Atya’s opinion Indu had laughed and thought that she could never be like these women. Indu criticized them for their ignorance and dependence. At present she observes no difference in between those women and herself. Both expected the same thing and that is unabandoned lives with their husbands. These women did aware very well the pain and agony of widowhood, so they prayed to Tulsi for not to have to face such type of consequence in their lives. Indu also wishes the longer companionship with Jayant as can not imagine any joy without his existence. According to this Indu seems to have forgotten her own existence and individuality. Always she thinks only about what Jayant likes and dislikes and what he will approve of. Though Jayant does not dictate her to do things in his own way, still Indu likes to follow his ways.

Once Indu caught in predicament about Jayant expectations and her own expectations and then she faces the reality when she asks herself a question that why she can’t compromise for what he can give that is deep affection, total and absolute commitment, it is not so, instead of craving for a response that will match with herself. She desires ardently for the ‘complete happiness’. Indu, true to her feminine virtues plays the role of an ideal housewife. But an ideal role of wife circumscribes her self-development, firstly by taking away her freedom of thoughts and expressions and secondly by ignoring the scope of giving free way to her creative potentials.

Rosamarie Tong observes some realities regarding a playing of woman’s role, the comment noted by M.K. Bhatnagar-
Sometimes women play their roles not so much because they have to in order to survive economically and/or psychologically. Virtually, all women engage in the feminine role playing (57)

A perspective comment on Indu’s total surrender makes by Dr. S.P. Swain in following words-

A woman’s responding and relating to other’s needs may distract her from her own sense of identity, of her becoming so fluid as to assume any shape. Indu feels as if she had become so fluid that she has no tangible shape no form of her own, without wants of her own, what is her identity in the family? Indu minus the “I” of course renders her an ideal woman “a woman who sheds her “I”, who loses her identity in her husband’s” (49, Roots), a woman who bears everything without a drop of fear. Marriage has reduced Indu to a state of “total surrender”. (58)

Indu’s dissatisfaction and unhappiness arrives due to the fact that as a husband, Jayant cannot accept his wife to be passionate in love-making. When Indu experiences Jayant’s reaction. She becomes shocked and tries to suppress and gets suffocated by her overwhelming love for her husband. She needs to hide her intense love only because she is a woman. This suppression makes her feel guilty. Indu’s yielding, passion and her emotional intensity finds no place in the sexual relationship with Jayant. Love is an all-enveloping emotions, which doesn’t gives consent to her to express her feelings towards Jayant, her desire and expectation to be with him cannot be explained within a single word. Indu express her overwhelming feelings with herself.
It is so much more, so overwhelming a response of the whole of me
to him. Sometimes I wonder if I will leave him one day and live by
myself. The only way in which I can be myself, my whole self again.
I have even toyed with the idea..... Because I love him too much. (59)

Woman as a subordinate sex is characterized by submission under male
dominance and women tend to develop a tendency to prevail by passive means.
As a girl child Indu finds the roots of this submission in her upbringing. She
explains that as a girl child her parents told her that she must be remain always
obedient and unquestioning, be meek and submissive. When Indu asks the
reason about it and gets the answer that only because she is ‘a girl child’. This is
the proper way for the survival to the women.

Indu very ruthlessly searches for the reason of her own submission to her
husband. She has the strength to admit it to her own self till she reaches at the
point. Indu traces out her journey with Jayant. She remarks that how she learns
the lesson. She confesses that –

When I am see this; he turns away from me. I’ve learnt my lesson
now. And so I pretend I’ am passive. And unresponsive. I’m still
and bead .....so that’s all I am ..........an anachronism. A woman
who loves her husband too much. Too passionately. (60)

Indu tries to suppress her overwhelming love for her husband Jayant and
gets suffocated due to her various experiences related with Jayant reaction. Indu
becomes shocked and feels pain and agony.

In the life of Indu another problematic situation arises due to her
profession. She worked as a journalist. She would like to be creative, but has no
freedom and scope for her creativity in her profession. Instead of that her job
demands her not to be an ‘idealist’ in the first place, and not to be writing about
the stark realities; but to write complementary to those who have influential contacts in society. Indu ridicules for being an ‘idealista’ by her editor. This ridiculous attitude of editor makes disturb to Indu. She shares this disillusionment with her husband Jayant and asks him whether she should resign from the job and Jayant’s response was very much disheartening for Indu. Jayant replied in his own words that –

_That’s Life! what can one person do against the whole system! No point making a spectacle of yourself with futile gestures. We need the money, don’t we? Don’t forget we have a long way to go._

On this rude response of Jayant, Indu expresses her emotions and feelings with herself:

_To go where? I had not asked him. I had quietly gone back to work. Hating it, hating myself. Waking up each day and thinking …….. I can’t go on. Feeling trapped, seeing myself endlessly chained to the long dusty road that lay ahead of me._

The situation and marital life of both of them becomes worse due to the failure of Jayant to experience and understand his wife Indu’s predicament and her dissatisfaction regarding her job. Dr. S.P. Swain looks at Indu’s predicament, restlessness and her non-conformity about her job ‘as the inner struggle of an artist’ to express herself. Dr. S.P. Swain comments that-

_Through the character of Indu, Deshpande is portraying the inner struggle of an artist to express herself, to discover her real self through her inner and instinctive personality. i.e. creative writing ……..he is a barrier of her feminine urge for self expression since_
he believes that one person like Indu can do nothing against the whole system by wielding her pen. (63)

Helplessly, Indu is caught between one of the life’s trappings and fails to reach to any solution of the problem. Indu gets ample time to think over this entire problem after the death of Akka, when she comes back at her maternal home. Almost all the problems of Indu becomes inter-related. She longs for love and affection, caring and sharing. She expects that there should be able to experience and understands the emotions, feelings and expectations of her mind, on the other words identify her thoroughly. But in reality this not happened. She loves Jayant and hates her own self for this unrestrained love, she rejects her body, her womanhood. There is expectation and longing in her for love and understanding. Still she wishes to achieve the sense of detachment. She cannot live without the expectation for freedom and love around her.

In this way, Indu is trapped between very contradictory expectations. After a lot of suffocation, sufferings, contemplation and a painful process of self realization she comes to terms with the reality. In this predicament old uncle and Naren help her. At her bad patch of life they share her feelings, pain, confusions and provide support to her by suggesting an optimistic attitude about how to look at the people and situations perceptively, objectively and realistically. Slowly she becomes ready and prepares herself to accept her own body, her bonding with her womanhood as a reality admits and accepts herself as a human being. She always remembers the important words of old uncle that the whole world is became a creation of interdependent parts, why not she? At this turn she no longer feels ashamed of her need of Jayant. Now she does not long to achieve a sense of detachment and express that it is only for the dead to achieve. Indu becomes independent and takes a few decisions. One of them is she will talk to Jayant about her dissatisfaction related with her job and she will resign the job. Lastly Jayant had to accept her firm decision.
Indu, who used to suffocate and suppressed her expectations and feelings was the cause of trouble for her husband, too. But now as she made things clear to her and decided to project her true self in front of her husband, Jayant, he seems to know her better. By the frankness in their bonding and relationship, Indu has given him a chance to know herself better. This is the process of evolving the new changed Indu, who can assert herself with conviction and without treating her emotions, expectations as a wasteful things. This is an awakening in Indu with which the transition is possible. As a result Indu experiences an ease in their bonding. At the end Indu comes to an understanding that this bonding is not a game like hide and seeks but it is a precious feeling of belief, trust and understanding between husband and wife.

Indu wholeheartedly accepts herself as a human being with her own needs and limitations and there is nothing to be ashamed of her feelings towards her husband, Jayant. The novel ends with a note of affirmation. Indu asserts her individuality as a woman and also as a main partake in the endless cycle of life. Now Indu’s viewpoints are turns into optimistic approach and she looks at life with possibilities of growth. She discovers the real meaning of life in this journey of individualism. O.P. Bhatnagar remarked about this particular turning point of the Deshpande’s protagonists lives. In his own words he explains that-

\[ ........ \textit{in the end comes the realization that freedom lies in having the courage to do what one believes in is the right thing to do and the determination and the tenacity to achieve to it. That alone can bring harmony in life.} \ (64) \]

It is worthwhile to observe that what Shashi Deshande expresses regarding the end of the novel. In her words she remarks that-
For it is true that alternatives are never so neatly laid but choice can never be so definite. Most of us stroll through life; recognizing the crossroads only when we have gone past them. We rarely choose any road deliberately; the choice is most often a chance, a casual one. Sometimes I wonder it for me Indu stood at one of those crossroads, pointing out the way. I’m not certain I choose the road she pointed out to me. Yet each time I look back, there she is, Indu with her pointing finger. May be at any rate, she turned me away from the road of exaggeration, of solemnity. One can always laugh, even at oneself. (65)

2.5 Sumi- Gopal Relationship In A Matter of Time :-

Shashi Deshpande’s novel A Matter of Time is a novel more deeply concerned with the bonding between husband and wife as compare to her other novels. This novel places the marriage of Sumi and Gopal at the centre. It moves to frame the illustrations of other marriages- marriage of Kalyani’s mother Manorama, of Kalyani, of Goda- Kalyani’s friend, of Premi, of Ramesh and others. In the process of examining those relationships many questions are raised and all of them have a tendency to examine the institution of marriage. The novel delineates the relationships of four generations in brief. There is a great deal of social history in the background of the novel. The changes which occur in the law, in the viewpoint about the property of family and in the socio-cultural value structure as well as the changes which have marked the family institution are reflected through this novel.

Gopal’s character is totally different amongst all other male characters depicted by Shashi Deshpande. Mohan is an engineer in That Long Silence, Jayant is a doctor in Roots and Shadows, and Kishore is a sailor in The Binding Vine. While like Manu in The Dark Holds No Terrors Gopal is a college teacher but the similarity between the two comes to an end here. Gopal shares some of
the qualities of Kishore. In a way, he is an extension of Kishore as a husband. Jasbir Jain contemplates that the relationship of Sumi- Gopal can be seen in direct contrast to the Saru- Manu’s relationship. Saru is a doctor, earns enough than her husband. She fights against her mother and proves herself, as a successful woman. Manu has accepted and admitted the luxury that they can afford with Saru’s earnings as a necessary part of his life. On the contrary, Sumi is a low profile person and though the break-up of her parent’s marriage had an adverse effect on her, she does not hold it against them. While Gopal is a person who fights for his principles. For the sake of conservation of his principles he resigns his secure job and moves into a small hired accommodation giving up even the comforts of a modest middle-class establishment. The husband-wife relationship of Sumi- Gopal is a more serious comment on marriage than the earlier novels of Shashi Deshpande. It also questions the tradition sacristan concept of Hindu marriage; on the other hand it is not treated as a contract.

The protagonist of the novel *A Matter of Time* named Sumi is around forty and has three daughters- Aru, Charu and Seema. On the opening of the novel, Gopal tells Sumi that he is leaving the house in very few words. Sumi, who is busy in listening to T.V. songs, listens to him without asking any question. It is as if she expects something more than the explanation of what he said. Both of them have the same feelings for a moment.

At night Sumi goes to bed with a confused state of mind to think over the meaning of the song, which she just listened – ‘Jeena yahan, marna yahan, iske siwa jana kahan,’ This peculiar song represents her own state of mind. She woke up early in the morning with the awakening of truth in her. The following description illuminates her state of mind very clearly-

> Panicked walking as if someone prodded her awake. She finds herself alone in the bed, the pillow by her side is mild and smooth,
the other half of the bed undraped, the blanket still folded. So it is true what he told her. He meant it, he is already done it. (66)

Sumi accepts the reality with infinite patience. She tries to maintain her normal routine only for the sake of her three daughters. The most striking thing about Sumi is that, though she is disturbed, in a state of shock, still she does not reveal her disturbed state of mind in front of her daughters. She does not panic. She is ready with confidence and full of strength to face the consequences in her married life. In a way, she is striving to keep herself undisturbed, knowing very well that she has to stand firmly in this totally unexpected situation. Her predecessors felt helpless in similar type of situation. According to this it becomes clear that Sumi is a modern woman, who does not allow herself to shatter in the critical moments of consequences. Sumi is trying to keep the normality of the routine only for her daughters. When they speak about Gopal she does not show any sign of anguish, as she does not expect for them to feel a sudden shock for what they have lost. Even though Sumi feels something is missing about inertly. Her hiding emotions and feelings explains from further note-

Sumi, despite her façade of normality, has a quality about her- a kind of blankness- that makes them uneasy. (67)

Sumi makes efforts to endure the agony, sufferings, suffocation within herself. She does not want to share it with her daughters. As Saru in The Dark Holds No Terrors, Indu in Roots and Shadows seeks refuge in their parental homes and Jaya in That Long Silence at her flat in Dadar at the peculiar moments of consequences and crisis. Similarly Sumi also accompanied by Shripati, her father and with her daughters comes to her parental house. Sumi decides to face the reality bravely as other Deshpande’s women protagonists
submit themselves to the introspection and rumination to regain the strength and confidence. When Sumi’s father, Shripati comes to take them she moves with her daughters to the Big House. Her one of the daughter Kalyani is shattered to know about the desertion and begins to cry loudly as if animal in pain and agony. And from this moment the girls faces the reality so openly and courageously. For both of them Gopal’s desertion is not just a tragedy but it is both a shame and disgraceful thing.

Naturally all of Sumi’s friends and close relatives do not immediately comes to meet her and also to her daughters. In the context of Indian society, whatever happens in a family, becomes treated as a matter of concern to the extended family members and other close friends, too. Even a cheap person, like Nagi, their maid servant is also started to give advises to Sumi’s daughters related with how to support their mother economically by getting job. Obviously Aru, one of the daughter of Sumi thinks that Nagi’s way of advising it straight out is better than the *deviousness, this circling round the truth* (p.14) by others. According to this still the ray of hope seen in the mind of everybody. The following lines elucidate the state in brief.

> *Each moment they are balanced on the edge of hope; every time the gate creaks; it could be Gopal, each time the phone rings there is the possibility that they will hear Gopal’s voice saying ‘Gopal here’. Even Sumi, despite her apparent stoicism in not immune from this hope. ‘Aru realizes it the day she comes home with Gopal’s scooter and Sumi, alerted by the sound, rushes out. Aru, getting off the scooter, sees the eagerness on her mother’s face, watches the hope dying out. For a moment they stare at each other wordlessly. (68)*
Sumi’s daughters and others are unable to understand her disturbed inner psyche. She is only striving to endure the suffocation, pain and agony ‘wordlessly’. There is awkwardness about the whole thing in her mind which creates discomfort and uneasiness that pervade more than grief and anger. Almost after twenty years of living together has not helped Sumi to understand her husband Gopal completely. With a limitations of human being, Sumi is not able to judge and understand Gopal thoroughly; and still curious and having not any bitterness about Gopal, after his act of desertion. Even though Sumi thinks that she knows Gopal better than anybody else. Sumi had no afraidness about Gopal’s death, when her daughters are worrying about his being dead or alive. On the contrary there is a certainty in her mind about he is being alive, of his steadily pursuing his own purposes. At the same time the others are trying to find reasons for what has done Sumi knows very well that the reason lies inside him. She continuously keep thinking about Gopal, their past companionship the future of her daughters and naturally unavoidably she reach to the question-

What about us, the girls and me? We are here because of his actions : how does this fit in? (69)

Sumi is the only person who bears all the disgrace and humiliation. She does not seek any explanation from Gopal neither on the day of desertion, nor at any time later. However, she desires to ask him only one question.

What is it, Gopal, I will ask him, that makes a man in this age of acquisition and possession walk out on his family and all that he owns? Because, and I remember this so clearly, it was you who said that we are shaped by the age we live in, by the society we are part of. How then can you, in this age a part of this society, turn
your back on everything in your life? Will you be able to give me an answer to this? (70)

Without cursing and blaming to Gopal, Sumi is curious to know, how he has taken the decision of to disown thing and people in this particular age of acquisition and possession. It requires courage, a strong make-up of mind to feel the response she has felt. While on the contrary Gopal is very grateful towards Sumi for not asking any question on his decision and thus saving him much embarrassment and possible mortification of voicing half truths. Even Sumi does not wish to talk about Gopal’s act of desertion with anyone of her friends and relatives. Inwardly Gopal’s desertion has affected on Sumi. Still she doesn’t reveal her feelings it has affected her body and soul. She is striving very hard to battle with this consequence. She is putting in her efforts to survive, but she cannot help the change which has seen over her.

As Sumi and her daughters need to vacate their house, she goes which her daughters to pack up the things. They work in frenzy for a whole day. At night, the girls felt tired and go to sleep on bare mattresses. Till now Sumi had not allowed to the girls, the luxury of thought. Everything seems to settle down for the girls after vacating their father house and shifting all the things in the Big House. Now they have adjusted themselves in the Big House. This is an important role played by the Big House and all the parental houses in the lives of women protagonists of Shashi Deshpande at the moment of consequences which occurs in their lives. These parental houses provided them not only a shelter but also a mental support. The Big House, Kalyani along with Shripati plays a special feature of an Indian family set-up. As per the typical situation in life of Sumi, she is still trying to change herself-

*Sumi is the one who has the air of being lost of having no place in her childhood home. She shows no outward sign of distress, but the*
girls notice a new habit in her, of touching them, holding their hands, smoothing their hair, as if this physical contact is a manifestation of some intense emotion within her. (71)

This ‘touch’ is a solemn declaration of the fact that yet she has her daughters to hold on to. She is zestfully makes efforts to overcome on inner turmoil and make peace with it. For this reason, Sumi tries to keep herself busy in doing household things like working in kitchen to help Kalyani. Gopal’s desertion has created a vast void in Sumi, which she is not able to fill up, with anything else. Gopal has occupied so much ‘space’ in Sumi’s emotional as well as daily life that she feels ‘a vast emptiness’ within her mind without him. She thinks at one point-

...... his absence has left such a vast emptiness that I can’t find my bearings, there are no markers any more to show me which way I should go.” (72)

Sumi is not totally unconscious of the developments taking place in him. As Jasbir Jain comments about the features of Gopal’s nature-

Gopal is not a neurotic person. He is clear- headed and has a strong sense of values. He also has a strong awareness of environmental influences. (73)

According to this remarks Gopal is a follower of his own belief. He realizes the futility of existence. He discloses his awareness of futilenes of life and his consequent loss of faith in it to Premi. It seems that the inner emptiness and existential alienation, which experiences by Gopal can be offered as one of the possible reason for his transformation leading to his desertion of the family.
While Sumi views his desertion as ‘Sanyasa’. However it cannot be equated to the Vedic renunciation or ‘Sanyasa’ and in case it appears to be renunciation, it is skin deep only. This fact is emphasizes by N. Poovalingam-

….. the perception…. That Gopal’s desertion of his family signifies the Vedic renunciation feeling “himself of all bondage”…… is not entirely convincing …… Gopal abandoning the family is not the result of saturation in the worldly life. He is more a withdrawal in pain than a renunciation due to contentment. Moreover, Gopal’s life has nothing to offer in lines corresponding to the other Vedic stages of a man’s life….. His predicament is more akin to the existentialist’s. (74)

The another aspect of marriage that needs to be examined is that the total dependence of the household is only on the male, and it not only an economic dependence but also an emotional one. This peculiar facet puts a question mark on the fourfold division of the Ashramas which gives the husband the choice of moving out of a householder’s life. Men can abandon their wives and children, leaving the dependent to cope as best as they can. Gopal’s desertion collapses the whole family. Sumi needs to vacate the house and look for other means of support first of all she moves into her father’s house. But later when she goes for searching the house on rent; she comes to know that how it is difficult for a female to hire a house, or as in her case, to be able to afford it.

Shashi Deshpande’s novel- A Matter of Time emphasizes on the woman’s problematic condition when she is abandoned not by accident but through the deliberate activities of man. Sumi’s total refusal to take help from her father named Ramesh is totally a matter of her own self respect. That is the right way she can be herself. The feelings of resentment and withdrawal in her three daughters only due to the desertion of Gopal.
The marriage of Sumi and Gopal has been based on the true love and when their eldest daughter Aru is seventeen years old Gopal decides to left the house and whole family and thus walk out from his marriage. Instead of that there is only patience, an immense amount of patience and no any shadow of anger and bitterness in the mind of Sumi. There are no melodrama, no hysterics, no tantrums and none of the conventional reasons. What is only can be disrupt is bonding of husband- wife that is otherwise well adjusted? It is merely a matter of time? Gopal has been through a conflict and crisis in his profession and has resigned from his teaching job, but is the conflict a symptom rather than a cause? What is the reason behind Gopal’s desertion? As he tries to detect the answers, he comes to know that there are several, but they are difficult to communicate. Jasbir Jain’s remark about communication is that-

*Communication is not merely a question of words or of language, but also of receptively and a sharing of perceptions.*

Gopal feels as if he is running out of time. He feels limited and confined by his role as a husband and as a father. He has totally lost his belief in the life he was leading; so naturally reality had become unreal for him, while the second reason lies in his childhood similarly with Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors*. The desertion of Gopal is viewed from several angles. There is Kalyani’s view, which is conventional in nature and has suffered both loneliness and abandonment. She meets with Gopal to commits a request that if there have been any falling on the part of Sumi, he should forgive her. Through the view of Kalyani, it becomes clear that she places Sumi, a wife firmly in the role of a subordinate who has failed to please and understands her husband. The master of the house Kalyani assures Gopal that Sumi will give all her precious jewellery, an assurance of Kalyani reflects the maxims of society that is only in relation with woman.
Aru, the eldest daughter of Sumi, who has shared a bond with her father in her growing years, and who naturally felt dejected and humiliated by Gopal’s desertion comes to him as a adversary, filled with anger and resentment. She wants an explanation over this consequence which she is never gained. Even other people also cannot help her. There is a sense of an emotional loneliness as one has live and dies alone.

Gopal becomes uncomfortable with another incident that is his father had married with his brother’s widow. His disturbed mind tries to think of several possible reasons for this marriage. His inner struggle causes severe inner conflicts. Even his sister Sudha also unable to share his painful realization that no one but his own father ruins his peace of mind completely. Gopal becomes in an abandoned and isolated condition remains for a long duration having the same feeling of desolation and loneliness following explanation made his state of mind very clear-

*Emptiness, I realized then, is always waiting for us. The nightmare we most dread, of walking up among total strangers, is one we can never escape. And so it’s a lie, it means nothing, it’s just deceiving ourselves when we says that we are not alone. It is the desperation of a drowning person that makes us cling to other humans. All human ties are only a masquerade. Some day, some time, the pretence fails us and we have to face the truth.* (76)

Gopal always contemplates about the question that Aru, his eldest daughter had asked him: Why did he get married and have children? Actually he married with Sumi because he felt attracted towards her, in other words, he obsessed by her presence. The another reason is that she was a good girl and his body is also admit with his thinking. But now it is the same body that now suggests him that he could lie and becomes a failure person in his life.
On the contrary, Sumi tries to calm Aru and said that let her father go, because this anger is not good for her health. These words reveals Sumi’s clearcut understanding of people around her and about their lives. There is no anguish and bitterness in her mind. It seems that she has made adjustment with bad patch of life and tries to console her mind and expects from her daughters to do the same by disclaiming their father, by making him free from the emotional bondage of love and support. Sumi is willing to give consent to Gopal to go out of their life despite the agony, humiliation and predicament. She comes to know very well that there must be something disparately so disturbing, that he has leave them alone, so it is better to make him free. When he doesn’t willing to be with them, they should not force him to live with them, with this perspective she permits Gopal to have his own space, to implement his own decisions, to free himself from the bondage of love, because this freedom is his necessity.

Actually Sumi and her daughters need Gopal’s support and love. The warmth of togetherness and he should perform the role of basic pillar of the family are the important necessities of their growing daughters and even though Sumi with a suffocation and suppression is ready to make him free from their bondage. It shows her volumes of strength and courage. His harsh decision has resulted her deep hurt, pain and suffocation and yet she stands firmly with him by accepting his rude decision who does not curses her life partner for ignoring the responsibilities and duties towards their family. She tries to battle with the rude and harsh reality with dignity and calmness.

Sumi, the protagonist slowly doing efforts to adjust with the problematic situations, in her married life. When Gopal’s nephew, Ramesh asked her about the future planning then Sumi answers that she doesn’t know anything. She needs some time for that. After shifting to the Big House, Sumi selects a very distant room for her when Kalyani asked her the reason, Sumi response unutterly that-
Not to lose sight of my loneliness, not to let the empty sound of it be muffled by the voices of other humans during the day, the sounds of their breathing and rustling in the night. It takes time to get used to sharing your life with another person, now I have to get used to being alone. (77)

Sumi is striving hard to get used to her new life which does not include her husband, Gopal for so many years who had been a close part of her life. She still remembers Gopal’s use of the word ‘destiny’, having ‘deeper tinge’. He thinks that our destiny is an inescapable, certain actions and activities are inevitable and each and every human being must have walk on chalked lines, which drawn by their own selves. In a sense Gopal is always nurturing all pessimistic views in his mind so naturally he becomes failure in maintaining his relationships with his family and others.

When Sumi is hunting for a house on rent, she saw the board of a printing press and there she enters and meets Gopal. Ramesh had informed her about Gopal’s house. Gopal is shocked and surprised to meet her. He does not recognize her for a moment, after recognizing he is rather confused to see her after this first meeting Gopal left the home. In this very first meeting after their separation there is an awakening in Sumi that Gopal’s life has moved on within a few minutes. Both of their lives are like two different streams now which will flow on separately. After this stark reality, when she raises her face it is tearless, neutral, barren devoid of mirth and life. Now there can be wordless relationship between them and communication is impossible without words. The understanding is only based on the silence. The message is conveyed to Sumi, not through the means of words but through the deeds, actions and other daily routine matters.

The first meeting of Sumi and Gopal after their separation is remarkable, as there is no tears, no bitterness, no abuses, no blames, not having objection
and providing explanation. There is only understanding of one another through the surrounding. The awareness that they can never be together again dawns upon Sumi and the finality of the thought gets confirmed in her mind so forcefully that there remains no hope of togetherness. This harsh reality can not be denied. She needs to admit and accept it. When Gopal calls her she gets up and both of them stares at each other in silence trying to confirm the thoughts and beliefs in their mind an silence look Gopal left the house silently, the confirmation of thought comes to her silently, and she faces and accept the stark reality courageously truthfully but still silently. This is one type of grace in the personality of Sumi’s character.

Sumi’s childhood friend and Goda’s daughter Devaki arranges a party. Which is in fact arranges for the meeting of Sumi and Gopal to meet, talk and find out the solution of the problem. Devaki feels that it is a part of her duty to do something for her friend Sumi and Gopal and that’s why she arranges the party. Though she is close friend of Sumi but not less than a family member. In an Indian context, thus, the families may be separate; still they are like extended families preserving a close bond with one another. They are interrelated and this relation is well recognized by both the sides. Devaki has always considered Sumi-Gopal as the lovers, while the touchstone for all other lovers. So naturally due to the separation of Sumi and Gopal it is only Devaki, Who becomes too suffered and expects to bring them together again.

On the next day of party Kalyani and Sumi’s daughters expects from Sumi to share what happened during their communication. Calmly Sumi answers all their questions one by one and also talks about some other things. For the very first time here, inertly Sumi breaks down after Gopal’s desertion. All the pains and agony, confusions, predicaments, humiliation, she had locked inside her, surrounds her but with an uncontrollable violence. Following lines mentioned her predicaments better –
The tears she had controlled then, the tears she had disdained in Devaki’s house, suddenly threaten to calm her. She barely has time to get to her room before they burst out of her with an uncontrollable violence. They flow so copiously, it’s as if there is a deep well inside her, a spring that has tapped by the words of the poem.\(^{(78)}\)

The violent outburst of Sumi in fact drains away, all that she had collected and controlled in her mind for all these days. This is the only particular incident where she breaks down with the madness and wildness of being lost in a strange world. Yet the departure of Gopal has brought out her hidden strength. When the family and friends blames and agonize over Gopal’s desertion the only person to meet Gopal without rancor is his wife, Sumi, who identifies the essential loneliness of all human beings and so sets him free. She maintains her matter of fact approach one of the very important facet about the nature of Sumi is that she is basically a good human being- her innate goodness does not allow her to blame even Gopal or get angry about people around or her life. She is still welcoming her life. She is satisfied and enjoyed her new job as a teacher, enjoys her writing which is a revelation to her own personality. She expects from her daughters always to look forward to life and experience the beautiful moment of life. She is tense about her eldest daughter, Aru’s decision that she will not marry, as she has experienced the consequences of the marriages of Kalyani and Sumi; while Sumi willing that Aru should know, understands and experience the tenderness of ‘love’ and the warmth of togetherness. Her tolerance, patience, equanimity and stoicism makes her an ‘enigma’, as observes by Shashi Deshpande-

Sumi’s acceptance is not passive. She blocks out the unpleasantness. She has a good opinion of herself; she is more
concerned with getting on with life. She does not want pity; she would do anything for pride. She distances even her husband. The point is, they are both unusual people. People are puzzled by the abandoned wife not feeling bad. (79)

Sumi’s pride and independent attitude prevents her to show her grief to anybody. She dislikes to open her heart and lay bare her emotions. She controls her feelings and looks composed and equations to the outside world. As her state of mind point out by R.S. Pathak-

......She fully realizes that trying a lacerated heart to one’s wrist and showing it to the world is meaningless. (80)

As the relationship of Sumi and Gopal is dissect, they try to search the answers for the things related to their past, certain traits about their nature and their together life. Sumi does not want to hurt her daughters and tries that her past does not shadows at own self and her daughter’s lives. Unused to freedom, she is willing to turn this new isolation that has descended on her into self freedom. She because about her own marriage and her mother’s marriage are enough in themselves to turn her daughters away from marriage. In anguish Aru asked her father why had he got married if it was to end like this. Premi also asks Gopal the same question. Nextly Aru puts the same question to Premi: what do women get out of marriage? The answer of Premi is that there is Nikhil, a child of their marriage children offer continuity in this mortal world. The husband of P.K. Sudha had also felt that children are the compensation for all else. Forever, Gopal’s mind does not accept this consolation.

Sumi and Gopal, as wife and husband shares memories of tenderly felt emotions, of physical closeness, of dependence and togetherness. Sumi felt that now the time of their life’s togetherness was complete. She does not want to
hold him against his wish. Abandonment of a husband can be an act of betrayal. A woman may feel broken and humiliated by it. But Sumi rejects such feelings and works her way toward a fresh foothold.

The novel functions on another level on the periphery of meaning revealed through the epigraphs. The epigraph to the first part; ‘The House’ is taken from ‘Brhad- aranyaka Upanishad.’ This epigraph leads one to the reason of this leave-taking. Marriage is not limited to the two people, who get married or to the family they bring up. It includes their psychological beings, their childhood, their future related dreams and their failure. At this particular point of their lives Gopal and Sumi are two individuals who think differently. Sumi who has always given him his freedom make space for his failures and makes no claims, neither does she run away from the problem, nor does she think of suicide himself off. Even though he allows his mother-in-law, sister-in-law and daughters to come and reason with him, his mind is closed to all argument and reasoning. He is very much obsessed with his past memories and his present sense of failure. As Jasbir Jain remarked about his disturbed state of mind-

*Matter of Time, like The Dark Holds No Terrors is concerned with masculinity, when a man is caught between the contradictions generated by the conflict between tradition and modernity. The Indian concept of masculinity is challenged not only by western education, but also by material competition. Gopal has withdrawn from it all.* (81)

Sumi and Gopal these are two basic unforgettable characters created by Deshpande in her fictional world. In fact both of them are two very good human beings. The bonding between these two is unique one. In spite of Gopal’s desertion, for the first time, a truly positive bond between husband and wife is created by Shashi Deshpande in her fictional world. Gopal desert Sumi and his
daughters and yet he respects her, loves her, sometimes adores her as a true lover does. He has no complaints about their past life spent together. According to his opinion, Sumi is an intelligent, capable, sensitive, dutiful and beautiful woman in the world. He knows that they share a bond of understanding. He is unable to explain at the time anybody asked him about his desertion. On the contrary he keeps on waiting for Sumi to visit him because he believes that only Sumi is the person who understands him better in the whole world.

Though Sumi becomes humiliated and hurts by various life consequences she presents to the world and even her daughters a well composed picture of herself. She lets her daughters to face the consequences of life boldly, because according her opinion this is the only way to battle with it. The undercurrent of an understanding on the part of Sumi for Gopal and his actions runs through the novel. The process of communication and understanding through analysis of past and present goes on without an apparent dialogue. It makes the couples Sumi- Gopal bonding is different from the other couples bondings portrayed by Shashi Deshpande. Each one of them respects the other and thinks of the other not only as a ‘husband’ and ‘wife’ but as an individual. This aspects keeps them apart from others. As Deshpande expressed that both Sumi and Gopal are ‘unusual.’

In all marital relationships of Deshpande’s fiction silence plays a defining role. It changes its suffocative role and takes another shape in Sumi- Gopal’s relationship. Sumi does not asks her unsaid questions, does not expect any answer. No any overt dialogue takes place at the time of desertion or after that with only few words Gopal leaves her she deals with the situation silently. No grudge, no complaints not even a sense of bitterness is reflected through her behavior. Sumi analyses and accepts the reality silently and Gopal is to her for that. A commendable decency through this whole process is displayed by Sumi. Thus ‘silence’ comes as an inevitable part of marital relationships. In
fact, ‘silence’ is one of the main concern takes over by Deshpande through her fiction.

2.6 Urmi- Kishore Relationship in The Binding Vine:

The Binding Vine is one of best fictional work by Shashi Deshpande. The main portrayal are depicted named Urmi, the protagonist and Kishore is her husband. He stands out from other male characters portrayed by Shashi Deshpande in her fiction. Mohan in That Long Silence and Manohar in The Dark Holds No Terrors are similar in their nature, approach as husbands, while Gopal in A Matter of Time is a step ahead of Kishore. Both of them have patriarchal values inculcated and treat wives as wives expecting from them all the responsibilities and duties of a traditional and well-cultured wife. They do not look towards their wives as individuals. Although Jayant in Roots and Shadows shows more understanding he also has certain rules and regulations that how a woman or a wife should behave. He does not express them yet reacts non-verbally in certain situations. While Kishore is a step ahead of Jayant. He well respects his wife, Urmi’s individuality. Atrey and Kirpal explains the remarks about Kishore-

Urmila’s husband Kishore in The Binding Vine makes an exceptionally egalitarian person. Born to a middle class family with an austere life style, he shows none of the aggressive pursuit of material wealth that characterizes the husbands of the other protagonists. He neither interferes in Urmila’s profession nor influences her in any of her decision. He genuinely loves her and is close to his only surviving child, Kartik.

Of a quiet disposition, he is represented as a strong character who even as Urmila’s young neighbour, had respected her wishes… He comes to her aid, when, Aju, her grandfather had bolted the house
and hanged himself to death. Since he can’t break open the door, he decides to get some of the others. He asks her to accompany him home: “I refused and he didn’t argue. (82)

Perhaps, no other male character in Deshpande’s novels shows the capacity to live with his vulnerability. Understanding and affectionate Kishore is an androgynous character. Urmila is stuck by the quiet intensity of his mourning for their daughter, Aru’s death. Urmila sees that tears pouring down silently from his face; on the other side the character of Urmi believe in love. She remembers clearcut the exact day on which she fell in love with Kishore and the vividness and exactness of her feelings that are-

*I fell in love with Kishore when I was fifteen. ‘Fell in love’, what a flabby, over-used phrase it is. But that’s exactly how it was for me- I fell headlong into that emotion in a moment. There was the same sensation of being shaken, of breathlessness that there is after a fall. Until then, he had been only Kishore, Vanaa’s rather strange, aloof brother. And then suddenly, as if someone had drawn a circle about him, he was singled out from the rest of humanity for me. I can remember not only the day, but the exact moments this happened. (83)*

The obsession and passion with which Urmi loves Kishore remains as it is; even though she has lost the spontaneity and eagerness. The cause may be that she has found him very cool and detached person. Kishore loves Urmi truly; still he seems to be afraid of the binding of love. He can be isolated and aloof after an intense love-making. He sometimes feels threatened by the intimacy that brings due to the marriage between two persons. The feeling of being ‘trapped’ is experienced by Kishore on their wedding night. The reaction
of Urmila to this strange activity becomes untraditional and sharp. She thinks is it only women want to be dominated by men? When Amrut asked Urmila’s opinion about this. She answers that-

No, Amrut, no human being wants to be dominated. The most important need is to love. From the moment of our births, we struggle to find something with which we can anchor ourselves to this strange world we find ourselves in only when we love do we find this anchor.

But love makes you vulnerable. Mira realized this; and she was afraid. Was it this same fear I saw on Kishore’s face on our wedding night. (84)

Urmila walks out not only to prove her husband Kishore wrong about the marriage is as being imprisonment but also she does not like the “trapped” look on his face, the tremendous burden on his mind to keep alive a certain tradition. He never asked her the reason about why she had walked out that night nor does Urmia try to explain the cause behind it.

An another most inevitable incident between Urmila and Kishore throws light on their relationship and their personalities. Intensely Urmila loves Kishore but she is unable to express her feelings into words. Many times she thinks and tries to express her feelings that how she feels isolated when he goes away with her. But she thinks of herself as ‘the classic clinging female’ (P.139). She imagines herself saying those words to him that each time his parting is like feelings of death for her seek Urmila was recalling and enjoying the moments spent together. She thought of saying about those words to him, but she fails. She thinks that her grief, pain, agony, suffocation accumulated in her mind which she is unable to express through her words becomes the rain and pour over the earth. It means that the rain, the thunder become the symbols of Urmia’s
emotions and feelings. The thickness in her heart caused by the storm of her feelings of longing, expectations, love and agony of parting result into the thunder.

Urmi, a passionate beloved expects to be reassured from her husband if not in words then through his deeds; that he also misses his wife and family, he too thinks of her always when he is away from her. But in reality Urmi do not experience any trace of this feeling in Kishore and also through his behaviors. He is very cool, composed and infact even after a physical intimacy. He does not show any indication and sign which proves that he is stimulated by the moment. He does not leave an impression that the moment has left any impact on him. When Urmi experienced this fact she becomes shattered and expressed her feelings within her mind –

But sex is only a temporary answer. I came out of it to find that the light had come back. Kishore lay smoking, one arm under his head, his face clear and calm. I lay still and watched. Kishore leaned across and stubbed his cigarette but into the ashtray. It was the finality of the gesture that shattered my strange inertia. (85)

Urmi feels isolated and alienated. As he stubs the cigarette but into the ashtray, the finality of the gesture provokes Urmila into rebellion. She runs out into the roaring wind and rain and gets completely drenched by gathering her night dress around her. Kishore brings her back and urges her to go to sleep with his arms arounds her. There is no discussion about this incident in between them. Later Urmila remembers that his closeness was only physical and his voice triggers off despair in her with its coldness. While recollecting that night incidents, Urmi says –
Yes, here it is, the Knowledge I spared myself then. Kishore will never remove his armor, there is something in him I will never reach. I have lived with the hope that some day I will. Each relationship, always imperfect, survives on hope Am I to give up this hope? (86)

As per Urmi’s remarks that those signals are at a deep-rooted insecurity in her relationship with her husband, Kishore. Even in front of his wife Kishore is not removing the armor to the one he loves. He projects himself as a person who is unreachable in a certain sense. In a novel A Matter of Time Gopal gives an impression that he has achieved ‘a sense of detachment’. All these Deshpande’s male characters are understands, considerate, loves their wives, families, friends but are afraid to surrender themselves in love and also afraid to give in totally to the loved ones; as they think that ultimately. They will get sorrow through love and so they wish to keep themselves away from this ‘Binding of Love’. A perceptive comment on Kishore is made by Jasbir Jain-

Mira is dead, but the fear she has experienced of being owned by another has been passed on to her son, Kishore. (87)

John Gray provided the insights in Men, useful in unravelling the cause of a women’s sensational and emotional insecurity. As Atrey, Kirpal points out

Men generally assume that once a woman is fulfilled, she should stay that way. Once he has proven his love, she should know it forever …….From the male point of view, this attitude makes perfect sense. Women find this attitude hard to accept. It is just plain inconsistent with their internal reality. A woman needs to be reassured that she is special, worthy, understandable, and lovable.
Men also need to be reassured, but they get that encouragement mainly through their work. Women, however, primarily need reassurance through their relationship. (88)

Gray, an expert in interpersonal communication is credited with the unique contribution that the difference between men and women is more than biological. According to Gray’s opinion men and women feels and respond differently. For a sound relationship between wives and husbands a good understanding of the emotional and mental make-up of the two sexes is essential; as also is learning the art of asserting and asking for fulfillment.

While commenting on the relationship of Urmi and Kishore; Atrey and Kirpal says that Urmi should assert himself more to bridge the gap of communication. As per their opinion.

The character of Kishore serves to show that even when a husband is as liberated as he, the marital relationship can still become a troubled one for either spouse, unless each partner, especially the woman, learns to communicate her needs and ask for fulfillment. (89)

Though Urmi is not submissive, she does not ask Kishore for more than what he gives her. Consequently she tends to nurture and build up resentment which makes her feel that despite a ‘love’ marriage her dreams of adolescent age are living Happily ever after with Kishore. (The Binding Vine, P. 165) have been modified. The vast scope for her to further develop the habit of asserting.

The hunger of for the sake of achieving Kishore is aroused in many ways. At the time she watched the marriage of Harish and Vanaa closely, she comes to know that it is very difficult for Vanaa to understand Urmi’s relationship with her husband Kishore, which has always been a ‘living’ in the present situation.
And when Kishore goes away from her, Urmi is left with unsatisfied passion and bodily hunger for Kishore. She expects that she could put in ‘deep freeze’ to be used on his return. The only way out of her constant fantasizing seems to be recognition of her sexuality. At the time when they both are together there is a part of him that is withheld from her. And Urmi too withhold a part of herself despite the physical expectations and wishes. Both Inni and Vanaa are the wives who have totally submitted themselves to their husbands, but it is only Urmi holds herself back because she also wants this submission from her bottom of heart. She is afraid that this submission is may be a habitual thing for her. In this regards the elaboration by Jasbir Jain is acutely done-

There is an ‘ego’ a sense of ‘self’, which leads her to withhold. She recalls how, on her wedding night, she had walked across to her parents house, afraid to yield and unwilling to be absorbed. It is the fear of annihilation that sends her back to her parents’ house on the night of wedding. Shashi Deshpande is asking some very serious questions when she places Urmi in the shadow of Mira. These questions relate to the separateness of an individual and then enable to destroy their will or to go away entirely with their desires. If they resort to half-truths, silences or deceptions these too indicate a separateness. It is the myth of a romantic union that is being explored along with the idea of power. Fulfillment through sex and love also gives women a sense of power and a man may be afraid of being absorbed and contained as much as a woman. One of the reasons Urmi goes back to her parents house on the night of her wedding is the look on Kishore’s face. He looked trapped. At one level, there is a conflict in every individual between the attachment and detachment, between the involvement and distancing, between loving and being loved. Desire has its own
traps. The debate of the Bhagwad Gita, of Krishna’s discourse to Arjuna, of Draupadi’s life and unfulfilled desires constitute a strong undercurrent in an individual’s life. Anita Desai carries on this debate in her early novels and Deshpande also writes about this conflict: How intense can love be if the self is not to be annihilated and if the moral and social world has a strong presence? (90)

J.P. Tripathi commenting on Urmila’s bonding with her husband that –

*Urmila, the sailor’s wife and college teacher, is more self – reliant and has an identity different from that of her husband; she is self – respecting and does not want to live on Kishore’s money. She is, however, a sensitive vine that needs Kishore as an Oak to entwine herself around.* (91)

At every turn of this novel Urmila emerges fully aware about an unequal treatment meted out to women. Urmi’s encouragement to Vanaa to be more assertive in life, her sympathies with Shakutai, her strong efforts to take up the task of the translating the Mira’s poem from the Kannada language to the English, her strong decision of publishing them prepare her to stand as a woman of strong convictions. From Shashi Deshpande’s earlier novels no other female character is as rebellious and strong as Urmila. Thus Urmila and Kishore both of them become strong individuals and shares a very different bonding of husband and wife. They love each other but do not share it. Kishore always carries a sense of detachment within him, which does not gives consent to him to express his love in front of Urmila due to his frailness of the ‘binding vine’ of love.
2.6.1 An Imprint : Mira’s Marital Life on Urmila:-

The character of Mira, who is the mother of Kishore delineated by Shashi Deshpande in a very fine way. Kishore is Mira’s first child and she died while she is giving birth to Kishore. The Second wife of Mira’s husband Akka handover all Mira’s belongings including a trunk full of her diaries and poems to the Urmia. Akka, Urmia and Vanna were surprised to see the poems written by Mira. There were also few photographs with a college magazines and few books.

The story of how Mira got married is tells by Akka to Urmia and Vanna. Kishore’s father saw her somewhere and single-mindedly pursued her, with his devious ways with her parents to win her over in marriage. At last he married with Mira. After listening to the story of Mira’s marriage, Urmia wonders and contemplates over what could be Mira’s reaction to her marriage, because the story leaves out Mira’s feelings and emotions entirely. There is not any hint as to what Mira felt and did. Was she pleased at first, feels triumphant at being married at the age of eighteen to the first man who ‘saw’ her? Was she angry that she had to give up her studies? Did she protest, say anything to her parents? (The Binding Vine. p.no-64) all these questions arouse in Urmia’s mind and she continuously contemplates over those.

A family photograph of Mira is seen by Urmia. There she saw Mira’s parents. Mira seems to be closer to her father because as she was his only daughter, so naturally seems to be his favorite child. On Mira’s thirteenth birthday her father presented her a book named ‘Arabian Nights’. Later Urmia’s attention concentrated towards Mira’s poems and diaries. Urmila establishes communication with Mira through her diaries and tries to reconstruct the tragic tale of a sprightly girl, who inspired by her sufferings and suffocation and wrote poems. Mira’s poem stands for the symbol of woman suffocation. While going through Mira’s poems, jotted in her diaries Urmia finds that which are none but her school note books. Urmila tries to understands a message tapped on her wall
by the prisoner in the next cell. It becomes clear from all the belongings of Mira, that she was a favorite daughter of her father who was naturally feels proud of her intelligence and talent. Mira had an unexpressed and deep desire of being recognized as a good creative writer and a poetess. But she becomes afraid and hesitates to express her desire as other may be laugh at her, if she expresses the desire aloud. Her anxiety, questioning and uncertainty are all felt in her heart and her poems are the true reflections of her feelings. Mira expressed her feelings through the following lines which reflects the strong dislikes of sex-

_Huddled in my cocoon, a somnolent silkworm will I emerge a beauteous being? or will I, suffocating, cease to exist?_ (92)

As per the opinion of C.S. Lakshmi for Mira the sex becomes like the sting of scorpion which is born by women. Urmi comes to know that Mira’s marriage is only a ‘black clouded haunted night she awaits with fear. She begins to hate the word “love” as it is uttered always by her husband. As Urmi narrates a passage from the papers found in the trunk of Mira that both of them speak a lot about the relationship she shared with her husband and reveals the truth that Mira’s feelings towards her husband are almost void. The bonding of Mira and her husband is devoid in care, tenderness and affection its result is that Mira withered out by the uncaring and violent approach of her husband. Mira puts in words the advice given to her by her mother at her marriage time. That each and every time she must obey to her husband, never utter a word ‘no’ and submit herself whole heartedly. This was an orthodox and conventional understanding of what an ideal wife’s role would be during her married life. Mira tries to follow the advise given by her mother, inertly she becomes restless and her mind rebels. In Mira’s married life she was lonely and isolated in that house because she felt an alien surrounded by people who don’t understand her
feelings and expectations at all. Mira’s loneliness revealed only through her poems was a part of Mira’s being and yet now only Urmila is able to understand her expectations and emotions.

Mira was very different from those days women in the sense she thought ahead of her own times and she was distinct from the girls of that particular time is revealed by her reaction which is related to an incident when an astrologer came to their house. He read their horoscopes and told their futures. Only Mira’s mother’s horoscope was not read because like the conventional woman she thought that only her children were her future and she was not apart from them and she was very happy to known the future of her child so there was no need to know her own future.

Similarly like the protagonist of That Long Silence i.e. Jaya here Mira too resents the new name given to her at the time of marriage when she burst out her protest is vehement.

As per all the belongings of Mira, her daughter-in-law i.e. Urmila is confident that she understands Mira, her suffocation, plight and predicaments. She perfectly understands Mira as a woman through her diaries and poems. Mira is a woman with an intellect and formal education, which gives her different attitude for to look at life in a very different way. Urmila knows that for Mira the life seems terrible is normal thing to the most of women of her time. But Mira is not an ordinary woman; she zestfully represents those women who could not follow the conventions and traditions blindly. Mira stands equal to Deshpande’s other protagonists- Jaya, Saru, Indu, Urmila and Sumi.

Shashi Deshpande’s female protagonist who are on the threshold of modernity and belongs to the older generation where they found themselves caught in the clutches of patriarchy and becomes blind and unable to find a way. Urmila wonders about Mira’s way of living life that how she could survive a life denied of choices and freedom and living with a man whom she could not love and other people with whom she had nothing in common to share with. As per
Urmi’s opinion perhaps it is only Mira’s writing that kept her alive. Mira knew sadly after her marriage that the pattern of life of the married women is always fixed and the same one, it never changes. The feelings of pain, fear and joy are inextricably interwined in Mira’s mind after her marriage. The pain of childbirth results in the joy of seeing one’s own child and experiences this joy too by Mira. She is aware of the new found love for her unborn child even in the midst of vulnerable pain and fear of being trapped forever, sadly Mira’s life comes to an end at this point, means she dies in childbirth.

According to Shashi Deshpande one facet of an arranged marriage is the confrontation with the unknown person. When a physical union precedes love, the union is likely to bypass the expectations and the willingness of the subordinate partner. It means the emphasis is only on body. It is the traumatic aspect of this physical relationship that is for grounded through the concept of rape with marriage. Mira in The Binding Vine, Saru in The Dark Holds No Terrors are the victims represented through the novels of Shashi Deshpande. The right to body is the basis of personhood. This basic right is denied to these women. Prasanna Sree points out Deshpande’s differentness in the delineation of female characters and their victimization before and after marriage.

No woman in out land is beyond the threat of rape, because of the suppressed energies of the male, through the taboos of patriarchy which deny sex before marriage and make male into wanton animals who assault any possible victim when possessed by lust.

(93)

2.7 Conclusion:-

Thus in this particular chapter I have tried to analyze woman’s suffocation through the bonding and relationship of man –woman in the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande. This man-woman relationship is the main pillar of the family, even though it reveals the silence and suffocation of the
woman imposed on her by the patriarchal family set up in India. Lack of space, lack of communication and understanding are the main causes responsible for this bleak picture which revealed through man-woman bonding with each other. But as we move towards the later novels of Shashi Deshpande, like *A matter of Time*, *The Binding Vine*, there is an important ray of hope dawning as the portrayal of an open and equal relationship between man and woman through these novels. Sumi and Gopal in *A Matter of Time* and Urmli and Kishore in *The Binding Vine* shows the mutual respect, love and understandings towards each other as human beings during their bonding. Though these are the stories of an isolation and desertion of woman by her husband; their relationship reveals an optimistic and healthy aspect of a marital system of Indian society.
References


2) Ibid., (p.no. 425)

3) Ibid., (p.no. 477)


8) Ibid., (p.no. 83)

9) Ibid., (p.no. 83)

10) Ibid., (p.no. 83)

11) Ibid., (p.no. 27)

12) Ibid., (p.no. 27)

13) Ibid., (p.no. 27)

14) Ibid., (p.no. 75)

15) Ibid., (p.no. 12)

16) Ibid., (p.no. 24-25)

17) Ibid., (p.no. 144)

18) Ibid., (p.no. 145)

19) Ibid., (p.no. 8)

20) Ibid., (p.no. 8)

21) Ibid., (p.no. 144)

22) Ibid., (p.no. 192)

23) Ibid., (p.no. 193)
24) Ibid., (p.no. 91)
25) Ibid., (p.no. 94)
28) Ibid., (p.no. 95)
29) Ibid., (p.no. 167)
30) Ibid., (p.no. 167)
31) Ibid., (p.no. 121)
32) Jain, Jasbir. Gender Realities, Human Spaces : The Writing of Shashi Deshpande. Rawat Publication: Jaipur and New Delhi; 2003. (p.no. 84)
34) Ibid., (p.no. 31)
35) Ibid., (p.no. 45)
36) Ibid., (p.no. 45)
37) Ibid., (p.no. 67-68)
38) Ibid., (p.no. 136-137)
39) Ibid., (p.no. 138)
40) Ibid., (p.no. 139)
41) Ibid., (p.no. 105)
42) Ibid., (p.no. 165)
43) Ibid., (p.no. 11)
44) Ibid., (p.no. 139)
45) Ibid., (p.no. 167)
46) Ibid., (p.no. 161)
47) Ibid., (p.no. 83)
48) Ibid., (p.no. 36)


51) Ibid., (p.no. 65)

52) Ibid., (p.no. 42)

53) Ibid., (p.no. 11-12)


56) Ibid., (P.No.31)


60) Ibid., (p.no. 91-92)

61) Ibid., (p.no. 17)

62) Ibid., (p.no. 18)


67) Ibid., (p.no. 10-11)

68) Ibid., (p.no.14-15)

69) Ibid., (p.no. 27)

70) Ibid., (p.no. 27)

71) Ibid., (p.no. 33)

72) Ibid., (p.no. 36)


75) Jain, Jasbir (2003), (p.no. 112)

76) *A Matter Of Time* (1996), (p.no. 57)

77) Ibid., (p.no. 23)

78) Ibid., (p.no. 112)


81) Jain, Jasbir -2003 (p.no. 116)


84) Ibid., (p.no.137)

85) Ibid., (p.no. 139-140)

86) Ibid., (p.no. 141)

87) Jain, Jasbir -2003. (p.no. 53)

88) Atrey, Kirpal. -1998. (p.no. 51)

89) Ibid., (p.no.51)

90) Jain, Jasbir -2003. (p.no. 89)


92) *The Binding Vine*-1993. (p.no. 65)