CHAPTER - IV

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Shashi Deshpande is essentially a novelist of Career women. Career is an opportunity through which a person's individuality is expressed, identified and rewarded. A woman's commitment to a career reflects her desire to fulfill her own dreams and strength. It rejects dependence on a relationship as a mother, wife or a daughter. An Indian woman, in the past, has been denied opportunities to emerge as a force professionally. Early marriage and purdah system confined her behind the walls of her home. Her identity decided her roles as wife and mother as a foundation of happy family.

The British rule in India heralded a new chapter of the development of women during by introducing education for women and social reforms like abolition of Sati, widows remarriage etc. Post-independence Indian society has witnessed the massive mobilization of women as career seekers in every field of life. The constitution also provides equal rights and privileges for women at par with men. The Five year plans also stress on the vocational and occupational opportunity for women's education and the
modern technological innovations played a vital role for the professional development of women. At present, there is a demand of 33% reservation for woman in parliament. We can see doctors, engineers, and administrative officers, beauticians, film heroines, films directors and other in every walk of male-dominated world. But as a career women, she has balance between her home and career which demands her double role and taxes her miserably.

The career woman is constantly trying to live as an economically independent individual. Yet it is rather surprising that the professional aspect of a woman's life has been ignored by men writers. Even women writers have not done better in this context. The need for women's financial independence has not received the emphasis it deserves for their works. In Indian English literature, Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Prawar Jhabvala and Anita Desai have not discussed at length the attempts of women to gain financial independence since their focus is entirely different. A few career women, no doubt, figure among the minor characters in their novels, but their professional life is not discussed in detail. Nayantara Sahgal does better
than her predecessors in the depiction of career women, especially in her later novels. But only Sonali of rich like us arrests our attention. More than any of these women novelists, it is Shashi Deshpande who tries to project women who endeavour to give equal importance to their professional as well as personal lives.

Shashi Deshpande's protagonists- Indu (Roots and Shadows), Sara (The Dark Holds No Terrors), Jaya (That Long Silence) and Urmila (The Binding Vine)- all are career women. She tries to address particularly the problems of the middle-class working women. Her career women try to redefine human relationships in view of the newly acquired professional status.

'Career woman' is a result of feminist movement from the West which concentrates on the freedom of woman from the clutches of the male dominance. She is not "life contracted unpaid workers" as Germaine Greer has observed and she is always conscious for her rights and identity as a woman. But Shashi Deshpande's Sara in The Dark Holds No Terrors emerges as a whole woman who is independent and establishes herself beyond the cultural
conflicts neither as a totally liberated woman or the typical westerns nor an orthodex Indian Submissive female. Shashi Deshpande's 'Career Woman' creates a balance between extreme feminism and the conventional role of submission and self denial in Indian context.

The career woman is also a new woman. We can find Indu in Roots and Shadows, Jaya in That Long Silence, Urmila in The Binding vine and Saru, The Dark Holds No Terrors as Career women who face conflicts and predicaments of their career inside and outside their homes.

The present chapter concentrates on 'Career woman' in the novels of Shashi Deshpande in Context of tradition and modernity in the fabric of Indian society ours is a male- dominated society where woman is only a pretender of happiness. The noted Indian Woman Poet, Kamala Das, in one of her poems, Suicide, has thus uttered.

"But
I must pose
I must pretend
I must act and role
Of a happy woman,

Happy wife"

'The career woman' has to travel along in order to get the present status as a free woman from bonds of traditions. As a modern woman, she keeps pace with her quest for womanhood where lies the rays of freedom and happiness from the clutches of rules of male dominated world. Her drama of happiness as a wife comes out of realisation of a woman as a victim and every woman loves to have 'a room of her-own' (Virginia Woolf).

In recent Indian English fiction, we find that the heroines are conscious of their rights and their places in their society. They are different from a traditional society and modern women. They are aware of their existence and are no longer submissive and living in silence. There is a marked difference in their attitude as compared to that of the heroines of earlier fiction writing has been, till recent years, considered a male domain. As Jane Austen observes in Persuasion:
"Men had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been their in so much higher a degree, the pen has been in their hands", (p. 22)

But seeing the recent emergence of women writers, who are telling their own story, we know that the pen is no longer in the hands of men only but also in the hands of more women who are conscious of their rights. They have risen in revolt and are rising their voice against their exploitation. Some important women novelists who have portrayed strong, determined and assertive heroines are Shashi Deshpande, Kamala Markandaya, Geetha Hariharan and Veena Paintal.

The primary motivation of the novel has always been a projection of the social situation and the reflection of social consciousness. Literature reveals principally three sets of relationships- human being in relation to the universe, individual in relation to society, and man in relation to woman. In other words, the novel may be considered a document of social criticism. It tends to reflect the contingent reality in an artistic fashion, Indian novelists have risen to the occasion and adequately
reflected the various human relationships, including the images of woman in man-woman relationship.

Novel written during the last two decades of the twentieth century provide a glimpse of the female psyche and with a full feminine experience. The Indian Society which has been so conventional and tradition bond could not remain impervious to the new forces that had started impinging on the mind of people. No wonder, the portrayal of woman by creative writers is truly reflective regarding the social changes which Indian society is undergoing. Several novels deal with the position of a new woman in such changing society.

Many Indian writers now present a picture of economically independent women which is totally different from one dependent image of women in the past. Changes in the economic conditions have brought a remarkable change in our attitude towards gender and as a result, woman has substantially consolidated her position she is no more servile to her husband.

In Indian, both men and women writers have seen women in different relationships. Both intellectuals and
sociologists regard Indian society as a traditionally male-dominated one where individual rights are subordinated to group or social role expectations. Woman has often been a victim of male oppression and has been treated like a burdensome beast. As a result, woman's individual 'self' has little recognition and 'self effacement. Indian woman has traditionally received such hierarchy, through which she lived with it down the ages.

Before marriage, women are brought up strictly according to the traditional and family codes. The moment a girl reaches adolescence, she is reminded of her virginity as a part of her femininity. She is constantly reminded by society that she need not assert her individuality as she becomes the fate of man should be the ultimate goal of her life.

Feminist movement which originally started in the west has widely spread in India. Analyzing man- woman relationship, Greer uses the analogy of employer and employee and considers women "life- contracted unpaid workers"1 Who cannot expect liberation from the clutches of male world. The ideological impact of woman's
Liberation Movement is felt by sociologists, intellectuals and the educated in India specially in urban areas. But Shashi Deshpande carefully avoids the western feminist's concept of emancipation and presents the Indian version of the modern woman who searches for the whole of her 'identity' and for fragmentations of her 'self' out of the swirling restlessness, Saru in The Dark Holds No Terrors emerges as a whole woman who is not dependent on anyone else. Deshpande cautiously puts aside the western notion of a woman's emergence in terms of separation from her life-partner or for an existence without any relation to male and society, a life in isolation which is a state of no existence. Having suffered the long conflict between the cultures of the colonized and the colonizer, the Indian woman, Saru, establishes herself neither as a totally liberated woman like the typical western nor as an orthodox Indian submissive female. In this respect, she is truly a representative of the middle-class 'new woman' who stands on the crossroad of Indian society reflecting tradition and modernity.
Such awakening amongst the feminists and women writers has helped them to project in their writing the image of a 'Career Woman'. In such times when radical change is going on all over the country, it has become quite desirable for woman to redefine her new role and determine her contribution to become an integral part of family and society, seeking a true balance between extreme feminism and the conventional role of subjugation and self-denial.

The family in India, during the last few decades, has been under process of social change and has been substantially affecting man-woman relationship.

It is because of a conspicuous change as there is a marked evaluation of roles and values in the female world. According to the sociological perspective the role of husband-wife relationship is the principal component in the context of family which is undergoing with a vital change as there as a new dawn of growing enlightenment and the movement for women's emancipation. In this regard, literature, has played a vital role in raising the readers' consciousness. In various forms, it has provided a
glimpse of female psyche and her range of female experience. It portrays, without inhibitions, 'the new woman' who refuses to play a second fiddle to her husband in various aspects of life.

Changes in the socio-economic conditions have also changed our patriarchal attitudes for female and these contemporary changes are rejected in literature too. Indian writers, in their works, present an image of woman which is totally different from the image of the past, according to which woman was viewed as 'an evil counterfeit', 'a weak vassal' While women has consolidated her identify and position, she refuses to submit to man in a servile manner. This has led the creative writers to redesign the man-woman relationship at pace with equality and liberty which is depicted largely in contemporary Indian fiction.

As a result man-woman relationship is one of the most significant themes of modern Indian fiction and it is the dominant theme of the fiction of Shashi Deshpande. Both in her short stories and novels, she has set a realistic picture of contemporary of Indian woman in context to her relationship with her husband.
For centuries, women in India have been deliberately denied opportunities of growth in the name of religion and ancient socio-cultural practices. At the advent of Independence, women were prey to many abhorrent customs, traditional rigidities and vices due to which their status in the society touched its nadir. Besides, there prevailed atmosphere for women which was bleak all-round. At the personal plane, women faced their widespread illiteracy, feeble health, segregation in the dark and dingy rooms in the name of purdah, enforce marriage before marriageable age, indeterminable widowhood, rigidity of fidelity and opposition of remarriage of widows, turning many of them into prostitutes, curse of polygamy degrading sacred rites of matrimony to a system of shameful traffic, putting to death to female, children, violence used to make women follow sati, commercialized marriage through dowry and, above all, the complete denial of her individuality. At the economic structural plane, the women were prey to economic dependence, early tutelage of husbands and in-laws, heavy domestic workload and 'invisible' and unrecognised work, absence of career and mobility, non-recognition of their economic
contribution, poor work conditions and wages, and monotonous jobs which men denied to do. At the socio-political plane, women suffered from the denial of freedom even in their own homes, repression in some direction and unnatural indoctrination in others, unequal and inferior status everywhere, rigid caste hierarchy and untouchability. Most women were reduced to 'dumb driver cattle' and led an inhuman, 'beastly life'.

During pre-independent Indian, the major force which acted as catalyst in creating awareness and hopes among women were nationalist movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Despite their miseries and misfortunes, thousands of women of different communities and all walks of life come out of their homes to join the nationalistic movement as political campaigner, participate actively in the protest marches and demonstrations; face lathis and bullets; and suffer gallantly the police repression, privation tortures, incarceration in prison and other indignities at the hands of the British imperialists.
Jawahar Lal Nehru, the maker of modern India, admired the role played by females during national movement in freeing India which was symbolic of her own freedom from chains of domestic slavery: "our women came to the fore-front and took charge of the struggle. Women had always been there of course but there was an avalanche of them which took not only the British Government but their own men-folk by surprise. There were these women, women of the upper or middle classes leading sheltered lives in their homes, peasant women, working class women, rich women------pouring out in their tens of thousands in defence of government orders and police lathis. It was not only the display of courage and daring but what was even more surprising was the organisational power they showed."4

He further added "Not only that women swept in the high tide of the struggle for independence, but they also launched a separate movement of their own to fight for their rights"5

While breaking the chains of India's slavery, they broke their own age-old Shackles. They fought
orthodoxy superstition and communal separation. They proved themselves of extraordinary capacities and projected a free, strong and courageous image of Indian womanhood. Events evinced that without the cooperation of women, the freedom struggle will not succeed.

It is a kind of marvelous participation in the nationalist movement which had a direct impact on the attitudes of women. They pinned high hopes in the solemn declarations made during the struggle for independence. Mahatma Gandhi- The Father of the Nation- at whose call thousands of women of all classes plunged into the political movement, declared that the leit motif of the independence struggle was:

"to gain independence not for the literate and the rich in India, but for the dumb millions,...........I shall work in Indian in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country in whose making they have an effective voice, an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people"6

Gandhiji's half of India's 'dumb million' were women for whom he wanted independence along with the other
"I am uncompromising in the matter of women's rights. In my opinion, she should labour under no legal disabilities not suffered by man. I should treat the daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality."

He also writes in Young India:

"Woman is the companion of man gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in minutest details of the activities of man and she has the same right of freedom and liberty as he. . . . . By sheer force of a vicious custom, even the most ignorant and worthless men have been enjoying a superiority over women which they do not deserve and ought not to have."

Women were Gandhi's 'last persons' whose tears he wanted to wipe and without whose liberation, he thought, the independence was superficial.
With the declaration of Independence and the transfer of political power, women's movement of yesterday's freedom suddenly subdued. Only a minority of erstwhile radical women leaders carried their activities even during the post-independence period.

Since the ultimate mission of struggle for independence was fulfilled many women activists found no reason to continue their activities. Some of them retreated to the security of their homes. The ordinary women became busy in recovering their lost homes. Only a small section of wealthy and well-to-do women could go in for politics or enter anyone of a number of professions. Barely within a year since Independence, Mahatma Gandhi the champion of women's cause, went out of the scene. The Independence, thus, by no means, automatically improved the lives of women. Several barriers, many old and many new, stood in the way of improvement in the condition of women in different domains of their lives.

Undoubtedly, Independence brought the promise of actual liberation and equality. And, in the years following
freedom, tremendous were felt in the status of women in Indian society.

Education has been identified as the major instrument for raising the status of women. For promotion of gender equality, the access to education for women of par with men played a vital role on the road of freedom during the last forty years have elevated women in a number of ways. It has created awareness among women and enabled them to be self-reliant. It has brought women in contact with the philosophy and meaning of liberation and that of the democratic values and traditions of the west. It has deferred the age of marriage, postponed the mothering responsibility and enabled them to seek a career. It has given rise to new equations in the relationship between husband and wife and enabled women to exercise their choice in the selection of the life partner.

Simone De Beauvoir rightly assesses the problems of women's freedom:

"A woman supported by a man wife or courtesan-is not emancipated from the male because she has a ballet in her hand, if custom imposes less constraint upon her
than formerly, the negative freedom implied has not profoundly modified her situation, she remains bound in her condition of vassalage. It is through gainful employment that women has traversed most of the distance that separated her from the male; and nothing else can guarantee her liberty in practice."\(10\)

A "Career Woman" is also of the "new woman" who is a balancing between her career and individual freedom. Shashi Deshpande's protagonists- Indu (Roots and Shadows), Saru (The Dark Holds NO Terrors), Jaya (That Long Silence) and Urmila (The Binding Vine), all are career women. She tries to address particularly the problems of the middleclass working women. Her career women try to rediscover human relationship in view of the newly acquired professional status.

Shashi Deshpande is aware of the predicament of a woman in a male-dominated society especially when the woman is not economically independent. In The Dark Holds No Terrors, there is a reference to a woman, who, ill-treated by her in-laws, drowns herself into a well. In
another instance, a woman is chained to a peg by her in-laws in the Cattle shed, Grieved and hurt at such gesture: Saru desires to become economically and ideologically independent. Sadly, economic independence has not automatically resulted in full-fledged autonomy. They are caught in a conflict between their familial and professional roles, between individual aspirations and social demands. Indu of Roots and Shadows and Jaya of That Long Silence, being women writers, are torn between self-expression and social stigmas-material and psychological state of mind. They finally, somehow, fully succeed in overcoming social stigmas, asserting their individuality and in realizing their context in the professional area. Shashi Deshpande's career women "are not satisfied with the rhetoric of equality between men and women but want to see that the right to an individual life and the right to development of their individual capabilities are realized in their own lives"11

Indu, a journalist in Roots and Shadows, finds her job very mechanised and unsatisfactory. The editor wants her to write what is acceptable to the public and so she
can not really write what she wants to. She is unhappy with her career as she is forced to be dishonest and false to herself. When she is forced to present a false*. Journalism, jayant, her husband takes it easy and advises her to compromise with opposite but she could not and decides to resign her job. Jayant firmly disapproves of any such move and Indu helplessly continues in the same job while hating it simultaneously.

Akka's choice of Indu as her heiress gives her new courage and strength. She introspects her married life and realises the need to seek freedom within the bounds of obligations and responsibilities. She refuses to be influenced by Jayant who does not want her to leave her job. She decides to resign her job at once and devote herself to the kind of writing she has always dreamt of Indu, thus finally, strengthens herself as a writer. She realizes that her roots are to be an independent woman as well as a writer, while her shadows are to be a daughter, a mother and a commercial writer. She had not let anyone, neither Kaka, nor Atya, nor even Jayant come in the way of
doing what she believed to be right. She had conquered her fears and achieved her goal and harmony in life.

Simone De Beauvoir has rightly remarked: "The fact is that men are beginning to resign themselves to the new status of woman; and she, not feeling condemned in advance, has begun to feel more at ease. Today the woman who works is less neglectful of her femininity than formerly, and she does not lose her sexual attractiveness....... If the difficulties are more evident in the case of the independent woman, it is because she has chosen battle rather than resignation. All the problems of life find a silent solution in death; a woman who is busy with living is therefore more at variance with herself than is she who buries her will and her desires; but the former will not take the later as a standard. She considers herself at a disadvantage only in comparison with man"12

Saru of *The Dark Holds No Terrors* becomes a doctor in order to be economically and ideologically independent. She becomes a successful doctor but ironically her professional success prompts her jealous husband to treat her brutally. To escape from his torture, she even prepares
to resign her job. But he is not prepared to lose her income and the comforts it brings. She searches for a refuge and wonders whether her parental home can be one. On introspection, she realises that she is her own refuge. Her success as a doctor reinforces her feeling of self-esteem. In the end, she realises that her profession is her own and she will decide what to do with it, "My life is my own", She is fully aware that career is an essential part of her life and that she can not sacrifice it in order to salvage her marriage. In fact, in moments of despair, it is her profession that has given her necessary courage to face life and therefore it is indispensable for her. She succeeds in realizing her selfhood through her profession. So she sets out to attend to a patient. Saru thus proves to the world that economically independent women like her can bring change in the society and that women as individuals can have some significant control over their relationships and professions. Thus, "Sarita, in The Dark Holds No Terrors, depicts the journey of modern woman towards financial independence, emotional balance and social recognition"
Shashi Deshpande’s That Long Silence (1988) is mainly concerned with the state of the modern Indian woman who is constantly trying to know herself. The silence of an Indian housewife is the major concern in this novel. The inner conflict in new woman is expressed in the novel, at the same time, there is quest for identity as Shashi Deshpande tells about the novel:

"And then I wrote That Long Silence, almost entirely a woman’s novel, nevertheless, a book about the silencing of one-half of humanity. A lifetime of introspection went into this novel, the one closet to me personally; the thinking and ideas in this are closest to my own"  

In this novel Jaya represents one half of humanity. Her husband’s indifferent attitude towards others seems to be his 'superiority' for Jaya. She is not interested in knowing how he had managed to get the job. She wants to be ‘Gandhari’ of modern days, an ideal wife, her eyes tightly bandaged and she didn’t want to know anything. She was happy to move to Bombay. She was delighted that they could send their children to good schools. She could have decent clothes, a fridge, a gas connection and
travelling first class. She is a typical modern Indian Wife who is not very fussy about her likes and dislikes. She has a perfect understanding of Mohan's nature.

"I know you better than you know yourself," I had once told Mohan, and I meant it.16

When Jaya knew that to Mohan, anger of a woman makes her 'unwomanly,' she had learnt to control, her anger. She had learnt other things also. She understood that the duties of 'a woman' are the most important thing for the woman in her family. All other things are less important.

Jaya, has been a writer of promise and had even won a price for one of her short stories. Mohan, her husband, encourages her to write and even introduces her to editor of papers and magazines. However, he finds her themes autobiographical in nature and therefore objectionable. He even cites a story and accuses her for having exposed their personal life through it. She begins to compromise with Mohan's demands and that has affected her writing career drastically. In order to fulfill her roles as wife and mother, as Mohan wants them to be, she is even prepared to
sacrifice her career. She shifts to writing light, humourous pieces in newspaper called 'middles', where she need not present her views and ideas. Later, she starts on her weekly column, 'Sita' about the daily routine of a middle-class house wife. These lack depth of feeling yet are acceptable to Mohan. Thus, like Indu of Root and Shadows, Jaya, also is forced to be false to herself as a writer.

Jaya after deep concern realises that she has failed as a writer for which she has made enormous sacrifice for her profession for her aspirations to see that her marriage is not jeopardised. She knows that she does not speak in her true voice and present her personal vision. She now realises that she cannot be a complete woman if she remains a wife or a mother and ignores the other equally important self, namely a writer. She finally decides to give up the 'Sita' column and to write what she really wants to write. Thus, at the end, Jaya succeeds in creating a fuller self:

"In a way, the protagonest, Jaya, is any modern woman who resents her husband's callousness and
becomes the victim of circumstances. By implication the character of Java represents modern woman's ambivalent attitude to married life".17

The emotions in Jaya are expressed in traditional style at the end:

"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".18

Shashi Deshpande's Jaya is over weighted with age-old traditional belief, but, at the same time, she, welcomes new ideas:

"Deshpande's protagonists finally try their best to conform to their roles and the novel ends with an optimistic tone with the possibility to some positive action in future. The novelist emerges in them as a bridge builder between the old and the new, between tradition and modern-city".19

Simone De Beauvoir has rightly assessed the situation of woman: "Sometimes her Lover or husband
asks her to renounce her career...... If she yields, she is once more a vassal; if she refuses, she condemns herself to a withering solitude. Today a man is usually willing to have his companion continue her work, the novels of Colette Yver, showing young woman driven to sacrifice their professions for the sake of peace and the family, are rather out dated; living together is an enrichment for two free being, and each finds security for his or her own independence in the occupation of the male"^20

Though Indu (Roots and Shadows), Saru (The Dark Holds No Terrors) and Jaya (That Long Silence) are the career conscious women, Yet they are basically traditional in their outlook and therefore face several problems of adjustment in their families.

Urmila of the Binding Vine, however, is the most rebellious of Deshpande's protagonists, She works as a lecturer in a college and is thus financially independent, self-reliant and highly self-confident, she has an identity different from that of her husband. She neither wants to live on her husband's money nor submit before him. Indu, Saru and Jaya are aware of the inequalities in society but
they do not attempt to set right anything. Urmila, on the other hand, takes up cudgels on behalf of Kalpana, the rape victims. This perhaps prompts Indira Nityanandam to comment thus.

"The hope for Indian women lies in the happy fact that through there are Miras and Kalpanas and Shakutais, we also have our Urmilas"[21]

Talking to an interviewer, Deshpande says, "having a life outside the family is very important for women."[22] Accordingly her women protagonists- Indu, Saru, jaya and Urmila-- succeed in constructing a self through individual professional achievement. They also manage to come to terms with themselves by redefining their relationships, accepting at the same time social constraints and emerge as fully developed individuals doing justice in their domestic as well as professional fields.

Awakening amongst Indian Women is largely due to the spread of education and impact of the Western Indian life and society. The women writers in India, placed in an orthodox culture, have their roots in their native soil but encounter an invading western sociological phenomenon,
the feminist movement', which calls for the liberation of 
women from the age old clutches of servility.

Saru the protagonist of Shashi Deshpande's The Dark 
Holds No Terrors, suffers from gender discrimination since 
hers birth. Subsequently, she develops a sense of hatred 
towards her mother who always comes in the way of her 
progress, imposing restrictions on her daughter without 
understanding that the new generation is passing through 
a transitional period where the daughter is sandwiched 
between tradition and modernity. It presents the conflict 
between Saru and her mother which represents the clash 
between the old and the new, the traditional and the 
modern. While Saru suffers discrimination as a daughter, 
She is in no better position as a wife. According to Manu, 
the law maker of the Indian orthodox culture, women can 
never be a decision maker:

"A girl, a young women, or even an old woman should 
not do anything independently, even in (her) house"²³

In the Indian culture, a woman's identity is defined 
by others, in terms of her relationship with men, as well as 
a daughter, a wife, a mother, for she does not have an
identity of her own. But here Deshpande and Saru seem to think that a woman's life in her own and the time has come when a woman must think as an individual.

The last phase of Sarita's life brings her face to face with her own self. In feminist terms, Saru's return to her parental home could be interpreted as what Kristeva calls "the refused of the temporal order and the search for a landscape that would accommodate their need."24

The home coming helps her to sort out her problems, to analyze her life, to review and re-examine her crisis.

Traditionally man has been regarded as a protector, a master, a guardian of woman. The modern educated woman has however started resenting this attitude. The present day woman has finally realized that she is not as helpless and dependent as a child. She is as much competent as man. But then the old Sanskars shake her new faith and she is struggling to come out of the shackles of such old Sanskars.

Another fact the modern educated young woman has gradually realized is man's wilful overlooking of woman's wishes, likes and dislikes. Until the sixties and seventies
man alone was looked upon as bread winner and woman was confined only to household. In the modern era, woman too has become a direct money earner. Now she not only earns money, and does her household work and also earns her self respect.

As long as the thoughts and feelings of the woman in all respects flowed together with those of man's she had the feeling of security and togetherness. Now when she has started thinking and feeling differently, she has started feeling alienated from man. And this alienation has generated in her a feeling of loneliness and emptiness and which she has to fight with all her might.

Loneliness, one of the concerns of the modern society, is not a disease, but a symptom of man's condition and this awareness is the first milestone in one's journey towards realising oneself. Edmund fuller remarks:

"Man suffers not only from war, persecution, Famine and ruin but from inner problem...... a conviction of isolation, randomess, (and) meaninglessness in his way of existence"
As long as the woman mutely accepted and practised the ages-old traditions and customs like clearing up "the mess with her bare hands, after each meal," and "eating off the same dirty plate her husband had eaten earlier", "getting married and bearing children," sharing the belief that "a woman can't live her alone" accepting to be "obedient and unquestioning", looking at husband as a definite article, permanent." Not only for now, but for ever, and so on, she felt secure and had the feeling of togetherness. Now that the new education has gradually made her conscious of the futility or emptiness of the various long. Preserved notions and taboos about the woman, she has started opposing and breaking them. And this crusade at times makes her feel alone and alienated.

The women in Shashi Deshpande's novel depict the new woman's struggle against all odds. One half of the humanity can't be neglected in this modern world. Therefore, Deshpande's major concern as a creative writer is her female characters, their plight, their suffering, and their own solutions to the problems created by the world. She knows that he silence has been too long, but somebody has to break it. Her characters- have positive
attitude towards life, through the world around them which is sometimes unfriendly towards them. Her characters are full of strength and weakness. They help others without sacrificing their own values.

Thus we see that the important insight that Shashi Deshpande imparts to us through her female characters is that women should accept their own responsibility for what they are, see how much they have contributed to their own victimization, instead of putting the blame on everybody except themselves. It is only self-analysis and self-understanding, through vigilance and courage, they can begin to change their lives. They will have to fight their own battles and have to overcome and them.

In brief we can say that woman is both winner and loser and she has to set a milestone of success on the path of life which is full of pebbles and thorns in forms of problems. She has to be her own problem-shooter and has to rise from within. The new woman has to create a balance between her individuality and social responsibility as a member of human society. Life without a life partner becomes a life of isolation and loneliness on earth and nobody is an island in himself or herself. Life is a symbol of peace, love and understanding that men and women have to share for a happy home and
a happy life. Shashi Deshpande's "Career Woman" seeks such a balance in her life and society, between tradition and modernity, between profession and individual freedom which can make life heavenly on the earth in Indian context.
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